

Air cargo handled at Sea-Tac hits highest level in four years

Air freight at Sea-Tac increases in 2012

Total tonnage of air freight handled at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac) increased by 1.4 percent between 2011 and 2012; 279,625 metric tons were handled in 2011 compared to 283,500 metric tons in 2012 (one metric ton is equivalent to 2,205 pounds). Between 2011 and 2012, slight growth was observed in the three main categories of air freight handled at Sea-Tac, which include domestic, international and air mail.

In 2011, Sea-Tac ranked 18th in the U.S. for tons of cargo handled. Washington’s exporter and importer distribution facilities, logistics service providers, and freight forwarders and consolidators (such as FedEx) that are concentrated in the South Puget Sound region rely on this integrated network to deliver fast and reliable door-to-door service.

All types of Sea-Tac air freight increase in 2012

2007 through 2012; Air freight measured in metric tons

Year	Domestic	International	Air mail	Total	Percent change
2012	155,170	82,041	46,289	283,500	1.4%
2011	152,211	81,918	45,496	279,625	-1.3%
2010	152,995	85,440	44,990	283,425	5.1%
2009	151,296	74,536	43,857	269,689	-7.2%
2008	161,847	84,069	44,852	290,768	-8.9%
2007	181,993	88,753	48,267	319,013	-6.7%

Data source: Port of Seattle, Seattle-Tacoma International Airport Activity Report.

Notes: Data as reported to Port of Seattle by the airlines. Sea-Tac air freight is measured as cargo weight and does not include plane weight.

Total air cargo handled in Washington declines slightly

Washington airports handled 1.35 million tons of air cargo in 2011, measured in plane plus cargo weight as reported by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). This represents a 1.4 percent decrease from 2010 air cargo levels. Rising fuel prices have been a factor in declining air cargo traffic over the last decade. In some cases, air cargo has been diverted to other modes such as truck and marine transportation, which tend to be less sensitive to fuel costs.

In 2011, the Sea-Tac, Boeing Field/King County and Spokane international airports handled 51 percent, 33 percent and 16 percent of the state’s total air cargo tonnage, respectively. These airports have been designated by the FAA to receive Federal Cargo Apportionment funding based on meeting the qualifying threshold of pushing over 100 million pounds (50,000 tons) of cargo annually.

Total Washington air cargo tonnage trends down 2007 through 2011; Tonnage measured in plane plus cargo weight

Year	Annual tonnage	Percent change
2011	1,350,534	-1.4%
2010	1,370,262	-6.7%
2009	1,469,397	3.8%
2008	1,416,036	5.1%
2007	1,347,350	-0.7%

Data source: Federal Aviation Administration, All-Cargo Data for U.S. airports.



The Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is ranked 18th in the nation for the amount of air cargo handled.

Freight Mobility Plan will help prioritize investments to improve trade, economy

In 2011, WSDOT began the process of updating the Washington State Freight Mobility Plan. Through it, WSDOT will develop and prioritize freight transportation system improvement strategies that enhance trade and economic growth while supporting safety, the environment, and goods delivery needs in Washington. The plan is expected to:

- Make a case for funding freight priority projects and programs in the reauthorization of the federal transportation bill and future state transportation packages.
- Guide capital and operating investments in the state’s freight systems.

The plan, scheduled for completion in 2014, will help WSDOT fulfill the requirements of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.06.045 and the recommended state freight planning activities described in MAP-21. Additional information on the Washington State Freight Mobility Plan is available at <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Freight/freightmobilityplan>.

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