

Federal Aviation Agency



H9-650

AC NO: 150/5090-1
AIRPORTS
<i>Cancelled</i> 00-2X
EFFECTIVE :
2/2/67

SUBJECT : REGIONAL AIR CARRIER AIRPORT PLANNING

1. **PURPOSE.** This Advisory Circular informs local and state governments, airport operators and area planners of Federal policy relative to development of a single airport to serve two or more cities and their environs, and provides guidance to such planners for evaluating the feasibility of establishing such regional airports.
2. **REFERENCES.**
 - a. Joint state of policy by the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Agency and Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board regarding regional airports, issued on May 2, 1961, (Attachment 1).
 - b. AC 150/5070-2, Planning the Metropolitan Airport System.
 - c. AC 150/5050-1, Airport Planning as a Part of Comprehensive State Planning Programs.
3. **BACKGROUND.** In 1961, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) and the Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) jointly issued a statement of policy with respect to the use and development of air carrier airports. The statement is quoted in part below. The entire statement is contained in Attachment 1.

"The Federal Aviation Agency and the Civil Aeronautics Board agree that the use of a single airport serving adjacent communities, where such action may result in a saving both to the Federal Government and the localities served, as well as improving the air service to the area, should be an increasingly important factor in considering applications for Federal funds for airport construction purposes and applications for certificated airline service."

The intent of this policy was to provide, within the limit of the financial authority granted by Congress to the FAA and CAB, the best possible air service to the community. Of equal concern is that each dollar invested in airport development by the local community should provide the greatest return in air service consistent with the achievement of other community objectives.

Application of the regional airport concept is not warranted in some cases. The particular circumstances will govern the most practical solution for providing communities with adequate air facilities and service. This circular is offered to aid governments, planners and airport operators in determining when the concept is normally applicable and to enable understanding of the purpose behind a Federal decision to identify those communities with possible regional airport potential.

The National Airport Plan (NAP) developed annually by the FAA specifies, in terms of general location and types of projects, the airport development considered necessary to provide a system of public airports adequate to anticipate and meet the needs of civil aeronautics, and includes all types of airport development eligible for Federal aid under the Federal Airport Act of 1946. All of the locations for which the CAB has authorized scheduled air carrier service based on a determination of public convenience and necessity are included in the NAP. Commencing with the 1966/1967 NAP, the Plan will identify certain locations with possible regional airport potential. This identification is intended to alert and encourage community and regional planners to study the immediate and long range benefits which might possibly result from regional airport development, prior to making major improvements to their existing airports. It does not, however, relate to the criteria by which that location gained entry into the National Airport Plan or to its authorization for airline service.

Requests for aid under the Federal-aid Airport Program for locations so identified in the NAP will be subject to careful joint FAA-CAB review in terms of the applicability of the regional airport concept. A decision rendered by the CAB after a regional airport investigation will normally provide justification either for improving existing separate airports or for limiting development for air carrier oriented needs to a single airport. For any location not so investigated or under investigation by the Board, airport sponsors are encouraged to undertake such studies and provide the findings resulting therefrom to the FAA in support of any future request for Federal financial assistance in the airport's further development. (NOTE: Paragraph 7 of this circular provides guidance to local governments in obtaining Federal financial assistance for transportation studies.)

It is anticipated that once a study is evaluated by the FAA and a determination is made to participate financially in either the development of a regional airport or improvement of the existing facilities, the location will be deleted from future lists in the NAP. Barring unforeseen developments, this should provide the community the necessary assurance to permit stable airport planning for at least the five-year period covered by the NAP.

4. DEFINITION OF REGIONAL AIRPORT CONCEPT. As used in this circular, the term "regional airport" means an air carrier airport which serves two or more cities and their respective surrounding areas.
5. FACTORS INDICATING NEED FOR REGIONAL AIRPORT STUDY. The CAB normally does not institute an air carrier regional airport investigation unless the communities involved or their airports are within 50 road miles of one another and they are within one hour's driving time of each other. Accordingly, a regional airport study is warranted in the following situations:
 - a. When a new air carrier airport is required to replace an existing airport which is within 50 miles and one hour's driving time of a second air carrier airport, or where the communities involved in the replacement situation are within the same travel range.
 - b. When an airport which requires major air carrier oriented development:
 - (1) Has originated fewer than 10,000 annual passengers, and
 - (2) Serves a community which is within 50 miles and one hour's driving time of another air carrier airport or another community receiving scheduled service.
6. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN REGIONAL AIRPORT STUDY. Determining whether two or more communities would best be served by one (existing or proposed) regional airport requires a comprehensive and thorough study. Different situations require different solutions. With respect to smaller communities, only one regional airport may be needed to serve both general aviation and air carrier users. On the other hand, in areas of larger population concentrations, the retention of an existing airport for general aviation use might be justified in addition to the development of a regional airport designed to meet air carrier requirements. Cost benefit techniques should be employed in seeking the solution. The ultimate objective of the study should be to determine all the costs and benefits which would change if a regional airport

alone served the communities over a period of 10 to 15 years into the future. This approach requires comparing two situations: with and without the regional airport. All the favorable and unfavorable consequences under the two alternative situations should be identified and estimated quantitatively to the extent feasible. In the assembly of the data on costs (unfavorable consequences) and benefits (favorable consequences), an overall viewpoint should be adopted -- to include the communities which would be served by the regional airport, the air travelers, the aircraft operators, air freight shippers, and the state and Federal governments to the extent they will provide funds and incur costs. In the gathering of these data, it would be invaluable to consult with those components of the industry and government using, contributing to the use of, or affected by the use of an airport, such as passengers, airlines, shippers, owners of general aviation aircraft, surface transporters, etc.

Necessary bases for estimating all the relevant costs and benefits for the with and without situations are traffic forecasts of aircraft flights, air passengers, and air freight. Differences in ground travel times for air travelers if a regional airport were available will be one of the most important consequences to be analyzed. Some costs and benefits -- particularly social as distinguished from economic and financial -- may be intangible. They should be identified nonetheless and assessed qualitatively for their nuisance or benefit impact. The noise of aircraft in approaching and departing airports is in many cases an example of intangible social cost. The convenience to air travelers of more frequently scheduled flights by competing airlines may be one of the intangible benefits. The paragraphs which follow discuss in more detail the factors which should be considered for a regional airport study.

a. Airport Accessibility.

- (1) Population Distribution. One of the major considerations in evaluating the usefulness of an airport is whether it is readily accessible to the total population it is intended to serve. Therefore, it is necessary to determine the present and anticipated future population distribution of each community involved in relation to the geographic location of the proposed regional airport. If the airport must serve all segments of aviation, the population distribution must be viewed from the standpoint of airline passengers and users of air cargo and general aviation facilities alike.

- (2) Surface Transportation to the Airport. Directly related to the distribution of the population is the distance and travel time by various modes of surface travel to the regional airport. Consideration should also be given to the comfort of surface travel to the airport. For example, trips requiring equal time may have different potential acceptability to the user depending on whether the trip is over a limited access highway, over narrow mountainous roads or a circuitous rapid transit system. In contrast, if there is a choice of airports within a reasonable distance, passengers are frequently willing to travel farther to the airport offering greater frequency of schedules with more modern aircraft. Thus, if a regional airport would provide service considerably improved over what is available through separate smaller airports, the overall traffic could be stimulated despite some inconvenience in increased surface travel time.

Users of general aviation aircraft, particularly business and corporate aircraft, have a greater sensitivity to surface travel than does the occasional airline passenger. A prime motivation for a corporation or businessman to invest in a private aircraft is the time element. Since many modern-day businesses depend on the use of private aircraft in the conduct of their affairs, dilution of this incentive through the removal of adequate and convenient airport facilities could have economic repercussions for the community.

- b. Aeronautical Activity. The current and anticipated traffic at each airport is of prime importance. As indicated in the policy statement, a regional airport should result in improved air service to the area. In this respect, an increase in traffic levels does not necessarily represent an improvement in the available service. However, a decrease in traffic may indicate a worsening of the service. Therefore, if a decline in traffic would be anticipated following the establishment of a regional airport, such factor must be carefully considered.

The quality of airline service to an area is evaluated in terms of ground access to the airport, city-to-airport transportation costs, frequency of flights, types of equipment, and other similar factors. Although airline schedules and equipment are generally of little concern to general aviation, accessibility to the airport and city-to-airport transportation costs are of considerable interest. On the other hand, the physical characteristics and facilities available at the airport are of greater concern to general aviation than to the average airline passenger.

Since the regional airport policy statement refers to improving the service offered by both scheduled airlines and general aviation, the improvement should be reflected in the overall traffic levels of all segments of aviation. No advantage would be gained if a regional airport resulted in the deterioration of air service to one segment of the general public without an off-setting betterment of service to a greater portion of the public.

- c. Airport Capability. Frequently, the lack of airport facilities to accommodate current or proposed airline service moves a community to seek a regional airport.

The regional airport should have the capacity to meet present and short-range future aeronautical needs of all segments of aviation and be expandable to meet anticipated long-range requirements. In addition to runway length, width and strength, and lighting systems, the requirements include terminal navigational facilities.

The airport capability has a very significant impact on the success of a regional airport undertaking. The more modern airport with longer runways, improved lighting systems and terminal navigational aids to permit lower landing minimums is attractive to general aviation as well as to the airlines, since these facilities contribute to greater reliability of operations.

- d. Costs. In considering the desirability of development of a regional airport as opposed to separate community airports, the comparative costs that would be imposed on the various segments of the community should be considered.

The cost of improving one or more of the existing airports vis-a-vis constructing a new airport is an important consideration to all governmental bodies concerned. The willingness and ability of a community to sponsor the development of a new airport is influenced by the effect it would have on the need for retaining the existing facility and the past and current investment it has in it, or on the other hand, the proceeds obtainable from its disposal. In addition, the fact that two or more communities generally share in the expense of constructing a regional airport usually lessens the cost to each of them.

Airport development costs should be weighed with the cost of providing additionally required highways, access roads and possibly rapid transit.

In deciding whether to construct a regional airport or to increase the aeronautical capability of existing community airports, the investment made by private industry on or near the existing airport is of concern to the community as well as to the industry itself. Such investment might have resulted from agreements or commitments made by the community or may be so significant to the community's economy as to warrant overriding consideration.

Finally, in addition to time and convenience, the individual traveler is essentially concerned with the overall cost of the journey. Thus, the cost of getting to and from the airport may materially affect the airline traffic to be generated by a community and that of general aviation.

7. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN PERFORMING PLANNING STUDIES. The Department of Housing and Urban Development's 701 Program provides Federal assistance for planning the airport system as a part of comprehensive area-wide planning programs.

Federal grants are made to assist state, metropolitan, county and other planning agencies in solving planning problems resulting from increasing population concentration in metropolitan and other urban areas, including small communities; to facilitate comprehensive planning on a continuous basis for urban development, including coordinated transportation systems; and to encourage such governments to establish and improve planning staffs.

Grants may cover up to two-thirds of the total cost of planning work. The remaining portion of the cost is paid by state, local or other non-Federal funds. More detailed information about the 701 Program may be secured by writing to the Department of Housing and Urban Development regional offices listed in Attachment 2 to this circular.

8. HOW TO GET THIS CIRCULAR. Additional copies of this circular and copies of circulars described in paragraph 2b and c are available from the Federal Aviation Agency, Distribution Unit, HQ-438, Washington, D. C. 20553.



Chester G. Bowers
Director, Airports Service

Attachments

ATTACHMENT NO. 1

JOINT STATEMENT OF POLICY RELATIVE TO DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL AIRPORTS

May 2, 1961

The Federal Aviation Agency and the Civil Aeronautics Board have become increasingly concerned over the establishment of separate air carrier airports in cities sufficiently close to be served through one airport. The use of two or more airports by the scheduled airlines in serving an area in many instances tends to diminish the services to each airport and increase the cost of air transportation. The concentration of the services provided to an area through the use of one airport will often improve the service offered by both scheduled airlines and general aviation. However, this would never be accomplished in such a way as to compromise the safety of either scheduled air transport or general aviation.

From the point of view of the Civil Aeronautics Board, a scheduled airline service into two separate airports that are reasonably adjacent often results in a deterioration of the quality of airline schedules to the area. In many cases, without substantial inconvenience to the air passengers, they could be served through a single airport, resulting in improved scheduling, better quality of service through the use of larger equipment, and an overall improvement in air service to the area.

The Federal Aviation Agency and the Civil Aeronautics Board agree that the use of a single airport serving adjacent communities, where such action may result in a saving both to the Federal Government and the localities served, as well as improving the air service to the area, should be an increasingly important factor in considering applications for Federal funds for airport construction purposes and applications for certificated airline service.

/s/ N. E. Halaby, Administrator
Federal Aviation Agency

/s/ Alan S. Boyd, Chairman
Civil Aeronautics Board

ATTACHMENT NO. 2

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT REGIONAL OFFICES

<u>REGION</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>STATES IN JURISDICTION</u>
I	Room 906 346 Broadway New York, N. Y. 10013	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont.
II	630 Widner Building Chestnut and Juniper Streets Philadelphia, Pa. 19107	Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.
III	645 Peachtree - Seventh Building Atlanta, Ga. 30323	Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.
IV	Room 1500 360 North Michigan Avenue Chicago, Ill. 60601	Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin.
V	2075 Federal Center 300 West Vickery Boulevard Fort Worth, Tex. 76104	Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.
VI	Box 36003 450 Golden Gate Avenue San Francisco, Calif. 94102	Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming and Guam.
VII	P. O. Box 9093 1608 Ponce de Leon Avenue Santurce, Puerto Rico 00908	Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.