

# WSDOT-Managed Airports (WMA): System Evaluation and Strategic Plan

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## FACT SHEET

### Purpose of the System Evaluation and Strategic Plan

The Washington State Department of Transportation Aviation Division (WSDOT Aviation) operates 17 public-use airports. The majority of these airports are located near the Cascade Mountains; additional airports are also located along the Snake River and coastal region.



In its inception, the purpose for the system of WSDOT-Managed airports was ostensibly to provide emergency landing areas in key locations. Today the airports are used for many other activities, including fire-fighting operations, recreational aviation and emergency medical transportation. The airports also provide transportation access to remote communities and significant recreation areas. One of the WSDOT-Managed airports – Methow Valley State – is included in the national system and is eligible for federal funding.

Growing uncertainty in traditional airport funding sources has prompted WSDOT Aviation to evaluate existing conditions and identify future needs. Such evaluation is being conducted on a statewide scale through the agency's Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS). The WMA study is designed to provide a necessary layer of additional detail for the WSDOT-Managed airports. It is necessary for WSDOT Aviation to examine the agency's role in operating these airports, as well as the role each airport serves in the statewide aviation system.

## Project Goals

- Define the purpose and role of the WSDOT-Managed airport system through an independent assessment

- Conduct a detailed assessment of existing facilities
- Standardize airport operating agreements
- Identify policies, standards and operating procedures
- Integrate with the current statewide system plan effort LATS

## Approach

Wilbur Smith Associates, a firm with expertise in aviation engineering and planning, will perform an independent assessment of the WSDOT-Managed airports and recommend a direction for future investment in the system. Once the assessment is completed, the consulting team and WSDOT Aviation will work with a Study Advisory Committee (SAC) to develop recommendations for best management practices and implementation strategies. The assessment of the state airport system and draft policies recommendations will be forwarded to the Aviation Planning Council to be included within the Washington Long-Term Air Transportation Plan.

## Timeline

March 2007	Project kick-off
June 2007	Release of independent assessment
August 2007	Policy and Performance Objectives
October 2007	Recommendations for Best Management Practices
November 2007	Study Advisory Committee meets LATS Aviation Planning Council Kickoff
January 2008	Final draft policy and management strategies completed
April 2008	Public review and Presentation to LATS Aviation Planning Council
September 2008	Begin State Managed Airport Handbook
November 2007 - July 2009	Aviation Planning Council Recommendations - LATS
September 2009	Public Comment State Managed Airport Handbook
November 2009	Final State Managed Airport Handbook

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