

**St. Mary's County  
Airport Advisory Committee  
2009 Annual Report**

(March 22, 2010)



**Jim Davis, P.E. Chair**  
**Jacque LaValle, Vice Chair**  
**Mike Brunnschweiler**  
**Robert Mullennix**  
**A. H. "Rich" Richardson**  
**John "Skip" Shepherd**  
**Randy Willis**

Appointed ex-officio member  
George A. Erichsen, P.E. Director,  
Department of Public Works & Transportation  
and Airport Manager

Assigned Technical Advisor and Staff Support  
Gary B. Whipple, P.E.  
Supervisor, Engineering Services  
Bob Carlton,  
Senior Project Manager

1 **INTRODUCTION**

2 *Purpose and Goals of the Committee*

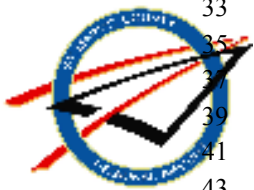
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4 The Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution on September 18, 2001 to  
5 establish an Airport Advisory Committee for matters relating to the development and  
6 management of the St. Mary's County Regional Airport. The initial Committee members  
7 were appointed by the Board of County Commissioners on December 20, 2001 with the first  
8 informal kick-off meeting held on January 28, 2002.

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10 The Committee consists of seven (7) members whose role is to advise the Board and County  
11 government on future planning, development and opportunities related to general aviation  
12 that might affect this important County asset. The Board meets on the fourth Monday of  
13 each month in the conference room of the Captain Walter F. Duke Terminal Building in  
14 California, Maryland unless otherwise indicated or if a special meeting is necessary.

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16 The self-imposed goals of the Committee are to: ensure safe and secure facilities for general  
17 aviation; improve economic development potential; complete the extension of the runway  
18 and relocation of the taxiway to meet FAA standards for the Airport Reference Code (B-II  
19 large); protect and enhance airspace and approaches; evaluate the County-owned North  
20 Parcel development feasibility; and to ensure that commercial, private and public  
21 development in and around the airport meets standards with respect to safety and noise.

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23 The Advisory Committee is provided with staff support and provides valuable input to the  
24 Airport Operations Division of the Department of Public Works & Transportation  
25 (DPW&T). At present, the Airport Manager duties are performed by the Director of the  
26 Department of Public Works & Transportation. Capital Improvement and management  
27 assistance is provided by the Supervisor, Engineering Services; an operating agreement with  
28 our primary Fixed Base Operator (Airtec, Inc.) provides daily operational support.

29  
30 *Welcome and Thank You*



33 The Advisory Committee extends its appreciation to Ned Clarke,  
35 who is stepping down as Vice Chair after two consecutive terms on  
37 the committee. The committee also welcomes back Mr. Gary  
39 Whipple from his second tour on active duty and would like to  
41 recognize Mr. Erichsen for his support of the airport as Director of  
43 Public Works and Transportation as well as Airport Manager. The  
44 Advisory Committee wishes to extend it's recognition of the County Highways & Building  
45 Services Divisions of the DPW&T, the Department of Recreation, Parks & Community  
46 Services, the County Attorney's Office, Department of Economic & Community  
47 Development (DECD), the Chamber of Commerce, Experimental Aircraft Association,  
48 Civil Air Patrol and fixed based tenants on the airfield for their assistance over the past year.

1 **DIVISION MISSION STATEMENT**

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3 *Airport Operations*

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5 “To satisfy aviation demand and promote airport development that both integrates with the  
6 community and serves the region’s general aviation and corporate pilots.”  
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8 **ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2009**

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10 The Committee reports the following:

- 14 • New and Revised Leases – (a) The County signed a  
16 new lease with the Washington Hospital Corporation  
18 to provide temporary crew quarters in support of  
20 MedSTAR medical flight operations for St. Mary’s  
22 Hospital. (*See photo*). The MedSTAR operations will  
24 relocate to the current Maryland State Police hangar  
26 upon completion of the new hangar for Trooper 7.  
28 (b) In addition, the County revised the lease with the  
29 Civil Air Patrol for its cadet training activities in the terminal and incorporated the CAP  
30 Maryland Wing’s new Mission Base Initiative to enhance emergency response operations  
31 for the region. (c) The County also signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with  
32 the Maryland Transit Administration to continue commuter bus route 909 Park-n-Ride  
33 located at the Airport.



- 34 • Safety & Security – (a) The County completed the updates to the Airport Security Plan  
35 (ASP), the Airport Emergency Plan (AEP) and the Wildlife Hazard  
36 Management Plan (WHMP) through grants from the Maryland  
37 Aviation Administration. (b) The voluntary Aircraft Owners and  
38 Pilots Association (AOPA) Airport Watch Program continues to  
39 enhance security and a sense of ownership among airport tenants as  
40 evidenced by few Office of the Sheriff responses to the airport. (c) The  
41 Maryland Aviation Administration and several Advisory Committee members conducted  
42 semi-annual inspections of the airport to address and report on issues and concerns.  
43 (d) The committee worked with the DPW&T and the County IT department to reinstall  
44 emergency phone service in the Pilot’s Lounge after Verizon removed the pay phone.

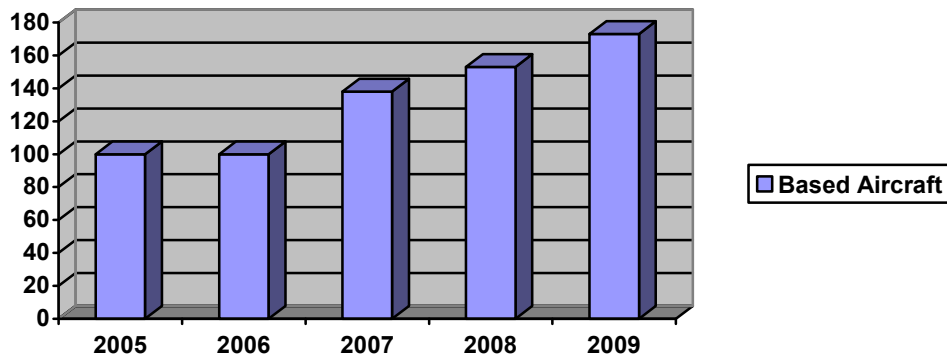


- 53 • Navigational Aides - (a) The Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS) passed a  
54 thorough field inspection on June 22<sup>nd</sup>, and the Maryland Aviation Administration  
55 agreed to continue to fund the AWOS connectivity to the national FAA weather  
56 database despite limited State funding for MAA. The committee recommends that  
57 Vaisala’s maintenance contract be renewed for another year. (b) The solicitation to  
58 replace the existing rotating beacon was sent to the County’s Procurement office as  
59 recommended by the Committee, and state funding is being pursued to offset County  
60 costs. The beacon is beyond its useful life and is not as visible as more current  
61 installations.

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- 2 • Wetlands Mitigation – Angler Environmental began field work at the St. Clements  
3 Shores wastewater treatment facility and determined that additional acreage is needed to  
4 address the airport’s wetland mitigation requirements. Angler identified additional  
5 property currently under an agricultural preservation easement, and the DPW&T  
6 submitted a petition to the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation. The  
7 project will address wetlands disturbance anticipated with the full development of the  
8 Airport as described in the Environmental Assessment.
- 9
- 10 • Annual Budgeting – **(a)** The Airport Advisory Committee has been briefed by the  
11 DPW&T and is aware of the draft operating budget level and the requested FY 2011-  
12 2015 capital budget plan. **(b)** We support the federally funded projects as shown in the  
13 Capital Improvement Program, and are pleased to see that several 100% County-funded  
14 Airport Improvement projects are also included in the budget as requested. **(c)**  
15 Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA) special grant funding and Federal ACIP  
16 funding is being used to the fullest extent practical. **(d)** The Airport is not treated as a  
17 cost center and operational costs such as airfield lighting, utilities, insurance, mowing, etc  
18 should perhaps be centrally accounted for in a single operating account.
- 19
- 20 • Community Outreach – **(a)** On June 13, 2009 the Experimental Aircraft Association  
21 sponsored a Young Eagles Rally at the St. Mary’s County Regional Airport. The weather  
22 was favorable, and approximately 120 children ages 8 -17 received a free airplane ride,  
23 which sets a new participation record. 13 pilots volunteered their aircraft, and some  
24 volunteers were from other EAA chapters who flew into our airport for the first time.
- 25
- 26 • Airport Users Group - The County maintains a link on its website at  
27 <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/2W6Users/> . The users group is an opportunity to  
28 share thoughts, suggestions and concerns about the airport and to disseminate important  
29 information to airport users. At last count, the group has grown to approximately 97  
30 members, according to the website.
- 31
- 32 • Airport Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards. Committee has developed a final  
33 draft after holding a Public Information Meeting on September 27<sup>th</sup> and has forwarded  
34 the draft to the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA) for final review. The draft  
35 will be forwarded to the County Attorney to begin the formal process of updating the  
36 County ordinance in 2010.
- 37
- 38 • Economic Impact Study - The 2005 Maryland Department of Transportation Economic  
39 Impact Study reports on the contribution of the Airport to the Southern Maryland  
40 economy. In short, the direct, indirect and induced impacts include 30 jobs, \$6 M in  
41 personal income, \$5.7 M in business revenues, \$3.7 M in local purchases and \$618,000 in  
42 state / local tax revenues. Businesses such as Massey Coal Company, Boeing, Coleman  
43 Microwave Company and the Washington Hospital Center use the airport as do tourists  
44 for access to special events such as the Budds Creek Motorcycle Races, the County Fair,  
45 the Southern Maryland Farm Life festival and other various festivals and cultural events  
46 in the area.

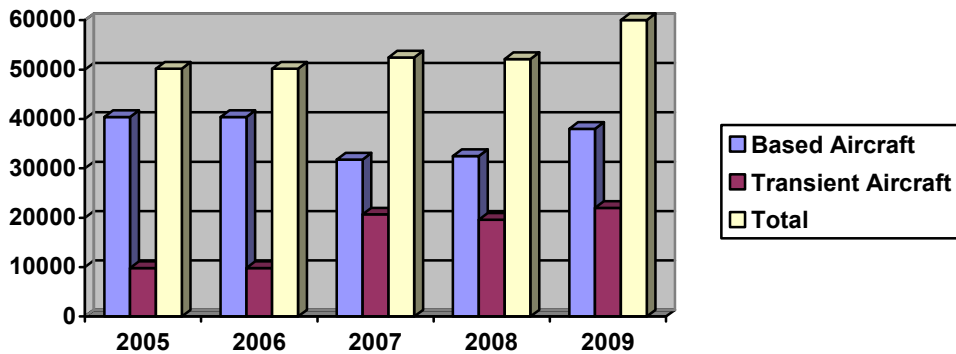
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- Feasibility Study for Terminal Food Service Operation – The committee has initiated a study to determine the feasibility and potential options available to establish a successful food service operation at the Captain Walter F. Duke Terminal. Committee members have visited other general aviation airports in Maryland to determine what practices have been successful and situations to be avoided. A separate recommendation will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners later in 2010.
- The National Based Aircraft Inventory was updated to assist the Federal Aviation Administration in administering its various national airspace planning programs. The data update ensures that all planes are accounted for by location and tail number and is a requirement for receiving continued Federal and State funding. Based aircraft totals for the last five years are indicated below. As of 2009, 173 total aircraft are included in the inventory.



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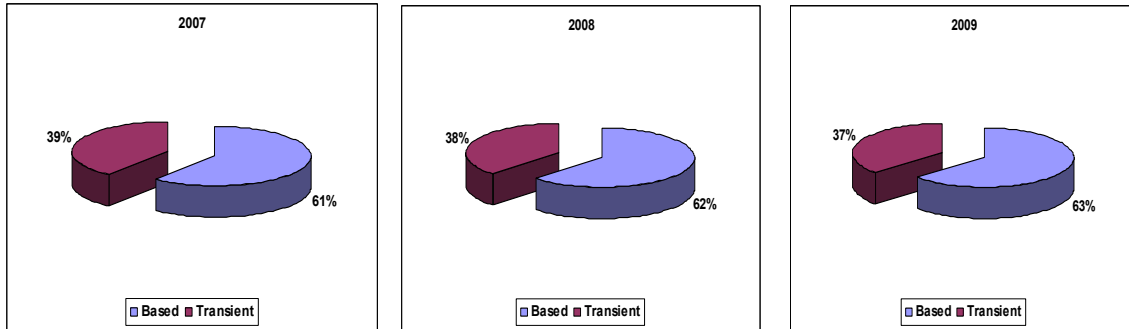
- Operational Data for both transient and locally-based aircraft are indicated as follows. Each take-off and landing is considered a separate aviation-related operation. Overall aviation activity has increased over the last year as the new T-hangars have been leased.



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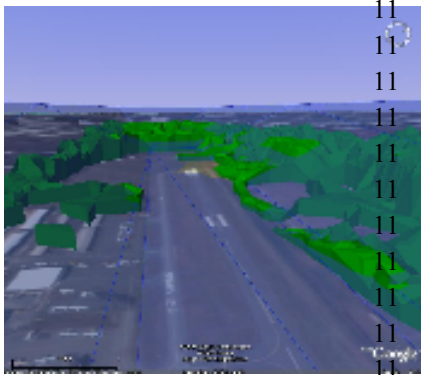
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The ratio between based and transient aircraft operations remains steady over the last three years at approximately 60 to 40. Transient operations account for almost half of airport activity.



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- Airspace Protection & Encroachment – (a) The updated Letter of Authorization (LoA) was further clarified Pax River NAS Air Operations Division in December 2009 to



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to ensure that the ability of general aviation aircraft from 2W6 to operate in the restricted airspace is not further limited. The “arc” graphically shown on the Exhibit should be measured from the 29 end of the runway as extended, not the airport reference point. (b) The new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance provisions with respect to Airport Environs and Tower installations implemented by the Board of County Commissioners has served the Airport well by preventing penetrations to FAR Part 77 surfaces

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and preserving airport approach minimums. These provisions prevent the further loss of approach minimums. (c) The DPW&T is now a registered user of the FAA’s Obstruction Evaluation Office website on which the County can review and comment on local FAA aeronautical studies.

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- Facility Maintenance & Improvements – (a) Through a state grant, the County and the Maryland Aviation Administration shared the \$44,000 cost to provide crack sealing for over 341,000 square feet (7.83 acres) of aircraft apron areas in May 2009. (b) At the request of the committee, the County installed weather-proof electrical outlets for engine block heaters to enhance cold weather start-ups. (c) The County re-striped the painted markings for the runway and taxiway during December 2009. (d) AirTec, Inc. upgraded the Jet A fuel tank to meet all current NAFA standards and increased capacity to 5,000 gallons, investing \$100,000 into the airport infrastructure.

1 **CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED OR EXPECTED**

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- 3 • The Advisory Committee recognizes the challenges faced by the Board of County  
4 Commissioners and the DPW&T Director, especially with only limited financial  
5 resources available.  
6
  - 7 • Support the expansion of tie-down spaces for additional fixed based and transient  
8 customers. The Committee concurs with the Airport Master Plan which intends to move  
9 all rotary wing aircraft (i.e. Medevac) from the existing apron area to the southwest  
10 portion of the runway extension.  
11
  - 12 • The Maryland State Police is replacing the current medevac airframe with a larger rotary  
13 wing aircraft within the next two years. The current hangar will not have the height  
14 needed to accommodate the new helicopter and will house MedSTAR after the  
15 construction of the new hangar is complete.  
16
  - 17 • Continued monitoring of development within the Airport Environs and in the vicinity of  
18 the airport property to provide sound technical recommendations to the Board of  
19 County Commissioners in order to protect the County's and the FAA's substantial  
20 investment in this important public asset. In particular, maintaining noise levels within  
21 the and nuisances  
22
  - 23 • Work with the Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD) to  
24 address the economic viability, diversity in services provided, and improving the  
25 marketing of the Airport as a regional asset. Recommend complimentary uses for the  
26 County-owned North Parcel, adjacent to the industrial park, to include a possible  
27 separate taxiway access to the Airport as described in the original feasibility study for the  
28 North Parcel Development. Growth should be aviation-related and have direct benefit  
29 to the airport.  
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31 **PLANS FOR THE FUTURE**

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- 33 • The Committee has reviewed and concurs with the Airport Operations action items that  
34 have been integrated with the Department of Public Works & Transportation's Strategic  
35 Plan. The Committee will continue to monitor and address these issues as presented for  
36 recommendation and/or action. Specific Action Items of particular interest to the  
37 Committee are as follows:  
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  - 39 • Develop an Airport Business Plan in conjunction with the DECD.
  - 40 • Once the runway is extended, "open" up the southwestern portion of the airport for  
41 development by extending water and sewer with County funding resources when the  
42 wetlands mitigation is complete.
  - 43 • Coordinate the planning and construction of the Lawrence Hayden Road relocation  
44 project with the County-wide Transportation Plan and other development on the area, to  
ensure consistency.

- 1 • Promote the implementation and commissioning of an improved GPS instrument  
2 approach.
- 3 • Work with the Public Safety Director to  
5 re-establish annual “Crash and Rescue Drills.”  
7 *(Such as the September 2007 event shown)*  
9 Ensure increased safety for pilots, aircraft,  
11 persons and properties.
- 13 • Pursue and obtain all required navigation and  
15 obstruction removal easements.
- 17 • Establish leading practices in Airport  
19 Management to include an Airport Operation  
21 Manual.
- 22 • Once the economy has stabilized, re-solicit expressions of interest for alternative revenue  
23 producing uses such as a restaurant or café-type service at the terminal.
- 24 • Tracking and monitoring new activities on the airfield such as the Harrier operations to  
25 ensure they are conducted with all notifications, permits, and notice.
- 26 • Evaluate other similar general aviation airfields and develop a listing of benchmarks  
27 and/or operational performance measures to help guide the development of the airport.  
28 The matrix of key airport performance benchmarking areas may include; traffic activity,  
29 physical facilities and services, aeronautical charges, non-aeronautical concession  
30 revenues (ie. Food beverage, advertising etc), operating and maintenance costs and  
31 quality of services.



## 34 **ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF INTEREST**

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36 Since 1978, the Federal and State Aviation Administrations have funded approximately 17  
37 projects at the St. Mary’s County Regional Airport in excess of **\$8 million**.

### 39 **AAC MEMBER LISTING (DEC 2009)**

40  
41 Jim Davis, Chairman  
42 George “Ned” Clarke, Vice Chairman  
43 Michael Brunnschweiler  
44 Jacque LaValle  
45 A. H. “Rich” Richardson  
46 John “Skip” Shephard  
47 Randy Willis