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THE STATE OF MINNESOTA PROVIDES THIS TECHNICAL BULLETIN IN THE INTEREST OF AVIATION SAFETY AND TO PROMOTE AERONAUTICAL PROGRESS IN THE STATE AND THE NATION

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## Check It Out!

by Christopher Roy  
Director

One very important part of the mission of the Mn/DOT Office of Aeronautics is “*aviation education*” and “*outreach*.”



Christopher Roy

To demonstrate the importance of aviation education, I will share a quote with you that was made by newly appointed EAA President and CEO Rod Hightower at EAA AirVenture 2010 in Oshkosh, Wisconsin:

*“When you are exposed to aviation early in your life, there’s a good chance that you’ll stay involved in aviation. I think the outreach to youth is probably one of the most important areas to expose people not only to aviation, but to the things that are important to aviation: science, math, engineering, technology, and I think America needs to stand up and be strong in that.”* (Rod Hightower)

Mr. Hightower’s quote similarly reflects our attitude and spirit toward reaching out to the community and to the youth in our state. Through our outreach and aviation education

efforts, we share information about the true importance and value aviation brings to their community. We can show people how aviation impacts their daily lives. We can also show them how they can be an active part of aviation and help increase its value to their community and to the youth who may someday choose careers in aviation.

Your Minnesota Office of Aeronautics is an active sponsor and participant in programs for youth, such as the following:

**Aviation Career Education (ACE) Camp:** The ACE Camp is held in June and July, and is open to Minnesota students who will be entering 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, or 12<sup>th</sup> grade. ACE Camp allows students to explore a wide variety of aviation careers and all aspects of the aviation and aerospace industries through tours and hands-on projects. Campers are also given the opportunity to fly in a helicopter, pilot a single-engine aircraft, and take the controls of a glider.

**Adopt-A-School Program:** The Aviation Safety, Education, and Training Section of the Minnesota Office of Aeronautics in response to requests from airport managers for ideas, materials, and activities, developed The Adopt-A-School Program for visiting school students and their teachers. It provides

curriculum and materials for teachers to cover with their students in advance of their visit to the airport which makes the visit more effective and meaningful and furthers aviation education.

**Adopt An Airport Program:** Any public-use airport in Minnesota is eligible to participate in the program. It provides a means by which communities may become involved in their local airports and assist in the maintenance and beautification of airport facilities. Local civic and community groups or individuals can adopt the airport, which means they volunteer their time to assist the airport manager or operator with activities mutually agreed upon. This program promotes increased awareness of the advantages and economic impacts that airports have on communities. It is also a means of education by which the community can learn about aviation and aviation careers, and understand what activities take place at an airport

There is a lot more I can tell you, but why don’t you take a few moments to go to our web page and see for yourself: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/aero/aved/index.html>. I am sure you will find a wealth of information that will open your eyes to new ways to understand, get involved with, and enjoy aviation. Check it out! □

## The Office of Aeronautics Today

The Minnesota Office of Aeronautics is a vitally important part of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT), and serves 135 publicly-owned airports around

the state. It also serves more than 20,000 certificated aviators, aviation mechanics and technicians.

### Our Mission

The Minnesota Office of Aeronautics is responsible for promoting aviation and aviation

safety within the state by supporting municipalities, townships, and counties in the development, maintenance, and safe operation of public airport facilities. Along with the 135 publicly owned airports, there are 19 publicly owned seaplane bases, and six privately owned (but

open to the public) airports. Sixty (60) airports have one or more runways at or over 3,800 feet in length. Also, seven (7) Minnesota airports have commercial air service.

Minnesota is home to more than 100 navigational aids and a similar number of high-speed computer weather systems for pilots around the state. Many airports also have new or recently updated arrival/departure facilities to meet the quality standards expected by Minnesota aviators.

### Where does the money come from?

The proceeds from the **aviation** fuel tax, **aircraft** registration, and **aviation** user fees are collected under **Minnesota Statute 296.421**, and are deposited into the State Airports Fund. The fund is used in accordance with **Minnesota Statute Chapter 360** *exclusively* for aviation purposes. No General Fund monies are used for aviation in Minnesota.

Expenditures are approved bi-annually by the Minnesota Legislature. The State Airports Fund is administered by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Office of Aeronautics, and distributed to several programs including construction and maintenance of infrastructure; navigational aids; safety programs; and weather programs (primarily) for pilots; and weather programs disseminated through various media including the Internet and broadcast media.

The broadcast weather information is available to anyone with a television throughout most areas of the state. It is a direct benefit to non-flying citizens as well as certificated aviators, by providing up-to-the-minute weather radar, and current and future conditions information that is immediately useful to farmers, fire and rescue personnel, law enforcement, natural resources agencies, schools, and many others.



Mankato Regional Airport  
Mankato, Minnesota

Gary Chambers

### What benefits does aviation bring to the community and the state?

The benefactors of the State Airports Funds are initially those that use air transportation in any way. This includes the flying public and aviators who use the airports and facilities, attend safety seminars, and utilize safety and aviation information publications. However, the aviation system provides benefits to *all citizens!* It does so in the form of timely, reliable, and the safe delivery of goods, mail, perishables, high-value items, and the transportation of people.

The aviation system also actively aids the economic growth and well being of a community.

On-airport, aviation-related businesses that provide direct services and products to the aviation public depend on adequate and safe airports and airport facilities.

Off-airport businesses use airport facilities for transportation of personnel, parts and equipment, and document courier service. This is often accomplished through the use of their own business aircraft, or through the use of commercial or charter passenger flights and freight facilities that provide just-in-time services and flights. Safe, efficient airport facilities, accurate current weather information, and well-informed pilots help to ensure the continued safe operation of aircraft for those in the air and on the

ground.

The communities benefit directly from having the airport as an economic engine and development tool. Many businesses seek out a community with an airport before deciding to locate in that community or area. These businesses bring jobs and economic growth to their communities.

Communities also benefit from having the airport as their “front-door.” An airport opens the way for expanded tourism, overnight mail and cargo services, expanded emergency and health services and capabilities, access to the world, and much more!

Many smaller towns very likely do not have a train station, or may not even have a bus terminal. But if they have an airport, that airport provides access to transport medical personnel, business people, urgently needed parts and supplies, tourism, and opens access to the global marketplace. So the answer to the question of who benefits from a strong, healthy, and viable aviation system is quite simply, everyone!

Minnesota’s system of airports contributed more than \$12.1 billion to the state’s economy in 2009, while providing nearly 165,000 jobs that produced more than \$6.4 billion in labor income. But, it is also very important to note that Minnesota’s small and medium airports alone brought more than \$433 million to the state’s economy and provided nearly 4,000 jobs that produced approximately \$184 million in labor income! \*

Bear in mind that General Aviation (GA) has been and remains a vitally important economic engine in Minnesota, and throughout the nation. In fact, approximately 70% of all General Aviation is associated with some commercial activity. Business travel alone accounts for more flying hours than any other facet of General Aviation.

Consider the fact that the total economic impact of GA (annually) for 2008-2009 (in Minnesota) was \$1,663,304,617, while the *daily impact* was \$4,556,999. Thus, GA contributed more than \$595 per person, based on combined direct, indirect, and induced effects in this state. It is interesting to note that Minnesota is number *nine* on the list of states with the *highest* General Aviation impact per capita.

With that in mind, it is then easy to understand why a municipality with an active airport is a better place to live, work and play. An active airport attracts motivated citizens, community-minded industries and adventurous visitors.

**What is the Minnesota Office of Aeronautics doing for the aviation community?**

**Nav aids:** Minnesota Office of Aeronautics professionals work hard to provide the best services and aviation products possible. One example is the dedicated work by the Nav aids team to fill a large radar coverage gap in Minnesota by utilizing a new technology called Wide Area Multilateration (WAM). The project will be jointly funded by the FAA and the State through bonding and the State Airports Fund.

There is a large area of Minnesota where radar coverage is not available. Aircraft operating in this area have to be above 4,000 feet and sometimes as high as 10,000 feet to be in radar

contact. There are 21 airports in this area including two with commercial service: Bemidji and Brainerd.

The area also contains Camp Ripley: an Army Airfield with significant training operations and a restricted area northwest of the airfield. In this airspace Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations are limited to one in/one out access. Air traffic services to pilots like traffic advisories, flight following and weather advisories are simply not available.

The Nav aids team is working diligently to remedy this situation to help make flying in Minnesota not only safer, but also more efficient. The direct benefit to aviators will be to *lower costs for pilots* using that airspace or those 21 airports. The benefit/cost analysis study summary concluded that there could be annual savings of 300,000 hours of passenger time in flight, 1.4 million gallons of fuel, \$6.3 million in aircraft operations, and \$140,000 in search and rescue expenditures.

**Airport Development:** The Airport Development team is constantly working to aid airports in finding ways to improve their facilities, or upgrade their runways, tarmacs, hangars, and enhance their arrival/departure buildings. While always including safety in the scope of their projects, the aeronautics regional airport engineers often look for new ways to help make the airport more user friendly and even more esthetically pleasing to see.

From July 2009-June 2010,

(FY2010), your Airport Development team handled 257 funded projects. The funding amounts included (Federal) \$53,766,125.00; (State) \$16,099,317.53, and (Local) \$11,748,329.84. Total project costs: **\$81,613,772.37.**

These dollars, while helping to improve and enhance local airports, also create jobs and economic benefits within those communities. This is not only a direct benefit to these communities, but is also directly beneficial to all citizens in those communities and surrounding regions.

Now you understand more about what the Minnesota Office of Aeronautics does for you and your community. We hope you will share this information with everyone in your community. Clearly you can see the value and importance of aviation and quality airports in Minnesota.

**One more thought about aviation in Minnesota...**

We offer one more thought about aviation: "When you build one mile of highway, you can only travel 5,280 feet and no further," said Chris Roy, Director, Mn/DOT Aeronautics. "But when you invest in the construction of one mile of **runway**, you will have built a path that connects your community to the rest of the nation, and to the world."

\* Data from the Economic Impact Study by the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies, 2010. □

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