

Procedure on Based Aircraft

Background

A fundamental step in the airport planning process is the identification of based aircraft, defined as aircraft that are “operational and airworthy” that are based at an airport for a majority of the year. Based aircraft counts are used by the FAA to categorize airports in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS) and can directly affect federal funding levels for airports. Based aircraft counts are also used in forecasting aviation activity at airports, as many development projects must be justified by current use or demand (e.g., apron expansions, hangar construction, and other basic airfield facilities). It’s therefore important to have a reliable count of the number and type of aircraft that are based at an airport or use the airport on a regular basis.

Nonprimary airports are required to provide an inventory of based aircraft on an annual basis to the FAA via the National Based Aircraft Inventory Program: <https://www.basedaircraft.com>. Once reported, based aircraft counts are validated against the FAA Aircraft Registry to ensure accurate counts. To be validated by the FAA, the following criteria must be met:

1. The aircraft is based on the airport (has an agreement with the airport for storage)
2. The aircraft spends a majority of the year at the airport (greater than six months)
3. The aircraft is operational (is capable of performing takeoff and landing)
4. The aircraft is airworthy (has a valid/current FAA airworthiness certificate)

Notes:

- ➔ *Through the fence aircraft:* A through-the-fence agreement allows people who own property with aircraft storage facilities near an airport to access the airport from off-airport property. Aircraft that are stored off-airport but are allowed to access airfield facilities via through-the-fence agreements should not be reported to the FAA as “based” at the airport.
- ➔ *Duplicate aircraft:* When multiple airports report the same aircraft being based there, neither airport may get “credit” for the aircraft. It’s recommended that airports working directly with the aircraft owner and/or other airport(s) reporting the aircraft to resolve instances of duplicate reporting.

Procedure

It is NCDOT Aviation procedure that validated based aircraft counts, as reported in the FAA National Based Aircraft Inventory Program, provide the most consistent and verifiable count of based aircraft. Validated based aircraft counts will be used in forecasting and in airport development considerations.

Resources

National Based Aircraft Inventory Program: <https://www.basedaircraft.com>

National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS):
https://www.faa.gov/airports/planning_capacity/npias

FAA Order 5090.5, *Formulation of the NPIAS and ACIP*