NCDOT DIVISION OF AVIATION
SPONSOR BRIEF

WINTER 2018

Division of Aviation
NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

A QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR AIRPORT SPONSORS & CONSULTANTS

Airport management program launches

Fifty-two airport professionals from 39 airports across the state took first steps toward earning the new North Carolina Airport Professional credential this fall, attending two NC AirTAP Airport Leadership and Management Program courses. The free program began in July with a course on airport rules and regulations. An October course focused on administration and governance. A Feb. 13 course will focus on operations and maintenance. An April course will focus on airport funding and finance with an optional session on Enterprise Business Systems (formerly Partner Connect). Courses continue every other month through mid-2020. The new program aims to provide knowledge and career development for airport officials, managers and operations staff, particularly those from general aviation airports. Learn more at **https://itre.ncsu.edu/focus/aviation/nc-airtap/education-training**.

New report: N.C. airports contribute $52 billion
Airports and DoA collaborate to spread the word

Publicly owned airports in North Carolina contribute more than $52 billion to the state's economy and support 307,000 jobs, according to a report released by the Division of Aviation (DoA) on Jan. 7.

The report, *North Carolina: The State of Aviation*, highlights the economic impacts of the state's public airports and the related aviation and aerospace assets that support North Carolina's aviation economy.

Technology helps aviation community mobilize for emergency response

Nine eastern North Carolina airports took hits from Hurricane Florence in September. But that did not stop the aviation community from mobilizing to support each other and provide infrastructure to support the state's emergency responders, aided by new technology tools – an airport sponsors listserv, Smartsheet data systems and drone technologies – developed before and during the storm.

Statesville Regional Airport Manager John Ferguson was among the first to use a new airport manager's email listserv, created by DoA last year, to alert colleagues they could house based aircraft that needed to evacuate.

High winds and flooding damaged buildings, facilities and equipment at Henderson Field (ACZ)

(*pictured at left*), Wilmington International (ILM), Coastal Carolina Regional (EWN), Albert J. Ellis (OAJ), Kinston Regional Jetport (ISO), Moore County (SOP), Fayetteville Regional (FAY), Michael J. Smith Field (MRH) and Duplin County (DPL) airports. Emergency responders and legislators turned to DoA for status updates on facilities and fuel. The DoA turned to airports for help, quickly creating an online Smartsheet form to submit status updates. An online dashboard (*pictured below*) let emergency responders know which airports could support supply drops and operations.

DoA also mobilized its Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Program, providing the state's first-ever coordinated drone support of emergency response.

Impact, *continued from page 1*

The state's 72 publicly owned airports and aviation-related jobs also provide $12.6 billion in personal income and contribute $2.2 billion in state and local tax revenues every year.

View the report online at www.ncdot.gov/aviation.

More than 40 airport officials joined DoA for a Jan. 4 webinar to kick off a statewide airports outreach initiative to use the impact data and report to gain greater local and state support for aviation.

More than 40 outreach activities have already been completed or planned by the DoA and airports around the state.

Please continue entering presentations and media stories related to the report outreach, and monitor results, through the Smartsheet tracker and dashboard: https://tinyurl.com/SoA19Dashboard *(Note: The form to enter presentations and media stories is below the dashboard on this page.)*

Contact Stephanie Sudano at ssudano@ncdot.gov for copies of the report or support with outreach.

New general aviation prioritization cycle to improve cash flow, transparency

DoA airport project managers (APMs) began reviewing general aviation project funding requests this month as part of a new annual prioritization cycle that began in the fall.

The new cycle ultimately will result in a multi-year program of projects. The goal is to improve cash flow, transparency and consistency in project prioritization.

The prioritization schedule for FY 2020 called for airports to enter or update all project requests by Dec. 31, 2018.

Projects will be reviewed and funded as follows:

- **January-early February 2019** – DoA staff review and select projects.
- **April 2019** – First round of projects selected for FY 2020 funds presented to Board of Transportation.
- **June 2019** – Projects selected for remaining FY 2020 funds presented to Board of Transportation.
- **September-October 2019** – Projects selected for federal apportionment funds from the annual state block grant presented to Board of Transportation.

State tax on aviation fuel funds economic development projects

Aviation-related economic development received a much-needed boost from the 2015 North Carolina Competes Act (revised in 2017), which directed that state taxes collected on aviation gasoline and jet fuel be dedicated for time-sensitive aviation capital improvement projects on general aviation airports for economic development purposes.

DoA launched the new fuel-tax funded N.C. Economic Development Funding Program in October. Funded projects can involve any combination of landside or airside projects. Funding requests should be submitted to APMs as economic development opportunities arise.

All FY 2018 and FY 2019 funds have been obligated. Projected funds for FY 2020 funds are estimated to exceed $7 million.

State grant funds for commercial service airports dispersed, long-term funding plan recommended

DoA has worked with the state's 10 commercial service airports for the past two years to disburse and expend $115 million for infrastructure improvements appropriated by the 2017 General Assembly for fiscal years 2018 and 2019.
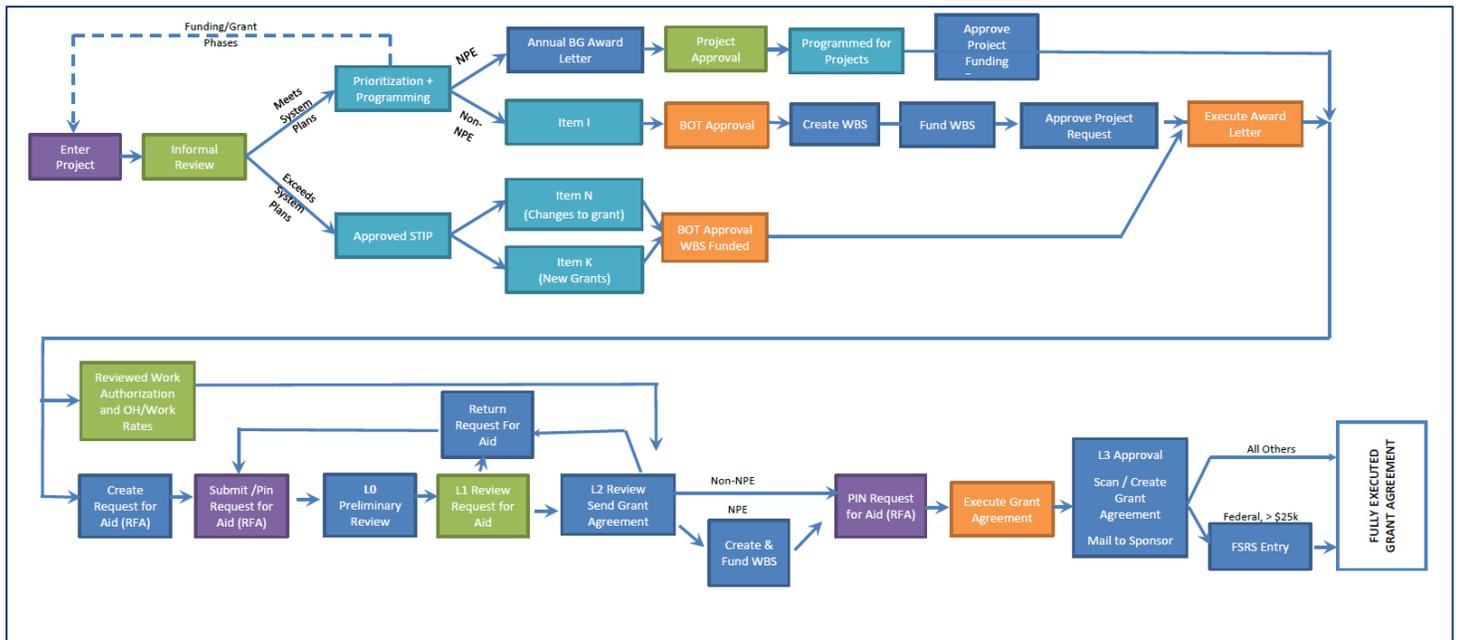
Legislators in 2017 called on DoA to disburse those funds, assess the funding needs of the 10 airports and develop a formula for allocating future funds.

Commercial service airports identified 454 needed infrastructure projects valued at $11.7 billion as of March 22. The 2019 General Assembly is expected to consider whether and how to provide funding to support ongoing infrastructure development at the airports.

Meanwhile, DoA will work with airports this quarter to prepare a report on how the $115 million has been used, due to legislators March 1.

Lean Six Sigma project improves grants processing

Airport sponsor feedback was critical to streamlining DoA's grant approval process

The Division of Aviation cut grant approval and payment processing time more than 15 percent in the past 18 months.

DoA's grants administration program recently completed an 18-month project to make much-needed improvements, cutting steps and reducing the time it takes to process grants approvals and payments.

At any given time, DoA manages more than 250 state and federal grants – more than $150 million a year – that enable the state's 72 public airports to develop and maintain their infrastructure.

"We'd had high staff turnover over three years and a lot of institutional knowledge lost," says Deputy Director/Manager of Airport Development Jon Arnold. "As a result, some payments to airports were more than six months behind, some grant awards were taking more than a year. Overall, there were many loose ends across the entire system."

Arnold and DoA staff began making basic process improvements to remedy the situation – creating checklists, mapping workflows and creating dashboards to map and monitor grant administration. As a result, grant payment times dropped from 30-40 days to around 10. Still, the team realized they needed outside help to make the deep changes they desired and regain credibility with their airport customers.

Enter the NCDOT Office of Governance, which helps business units improve process efficiencies using Lean Six Sigma (LSS).

By the end of the project, the team deleted or changed nine of 26 process steps, cutting the grant approval and payment process by about 14 days, or about 15 percent. Staff also gained a set of tools and knowledge they will use to continue making process improvements in grants administration.

"This project has been truly transformational," Arnold says. "Of course, key to the success of the project was input from airport sponsors and consultants. We will conduct another "Voice of Customer Survey" this year and ask that all sponsors and consultants take the time to provide valuable feedback. We welcome and appreciate feedback at all times."

Grant process changes announced in December

DoA introduced 18 updates and changes in December to improve grant workflow efficiency, deliver better customer service to airport sponsors and help DoA and airports comply with state and federal grant regulations.

The updates, resulting from airport feedback and the DoA's 18-month Lean Six Sigma project, affect grant agreements, Enterprise Business Systems (formerly Partner Connect) grant documentation, compliance monitoring and claims.

Get details on the at State Aid to Airports webpage (under Grant Updates) or contact your APM.

New Request for Aid form now allows online input of cash flow projections

DoA updated its Request for Aid Form (RFA) during the summer, adding a new section for inputting cash flow projections – one of the standards requirements for RFAs. In the past, cash flow projections were collected as paper copies and manually computed. The collection of this information is now incorporated directly into the online RFA form, allowing it to be much more easily entered and reported. Two videos show how to complete and submit the RFA application. View the videos. *(See related story on page 7.)*

DoA plans to continue updating its Enterprise Business System to allow more input of documentation directly into online forms to reduce the number of forms and attachments that must be uploaded.

Five Tips for Avoiding Grant Processing Delays

Our goal is your goal: approve grant requests as quickly as possible. Here are five ways you can help.

1. **Chose the correct claim type from the drop-down box.** There are two types of claims: Advanced and Reimbursement. Advanced payment requests are certifications that the invoice has not been paid and must be disbursed within three business days. Requests for reimbursements must have payment verification uploaded with the claim. These are two separate and specific types of claims that cannot be combined in one request.

2. **Use the most current forms**. Be sure to check the State Aid to Airport Webpage for the most recent version of all forms.

3. **Upload federal AIP sponsor certifications with your signed grant agreement for federal grants.** All seven certifications must be signed and uploaded before a grant agreement can be created.

4. **Prior to submitting claims in Enterprise Business Systems (formerly Partner Connect), please ensure the grant is not expired and QSRs are current.** Each agreement can have only one item at a time in workflow. If a grant is expired or the QSRs aren't current, the claim will be rejected, which will enable the sponsor to submit either the request for an extension or the missing QSR and then, subsequently, the claim.

5. **Get APM approval for work authorizations.** Funding can be jeopardized if you execute work authorizations prior to APM concurrence.

2019 Airport Wildlife Hazard Training schedule set

DoA has teamed with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services – Wildlife Services to host five standard and two advanced trainings, free of charge, in 2019 to help airport personnel manage wildlife hazards.

Training dates and locations are:

- **Feb. 6** – Smith Reynolds Airport (KINT), Winston-Salem
- **April 10** – Coastal Carolina Regional Airport (KEWN), New Bern – Advanced Training
- **June 12** – Asheville Regional Airport (KAVL)
- **Aug. 7** –Charlotte Monroe Executive Airport (KEQY)
- **Sept. 18** – Pitt-Greenville Airport (KPGV)
- **Oct. 9** – Hickory Regional Airport (KHKY) – Advanced Training
- **Nov. 6** – Raleigh Executive Jetport (KTTA)

For questions or to pre-register, contact Jimmy Capps, USDA– APHIS Wildlife Services, at (919) 210-9428 or james.e.capps@aphis.usda.gov

Statewide pavement repairs and inspections under way

Pavement improvements and inspections are moving forward at 69 (all but the largest three) of the state's public airports through the DoA's Safety Preservation Airfield Maintenance (SPAM) Program.

SPAM combines preventative maintenance projects, such as pavement crack sealing and repainting runways, into a single statewide contract. This creates economies of scale and efficient, centralized administration of projects previously bid and managed as individual projects by local governments. And because the projects promote safety, DoA can fund them 100%, providing a cost savings to the airports.

DoA contractors recently completed pavement improvement projects at Cape Fear Regional (Southport), Jackson County, Gastonia Municipal and Odell Williamson (Ocean Isle Beach) airports. Work is underway at Anson County, Michael J. Smith Field, Triangle North (Louisburg) and Washington-Warren airports.

Meanwhile, DoA has contracted with Jacobs (prime) and Roy D. McQueen (RDM) Engineering

Consultants (subcontractor) to inspect pavement at the 69 airports in 2019. The results will be used to prioritize pavement projects.

For more information, contact Randy Finger, manager of statewide programs, (919) 814-0591 or afinger@ncdot.gov.

Approach Surface Certification

The DoA will ask all airports for the first time in nearly a decade to recertify that their primary runway approaches are clear of obstacles, following FAA's recent update to key design and operations guidance.

FAA in September issued Engineering Brief #99, which included changes to Tables 3-2 and 3-4 of Advisory Circular 150/5300-13A, Airport Design. Recertifications are required to ensure runway approaches remain compliant following these changes.

Look for a request for recertification coming soon from DoA's Statewide Programs office.

NC AirTAP offers training and technical assistance for airport community

Airport managers, staff and consultants got hands-on training on fueling safety, equipment inspection and best practices Dec. 6 at a North Carolina Airport Technical Assistance Program (NC AirTAP) training at Stanly County Airport *(pictured above)*.

It is one of many NC AirTAP training and technical assistance programs offered to help airport managers, staff, board members and local elected officials better manage and develop their airports.

NC AirTAP is funded by the Division of Aviation, managed by North Carolina State University's Institute for Transportation Education and supported by the N.C. Airports Association.

The NC AirTAP team continually updates its offerings to meet the needs of the airport community, recently adding webinars. Upcoming training programs are available online along with past NC AirTAP presentations.

NC AirTAP also connects airport professionals to helpful technical publications and resources available from various industry organizations.

Learn more about all NC AirTAP offerings at https://itre.ncsu.edu/focus/aviation/nc-airtap.

Contact the NC AirTAP team to discuss your ideas for future training and resources:

- Stephanie Sudano ssudano@ncdot.gov
- Tom Zajkowski, tjzajkow@ncsu.edu
- James Martin, jbm@ncsu.edu

Training Videos Guide Sponsors Through Request for Aid Application

Two YouTube videos available at the NC AirTAP YouTube Video Channel walk airport sponsors step-by-step through the process of completing Request for Aid (RFA) applications. One video covers preparing a Request for Aid Application. The other covers submitting one.

DoA seeks feedback on whether the videos are useful and will use that information to determine whether to create new videos covering other aspects of grant process guidance.

Contact Stephanie Sudano at ssudano@ncdot.gov to let us know what you think.

Connect Via Airport Managers Listserv

Names of good lighting contractors. Hangar lease rates and policies. Tie-down and hangar space available during Hurricane Florence.

These are a few of the hot topics discussed by airport managers recently on the DoA-managed email listserv. All airport managers are encouraged to take advantage of this key information-sharing resource. Contact Stephanie Sudano at ssudano@ncdot.gov to sign up.

Consultant Corner

It's that time again. Submit your 2016 financials to the NCDOT Office of Inspector General-Consultant, Utility, Railroad and Turnpike for the annual approval of your company's overhead and labor rates. Approval of the new overhead rate is required for any proposals submitted for approval after July 1, 2017.

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**Find airport development guidance, resources and forms on the
Connect NCDOT State Airport Air & FAA State Block Grant Programs webpage**
https://connect.ncdot.gov/municipalities/State-Airport-Aid