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Alaska Aviation System Plan

FACT SHEET

August 2022

Airport Classifications and Performance Measures

Alaska's expansive aviation system contains many different types of airports. Classifications are used to categorize and define roles within the system and are reviewed under each phase of the Alaska Aviation System Plan (AASP). This reevaluation occurs approximately every five years to validate categories, deliberate changes, and assess individual airport placement in various classifications. Correct classification assists in defining the airport's role and determines the proper metrics to assess system health and plan for future development.

Performance measures are used to assess large networks and provide statistical records to indicate progression toward high-level goals and objectives. Aviation systems are dynamic, requiring individual airports to consider many factors when planning future projects. Measures are not directive; they provide only one of the metrics managers use when considering future projects.

During the Phase III review, classifications received minor modifications and performance measures underwent a significant transformation. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) determined previously established measures, though informative and valid, are complicated and time intensive, making it impossible to maintain accurate, up-to-date data for a large system. The TAC recommended simplifying the metrics and using information updated by reliable sources, such as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The TAC also assessed industry advancements and the need for new measures to evaluate the system's readiness to take advantage of modern technology.

Tracking the performance of an airport system in a state as large and diverse as Alaska is challenging. Airport size and function range dramatically, from short, unlit gravel strips in remote rural areas to medium and small hub airports—like Ted Stevens Anchorage International—that are recognized as industry leaders on the global stage. These airports do have one commonality- they provide a primary transportation connection to the communities they serve. In more than 224 Alaska communities, the airport is the only year round link to the outside world.

Accurately tracking and reporting performance provides managers and decision makers with valuable information for determining the prudent allocation of limited resources. Over time, these measures provide a high-altitude view of overall system viability and assist in identifying areas of declining system health. Early identification of declining performance allows for proactive mitigation or consideration of new priorities.

The updated measures are grouped in categories to help define action groups, potential funding, and facilitate reporting meaningful statistics on large groups of airports. For example, certified weather reporting and weather cameras are crucial to aviation safety in Alaska. These two elements are now included in the safety category and reports show that 100% of medium, small, and regional hub airports have certified weather reporting and weather cameras, 75% of Community Off-Road airports have weather cameras and over 55% have certified weather reporting. With eight new Automated Weather Observing Systems (AWOS) scheduled to come online this year, future reports will document progress on these objectives.

Performance Categories


Airport Design


Airport Safety


Airport Planning


Community Quality of Life


Community Economic Development

continued other side

Airport Design focuses on compliance with FAA design standards for each classification and the type of aircraft most frequently serving the airport.

Airport Safety includes design elements—like runway length, lighting, and crosswind coverage—that relate to safety, in addition to the availability of certified weather reporting, FAA weather cameras, and seasonal closures.

Airport Planning focuses on fundamentals that inform future development and projects, such as current Airport Layout Plan (ALP), Master Plan, Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program (CIMP) inspection, compliance with FAA Part 139 requirements, and GIS data standards.

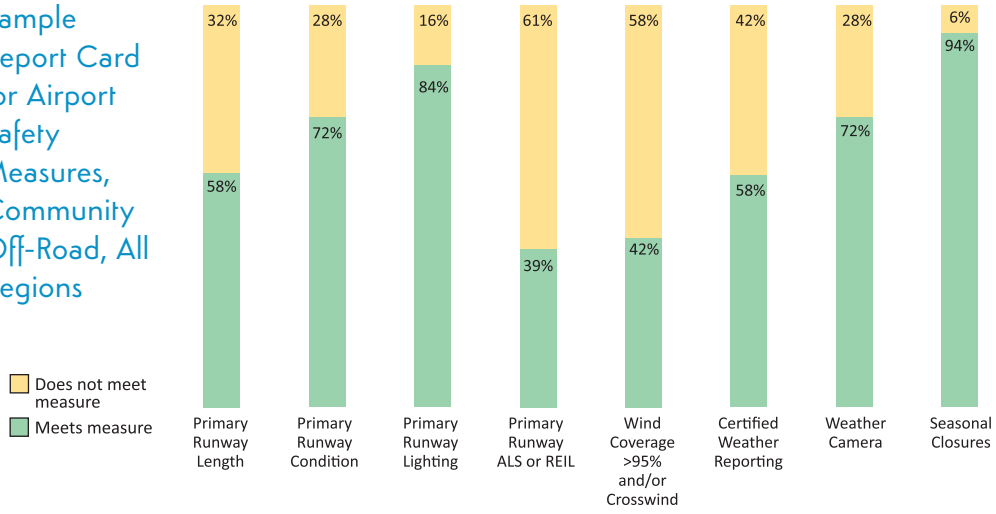
Community Quality of Life and Community Economic Development include several measures previously tracked, such as passenger shelters, public restrooms, parking, and lease lots, as well as new additions identified by the TAC as important to the community's desire to improve their airport, such as unmanned aerial systems (UAS) integration and broadband connectivity. Community measures are unique because they fall outside the province and funding capability of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF); therefore, no cost or funding information is provided. Continued documentation and tracking of these measures improves the viability of community applications to pursue public and private funding sources.

The latest update includes the development of new website reporting features, such as individual and regional report cards that allow users to generate a graphic by airport classification. Individual airport report cards provide a snapshot of all measures and where that airport has attained objectives and where additional resources are desirable. These individual report cards help planners visualize airport status and focus on current objectives and opportunities. An example of this is the new measure for broadband connectivity. With the possibility of targeted federal funding, the planners can quickly run a report to show that less than 25% of Community Off-Road airports currently have broadband connectivity available. Individual airport report cards help identify those communities by name. These report cards are only available on the internal website to facilitate the success and efficiency of various programs. The public may also request copies from their regional airport planner.

The complete Classifications and Performance Measures report, which details the evaluation process and documents minor changes, is available on the AASP website. (www.alaskaasp.com)

The AASP team welcomes your ideas and questions as we continue to improve the website and delivery of airport information to communities and the aviation industry.

Sample Report Card for Airport Safety Measures, Community Off-Road, All Regions



Sample Report Card for Kasigluk (Z09)

Identifier	Airport Name	Associated City	Airport Classification	Airport Owner
Z09	Kasigluk	Kasigluk	Community Off-Road	DOT&PF Central Region

Community Economic Development

Performance Measure	Criteria	To Meet Measure	Current Condition	Meets Measure
Fuel Available	Fuel available for purchase	Yes	No	✗
Documented Need for Additional Lease Lots	Documented need for additional lease lots	No	No	✓
Documented Need for Aircraft or Vehicle Parking	Documented need for vehicle or aircraft parking	No	No	✓
Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Integration	Airport connected to UAS Corridor, with plans for future unmanned activity	Yes	No	✗
Broadband Connectivity Available	Broadband available through local fiber connection	Yes	No	✗

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The AASP project is managed by the State of Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), Division of Statewide Aviation. Additional assistance is provided by the Aviation Advisory Board, private aviation organizations, local airport sponsors, air carriers, aviation related businesses and pilots.

The preparation of this document was supported in part with financial assistance through the Airport Improvement Program from the Federal Aviation Administration (AIP Grant # 3-02-0000-028-2021) as provided under Title 49 USC § 47104. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the FAA. Acceptance of this report by the FAA does not in any way constitute a commitment on the part of the United States to participate in any development depicted therein, nor does it indicate that the proposed development is environmentally acceptable in accordance with appropriate public laws.