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**George C. Ford**

George Ford has spent decades covering business news across Eastern Iowa. Ford is a native of Lexington, Ky., but has [...]

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## Eastern Iowa Airport raising rates for airlines, cargo carriers

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The Eastern Iowa Airport will be increasing its landing fees, cargo carrier and passenger terminal rental rates on July 1.

The Cedar Rapids Airport Commission on Monday approved raising the landing fee for airlines to \$2.73 per thousand pounds of landed weight, which represents a 9.7 percent increase from the existing rate of \$2.49 per thousand pounds.

The rate increase, which will take effect July 1, is due to a decrease in landed weight on the airfield of 3.9 percent. The lower landed weight is based in part on United Airlines discontinuing its Houston service, American Eagle eliminating a flight to Dallas/Fort Worth, and UPS adjusting its schedule for several months by replacing its Airbus A300 aircraft with a Boeing 757.



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The Eastern Iowa Airport will be increasing its landing fees, cargo carrier and passenger terminal rental rates on July 1. (The Gazette)

The cargo carrier apron use fee for fiscal year 2014 is projected to be \$94.36 per landing, which is a 13.6 percent increase per landing from the existing rate of \$83.05. The rate change reflects a 5.9 percent increase in direct maintenance and operating expenses and a 14.8 percent jump in indirect expenses.

Total air cargo carrier landings also are expected to decrease 4.4 percent from 1,649 in the current fiscal year to 1,576 in fiscal year 2014.

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The passenger terminal lease rate will increase 6.7 percent to \$19.88 per square foot in fiscal year 2014 from the existing rate of \$18.63 per square foot.

Don Swanson, airport director of finance and administration, told the commission that the new landing fees, cargo apron use fee and passenger terminal rental rates will allow the airport to compete with other airport in the so-called "snow belt."

"Our landing fee of \$2.73 per thousand pounds is below the \$3 or more charged by our competitors," Swanson said. "Our cost per enplaned passenger will be \$6.56 in fiscal year 2014, which is a 14-cent decrease from \$6.70 in fiscal year 2013.

"The decrease is a result of a projected 2 percent increase in enplanements for fiscal year 2014, which offsets the increases in building rental and landing fees projected to be charged to the airlines."

Travelers renting cars at The Eastern Iowa Airport will see no change in the customer facility charge. Swanson said it will remain at \$1.76 per rental day in fiscal year 2014.

Separately, the commission received a report on bids for construction of a new taxiway at the airport, but held off awarding a contract until its July 22 meeting. Heather Wilson, airport director of marketing, said federal funding has not been approved for the \$5.1 million project.

Taxiway E parallel the airport's secondary runway and provide easier access to aircraft. The airport commission received four bids for the project, with the lowest bid just above \$4 million and the other three above \$5 million.

The FAA would be providing 90 percent of the funding and the airport would pay the remaining 10 percent.

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