

Guidebook Informs Nation's Smaller Airports

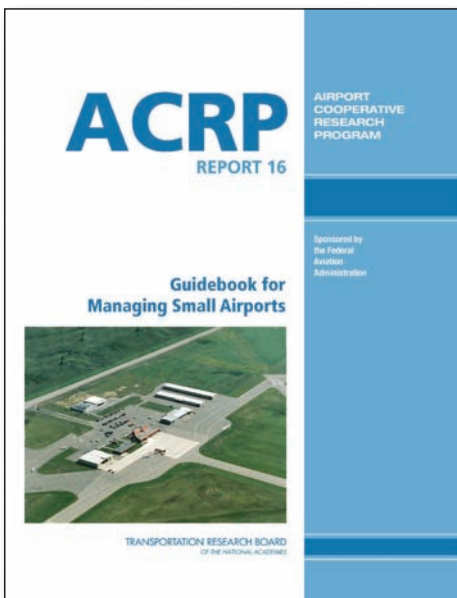
The manager of a smaller airport has numerous responsibilities. As the Chief Executive Officer, s/he is responsible for board governance and personnel management. As the person responsible for operations and finance, the manager must contend with foreign debris on runways and reduced budgets. As the leader of planning and marketing for the airport, the manager must be versed in public speaking, airport layout plans, and customer satisfaction. No matter the responsibility, every manager of our nation's smaller airports needs help.

Sharon Glasgow of the Federal Aviation Administration describes one source of help. "ACRP Report 16: *Guidebook for Managing Small Airports* introduces airport practitioners to the myriad issues facing small airports in the United States. These practitioners—owners, operators, managers, and policy makers of small airports—are responsible for a wide range of activities, often unrelated to the management responsibilities of the airport. This report presents the critically important issues that these practitioners frequently encounter while wearing the airport manager's hat," Glasgow claimed.

Wisconsin. "I work within the Public Works department and our Director has limited knowledge of and experience with airports. The Guidebook has helped me communicate more clearly with her. More specifically, the Guide has helped me help her better understand the FAA grant assurances. With the Guide, I do not have to constantly reinvent the wheel," Markano observed.

"We recently dealt with a height restriction issue here in Waukesha County. Our corporate counsel relied on the Guidebook to help him help us," noted Markano. "Our airport commissioners are successful business people who appreciate a business-like approach to airport management; the Guidebook helps me explain airport matters more clearly to them," said Markano.

Markano's sentiments are echoed by Stephanie Ward, Manager of Aviation Planning Services for Mead Hunt. "I see more and more general aviation airport managers who possess good managerial skills but who lack airport and aviation experience. The Guidebook captures so many parts of what managing an airport is all about and does so in a way that hits the highlights without getting into the nitty gritty," said Stephanie. "Plus, the Guidebook's links to other resources are



John Cunningham, front, of the Iowa Concrete Paving Association and Jeremy Keating of the Davenport Municipal Airport discuss small airport management issues at the 2010 Iowa Aviation Conference in West Des Moines, Iowa.



Photo courtesy of Iowa Department of Transportation Office of Aviation

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valuable to both new and veteran airport managers,” Mead commented.

As a former manager of a small airport, Tim McClung, who currently serves as Planning and Outreach Manager with the Iowa Department of Transportation’s Office of Aviation, finds the Guidebook a real asset. “The Guidebook offers a 1-stop shop for small airport managers and commissioners. It references a broad variety of topics and is directly applicable to every airport here in Iowa. Our staff reviewed the report thoroughly and found the Guidebook to be right on target. The Guide had to pass our DOT litmus test before we distributed it,” McClung asserted.

And distribute the report they did. McClung and his team developed an informational session about the Guide at the state’s annual aviation conference.

AIRFIELD MAINTENANCE

“If there is the slightest chance that an airport will experience snow and ice conditions, a snow and ice control plan should be established. At a minimum, a snow and ice control program should identify equipment, personnel, airfield inspection procedures, snow removal priorities, and a list of key contact personnel involved in coordinating airfield operations.”

ACRP Report 16
Guidebook for Managing Small Airports

http://www.trb.org/Publications/Blurbs/Guidebook_for_Managing_Small_Airports_162145.aspx

The Iowa DOT distributed the Guide to more than 100 airports throughout Iowa, and posted the Guide prominently on the department’s web site.

The Guide’s value is further evidenced in Michigan, where Dick Acker and his colleagues from the Michigan Association of Airport Executives (MAAE) have adopted the Guide as the “textbook” for their Airport Manager’s 101 training. Acker is manager of the Clare Municipal Airport in Clare, Michigan, and a trainer of the 101 class. “There are 235 public-use airports in Michigan. Before budget cuts, the Michigan Bureau of Aeronautics was able to provide annual training for airport managers. Now, it’s up to the MAAE. Because the Guide is right on, we made it the central piece of our airport manager’s training,” Acker said.

There are many aspects of the report that Ward appreciates. “The Guide’s size is just right, it is written to the target audience, and it contains numerous links to additional resources,” she observed.

“Plus, there are things in the report I’ve never considered,” she said. Because the Guidebook captures so much of what managing a small airport is all about, Ward and her Mead Hunt colleagues frequently distribute copies of the Guidebook to their small airport clients.

“In our Iowa DOT aviation office we receive a lot of questions about airport operations, public relations, finance, and planning,” McClung commented. “The Guide was developed with a national perspective, which provides us with different ideas and experiences that we would not otherwise have and which we share with the managers of our smaller airports.”

Because managers of our nation’s smaller airport are responsible for so much, they often find themselves operating in a reactionary mode. “Like many, I am expected to be a jack of all trades. The Guide improves my understanding of airport management issues and functions as a just-in-time resource,” Markano observed.



Photo courtesy of Iowa Department of Transportation Office of Aviation

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