

A Profile in Regional Aviation Systems Planning: Southern California Association of Governments

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About SCAG

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is a six-county region planning organization representing the Los Angeles urbanized area and includes 190 cities and more than 18.1 million residents. In addition to its planning and policy initiatives to encourage a more sustainable Southern California, SCAG serves as the federally recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for this area, responsible for regional transportation planning in general and regional aviation system planning in particular. The SCAG Region supports the world's largest regional aviation system with 44 public use general aviation airports, nine established or emerging air carrier airports (one of which is a joint use military air field), and two commuter airports.

History of RASP

In the 1990's, the focus of the SCAG Aviation Program shifted from regional airport site selection studies to assessing the potential commercial use of recently closed or downsized military air bases in the region, utilizing sophisticated aviation demand modeling technology. SCAG's 1998 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) developed 2030 regional aviation demand forecasts that assumed an unconstrained airport system. For the 2001, 2004 and 2008 RTPs, SCAG constituted an Aviation Task Force to develop and evaluate aviation scenarios and provide policy recommendations to SCAG's Regional Council. Adopted regional aviation system plans (RASP) for these RTPs respected legally-enforceable and physical capacity constraints at urban air carrier airports, and recommended strategies to decentralize service to airports with underutilized capacities. They also reflected new economic realities, changes in air passenger travel behavior and airport security procedures enacted after the events of September 11, 2001.

SCAG is currently developing a new RASP for its 2012 RTP, including an updated Regional Airport Ground Access Element



and updated general aviation demand forecasts. New 2035 regional aviation demand forecasts for both commercial and general aviation airports in the region will be significantly lower than previous forecasts developed since 1998, in response to new economic and demographic realities. It will provide essential input data to the South Coast Air Quality Management District in preparing new Air Quality Management Plans for PM 2.5 and ozone. It will also help maximize the utilization of available airport capacities in the region, and guide region airports in the strategic preparation of airport master plans, ground access plans, and capital improvement plans.

Aviation Guiding Principles Adopted for 2008 RTP

1. Provide for regional capture of economic development opportunities and job growth created by the prospect of significant regional air traffic growth through 2035.
2. Distribute maximum opportunity to Southern California airports where population and job growth are expected to be strong and where local communities desire air traffic for economic development.
3. Reflect environmental, environmental justice and local quality of life constraints at existing airports that operate in built-out urban environments.



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4. Reflect that each county should have both the obligation and the opportunity to meet its own air traffic needs where feasible.
5. Reflect that the region as a whole has an obligation to help pay the costs of airport environmental mitigation and ground access improvement in counties that serve a disproportionate share of regional air travel demand at their airports.

Aviation Action Steps Adopted for 2008 RTP

1. Support capacity enhancements at existing and potential airports to handle anticipated increases in passengers and cargo volume where it is desired.
2. Mitigate the effects of expanding airports and maximize air passenger and air cargo utilization of outlying airports in less-populated areas so that community impacts are minimized.
3. Support the continued responsibility of SCAG for developing regional aviation and ground access plans for the region.
4. Support the close cooperation between SCAG and other aviation organizations to facilitate the implementation of adopted regional aviation plans prepared by SCAG.
5. Support legislative, marketing and ground access initiatives that promote the decentralization of aviation demand to under-utilized suburban airports where it is desired.
6. Support more flexible use of airport revenues for off-airport ground access projects.
7. Support giving priority to key airport ground access projects in the programming of transportation projects in the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP).
8. Support the development of a regional network of new flyaways that connect to multiple airports via HOV, light rail and commuter rail facilities, to help decentralize aviation demand to under-utilized suburban airports where it is desired.
9. Support efforts to redesign the regional airspace system that may be needed to reduce significant conflicts and delays associated with future air traffic in SCAG's adopted 2035 regional aviation forecast.

10. Support a more active role by the federal government in developing substantial incentives for airlines to upgrade their aircraft fleet to cleaner and quieter aircraft.

Regional Benefits of RASP

For its 2004 RTP, SCAG estimated that the region's commercial airports contributed \$105 Billion and 761,000 jobs to the regional economy, based on 2003 activity data (78.9 million passengers served and 2.7 million tons of air cargo handled). The region's commercial airports handled 81.5 million air passengers in 2010.

Integration into Long Range Transportation Planning

RASPs prepared by SCAG for its 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2008 RTPs (i.e. long-range transportation plans, or LRTPs) were fully integrated into the RTP document, with overall aviation demand forecasts and policies in the RTP main document, and technical documentation on the forecast methodology and the Airport Ground Access Element in the RTP technical appendices.

Partners/Stakeholders

Key partners in the SCAG RASP process includes Los Angeles World Airports, which operates Los Angeles International (LAX) and Palmdale Airports, as well as Long Beach (LGB), John Wayne (SNA), Bob Hope (BUR), and Palm Springs (PSP) air carrier airports. Representative from these airports, as well as emerging commercial airports including San Bernardino International, March Inland Port and Southern California Logistics airports, participate in the SCAG Aviation Technical Advisory Committee. A number of general aviation airports in the region also regularly participate in ATAC, as well as the FAA and various aviation groups including the NBAA, the AOPA and the Southern California Airspace Users Working Group. In addition, SCAG also provides aviation forecast data to the South Coast Air Quality Management District.



About the Southern California Association of Governments

Over the past 40 years, the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) has evolved to represent the six counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura and Imperial, 191 cities and more than 18 million residents over 38,000 square miles and is the nation's largest metropolitan planning organization. In addition to the variety of planning and policy initiatives undertaken by SCAG, it is mandated by federal and state law to research and plan for transportation, growth management, hazardous waste management, and air quality. For additional information, please visit www.scag.gov.



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About the National Association of Regional Councils

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) serves as the national voice for regionalism by advocating for regional cooperation as the most effective way to address a variety of community planning and development opportunities and issues. NARC's member organizations are composed of multiple local governments that work together to serve American communities – large and small, urban and rural. For additional information, please visit www.NARC.org.

The National Association of Regional Councils

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