



Aviation Technical Subcommittee Highlights of the March 27, 2025, Meeting

Meeting Participants:

- Kevin Clarke, Maryland Aviation Administration, (MAA)
- Shawn Ames, Maryland Aviation Administration, (MAA)
- Azeem Khan, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, (MWAA)
- Keith Meurlin, Washington Airports Task Force, (WATF)
- Victor Henry, Baltimore Metropolitan Council, (BMC)

TPB Staff:

- Timothy Canan
- Suraj Vujjini
- Ian Newman
- Renee Ritchey
- Olga Perez
- Zhuo Yang
- Charlene Howard

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND APPROVAL OF HIGHLIGHTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (JANUARY 23, 2025)

Mr. Kevin Clarke called the meeting to order at 10:32 A.M. The meeting was conducted virtually by Microsoft Teams teleconference. The highlights of the previous meeting, held January 23, 2025, were approved by the Subcommittee, as written.

2. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Timothy Canan formally introduced Mr. Ian Newman, Manager of Travel Monitoring and Planning Assistance, and Ms. Renee Ritchey, GIS Analyst. While not directly part of the CASP program, both are key members of the Planning Data and Research team and provide valuable support to CASP efforts as needed. Mr. Canan acknowledged their contributions and welcomed them to the Subcommittee meeting.

3. DISCUSSION ON IN-PERSON MEETING OPTIONS

Mr. Canan reminded the Subcommittee that the decision to meet in person at COG was made during the last meeting, as part of an effort to reintroduce face-to-face interaction. He acknowledged the travel involved and expressed openness to future meetings being hosted by member agencies, such as BWI or MWAA, as was done prior to the pandemic.

Mr. Clarke asked if there were any objections to holding the May 22 meeting at COG offices; hearing none, the group agreed to proceed as planned. Mr. Canan confirmed the in-person meeting will move forward barring unforeseen issues.

4. AIR CARGO ELEMENT UPDATE

Ms. Olga Perez presented the final Air Cargo Element Update report, thanking members for their detailed feedback. She grouped the comments into formatting improvements and content corrections. Key revisions included correcting data in the executive summary, updating narrative details related to Dulles cargo facilities, and improving map readability with clearer labeling and enhanced visual contrast.

Ms. Perez confirmed the report has been approved by the communications team and will be published on the website before submission to the FAA to formally close out the CASP 36 which includes the 2022 Air Cargo Element Update. Mr. Clarke commended the improved graphics and acknowledged the quality of the revisions.

5. REGIONAL AIR PASSENGER SURVEY GEOGRAPHIC FINDINGS

Mr. Suraj Vujjini provided the Subcommittee with a comprehensive update on two key projects under the 2023 Regional Air Passenger Survey effort: the Geographic Findings Report and the Ground Access Forecast Update. He began by announcing that the draft of the Geographic Findings Report was distributed to Subcommittee members on March 26 for review. While the document totals 126 pages, Mr. Vujjini clarified that the core content concludes on page 45, with the remaining pages consisting of appendix materials. He encouraged members to focus their review on the main analytical sections and to submit comments by April 11. Feedback is welcome in any format—annotated PDFs, emails with page references, or spreadsheets—based on the reviewers' preference.

He then provided a status update on the Ground Access Forecast Update, which is in progress. Mr. Vujjini noted that the team is currently reviewing the 2019 forecast and converting legacy SAS scripts into Python to enhance efficiency and duplicability. Once this technical work is complete, the team will proceed with updating data tables using the latest available information. A working draft of the revised forecast report will be shared with the Subcommittee for review following a similar process as the Geographic Findings Report, allowing members to provide comments prior to final publication.

Finally, Mr. Vujjini expressed his appreciation to the airport stakeholders for their continued support and collaboration throughout the survey process. He also extended thanks to his colleagues—Tim Canan, Ken Joh, Olga Perez, and Zhuo Yang—for their assistance in preparing the reports and supporting the data analysis. No questions or concerns were raised following the presentation, and Mr. Kevin Clarke commended the team on their efforts, noting the substantial workload and importance of the work underway.

6. 2025 WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE REGIONAL AIR PASSENGER SURVEY

Mr. Timothy Canan highlighted the 2023 Regional Air Passenger Survey and the finalization of a key product, the Geographic Findings Report. He acknowledged the delay in releasing the report, citing the implementation of new data collection methods and the internal effort to convert code from legacy SAS scripts to Python. These updates are part of a broader initiative to make data processing more efficient and ensure the program remains adaptable to current technologies.

Mr. Canan emphasized that while the process was longer, many lessons were learned that will improve the execution of future surveys, including the 2025 iteration.

Mr. Canan then verified continued interest and support for conducting the 2025 survey, stressing the importance of reaffirming commitment from partner agencies. The conversation that followed made clear that the survey's products remain highly valuable. Mr. Kevin Clarke noted the importance of using credible, third-party data from COG in public and political communications, especially when advocating for airport needs. Mr. Azeem Khan from MWAA added that management is increasingly interested in understanding roadway congestion and access to airports, and the survey data plays a key role in those discussions. Mr. Keith Meurlin further echoed the value of the survey, particularly in aviation policy contexts, where the independence of the data enhances its credibility and influence.

Finally, Mr. Canan affirmed that staff would proceed with initiating preparations for the 2025 survey. This includes issuing formal letters to MAA and MWAA within the next month to request funding commitments. He explained that these commitments are essential to establish the project formally within COG's system before contracting with a consultant or beginning methodological updates. He also noted the importance of balancing survey innovation with consistency to maintain longitudinal comparability. The Subcommittee reached a consensus about moving forward with the survey, with no objections raised.

7. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Mr. Kevin Clarke opened the roundtable discussion and informed the Subcommittee that Mr. Ricky Smith, Executive Director, will be departing from his position to assume the role of Airport Director at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. Mr. Clarke noted that Atlanta is the busiest airport in the world and described this as a significant professional opportunity for Mr. Smith. He expressed that while Mr. Smith will be greatly missed, the team is proud of his accomplishments.

Mr. Clarke stated that the timeline and process for selecting a replacement have not yet been announced. The next steps are expected to be determined by the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Governor of Maryland. Mr. Smith's last day is anticipated to be at the end of the month, and he will begin his new role in Atlanta shortly thereafter. Mr. Clarke noted that Mr. Smith has served as Executive Director since 2015 and, with previous service, has spent nearly 30 years with the organization.

Mr. Shawn Ames confirmed this timeline and acknowledged Mr. Smith's long-standing leadership. Mr. Clarke added that Mr. Smith has established a strong executive team, and no major changes to agency culture or direction are expected in the short term.

Mr. Azeem Khan reported that the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) has also experienced a recent leadership change. Mr. Tom Beatty has been appointed Chief Executive Officer. Mr. Khan stated that it is still early to determine what impact, if any.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Khan inquired about the upcoming 2025 survey and whether there would be any new or updated questions, particularly those related to addressing landside congestion at the airports. He explained that MWAA is exploring potential strategies such as congestion pricing or curbside drop-off fees and would find it valuable to include related questions in the next survey cycle.

In response, Mr. Timothy Canan stated that the questionnaire is not expected to change significantly, but COG staff will share the draft survey instrument with members and will welcome suggestions for revisions or additions. He explained that while many survey questions are identical across all three airports, some airport-specific questions are also included. Mr. Canan encouraged members to review the existing instrument and propose any refinements that would support local airport planning needs.

Ms. Olga Perez added that the full survey instruments are available as appendices to the General Findings and Geographic Findings reports recently distributed to the Subcommittee. Mr. Khan acknowledged this and noted he had been out on sick leave but would review the documents.

Mr. Canan concluded by summarizing the next steps: a Doodle poll will be circulated to schedule the next meeting; members are asked to submit comments on the Geographic Findings Report by April 11; and staff will prepare funding commitment letters and a new grant application for the upcoming 2025 survey.

9. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned. The next Subcommittee meeting is scheduled for May 22, 2025. It will be held as a hybrid meeting.