

**HISTORY
AND
ISSUES INFLUENCING
THE DEVELOPMENT OF
MIDAMERICA ST. LOUIS AIRPORT
AND
THE NEED FOR AN UPDATED
JOINT USE AGREEMENT
WITH
SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE,
ILLINOIS**

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**History and Issues Influencing the Development
of MidAmerica St. Louis Airport
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Overview

Scott Air Force Base and MidAmerica St. Louis Airport operate parallel 8,000 and 10,000 foot runways linked by a 7,000 foot taxiway in St. Clair County Illinois. Widely considered to be the most unique Joint Use Airport in the U.S., Scott AFB/MidAmerica operates under a 50-year Joint Use Agreement (JUA), first implemented in 1991, which contains several controlling conditions and terms that have largely become obsolete and/or irrelevant. As a result, Scott's military managers and MidAmerica's civilian managers are forced to conduct redundant and duplicative operations, in areas such as firefighting and emergency services, that undermine both facilities' cost-effectiveness.

At a time when the Air Force has taken the lead in pursuing and implementing innovative and effective public-public and public-private partnerships (P4's) authorized by Section 331, the opportunity to achieve greater efficiencies as well as higher levels of needed services at Scott AFB/MidAmerica Airport through a modernized and updated JUA should be aggressively pursued.

History of Lambert-St. Louis Field and the "Metro-East" Option

Created in 1925 from 160 acres of farmland, "Lambert-St. Louis Flying Field" experienced steady growth over the next 40 years. But by the time the first passenger jet aircraft landed in 1959, both civic and aviation officials in the greater St. Louis region had long since concluded that Lambert would likely not be able to accommodate future air traffic growth in what was then the tenth-largest metropolitan area in the U.S.

A proposal to build a new primary St. Louis airport across the Mississippi River in Illinois had originally been advanced immediately following World War II by City of St. Louis officials and the Governor of Illinois. By the late 1960's, as the number of annual passengers at Lambert continued to increase – from 515,000 in 1950 to nearly 5.8 million in 1972 – the "Metro-East Option" had emerged as a sensible, safe and cost-effective alternative to Missouri's controversial and unpopular proposal to expand Lambert to the north.

Faced with the prediction of continued passenger growth and widespread skepticism that a feasible Lambert expansion plan could ever be implemented, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) embraced the Metro-East Option, and in September 1976, USDOT Secretary William Coleman approved the purchase of land for a new primary regional airport at Columbia-Waterloo in Monroe County, Illinois – only nine miles south of the Eads

Bridge. In announcing the decision, Coleman stated that he “cannot find that Lambert could be improved, modernized and developed sufficiently to meet the need” of the greater St. Louis area into the 21st Century.

But this victory for common sense and rational planning proved to be short-lived. Faced with a concerted lobbying campaign from Missouri political interests, just six months later Coleman’s successor reversed DOT’s decision and cut funding for the new Illinois airport. With this decision from Washington, efforts intensified to find an acceptable expansion plan for Lambert Field. That effort ultimately resulted in the \$1.7 billion “W-1W” alternative that included a new runway to the west of the existing airport. However, final approval of the W-1W plan did not come until 1998 – and the new 9,000-ft. runway 11-29 did not open until 2006.

Emergence of the “Passenger Reliever” Airport Concept

Meanwhile, in the aftermath of the 1977 USDOT decision to abandon the Columbia-Waterloo airport, there was continued skepticism that a Lambert expansion plan adequate to meet future traffic projections could ever be implemented. This widespread belief, and the emerging demographics of a region in which over 25 percent of the population reside on the Illinois side of the Mississippi, led Illinois state and local officials to pursue the concept of locating a “passenger reliever” airport in St. Clair County. Following passage of the Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982 and subsequent language in the FY 1988 Appropriations Bill, the FAA was directed to evaluate the feasibility of Joint Use at Scott AFB, located approximately 20 miles ESE of the St. Louis Gateway Arch. In 1992, a Record of Decision was published by FAA, in coordination with DOD, that supported the proposal to build the \$315 Million Scott AFB Joint Use Project.

Joint Use Agreement

In September 1991 – with approval of Lambert’s W-1W expansion plan still seven years away – the U.S. Air Force and St. Clair County entered into a Joint Use Agreement, in which the County agreed to acquire approximately 3,800 acres immediately adjacent to Scott AFB to construct a civil airport with an 8,000-ft. runway, 7000-ft. Class V aircraft weight-bearing connecting taxiway, air traffic control tower, and other improvements. St. Clair County subsequently acquired 4,175 acres of land between 1992 and 1995. In addition to the area occupied by MidAmerica Airport, this sizeable public “land bank” provides Scott AFB with

considerable insulation from adverse development and gives DOD access to significant secure areas on which to locate new missions such as Defense Information Systems Agency and National Geospatial Intelligence Agency.

In 1993, the parties agreed to Amendment #1, which, among other things, committed St. Clair County to replacing all base facilities and land displaced by airport development -- Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR), housing, support and mission – without diminishing functional capability. These included the 1,000+-unit Cardinal Creek Village housing development, shopette, gas station and two schools. Of the \$90 million budgeted for Cardinal Creek Village replacement alone, the Air Force provided \$60 million while the State of Illinois and St. Clair County provided \$30 million.

BRAC and Relocation of the 126th Air National Guard Wing

Negotiation and early implementation of the Joint Use Agreement immediately preceded the 1993 and 1995 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) rounds, which would result in a substantial addition to Scott AFB's missions and fleet. For many years, City of Chicago officials had expressed the desire to acquire the Illinois National Guard's 359-acre Air Reserve Station located at O'Hare International Airport in order to accommodate expansion plans. The 1995 BRAC process provided just that opportunity. As a result, the Air Force was directed to relocate the 126th Air Refueling Wing (ANG) to Scott AFB, with \$90 Million in funding provided by the State of Illinois and City of Chicago.

The BRAC agreement included a binding pre-condition for St. Clair County to extend the MidAmerica Airport runway, from 8,000 to 10,000 feet, the length originally envisioned. This would allow “a fully loaded KC-135 Aircraft, from the 126th Air Refueling Wing, to utilize the MidAmerica Airport primary runway for Emergency War Order tasked missions.” DOD supplied \$7Million in capital support for that effort.

Fees and “Substantial Use”

The JUA – which, it is essential to recognize, was negotiated prior to the decision to relocate the 126th ARW and its KC-135's - and at a time when it was still anticipated that MidAmerica would become an active commercial “passenger reliever” airport – states that since “Air Force use of the civil airport area is not expected to be substantial. . .military or other government-owned aircraft. . . landing on either runway are not subject to County fees and

charges,” and that “no annual landing fee payment or other charges will be collected from either party so long as either parties' operations do not constitute substantial use.”

The agreement states that “substantial use will be considered to exist only if civil operations on the existing runway or military operations on the new runway are greater than one hundred (100) during a 24-hour period. An operation is defined as a landing or a take-off. It is not intended that such use should exceed a three (3) day or 72 hour period or that a somewhat lesser number of operations should be accommodated on a routine or continuous basis without charge.”

The agreement also provides for a separate memorandum of understanding to be negotiated in the event that either runway will be unavailable for use for an extended period. This provision has been invoked on several occasions, most recently in 2011 and 2014, when the Scott AFB runway was out of service due to scheduled maintenance and/or construction. On those occasions, the Air Force agreed to pay MidAmerica \$40,000 per month for the right to use MidAmerica’s runway for all military flight operations at Scott AFB. (The 2014 monthly fee was reduced by \$20,000 in exchange for SAFB’s providing all FAA-required firefighting services, per FAA Certification Alert 12-05).

The definition of “substantial use” contained in the JUA is similar to a description of the activity of an Air Force fighter wing (48-72 Primary Authorized Aircraft) conducting sorties over a three-day period. It must be recognized that this definition was included in the JUA prior to the BRAC decision to relocate the 126th ARW and its KC-135’s from Chicago-O’Hare to MidAmerica. It is quite simply an inappropriate measure of activity for a KC-135 Stratotanker wing.

Subsequent to execution of the 1991-93 JUA, the Air National Guard published Pamphlet 32-1001 – 08 April 2003 (Certified Current 2 August 2013), “Airport Joint Use Agreements for Military Use of Civilian Airfields.” The pamphlet states that civilian airport facilities developed with U.S. Government funds must always be available without charge for use by Government aircraft, “except that if the use is substantial, the Government may be charged a reasonable share, proportionate to the use, of the cost of operating and maintaining the facility used.” It continues to state that Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Grant Assurance 27 defines substantial use as any one of the following:

- Five (5) or more Government aircraft regularly based at the airport or on land adjacent thereto;
- The total number of movements (counting each landing as a movement) of Government aircraft is 300 or more in a month; or
- The gross accumulative weight of Government aircraft using the airport (the total movement of Government aircraft multiplied by gross weights of such aircraft) is in excess of five million pounds in a month.

MidAmerica Runway Use

According to data provided by the Air Traffic Control Tower manned by Scott AFB personnel (see attached), military use of the MidAmerica runway between 2001 and 2014 has ranged from 358 to 1,377 operations per month (499/mo. in 2014).

In addition, since the Maximum Landed Weight of a fully loaded KC-135R is 220,000 pounds, the “five million pounds in a month” trigger for substantial use would be reached with only 23 KC-135 landings. Estimates of current KC-135 use of the MidAmerica runway indicate approximately 26.8 million pounds per month of landed weight by the KC-135 alone.

Current Joint Operations

Today, Scott AFB and MidAmerica St. Louis Airport function as one facility in daily airport operations and military and civilian operations supplement each other in a mutually beneficial partnership. The arrangements for deicing and snow removal operations provide a positive illustration of this partnership.

In 2004, Scott AFB’s deicing pits were decertified. However, MidAmerica operates over 25 acres of certified deicing ramp space that is available at all times for use by Scott’s military aircraft. MidAmerica also maintains a 63-foot, boom-capable deicing truck. This equipment, purchased at additional expense above FAA requirements, has allowed Scott AFB to lift its previous restriction on winter operations for C-17 and C-5 aircraft.

Due to military risk assessment, during inclement weather operating conditions, Scott AFB military aircraft have been directed to use MidAmerica’s 10,000 foot runway exclusively and, in fact, the 8,000 foot military runway remains closed until accumulated snow melts naturally. Scott AFB snow removal equipment and crews clear the 10,000-foot MidAmerica

runway as well as minimum required civilian flying and taxiing surfaces, thus ensuring military aircraft have access to the deicing facilities.

A jointly coordinated local flying regulation also considers the civilian 10,000 foot runway a lower risk factor for multiple touch-and-go training events and defines the primary visual and training pattern to the civilian runway. Additionally, as partners in maintaining and operating the airport, MidAmerica civilian and Scott AFB military personnel support a joint wildlife program, joint bird aircraft strike hazard (BASH) program, and joint FAA/DOD airport reporting program, as well as a number of minor programs for safe airport operations.

STL Passenger Projections Unrealized as Traffic Declines Dramatically

While they were widely accepted as realistic at the time, the optimistic assumptions that led both to Lambert's massive \$1.7 billion runway W-1W project and the new passenger reliever facility in St. Clair County were not borne out by subsequent events and developments in the commercial aviation industry. The bankruptcy of Trans World Airlines, its ensuing purchase by American Airlines, the overall decline in passenger aviation following the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and American's ultimate decision to eliminate its St. Louis hub resulted in a dramatic 56 percent reduction in Lambert's passenger traffic – from a high of 30.6 million in 2000 to only 13.4 million in 2004. While the supposedly realistic mid-80's projections had forecast 20 million annual enplanements at Lambert by the year 2010, the actual number enplaned that year (6.2 million) proved to be less than one-third the projected volume. (See attached.)

Conclusion

Today, as Scott AFB/MidAmerica continue to operate as the most unique Joint Use Airport in the nation, the legacy Joint Use Agreement simply does not address current realities. The special supplemental letters of agreement in 2011 and 2014, referenced above, provide a compelling illustration. Under those supplemental agreements, the Air Force paid over \$600,000 for "substantial use" of MidAmerica. It is reasonable to anticipate that the terms of a new Joint Use Agreement could provide for practically unlimited military use of MidAmerica's 10,000 foot runway – without payment of fees – in exchange for shared use of certain routine Scott AFB services, to be determined.

Elimination of the requirement of fees for use of MidAmerica's runway – and new agreements on shared services pursuant to Section 331 – would, in effect, sidestep what has become a needless distraction over the definition of “substantial use” and its applicability to the unique Scott AFB/MidAmerica situation.

In an April 2013 memorandum entitled “Public-Private Partnerships Supporting the DoD Mission,” Admiral James A. Winnefeld, Jr., Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and then-Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter wrote “[t]he Department . . . encourages the use of PPPs by DoD Components to facilitate innovation and creative thinking. PPPs can be a valuable method of enhancing the Department's capacity by leveraging the expertise and resources of [non-Federal entities]. . . The heads of DoD Components are encouraged to be forward thinking in order to resolve concerns and eliminate unnecessary impediments to cooperation.”

The time for cooperative and constructive action is now.

Appendix A
MidAmerica St. Louis Airport
Flight Data per Tower Reports Used for FAA Reporting
MidAmerica Runway

I. 2001-2009

	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2009	
Military	16,524	84.5%	18,867	86.8%	13,770	77.8%	12,288	73.2%	10,983	72.7%	8,932	67.1%	5,434	57.2%
General Aviation	2,471	12.6%	2,821	13.0%	3,182	18.0%	4,125	24.6%	3,798	25.2%	3,977	29.9%	3,861	40.6%
Air Carrier	557	2.8%	37	0.2%	743	4.2%	374	2.2%	319	2.1%	397	3.0%	208	2.2%
Other	4	0.0%	0	0.0%	9	0.1%	3	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Total	19,556		21,725		17,704		16,790		15,100		13,306		9,503	

**Military Monthly
Average
2001-2009¹**

2001-2009¹	1377.0	1572.3	1147.5	1024.0	915.3	744.3	452.8
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II. 2012-2014²

	2012		2013		2014	
Military	4,292	52.7%	4,339	52.8%	5,993	69.2%
Civilian	3,857	47.3%	3,884	47.2%	2,671	30.8%
Total	8,149		8,223		8,664	

**Military Monthly
Average
2012-2014**

2012-2014	357.7	361.6	499.4
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¹ 2007, 2008, 2010 and 2011 data not available

² 2012-2014 Data following change in accounting methodology and apparent AMC direction limiting MidAmerica runway use

Appendix B

Chronology of Decisions and Events Affecting Construction of MidAmerica St. Louis Airport and Expansion of Lambert St. Louis International Airport

1976	September	Ford Administration Transportation Secretary William Coleman approves new primary St. Louis regional airport in Monroe County, Illinois.
1977	March	Carter Administration Transportation Secretary Brock Adams reverses Coleman decision and cuts funding for new Illinois airport.
1985		<i>Lambert St. Louis AP passenger enplanements hit 9.95 million. St. Louis projects passenger growth will hit 20 million by 2010.</i>
1988		Congress directs FAA to evaluate feasibility of joint use at Scott AFB.
1991	September	U.S. Air Force and St. Clair County enter into Joint Use Agreement (JUA) to acquire land and build a new 8,000-ft. runway and taxiway connected to Scott AFB.
1992		DOD and FAA publish a record of decision supporting \$315 million Scott AFB Joint Use Project.
1993	July	Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommends closing the O'Hare Air Reserve Station and relocating the assigned Air Reserve Component (ARC) units to a location acceptable to the Secretary of the Air Force - provided the City of Chicago finances the full cost of replacing facilities.
1993	December	U.S. Air Force and St. Clair County agree to JUA Amendment #1, to replace all base facilities displaced by the new airport and runway.
1995	July	Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) recommends relocating the 126th Air Refueling Wing (ANG) to Scott AFB – including a binding pre-condition for St. Clair County to extend the MidAmerica runway to 10,000 feet.
1996	October	U.S. Government and City of Chicago complete agreement to purchase O'Hare Air Reserve Station, including extension of MidAmerica runway to 10,000 ft.
1997	November	MidAmerica Airport begins operation of 10,000-ft. runway.
1998		\$1.7 billion "W-1W" Lambert St. Louis AP runway expansion plan is approved.
1999	July	126 th ARW completes transfer of all assets from O'Hare ARS to Scott AFB.
2000		<i>Lambert AP traffic reaches high of 30.6 million passengers (enplanements and deplanements)</i>
2004		<i>Lambert AP traffic drops by 56%, to 13.4 million passengers (enplanements and deplanements)</i>
2006		New 9,000-ft. runway 11-29 opens at Lambert St. Louis AP.
2010		<i>Lambert AP records 6.2 million enplanements – only 31% of 1985 projections.</i>

