

# Florida Airports Council AIRMAIL '23

FAC Members News, Trends & Developments Within the World of Aviation

## FAC Board and Members Focus on State Legislative Priorities



The State Affairs Committee hosted the Board of Directors and members at the 2024 State Legislative Summit in the Capitol, November 7-8, 2023.



Twenty-six professionals from eighteen airports and eighteen corporate members met with key members of House and Senate, Transportation, Tourism, Commerce, Appropriations Committee Members and many others. Delegates divided into groups and met with more than 32 legislators to advocate for state airport/aviation initiatives.



We were greeted in the morning by SelectFlorida's Joseph Bell, CGBP, Director, International Trade and Development, providing an overview of the services available to airports and industry for economic development. The organization provides valuable resources and opportunities for business and industry seeking information about "Why Florida".

*[Click Here for the Aviation & Aerospace industry sector brief.](#)*



Senator Ed Hooper (R-21), also stopped in to provide congratulations and encouragement regarding pursuit of FAC's legislative priorities.

Sen. Hooper is Chair of the Appropriations Committee on Transportation, Tourism & Economic Development, and member of the Commerce & Tourism and Transportation Committees.

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# THANK YOU to our State Summit Sponsors



- Crawford, Murphy, & Tilly, Inc.
- Greater Orlando Aviation Authority
- Hanson Professional Services, Inc.

- Tallahassee International Airport
- Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport
- Lee County Port Authority

- Garver
- AVCON, INC.
- Sheltair Aviation



## Kim Holland, FDOT Assistant Secretary of Strategic Development Briefs FAC Board of Directors

The Board of Directors met Monday November 6th while in Tallahassee to discuss the business of the Council, the Education Foundation and to greet Kim Holland and the Aviation Office leadership.

Kim noted her departments support for the Florida's airports and aviation industry and for a robust Aviation Work Program and provided detail regarding the commitment of funds for **FY24-FY28**. Bart Vernace, FAA Orlando ADO Manager reminded the Board regarding important FAA dates and initiatives.

## FDOT Announces Advanced Air Mobility Advisory Committee (AAMAC)



David Roberts, Interim State Aviation Manager has announced the formation of the Advanced Air Mobility Advisory Committee (AAMAC).

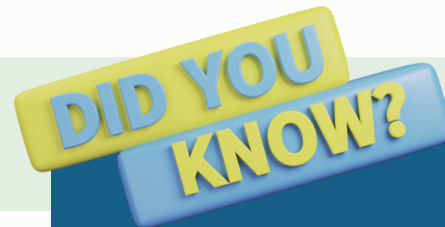
The intent of the Committee is to re-engage critical industry partners to ensure the continued success and safety of AAM integration into the state's transportation system.

The AAMAC is a successive effort to further the initial work of the FDOT's AAM Working Group which led to the development of the FDOT's September 2023 Implementation and Public Outreach Plan. The purpose of the AAMAC will be to provide strategic input and guidance to FDOT for the deployment of electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircrafts across Florida.

Regular in-person meetings with the AAMAC will be held at locations across Florida throughout the year. **The first meeting will take place Thursday, November 30, 2023, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m., at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport.**

In addition to re-engaging key stakeholders, the first meeting will provide an overview of the September 2023 Implementation & Public Outreach Plan along with the associated legislative priorities. This first meeting will also focus on how FDOT intends to update the current 2020 Airport, Airspace, and Land Use Guidebook to incorporate AAM and other critical vertiport elements.

*FAC is a member of the AAMAC, so stay tuned for future updates.*



### FLORIDA RANKS:

- #1 in High Tech Employment in the Southeast
- #3 Best State for Business
- #4 Best Undergrad Aerospace Engineering Program (ERAU)

### FLORIDA'S AVIATION AND AEROSPACE CLUSTER:

- 640+ Aerospace Establishments
- 2000+ Aviation Establishments
- 130+ Public Use Airports  
Including 19 Commercial Service Airports
- 3 Spaceports
- 20+ Major Military Installations

## ACI-NA WASHINGTON UPDATES

### SENATE PANEL EXAMINES AIRCRAFT NEAR MISSES:

The Senate Aviation Subcommittee heard from a panel of aviation safety experts today about close calls in air travel and efforts to improve the U.S. aviation system's safety culture, processes, and technologies.

**You can view the hearing and find the witness testimony [HERE](#).**

This hearing comes as the Senate Panel remains stalled for months in its efforts to move a five-year bill reauthorizing the FAA after the House passed its version earlier this year.

Congress faces a year-end deadline to pass a new FAA Bill.

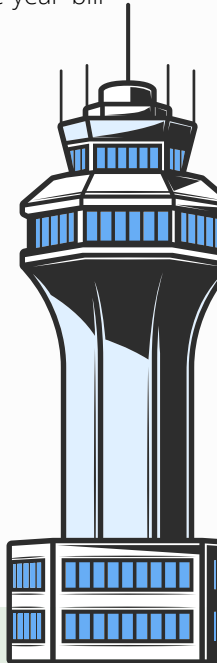
The FAA reported 1,756 total runway incursions in fiscal year 2023 for 54.4 million takeoffs and landings, 23 of which were categorized as serious incursions.

**Two main issues emerged as leading to these incursions** – understaffed and overworked air traffic controllers and insufficient detection technology at airports and onboard aircraft.

Chair Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) said 99 percent of ATC towers are understaffed with controllers working an average of 60 hours per week. NATCA President Rich Santa warned that controller staffing has remained relatively flat over the last year despite increased attention from the FAA and Congress to boost hiring.



NTSB Chair Jennifer Homendy reported that just 43 U.S. airports have airport surface surveillance technology installed – 35 airports have Airport Surface Detection Equipment—Model X (ASDE-X) and 8 airports have Airport Surface Surveillance Capability (ASSC). She noted that these systems warn ATC towers but not pilots, and she called for more technology for both runway and cockpit alerting, as well as 25-hour cockpit voice recorders.



## Industry Leaders Outline Path to Meeting Future Sustainable Aviation Fuel Needs at Airports

The American Association of Airport Executives' (AAAE) Airport Consortium on Transformation (ACT) Program, Airport Consortium on Transformation (ACT) comprised of innovative airport leaders and aviation industry experts, has released its latest research examining the opportunities and challenges U.S. airports face to achieve widespread adoption of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) as an approach to reduce carbon emissions.

Supported by industry partners, this work seeks to increase familiarity with SAF and highlight policies and standards that airports, industry, and governments can enact to improve the utilization and distribution of SAF.

The working group's findings conclude that compared to expansion of other carbon-reduction programs, such as electric and hydrogen-powered vehicles or aircraft, few changes are needed to on-airport infrastructure to distribute SAF. Additionally, there is an opportunity in the future for airports to lead the industry and support development of off-airport infrastructure for the blending and transportation facilities needed to deliver SAF for use at airports.

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*"SFO leads the world in SAF deliveries, and our journey to reach this point demonstrated that an industry coalition, combined with the support of public policymakers, can deliver a powerful solution to reduce the climate impacts of air travel. This ACT publication, co-created with Arup, seeks to provide the insight airport leaders need to champion their own SAF strategies. We have learned firsthand how an airport can create the right environment to unlock SAF adoption, and we are excited for this transformation take off at airports across the nation."*

ERIN COOKE, SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY DIRECTOR, SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

*"Sustainable aviation fuel will be the backbone for decarbonizing the aviation sector. As an alternative fuel source that can be readily incorporated into existing systems, SAF is the most practical path to carbon savings for the aviation industry in the short term. Arup is pleased to support AAAE in ensuring that airports are ready to play a constructive role in the transition to low- (and eventually zero-) carbon flight."*

RAPHAEL SPERRY, ASSOCIATE PRINCIPAL, ARUP

This research evaluates the current SAF supply chain; infrastructure needs; government and industry incentives, mandates, and credits. Included in the research are initiatives U.S. airports are piloting to advance the use of sustainable aviation fuels and resources airport executives can use to further momentum and transition to SAF.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE LATEST RESEARCH](#)



# AROUND THE STATE

## SHELTAIR PARTNERS WITH TAMPA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TO HOST VOLOCOPTER

SOURCE: SHELTAIR AVIATION PRESS RELEASE

On November 2nd, in collaboration with Tampa International Airport and Volocopter, Sheltair generously offered its convenient location and hangar space at its award-winning Tampa, Florida, (TPA) FBO location to host a historic multilayered flight test campaign marking a pivotal moment in the evolution of Urban Air Mobility (UAM).

Setting the stage for a dynamic future of electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft in the United States, this event positions Tampa at the forefront of UAM innovation, as one of the first cities to commence operations and visualize the remarkable possibilities that lie ahead.

Lisa Holland, President of Sheltair, proudly expresses, "Sheltair is honored to have been chosen to host this event, as we are committed to supporting and wholeheartedly embracing the future of Urban Air Mobility (UAM)."

Joe Lopano, CEO of Tampa International Airport, further underscores the commitment to innovation, stating, "Tampa International Airport has always embraced forward-thinking planning and has already identified a potential site for urban air mobility within our Master Plan. This technology holds the potential to revolutionize the aviation and transportation industry, and we are thrilled to partner with Volocopter as we usher in and visualize the remarkable possibilities that lie ahead."

The centerpiece of this historic event was the crewed Volocopter 2X, representing the first-ever eVTOL flight test within the confines of an operational and large international airport in the United States. Notably, it was also the first eVTOL test in the state of Florida, solidifying the region's position as a focal point for UAM development and innovation.

The multilayered flight test campaign encompassed critical phases, including aircraft downwash and outwash testing in coordination with the U.S. Federal Aviation Authority (FAA), as well as performance testing in the unique environmental conditions of Tampa, Florida.

Volocopter's commitment to quiet, safe, and sustainable operations through certified eVTOLs enhances transportation efficiency and reduces congestion, while ushering in the era of aviation decarbonization. In line with this vision, Volocopter recently announced a strategic partnership with the Bristow Group to commence eVTOL operations in the near future, with Florida identified as a key region for deployment. Since 2018, Volocopter has conducted visible flight tests in several cities, including Las Vegas, Oshkosh, Dallas-Fort Worth, and now Tampa.

Sheltair Aviation's role in hosting the Volocopter flight test campaign exemplifies its unwavering commitment to spearheading economic growth and supporting the future of aviation in the United States.





AROUND

# THE STATE



## BOCA RATON MAYORS BALL HONORED BRAA WITH 2023 GEORGE LONG AWARD

SOURCE: BOCA RATON AIRPORT PRESS RELEASE



2023 Boca Raton Mayors Ball Committee

In its grand tradition, The Rotary Club Downtown Boca Raton (RCDBR) presented its eighth Annual Boca Raton Mayors Ball last Saturday, November 11th at Boca West Country Club.

Each year Boca Raton's business leaders and community innovators attend this marvelous event that honors the City's historic iconic milestones and pays homage to all those, past and present, who have helped make Boca Raton the best place to live, work, learn, visit, heal and raise a family. Event proceeds fund the Club's "Service Above Self" grant program that supports the health and wellness needs of Boca Raton nonprofits.

The highlight of this year's Gala was the presentation of the George Long Awards – named for the City's first appointed Mayor in 1924 and was presented by Club Co-Chairs Alex & Jessie Price and Jon & Bonnie Kaye whose firm Kaye Communications PR & Marketing produced the Mayor's Ball.

This year the Boca Raton Airport Authority was honored in recognition and celebration of their 75th anniversary and their continuing impact in the local community. The Airport contributes \$693 million annually to the local economy and the Airport and its tenants collectively employ over 4,843 individuals annually. Furthermore, the Boca Raton Airport Authority has been committed to the community through philanthropic ventures such as scholarships to nurture future aviators.

In addition to the Boca Raton Airport Authority, the Faulk Center for Counseling was also honored for its outstanding nonprofit work, along with philanthropist Marta Batmasian.

*"We are immensely proud to have been honored at this year's Boca Raton Mayors Ball. We have been fortunate to be part of the community for the past 75 years and look forward to soaring to new heights in the future. We would like to thank this year's Co-Chairs Jon and Bonnie Kaye, Honorary Co-Chairs Alex and Jessie Price, and the gala's host committee for this wonderful honor,"* said Boca Raton Airport, Executive Director, Clara Bennett.

### ABOUT THE ROTARY CLUB DOWNTOWN BOCA



Founded in July 2012, The Rotary Club Downtown Boca Raton is dedicated to impacting the Boca Raton community through Rotary International's mission of "Service Above Self." The award-winning 501(c)3 nonprofit's purpose is to make a difference in the community by enhancing the lives of many in an environment that embraces and promotes integrity, fellowship, and trust. The RCDBR is one of 46,000 Rotary clubs in more than 200 countries connecting 1.4 million Rotarians around the globe. The Rotary Club Downtown Boca Raton meets weekly at the Embassy Suites in Boca Raton on Fridays at noon.

For information on "health and wellness" fundraising initiatives and membership in the Rotary Club Downtown Boca Raton, visit [www.rotarydowntownbocaraton.org](http://www.rotarydowntownbocaraton.org).



AROUND

# THE STATE



## LAKE WALES PILOT AIRBORNE AGAIN AFTER SURVIVING 2022 MEDICAL EMERGENCY THAT LED TO 'MIRACLE' LANDING AT PBI

Source: *Palm Beach Post, USA Today*

Kenneth Allen took to the skies on Oct. 11 without a co-pilot. It was the first time he'd flown alone since he cheated death. Allen of Lake Wales lost consciousness when his body's largest artery tore on a flight back from the Bahamas on May 10, 2022.

But his life was saved twice that day: once when passenger Darren Harrison took control of the plane and landed it safely at Palm Beach International Airport despite having no flight experience and again when doctors at St. Mary's Medical Center quickly spotted the tear in his aorta and Dr. Nishant Patel at Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center repaired it in a nine-hour surgery.

Since that day, Allen, now 65, has been working to get back to the skies safely. His recovery has been nearly immaculate, and after sign-offs from seven physicians, Allen was granted medical clearance by the Federal Aviation Administration to fly solo. As he cleared the runway Oct. 11, he relished his time alone in the skies. "I spent about 45 minutes in the air by myself going between different lakes," he said. "It felt so good that nobody was in the plane with me. It was just freedom."



### MAY 10, 2022: A DAY WHEN LIVES CHANGED FOREVER

On May 5, 2022, Allen flew the Cessna 208 Grand Caravan to The Bahamas with the plane's owner, their family and Harrison to drop them off for a vacation and a fishing trip for Harrison. He flew back through Fort Pierce with no issues.

When he was scheduled to pick up Harrison from his fishing trip May 10, Allen asked his friend Russell Franck whether he wanted to fly with him. A pilot of 34 years, Allen said he was extremely comfortable flying the Cessna, and Franck sat in the co-pilot seat, as he'd done many times when on trips with Allen.

About 60 miles offshore, Allen said he remembered having an intense headache and seeing blue spots in his vision before passing out. He doesn't remember much else until emergency crews pulled him from the plane on the runway.

Franck said Harrison moved the incapacitated pilot out of his seat and laid him down behind the cockpit. Harrison used the emergency radio to contact air traffic control on the ground.

Robert Morgan, an air traffic controller who was on break at PBIA, was called back to the tower to help because he was a certified flying instructor. He got in touch with Harrison on the radio when the plane was flying above Delray Beach. Instead of directing him to the Boca Raton Airport, Morgan directed the plane to PBIA where there was a longer runway and better radio connection.



[Keep Reading...](#)



# AROUND THE NATION



## US FAA NAMING PANEL TO ADDRESS PILOT MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Source: Reuters.com

The FAA said on Thursday it is naming a Pilot Mental Health Committee to provide recommendations to address barriers preventing pilots from reporting mental health issues.

The issue has taken on new urgency since an off-duty Alaska Airlines ALK.N pilot last month was charged with trying to disable the engines of a jet in flight and told police afterward he was suffering a nervous breakdown. "Mental health care has made great strides in recent years, and we want to make sure the FAA is considering those advances when we evaluate the health of pilots," said FAA Administrator Mike Whitaker.

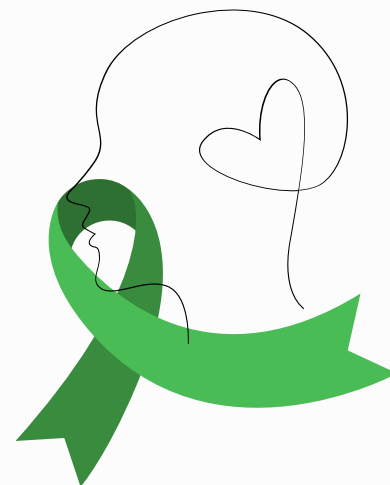
The FAA said it would also work to address uncompleted recommendations from a July inspector general's office report on pilot mental health, which found the FAA's "ability to mitigate safety risks is limited by pilots' reluctance to disclose mental health conditions."

National Transportation Safety Board chair Jennifer Homendy said Thursday the Board is planning to hold forums on December 6 with pilot mental health as the center of focus. She said the FAA oversight of pilot mental health is in need of significant reform and attention.

"The current system is broken and has been for a really long time," saying pilots are fearful "they could lose their job if you mention you are going to talk therapy.", considering Pilots must report certain mental health conditions to aviation medical examiners, who determine fitness to fly.

"We don't want to create an unsafe system clearly, but mental health is dynamic" and there are many ways of dealing with mental health challenges. "It's not leaving people wondering if they are going to get to fly," Homendy said.

Air Lines Pilots Association President Jason Ambrosi told Reuters "We need to destigmatize mental health for pilots... We need to make people understand it is OK for them to talk to someone." He praised the FAA's action to bring a wide variety of experts together including pilots, mental health professionals and regulators "to say where do we need to go" in effort to ensure the right paths are being explored.



## ALL-YOU-CAN-FLY: FRONTIER AIRLINES DROPS ANNUAL PASS TO \$499 |

Source: SimpleFlying.com



The famous GoWild! All-You-Can-Fly Annual Pass is currently being offered at its lowest recorded price ever. Frontier Airlines announced on November 15 that the unlimited flight pass has gone on sale for only \$499. This deal, a part of the airlines' Black Friday promotions, lasts from November 15 to November 28.

Frontier Airlines advertises that the GoWild! Annual Pass holders can benefit from unlimited flights throughout the year. Technically, pass holders are charged \$0.01 for airfare for every flight, plus the applicable taxes, fees, and charges at the time of booking. This includes access to domestic and international flights offered by the airline. Pass users can get confirmed bookings on the day before their domestic flight departs or ten days before their international flight is scheduled to depart. The pass holders can also plan ahead and book their intended flights earlier for a slight charge.

However, the GoWild! All-You-Can-Fly Annual Pass has officially gone on sale for \$499. This is the lowest price Frontier Airlines has ever offered the pass at. The GoWild! pass is valid from May 1, 2024, to April 30, 2025. Additionally, Frontier Airlines is offering Frontier Miles Silver Elite status to all travelers who purchase the pass for 2024-2025. The status is available to pass holders through the end of 2024. To receive this bonus benefit, travelers must purchase the annual pass by November 28. [Click Here for more information.](#)

# DATES TO REMEMBER

## LIVE

DECEMBER 06, 2023  
10:30 AM

### CFASPP STATEWIDE STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Tampa International Airport, HCAA Board Room – SkyCenter1  
[CLICK HERE TO VIEW MEETING AGENDA](#)

## 2024

JANUARY 25, 2024  
6:00 PM - 10:00 PM

### BART VERNACE WELCOME RECEPTION & RECOGNITION DINNER

Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport

JANUARY 26, 2024  
8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

### FAC MID-YEAR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport

JANUARY 26, 2024  
1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

### JOINT FAC / FAA ENVIRONMENTAL WORKSHOP

Hyatt Regency Orlando International Airport

MARCH 12 -  
MARCH 13, 2024

### WASHINGTON DC LEGISLATIVE FLY-IN

[Hilton Washington DC National Mall The Wharf](#)

480 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Washington, DC 20024 | (202) 484-1000

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN - [CLICK HERE FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION](#)

MARCH 19 -  
MARCH 20, 2024

### FAPA AVIATION INDUSTRY SPRING COURSE

**FDOT Manatee Operations Center** | 14000 East SR64, Bradenton, FL 34212  
[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Please email [lisa@floridaairports.org](mailto:lisa@floridaairports.org) & [info@floridaairports.org](mailto:info@floridaairports.org) with any questions or calendar updates, or visit [www.floridaairports.org](http://www.floridaairports.org) for details.

# HAPPY THANKS GIVING

*Have a safe & happy Thanksgiving!*

**Reminder:** The Florida Airports Council Business Office will be closed Wednesday, November 22 - Friday, November 23, 2023, for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

The office will re-open the following  
Monday, November 26.





# FLORIDA AIRPORTS ARE A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND ONE OF FLORIDA'S ECONOMIC ENGINES

Florida's airports are an economic engine - the aviation industry generates \$336 billion in economic activity and supports 1.4 million jobs. To keep achieving great heights and meeting the needs of tomorrow's business environment, Florida's airports must continue to be developed, improved, and expanded.



## LET'S KEEP FLORIDA'S AIRPORTS SOARING

As the statewide voice for aviation, the Florida Airports Council looks forward to serving as a strategic partner with state leaders as we navigate these challenges and advocate for issues that matter to Florida's airports and the passengers they serve.

*Together, we can continue to advance Florida's all-important travel sector and strengthen the state's economy.*

## CONTACT US!



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