

Airport Role and Activity

AIRPORT ROLE

Present

Personal/recreational flying: the use of aircraft by individuals (in their own, rented, or borrowed aircraft) for pleasure, recreational, or personal transportation not in furtherance of their occupation or company business.

Business flying: the use of aircraft by pilots (not receiving direct salary or compensation for piloting) in connection with their occupation, their employer's business, or in the furtherance of private business.

Corporate flying: the use of aircraft, owned or leased, and operated by a corporation or business firm, for the transportation of personnel or cargo in furtherance of the corporation's or firm's business, and which are flown by professional pilots receiving a direct salary or compensation for piloting.

Hemet-Ryan Airport is a public-use airport located in Riverside County. The Airport is an essential component of the transportation system for Riverside County. Both the state and federal governments include Hemet-Ryan Airport in their respective system plans: California Aviation System Plan, Central California Aviation System Plan (CCASP), and the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems. As a general aviation facility, the airport provides a base of operations for local pilots while also supporting a variety of recreational, medical, and business uses, as well as providing a point of air access to the community and a place for practicing flight training. These general aviation roles are expanded upon below.

A Base for Hemet Area Pilots — For pilots who live and/or work in the Hemet area, the Hemet-Ryan Airport is the most convenient airport from which to fly. Pleasure and personal business are the predominant reasons these pilots fly. There are seven public-use airports located within 25 nautical miles of the Airport. The nearest airports are French Valley Airport and Banning Municipal Airport. These airports are located 11 nautical miles southwest and 14 nautical miles northeast of Hemet-Ryan Airport, respectively.

Recreational Use — Hemet-Ryan Airport is predominately a recreation-oriented airport. Somewhat less than half of all operations are related to sailplanes - a purely recreational activity. Excellent thermal conditions make soaring at Hemet-Ryan one of the busiest soaring sites in the United States.

A Place to Conduct Business — Another important role of Hemet-Ryan Airport is as a place of business. Several aviation and non-aviation related businesses are based at the Airport. These businesses contribute to the local economy through their payrolls and purchases of goods and services.

Fire Attack Base — Hemet-Ryan Airport has served as a base for fire attack aircraft for many years. Recently the US Forest Service fire attack operations were transferred to San Bernardino International Airport. Although the California Department of Forestry and Fire Fighting's operations remain, they are scheduled for relocation in the near future.

Point of Air Access for Visitors to the Community — The Airport is a means of accessing Hemet and Riverside County for recreation and business.

A Place to Practice Flight Training — Hemet-Ryan Airport supports flight training for both sailplane and powered aircraft.

Site for Emergency Access to the Community — Following calamities such as a major earthquake, fire, or flood, airports are often of critical importance as points of community access for emergency and relief services. In addition, when regional ground access routes (i.e., roads, highways, and rail lines) are severed by a calamity, transportation by air may be the only means of effectively moving about and delivering supplies.

Future

Consistent with similarly situated airports; future development of Hemet-Ryan Airport is expected to be modest. Except for fire attack operations, the basic roles that the airport currently fulfills are expected to continue for the 20 years of this Master Plan study. With the expected long-term increase in industry, there will be an increase in the importance of the airport as a point of access to the community.

Hemet-Ryan will largely remain a recreational facility catering to sailplanes and single-engine piston aircraft. Growth of this use will be slow but steady over the planning period. There is the potential for a

short-term dip in operations and based aircraft by these types of users. This is due largely to aging of the current based pilot population and associated decline in the issuance of medical certificates.

Sailplane operations will remain at its present level and possibly decline due to the same factors affecting the current based powered aircraft owner population. However, area population growth, coupled with increasing visibility of the San Jacinto Valley as a recreation area (e.g., reservoir, upgraded casino), will result in an increase in sailplane operations.

As the economic base of the San Jacinto Valley evolves over the next 20 years, the Airport will see increased use by turboprop and jet aircraft. Most of the growth in operations will be by transient aircraft. The Airport will see very little growth in rotorcraft operations.

CDF fire attack operations will relocate its fire attack operations either as scheduled or within a few years. It is not expected that fire attack operations will be reestablished.

CURRENT AIRCRAFT ACTIVITY

Based Aircraft

The number and types of aircraft based at an airport are useful indicators of the airport's activity and operational role. The current (2001) year-round population of based aircraft is about 188. Of this total:

- 110 are single-engine, piston aircraft (59%)
- 60 are sailplanes (32%)
- 10 are twin-engine aircraft (5%)
- 6 are helicopters (3%)
- 2 are jets (1%)

The sailplane population varies seasonally. From September to May the number of sailplanes based at the airport doubles from its year-round total to about 120.

All of the helicopters are associated with either the Riverside Sheriff's Department or California Department of Forestry and Fire Fighting.

Aircraft operation: either a landing or a takeoff. A common training activity called a **touch-and-go** (where an aircraft lands and then takes off without stopping on the runway) counts as two operations.

Aircraft Operations

As in most cases for almost all airports without an air traffic control tower, aircraft operations at Hemet-Ryan Airport are not routinely counted. Therefore, current operation estimates are based upon estimates of operations on Runway 5-23 prepared by Caltrans Aeronautics staff. These estimates were developed from sample operations counts gathered by an acoustical aircraft counter. The most recent estimate was made in December 1999. The estimate indicated that about 37,000 operations occurred on Runway 5-23.

Caltrans did not estimate the number of operations associated with soaring. Based upon discussions with the soaring fixed base operator, sailplane related operations were estimated to be 33,000 in 2000. This includes operations by both sailplanes and tow planes.

Based upon the data sources noted above, 70,000 aircraft operations were estimated to have occurred in the year 2000. The distribution of operations was estimated based upon discussions with the fixed based operators and comparison with other similar general aviation airports. Table 2A presents the estimates of current operations by class of aircraft.

The Caltrans acoustical counters produce hourly and daily counts as well as totals. These counts indicate that aircraft activity is heaviest on weekends. During the weeks sampled, weekends accounted for 38% to 54% of weekly operations. This is consistent with the recreation orientation of the airfield.

Transient Aircraft

Daily transient aircraft parking demand typically ranges from 3 to 5 aircraft. Most aircraft are piston single-engine and twin-engine aircraft. However, Hemet-Ryan Airport may see 5 to 10 turboprops per week, and 1 to 2 jets.

AVIATION ACTIVITY FORECASTS

Based Aircraft

Current and future demand for based aircraft parking space in hangars, tiedowns, and transient parking at Hemet-Ryan Airport are influenced by a variety of factors. Some of these factors are national or

	Current	Projected
	2000	2020
Based Aircraft		
<i>Aircraft Types</i>		
Single-Engine Piston	110	165
Piston Twin	9	12
Twin Turboprop	1	6
Business Jets	1	4
Sailplane	120	140
Helicopters	6	8
Total Aircraft	247	335
Transient Aircraft		
Peak Daytime Parking Demand	5	20
Annual Aircraft Operations		
<i>Aircraft Mix</i>		
Single-Engine Fixed	49,400	67,500
Single-Engine Variable	1,000	2,000
Twin-Engine	500	4,000
Twin-Engine Turboprop	100	2,500
Business Jets	17,000	20,000
Helicopters	2,000	4,000
Total Aircraft	70,000	100,000
<i>Average Operations Per Based Aircraft</i>		
Total	283	298

Source: Mead & Hunt (June 2003)

TABLE 2A

Master Plan Activity Forecasts

Hemet-Ryan Airport

regional in character; others are specific to Hemet-Ryan Airport. Each of these demand factors needs to be considered in the development of based aircraft forecasts for the airport.

National Factors Affecting Forecast

The Federal Aviation Administration produces an annual forecast of national trends in aviation. The most recent forecast identifies several general trends that are relevant to Hemet-Ryan Airport:

- The single-engine piston fleet is expected to grow slowly in the immediate future. However, there are two factors that may dramatically reduce the existing fleet during the next 20 years: potential discontinuance of the production of 100 LL and the reluctance of some owners to modify their aircraft to use an alternative fuel; and the age of many aircraft requiring major investments to remain flyable.
- The twin-engine piston fleet will not see any growth; new manufacturing will match attrition.
- The turbine fleet will continue to expand, with jets increasing faster than turboprops.
- The number of sailplanes is forecast to grow about 1% per year.
- Very little growth in rotorcraft is forecast.

State and Local Demand Factors

Statewide forecasts were published in the California Aviation System Plan (CASP, 1999). The system plan includes all public use airports in California. The state's forecast methodology allocates aviation activity in a top-down manner; the forecasts are distributed to respective geographic areas, then sub-areas and ultimately to individual airports. The CASP forecasts a decline through 2010 and then a modest recovery by 2015. The result would be 300-based aircraft by 2015.

The following airport-specific demand influences partially overlap the above national and state demand factors, but are more reflective of the conditions existing at Hemet-Ryan Airport.

Facilities and Services Available — Existing general aviation facilities and services at Hemet-Ryan Airport are satisfactory for the airport's current levels of activity. All of the basic services necessary for general aviation are present (i.e., flight training, fuel, and aircraft maintenance). The planned relocation of portable hangars and reconstruction of the main apron will increase the attractiveness and utility

of the airport for transient aircraft. It will also provide space for additional storage hangars that gives the airport the opportunity to attract aircraft users from surrounding areas.

Airspace — Hemet-Ryan Airport is located in an area characterized by relatively simple airspace. This simpler operating environment typically proves attractive to users of personal, recreational, and enthusiast types of aircraft. Additionally, the relatively uncomplicated airspace is ideal for flight training operations at the airport.

Nearby Airports — French Valley Airport is the nearest general aviation airport. This airport is becoming constrained due to lack of space for additional hangars on the airport and rapid urbanization in adjacent areas. Hemet-Ryan Airport may be able to attract aircraft if hangars are available.

Proximity to Nearby Industry — Industrial growth will have a positive effect on the airport's aviation activity. Users of business and corporate aircraft desiring easy access to the City of Hemet and the San Jacinto Valley are anticipated to make increasing use of Hemet-Ryan Airport.

Demographics — Population alone does not typically generate a corresponding increase in based general aviation aircraft demand. However, the combination of increasing population growth and economic growth in the San Jacinto Valley, as well as a statewide increase in the number of registered pilots should result in an increase in based aircraft.

Based Aircraft Demand Conclusions

In recognition of the above-noted national, state and local demand factors and planning projections; the Airport Master Plan Update concludes that there is potential for modest growth of Hemet-Ryan Airport's based aircraft population. The plan projects that based aircraft at Hemet-Ryan will increase from the current (2000) level of 247 aircraft to 335 aircraft in the year 2020. This assumes that the airport's facilities and services are adequately maintained, additional hangar space is provided and the County continues to efficiently operate the airport. Table 2A summarizes the Master Plan's 20-year forecast for future based aircraft for the airport.

TRANSIENT AIRCRAFT PARKING DEMAND

The demand for transient aircraft parking positions at the airport is influenced by a combination of factors, including those mentioned above with respect to based aircraft, and those discussed subsequently which affect aircraft operations. The Master Plan forecasts that peak daytime transient aircraft parking demand will increase from the current 5 spaces to 20 spaces over the 20-year planning period. The transient apron design should accommodate up to five jets.

AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS FORECASTS

National and State Forecasts

Both the Federal Aviation Administration and Caltrans have prepared official forecasts of operation for Hemet-Ryan Airport. The FAA's Terminal Area Forecast calls for no change in operations through 2015. The *California Aviation System Plan* anticipates slow growth in operations reaching 117,800 by 2015.

Airport-Specific Factors

Various circumstances specific to Hemet-Ryan Airport are also relevant in determining future airport operational levels.

Number and Type of Based Aircraft — Forecast growth in the number of based aircraft will increase the number of operations. However, as the aircraft will be principally used for recreational purposes, the average number of operations per based aircraft will increase only slightly over the forecast period (from 283 to 298).

Availability of Hangars — A key element supporting the forecast growth in based aircraft is availability of aircraft storage hangars. Although the principal demand will be for hangars sized to accommodate single-engine aircraft, the full range of hangars will be needed.

Sailplane operations — Continued moderate growth in seasonally based sailplanes is a prerequisite to long-term growth in sailplane operations.

Flight Training — A relatively modest portion of the airport's total annual operations involve local or transient flight training operations. This is not expected to change.

Extent of Transient Aircraft Use — Increased business, corporate, and industrial development within the San Jacinto Valley is expected to generate increased activity, principally by transient aircraft. Most of the forecast increase in jet operations is expected to be from transient aircraft.

Annual Operations Demand Conclusions

The Master Plan forecast projects that total annual aircraft operations at Hemet-Ryan Airport will increase from the 2000 level of 70,000 to a level of 100,000 in the year 2020. Summarized in Table 2A is the Master Plan 20-year forecast of future annual aircraft operations for Hemet-Ryan Airport.