

AWOS installation boosts Texas airport revenues

T.P. McCampbell Airport sits on the Gulf Coast of Texas. Over the course of two years, the airport greatly increased landings and revenues, thanks in large part to the installation of a Vaisala Automated Weather Observation System (AWOS).

No weather data - a disadvantage

Until 2007, T.P. McCampbell Airport had to rely on the city of Corpus Christi, only 17 miles away, for its weather data. In a coastal climate, the weather at even such a short distance can be very different. What that meant for T.P. McCampbell Airport was fewer landings and less business. Accurate weather data is important and a big factor in reducing risk on take-off and landing.

Located just outside the town of Ingleside, Texas, T.P. McCampbell Airport handles an average of 40 take-offs and landings per day. A mix of recreational and corporate flyers, many customers are on their way to popular coastal destinations. T.P. McCampbell Airport provides on-site fueling and operates with a full-time staff of three.

Texas AWOS program delivers

In an effort to improve safety and increase traffic, airport manager George Alvarado petitioned the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for an AWOS installation. Alvarado knew that his chances of receiving one were good: the Department initiated a statewide AWOS program in 1998, when 16 Vaisala AWOS were installed. Since then, the program has been expanded, and today there are 70 Vaisala AWOS operating at airports across the state.



“It’s not just the airport that is growing, but the local economy as well. All of the corporate flyers who land here use the local hotels, rent cars, buy fuel, go to restaurants. Being able to get travellers on the ground at the airport lets the money trickle down, so everyone benefits.”

*George Alvarado,
Airport Manager,
T.P. McCampbell Airport, Ingleside, TX*

Challenge

- T.P. McCampbell Airport is located on the Gulf Coast of Texas, where weather can change very quickly
- With no weather measurement system, T.P. McCampbell Airport had to rely on information from 17 miles away
- A lack of weather data presented a safety challenge for the airport
- Risks stemming from unknown weather conditions limited the amount of business that T.P. McCampbell Airport could attract

Solution

- Texas Department of Transportation included T.P. McCampbell Airport in their statewide Vaisala AWOS program
- A Vaisala AWOS III PT was installed by Vaisala, who also manages the maintenance

Benefits

- Increased safety, increased flyer confidence
- Significant increase in traffic
- AWOS observations available for pre-flight briefing anywhere in the U.S.
- 14 companies now land their jets at T.P. McCampbell Airport on a regular basis
- The airport’s impact on local businesses has increased from \$550,000 to over \$1 million



The new AWOS was approved by TxDOT and installed in 2006. The system provides pilots with vital weather information including visibility, present weather, altimeter setting, temperature, dew point, wind speed and direction, cloud height and sky condition, plus precipitation identification and thunderstorm tracking. The AWOS also connects T.P. McCampbell Airport to the National Airspace Data Interchange Network (NADIN) through Vaisala AviMet® Data Link, making the airport's weather observations available for preflight briefing from anywhere in the United States.

Vaisala easy to work with

Alvarado was impressed by the Vaisala project management team's expertise and dedication during the installation: "There was a cold front that came through and dropped the temperature 50 degrees in less than an hour, and there was rain," he remembers. "Vaisala was excellent. They were very conscientious, communicative and competent and I was very happy with their efforts to get the AWOS in and get the job done, rain or shine."

AWOS in, traffic up

The AWOS installation was completed in late 2006 and commissioned in early 2007. Since then, airport traffic has picked up significantly. Having an on-site AWOS makes landings safer and gives corporate and Part 135 operators the confidence they need to

choose T.P. McCampbell Airport over other regional airports. According to Alvarado, 14 different companies now land their jets at T.P. McCampbell Airport on a regular basis. The availability of accurate local weather data has also brought in some unexpected visitors. Earlier this year a U.S. Navy jet fleet was able to land at T.P. McCampbell Airport when bad weather prevented them from flying into Corpus Christi International.

Increased traffic has either given or brought the airport a new prosperity and has allowed Alvarado and his team to focus on growth. T.P. McCampbell Airport is in the process of installing a new, higher-capacity fueling system and is completing a runway expansion of more than 1,000 feet.

Trickle-down prosperity

Increased airport income is just the tip of the iceberg for the nearby community of Ingleside. "All of the corporate flyers who land here use the local hotels, rent cars, buy fuel, go to restaurants," says Alvarado. "Being able to get travellers on the ground at the airport lets the money trickle down, so everyone benefits." And the exact benefit has been calculated in dollars and cents: a 2005 TxDOT study found that T.P. McCampbell Airport economic impact on the Ingleside area was just under \$550,000. Today, that impact has risen to over \$1 million simply because of increased availability and traffic.



VAISALA

For more information, visit www.vaisala.com or contact us at sales@vaisala.com

Ref. B210821EN-A ©Vaisala 2009
This material is subject to copyright protection, with all copyrights retained by Vaisala and its individual partners. All rights reserved. Any logos and/or product names are trademarks of Vaisala or its individual partners. The reproduction, transfer, distribution or storage of information contained in this brochure in any form without the prior written consent of Vaisala is strictly prohibited. All specifications — technical included — are subject to change without notice.