

Operations dip a bit at Mount Vernon Airport

Airport officials reviewed 2024 Aviation Report Tuesday

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MOUNT VERNON — Total operations at Mount Vernon Outland Airport declined last year, according to the facility's 2024 Aviation Report.

The report indicates that the airport had 27,393 total operations in 2024, down a bit from the prior year's total of 29,802. Airport Director Chris Collins said that he attributes the slight decline — at least somewhat — to all of the construction projects going on at the airport at different points in the year.

"I personally believe a lot of this was the construction projects (that) we had with the runway/taxiway lighting," Collins said. "We had several weeks where both runways were closed, which means (that) we couldn't take any airplanes. And then Runway 1533

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closed (for) at least two months, and there were a lot of taxiway closures. Bottom line is, there were a lot of closures and that could have affected it a little bit."

Collins also said that nationwide, flying across the country slowed a little in 2024, possibly having to do with the election and the fact that corporate flight departments were slowing their movements around the U.S.

On Tuesday, Feb. 11, the Mount Vernon Airport Authority Board of Commissioners heard a presentation on the 2024 Aviation Report from Collins. With the report, Collins presents information to the board every February about the previous year's operations, as well as giving board members a look at the "tenant base" from the prior year. The tenant base refers to what kind and how many aircraft are at the airport, Sentinel archives state.

And while the slight drop in operations was the bad news in the report, there was also good news, Collins said. The report shows that Mount Vernon Airport set a record for the amount of turbo jet operations last year, at 404. The previous record was achieved in 2023, with 376. This statistic refers to jet aircraft that utilized Mount Vernon Airport during

the year in question.

"So that's a pretty good increase," Collins said.

Another positive trend in the report was that the airport's Corporate Aircraft Association (CAA) operations stayed relatively stable at 296, down just a hair from the prior year's 308.

"So, we only went down 12 CAA operations, which is real significant with the closures that were occurring the last two quarters of the year," Collins said.

CAA is the prime contract opportunity offered at the airport. Basically, corporate operators pay a fee to be in the program, and certain airports across the country are selected as "preferred fixed base operations." When corporate aircraft on cross country runs make a fuel stop at a preferred CAA Stop airport, they can upload fuel much cheaper, Collins said.

"It's our fourth year in the program, and it's just been wonderful," Collins said of CAA. "About 25 to 33% of our annual fuel sales are CAA customers."

In addition, the Aviation Report shows that the total number of aircraft at the airport is 40, which is identical to the prior year.

"I'll call it a good year in spite of the circumstances that were going on in terms of the infrastructure that was being upgraded," Collins said.

Other Airport Board actions Tuesday included:

- The board tabled a



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AVIATION REPORT — The Mount Vernon Outland Airport Board recently discussed the airport's 2024 Aviation Report, which showed a decline in total operations for last year.

proposal to change out all the lights in the fixed based operations (FBO) building. The cost of the project is estimated at \$7,656 including a rebate of \$3,035 from Ameren Illinois.

- The board approved a workman's compensation insurance policy with Guy Wood Insurance for a premium cost of \$16,178, an increase over the expiring policy which was at \$11,386. However, for the extra premium cost, the airport is able to cover seven extra employees, six of whom are skilled tradespeople like airplane mechanics and refuelers. The board also approved a directors and officers insurance policy with Guy Wood at a premium cost of \$3,420, which is identical to the prior rate.

- The board discussed ongoing infrastructure and solar projects.

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