

# St. Louis Downtown Airport Sees Continued Growth In Flight Operations During FY2023

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ST. LOUIS - St. Louis Downtown Airport (KCPS) announced flight operations at the airport increased to a total of 104,156 during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023. The data follows a positive trend in recent years of flight operations continuing to rebound from significant air travel impacts felt during the coronavirus pandemic. In fact, the operations are surpassing levels seen before the global pandemic began in 2020.

Flight operations reported in FY2023 represent a 2.4% increase over numbers reported in FY2022, and a 7% increase over pre-pandemic totals reported in FY2019. This marks

the second consecutive year of growth at St. Louis Downtown Airport, which is located in St. Clair County on 1,000 acres in Cahokia Heights and Sauget and is the busiest general aviation airport in Illinois, outside of Chicago.

“The trend in increased flight operations is a positive sign that air travel is returning to normal for private and business travel customers,” said Mary Lamie, Executive Vice President of Multi Modal Enterprises for Bi-State Development, which owns and operates the airport. “The biggest increases in flight operations were seen toward the end of our fiscal year, so we are optimistic that this upward trend will continue into the next year.”

While flight operations have grown, Charter flights in and out of the airport have remained steady with 274 reported in FY2023, up 2.6% from FY2019. Fuel sales in FY2023 surpassed those in FY2022, but still haven’t reached the levels seen during the last pre-pandemic fiscal year. Data collected shows that 1,606,416 gallons of fuel were sold during FY2023, an increase of 9.8% over FY2022.

“Fuel sales have been climbing since the pandemic ended, which is encouraging,” said Sandra Shore, Director of St. Louis Downtown Airport. “We are happy to see the overall positive trends as more aviation customers choose to fly in and out of St. Louis Downtown Airport. We continue to strengthen relationships with our tenants and partners who rely on the airport to accommodate their various needs.”

Recent airport investments will support future growth. In mid-August, a \$5.4 million Ground Engine Run-Up and Compass Calibration Pad project was completed. It will serve aircraft maintenance and manufacturing providers operating at the airport and support high-tech aerospace maintenance and trade skill jobs. The new areas were made possible through a \$5 million Rebuild Illinois grant and will help improve operational safety, boost airport businesses and increase global competitiveness for the bi-state region.

The Ground Engine Run-Up portion of the project includes new airfield pavement with jet blast deflectors used to perform aircraft maintenance tests. Up to 500 high-power engine run-up tests are expected to be conducted annually by the aircraft maintenance tenants such as Gulfstream Aerospace Corp. and West Star Aviation that will utilize this new area. The area will reduce aircraft engine run-up noise by more than 50%. The new Compass Calibration Pad enables the magnetic compasses in each aircraft to be regularly calibrated – free from any magnetic influencers – to help ensure the safety of the crew and passengers.

St. Louis Downtown Airport continues to be a significant contributor to the local and state economies. According to the most recent study conducted by the Illinois

Department of Transportation (IDOT), St. Louis Downtown Airport helps generate more than \$422 million in economic impact for the region, including factors such as on-airport activity and visitor spending. The airport supports significant activity from recreational, charter and business flying, as well as flight instruction from Saint Louis University's Oliver L. Parks Department of Aviation Science, the nation's oldest flight school still in operation, along with Ideal Aviation and St. Louis Flight Training. Additional activities supported by the airport include government operations, military training, real estate tours, medical transport, aerospace technology research, and glider flying. St. Louis Downtown Airport remains a major job center in the St. Louis area, providing 1,522 full-time and part-time jobs to the region through airport tenants and operations.

To learn more about St. Louis Downtown Airport, visit [www.stlouisdowntownairport.com](http://www.stlouisdowntownairport.com).