Basic Information
Rickenbacker International Airport is an air carrier airport located 11 miles south of Columbus, Ohio. The airport supports a variety of aviation activities including air cargo, military operations, passenger service, and general aviation as well as rail and trucking activities. Major facilities at the airport include a 12,102-foot primary runway (Runway 5R/23L) with an associated full parallel taxiway. Operations at the airport are supported by instrument landing systems at both ends of Runway 5R/23L, an air traffic control tower, and AWOS III weather reporting. Other facilities and services include the Rickenbacker Charter Terminal, two fixed base operators (FBOs), avgas, jet fuel, and aircraft maintenance. Rickenbacker International Airport is included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems.

Qualitative Benefits
The Columbus Regional Airport Authority owns and operates Rickenbacker International Airport and provides FBO services via Rickenbacker Aviation. The airport is currently home to over 25 on-airport businesses and government organizations. Air cargo airlines and freight forwarders have a significant presence at Rickenbacker International. The primary air cargo carriers include FedEx, UPS, Kalitta Air, Cargolux, and AirNet Systems. FedEx has a regional hub on-site and AirNet Systems maintains its headquarters at the airport and provides FBO services. Freight forwarders include Forward Air, Team Worldwide, Scanwell Logistics, and Kuehne & Nagel, among others. Rickenbacker International is also home to several military units including the Ohio Air National Guard’s 121st Air Refueling Wing, the Army Reserve National Guard’s 1-137th Assault Helicopter Battalion, the Naval Reserve, and the Marine Corps Reserve. Allegiant Air provides year-round, non-stop passenger service from Rickenbacker International to Orlando and Tampa, Florida. These flights operate out of the Rickenbacker Charter Terminal, a favorite among Central Ohio leisure travelers due to its convenience. The most frequent aircraft operations at Rickenbacker International include air cargo, corporate, and military flights.

Rickenbacker International is situated in the center of the Rickenbacker Inland Port, a premier, high-speed, multi-modal logistics hub that also includes the Norfolk Southern Rickenbacker Intermodal Terminal, Foreign-Trade Zone No. 138, and the Rickenbacker Global Logistics Park. More than 40 non-aviation-related businesses are located off-airport within the Rickenbacker Inland Port. These include freight forwarders, distribution centers, manufacturing businesses, and business support services providers.

The airport maintains various programs to enhance community outreach. One such program is Operation Feed, which benefits the Mid-Ohio Food Bank and funds adoption of a needy family during the holiday season, providing toys for the children and grocery store gift cards for the adults. Airport employees host several luncheons each year to raise donations for Operation Feed. Airport employees also participate in an annual fundraising drive to benefit United Way.

Methodology

Rickenbacker International
Impacts

ON-AIRPORT IMPACTS
2,288 Jobs
$155.8 million in Payroll
$445.4 million in Output

CONSTRUCTION/ VISITOR IMPACTS
235 Jobs
$ 9.5 million in Payroll
$ 28 million in Output

Suppliers to Construction Dependent Businesses
Suppliers to Visitor Dependent Businesses

MULTIPLIER IMPACTS
2,283 Jobs
$ 903 million

TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS
4,806
$ 267 million
$ 903 million

Impact Measures
Jobs measures the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs related to airport activity including visitor-supported and on-airport construction jobs. A part-time employee counts as half of a full-time employee.
Payroll measures the total annual salary, wages, and benefits paid to all workers whose livelihoods are directly attributable to airport activity. Output measures the value of goods and services related to airports in Ohio. The output of on-airport businesses is typically assumed to be annual gross sales.
The Ohio Airport System

The Ohio system of 104 airports not only provides the state with a safe and efficient mode of transportation, it is also an important stimulus for economic growth and development. By providing aviation-related services, the system supports hundreds of thousands of jobs and produces billions of dollars in economic activity. The state’s largest employers, and many smaller businesses, rely on aviation to rapidly transport personnel, equipment, and supplies.

Study Process

To better understand the relationship between Ohio’s system of airports and the statewide economy, the Ohio Department of Transportation’s (ODOT) Office of Aviation conducted an economic impact study of aviation using an FAA-approved methodology that has been applied to state airport systems throughout the United States. Funding for this study was provided by the FAA and the ODOT Office of Aviation.

Each Ohio system airport’s total economic impact was quantified in terms of jobs, payroll, and output. Through a comprehensive survey process, the direct economic impacts related to on-airport business tenants and visitor expenditures were determined for each system airport. The multiplier effect of these impacts was then calculated to ascertain the total airport-related impacts.

Statewide Benefits from Aviation

More than 120,000 jobs can be tied to the airports of Ohio. These employees receive $4.2 billion in payroll and benefits and generate $13.3 billion in economic activity. In addition to economic impacts, the system of airports provides numerous benefits that enhance the quality of life, health, safety, and welfare of Ohioans.

The state’s network of seven commercial service airports provides access to regional, national, and international markets. Nearly 10 million enplaned passengers used the Ohio system of commercial service airports in 2012 to reach these destinations. In total, Ohio commercial service airports support nearly 106,000 jobs with annual earnings of approximately $3.5 billion and $11.5 billion in annual economic activity.