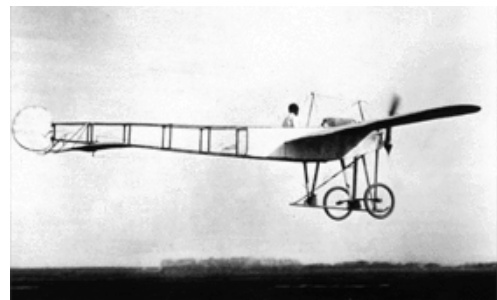




## **BOISE AIRPORT**



## **GENERAL AVIATION**



## **COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**



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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Our research indicates that in general terms the users of the Boise Airport are satisfied with the facilities and the levels of information provided. Interviews with airport tenants indicated similar levels of understanding and satisfaction. Several “themes” were detected from the surveys and interviews. Those themes are identified in the report and focus on the perceptions held by the General Aviation Community that GA is not important to the airport.

Most respondents felt that more communications with the General Aviation Community would be beneficial and desirable. We have proposed a number of strategies to improve the quality, availability, accuracy and timeliness of those communications. Additionally, based on the feedback, we have suggested targeted communications strategies.

Two user specific issues were identified; hangar rental opportunities and interest in the airport’s anticipated Master Plan Update. The management team is aware of both issues and is working to develop strategies to resolve the hangar availability issue. During the Master Plan Update the airport plans an aggressive information sharing effort with the General Aviation Community.

During January 2004 approximately 550 surveys were mailed to Ada County pilots resulting in a return rate exceeding thirty-three percent (33%). While thirty-three percent is a significant number, the more important factor is that over seventy percent (70%) of the pilots that own aircraft took time to provide feedback. That number alone is truly remarkable and indicates the breadth of interest in the airport by pilot users.

The report details responses to a series of questions directed to Fixed Based Operators, Corporate Operators, General Aviation pilots, FAA - ATCT and the operators at Nampa and Caldwell Airports. In the closing section of the report we provide a series of suggestions / recommendations that will be helpful as the Boise Airport moves forward with its efforts at stronger and broader communications with General Aviation users.

While the focus of the effort was on General Aviation at Gowen Field, we believed that any understanding of General Aviation in the Treasure Valley should also consider a review of Nampa and Caldwell activity. In recognition of the significant General Aviation activity and interest at all three airports (Boise, Caldwell and Nampa) we believe it would be useful for those airports to meet regularly to share their common interests and development plans. This can be accomplished through a structured Regional Planning effort or through facilitated meetings of the parties.

In closing, we would like to thank the pilots and airport users who’s input was invaluable in creating this report. Clearly, Boise Airport has a strong, concerned and viable General Aviation Community interested in the airport’s operation.

Respectfully,

Critical Path, Inc.

## II. BACKGROUND

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**B**oise Airport contracted Critical Path, Inc., to develop a “communications plan” for General Aviation. That process envisioned assessing General Aviation needs / desires from the pilot and user perspective, including Fixed Base Operators, FAA, GA pilots and Corporate Operators regarding the Boise Airport. This report includes findings from a written survey of Ada County pilots and on-site interviews with FBO, corporate operators, FAA and the airport managers of the Nampa and Caldwell Airports.

Specific research objectives for this project were to:

- Gain awareness of General Aviation’s priorities and degrees of interest in the various aspects of communications with the airport;
- Determine sources of awareness regarding airport issues; and
- Gauge user opinions of the airport’s performance on various issues, including the airports relationship with GA and contribution to the growth of the community.

### III. INTERVIEWS WITH FIXED BASE OPERATORS

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#### *Survey Instrument*

This survey instrument was specifically designed to allow the Boise Airport to gain a better understanding of how the Fixed Base Operators (FBO) on Gowen Field perceive the airport.

On-site interviews were conducted during the week of January 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004. All FBO's on the airport were contacted; four responded. The four FBOs interviewed were Boise Air Service, Turbo Air, Conyan Aviation and Western Aircraft. The relevant comments from those interviews are summarized in the following section.

#### *Interview Results Synopsis*

**What do you think of the concept of the Airport trying to reach out to the GA community?**

Three out of four fixed base operators thought the concept of the Airport reaching out to the GA community was positive. All three of the operators who thought it was a positive step felt so because it is unusual for airports of the size of Boise to focus on anything but the commercial operators. The other operator felt it was unnecessary because he knew how to get hold of the Airport Director.

**Are you satisfied with the level of information that is available from the Boise Airport?**

Two of the four FBO's were happy with the level of information available from the Boise Airport. They receive information through the mail or by phoning the Airport. The two operators not satisfied with the level of information had experiences at other airports where more information was available to them. However, they indicated that once they asked for the information it was made available but, as they indicated, they had to ask.

**How can the Airport do a better job of communicating with you, the FBO?**

Two out of five of the operators had no comment on this question. The other three operators had different answers on what the airport could do to better communicate. The majority said that meetings every six months with all tenants would be useful.

**What information would you like to hear from the Airport?**

Two of the four respondents indicated that they did not need additional information. The other operators desired information related to activities (primarily construction) that pertained directly to their future operations. They also wanted to hear about changes in plans, regulations and policies that would affect their businesses.

**What information would your customers like to hear about?**

Two of the four operators indicated that this question did not apply to them because most of their customers were transient users. The other two operators responded that they would be interested in any subject that might pertain to their customers. More up to date information on security was requested.

**Could you identify any problems that GA is having at BOI?**

One of the four operators could not identify any problems. The three responding operators had responses indicating general consensus that there were too many FBOs on too little land. The shortage of land was identified as leading to a shortage of all types of hangars. There was a general feeling among the operators that GA is not a high priority for the Airport.

**What can the Airport do to make your work like better or easier?**

All four operators provided different answers to this question. One of the focal points was that GA wanted the Airport to be “more friendly” to them. They feel like a thorn in the Airport’s side instead of an active contributor to the airport. One operator would like to see the Airport limit the future growth of general aviation businesses.

**What do you feel the Airport needs as far as facilities for GA?**

**Do your customers have reasonably convenient access to their aircraft?**

Four out of four operator responses were positive; their customers have convenient access to their aircraft.

**What are your thoughts on the current layout of the GA facilities, i.e. hangars, tie downs, FBO sites, etc.?**

One of four operators had no comment on this question. The other three operators thought the Airport has done a satisfactory job with the space that is available. One operator commented that the Airport developed to fulfill the needs of the airlines and freight operators; GA was a secondary consideration.

**Do you believe the number of hangars for rent is adequate?**

One of the operators expressed an opinion that the Airport should not be in the hangar business. The hangar rental business should be left to the private sector. The other three operators felt that there are an inadequate number of hangars for rent.

**Do you believe the number of tie down spaces available is adequate?**

Three of the four operators stated that they believe a shortage of tie-down space exists. The other operator had no comment.

**Do you believe the number of shade hangars is adequate?**

Three of four FBO's felt there is an inadequate supply of shade hangars available. The other had no comment.

**Do you feel an on-airport restaurant in the GA area would be used?**

The operators were split on this issue. Most of them asked who would operate it and where would it go. One operator felt it would attract the airport employee crowd. The other three operators did not think it would work. The general sentiment was that people who work at the airport want to get away from it and that Gowen Field is too large of an airport to draw people to it compared to a Nampa or Caldwell.

**Do you feel that current security rules are adequate for GA airport users?**

All four operators felt that the Airport was staying on top of security and doing a good job.

**In general terms, are you satisfied with the services and facilities at BOI?**

Two of four operators were satisfied. The other two were not satisfied with the condition of the ramps and with the lack of space available to expand.

**Do you feel that TSA actions following 9/11 have significantly impacted GA operations? In what ways?**

Three out of four operators did not feel that TSA actions after 9/11 had significantly impacted their operations. The FBO's have voluntarily stepped up their own security. The other operator felt some impact. The biggest complaint was that access to the "No Fly List" was difficult which they attributed to the government not being ready for the impact.

**Do you feel that air space congestion is better today than five years ago in the BOI area?**

All four operators felt there was no significant difference.

**Do you feel that there are any issues with the military operations affecting GA operations?**

All four operators said there were no issues with the military.

**What do you, as an FBO, need to operate more efficiently?**

All four operators requested more ramp space for future growth.

**Do you feel that there is competition with the Nampa and Caldwell airport? Is it positive or negative?**

All of the operators felt there was no competition with Nampa and Caldwell.

**Would you like to see all GA operations moved to the third runway?**

Two of the four operators were opposed to moving to the third runway. The other two operators were curious about it and wanted to see the airport's proposal. Most of them stated that it would depend on the economics whether they moved or not. They expressed concern about being isolated from the two main runways and the services provided there.

**Other issues you would like us to consider or share with the Airport?**

Two operators wanted communication to open up and become face-to-face in order to ask questions. The common feeling was there is an antagonistic feeling at Boise Airport and no sense of cooperation between tenants. Another operator stressed that they feel like they are the last priority at the Airport. They feel that "if GA were not there, then the Airport would not be there either".

## IV. INTERVIEWS WITH CORPORATE OPERATORS

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### *Survey Instrument*

This survey instrument was specifically designed for the Boise Airport to gain better understanding of how the corporate operators on the Boise Airport perceive the airport.

On-site interviews were conducted during the week of January 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004. All of the corporate operators on the airport were contacted; four responded. The corporate operators interviewed include the Boise Pilot Shop, Boise Cascade, Simplot Aviation and Alscott. The relevant comments from those interviews are summarized in the following section.

### *Interview Results Synopsis*

**What do you think of the concept of the Airport trying to reach out to the GA Community?**

Three of four operators felt it was a great idea and that communication is needed at the Boise Airport. The other operator felt it was not necessary.

**Are you satisfied with the level of information that is available from the Boise Airport?**

All four operators were satisfied with the level of information available.

**How can the airport do a better job of communicating with you, the corporate operator?**

One operator was pleased with the level of communications. The other three operators felt a newsletter and an Internet site would be a strong addition and widely used.

**What information would you like to receive from the airport?**

One operator felt that they were well informed. The other three operators wanted to hear anything that was relevant to them as an individual operator or anything that would affect GA.

If the Airport is going to make a decision that would affect GA then the GA community should be invited to attend that meeting. Any changes that are made to GA then they want to know what it is going to cost them.

**What information would your pilots like to hear about?**

Three operators were satisfied with the level of information their pilots receive. The other operator wanted to hear anything that would affect their operations such as runway or maintenance issues.

**Could you identify any problems that corporate aviation is having at BOI?**

Two operators could not identify any problems. The other two operators brought up two different items. One needs to be able to expand if their mission changes and the other would like to see de-icing capability available for GA users.

**What can the airport do to make your work life better or easier?**

Three of four corporate operators felt that Airport was doing a good job. The other operator would like their facility to have a higher priority when it comes to snow removal.

**What do you feel the airport needs as far as facilities for corporate aviation?**

**Do you feel an on-airport restaurant in the GA area would be used?**

One operator felt it would not work. The other three operators felt that a restaurant would work because there are no options at the airport and noted that it would be nice if they also catered and delivered.

**Do you feel that current security rules are adequate for GA airport users?**

Three of four operators felt that security rules were adequate. Most corporate operators know who is coming and going since it is their aircraft. The other operator felt they were ridiculous and an inconvenience.

**In general terms, are you satisfied with the services and facilities at BOI?**

Three of four operators were satisfied with the service and facilities; they felt that everything that is integral to their operation was available. One operator had no comment.

**Do you feel that TSA actions following 9/11 have significantly impacted GA operations? In what ways?**

Three out of four operators did not feel any significant impact on their operations indicating that everyone has stepped up security on their own. They control who is getting on and off their aircraft and they generally know their identity. The other operator did feel a significant impact, as they are no longer a FAR 135 charter operator after 30 years of being one. The reason provided for not providing charter service was "it is too difficult to comply with TSA regulations".

**Do you feel that there are any issues with the military operations affecting corporate operations?**

All four operators had no major issues with the military affecting their operations. Two of the operators expressed their frustration at the closure of Taxiway Bravo when the threat level is raised. They feel it does not help security and causes traffic jams and rerouting problems.

**What do you, as a corporate operator, need to operate more efficiently?**

Three out of four operators were happy with what they had and did not need anything. The fourth operator would like to have the taxiway to them plowed sooner. Also, they did not want any unnecessary regulations created.

**Would you like to see all GA operations moved to the third runway?**

Two operators have no problem moving to the third runway as long the cost involved is addressed and minimized. The other two operators were against moving due to their current facilities; they like their location and do not want to be cut off from the rest of the airport. They would not mind the third runway being used as a training facility.

**Other issues you would like us to consider or share with the Airport?**

One operator felt a Monday morning posting to an Internet site with some way for them to respond would be useful and appreciated.

## V. INTERVIEWS WITH CALDWELL AND NAMPA AIRPORTS

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### *Survey Instrument*

This survey instrument was specifically designed for Boise Airport to gain a better understanding of how the neighboring airports perceive Boise's role. Additionally, we attempted to gain a sense of each airports development plans.

The on-site interviews were conducted during the week of January 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The interviewer met with Curt Hawkins, Caldwell Airport Manager, and Bob McGee, Chairman of the Caldwell Airport Commission and Colleen Hartnett, Nampa Airport Manager. The relevant comments from those interviews are summarized in the following section.

### *Interview Results Synopsis*

**What do you think the role of the Boise Airport is for the area related to flight operations?**

The two airports feel that Boise's role is to provide services for passenger and military aircraft and to function as a flight training opportunity in a controlled airport (airspace) setting.

**Do you feel that Boise is specifically for commercial operations?**

Both feel that Boise is specifically for commercial operations.

**What are your thoughts / feeling about BOI's role as an airport?**

The operators at Nampa and Caldwell believe that the Boise Airport's proper role is to accommodate the commercial airlines and provide facilities for commercial passengers. The role of Nampa and Caldwell is to service the General Aviation pilots.

**What facilities do you think are needed in the GA community?**

Each airport manager mentioned needs ranging from a quality terminal building with amenities to facilities that pilots can use to build their own aircraft.

**What defines your customer base, who uses your airport?**

The same type aircraft use each airport; the customer base is corporate, business jets, ultra-lights, helicopters, gliders, single-engine and experimental aircraft. Mixing these different types of aircraft at Caldwell is becoming more difficult. Caldwell and Nampa are actively pursuing GA users. The Caldwell Master Plan has identified a need to build an Air Traffic Control Tower due to the difficulty of mixing all of the aircraft in the area.

**Is your airport growing?**

Both airports are growing rapidly. Caldwell grew 25% this past year (2003). Nampa added three flight schools and the Warhawk Museum.

**What plans does the airport have for the future?**

Each airport wants to be “THE” destination airport in the Northwest region. When flying into the Northwest Region and specifically the Boise area, both airports want to be the pilot’s choice for services. Both operators want to attract more corporate business. To satisfy the demand (there is a waiting list for hangars) both airports will be adding additional hangars; Caldwell has a new terminal building on the north side of the field planned for 2005. Caldwell plans to extend their runway an additional 2000 feet. Nampa would like to extend their runway but is land locked.

**Is there a need to develop a Regional Aviation System Plan?**

Both airports were interested in this concept and would like to understand how they could work together toward their common goals.

**What do you feel are your airports strengths / weaknesses?**

Caldwell management believes their strengths are their land, their ability to expand and their positive relationships with the users. They felt their weaknesses are in their hangar development policies (all are privately owned), limited funds and access to airport.

Nampa's management believed their strengths are rooted in the friendly atmosphere, inexpensive operations and the organization of the airport. Their weaknesses are that their Jet-A fuel is self-serve, their runway length is limited and the lack of a business to tow aircraft for maintenance.

**Do you actively promote the use of your airport? How?**

Both airports do actively promote by advertising in various media and speaking to community organizations. They promote their airports as more user friendly than Boise Airport (easier access) and quicker than flying into Boise. They stated that it is quicker to fly into either Nampa or Caldwell and then drive into Boise than it is to fly into Gowen Field with the traffic and taxiing to an FBO or your hangar and then finding your vehicle.

**Do you feel that TSA actions following 9/11 have significantly impacted GA operations? In what ways?**

Neither operator identified any impacts yet from TSA actions; are both trying to anticipate changes that TSA may impose.

**Do you feel that air space congestion is better today than five years ago in the BOI area?**

According to Caldwell management, when Boise split up their approach / departure frequencies, one was saved for a remote station to service Caldwell / Nampa which they feel is a must. As stated before, Caldwell has an Air Traffic Control Tower in their Master Plan; they feel with the increases in traffic a tower will be needed in the near future.

## VI. GENERAL AVIATION SURVEYS

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### *Survey Instrument*

This survey instrument was specifically designed for Boise Airport to gain a better understanding of how the general aviation pilots in Ada County perceive the airport.

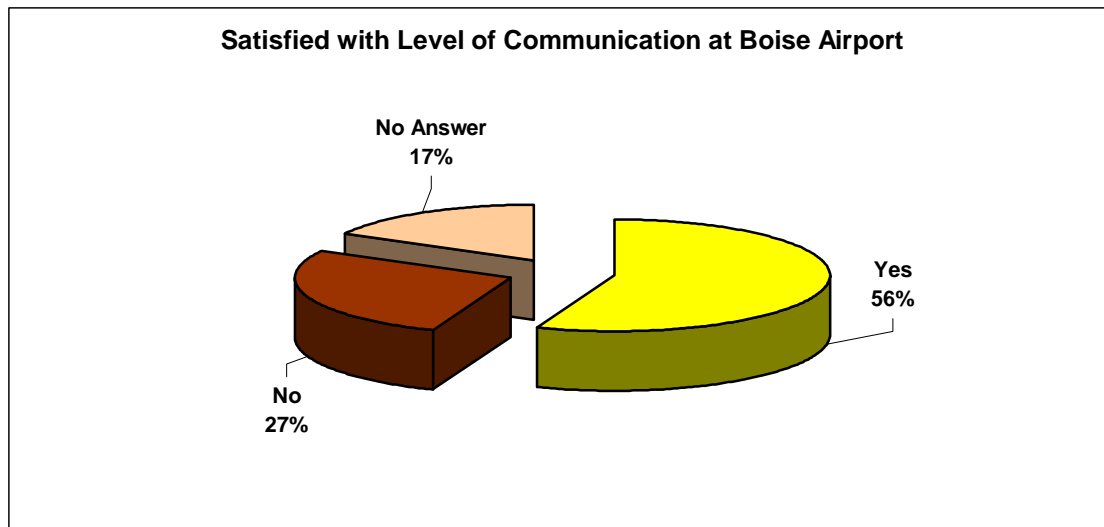
A total of 555 surveys were mailed to Ada County pilots during the week of January 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The surveys covered issues ranging from general communications to long-term planning issues. A total of 160 completed surveys were returned indicating strong interest in the GA community. The data from the surveys is presented in chart and graph form in the following sections.

### *The Sample*

Survey research is susceptible to human and mechanical errors as well as interviewer recording and data handling errors do occur. Every attempt has been made to minimize handling errors.

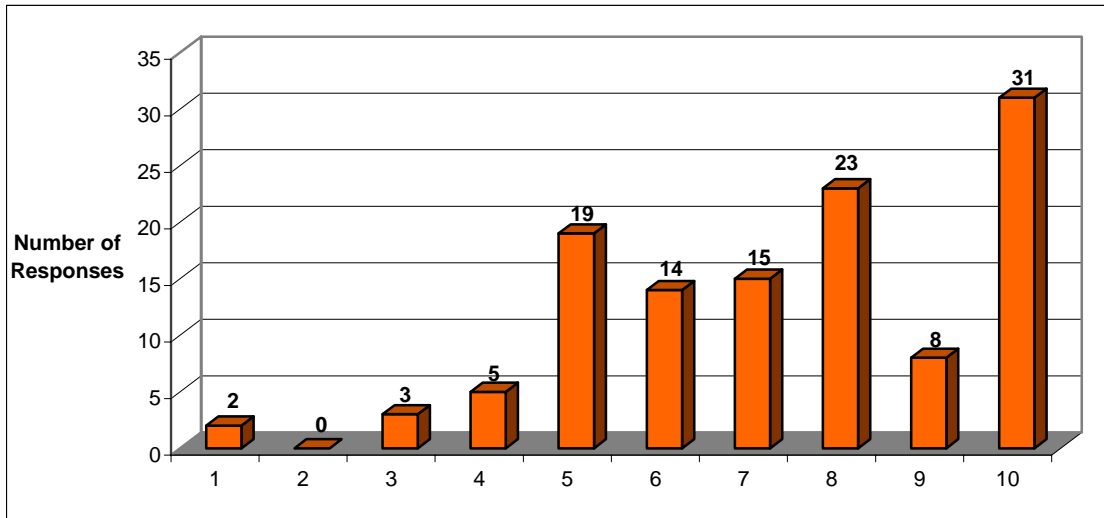
### *Survey Results Synopsis*

**Are you satisfied with the level of information that is available at Boise Airport?**



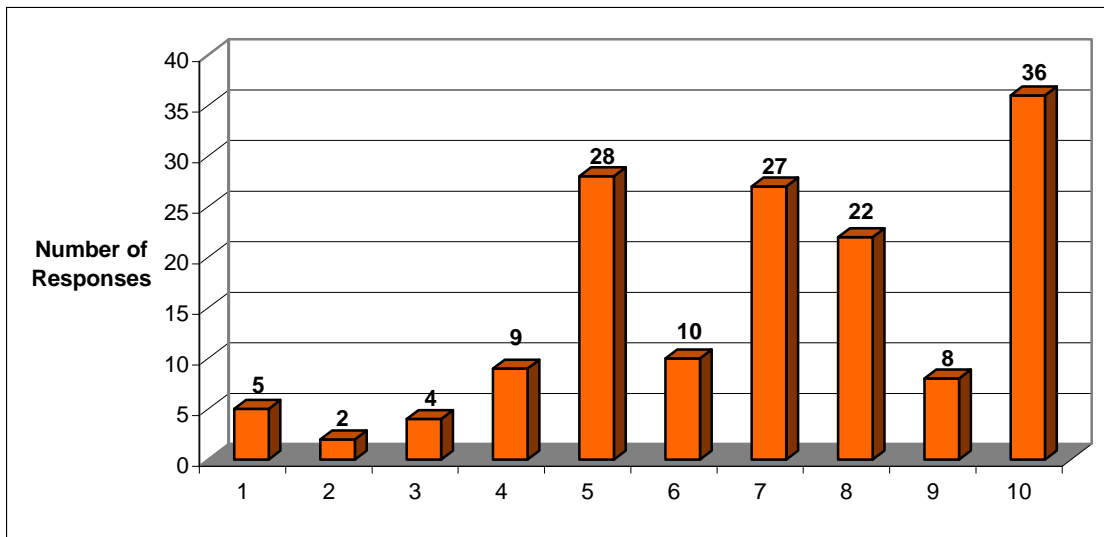
Eighty-six of 160 respondents reported that they were satisfied with the level of communication available at the Boise Airport. Forty-two respondents were unsatisfied and 26 respondents did not answer.

On a scale of 1 to 10, I would like to know more about what is happening at the Boise Airport.



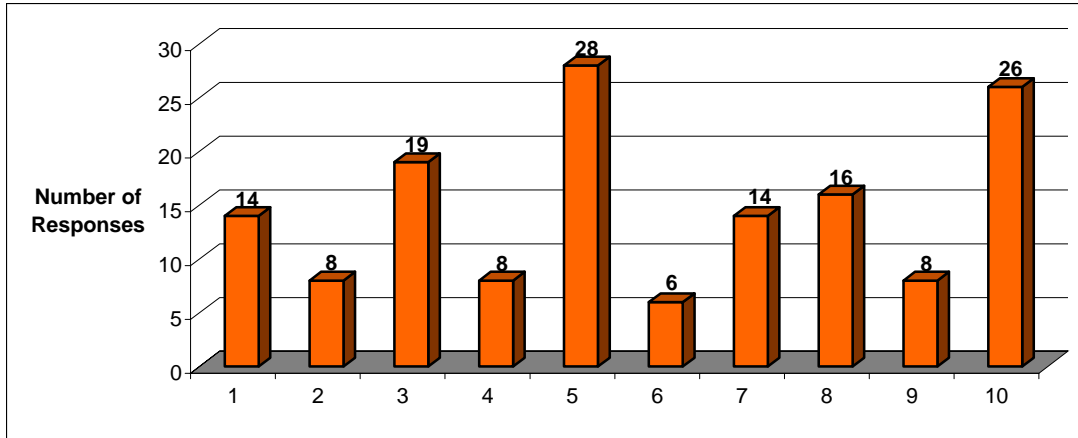
The question asked respondents to reply to the question based on a one to ten scale; one “Strongly Disagreed” and ten “Strongly Agreed”. For the most part, the respondents were in the moderate range on the issue of wanting to know more about what is happening at the Boise Airport. 92% of respondents agreed in some way that more information was needed.

On a scale of 1 to 10, I would like to know more about construction activity and plans.



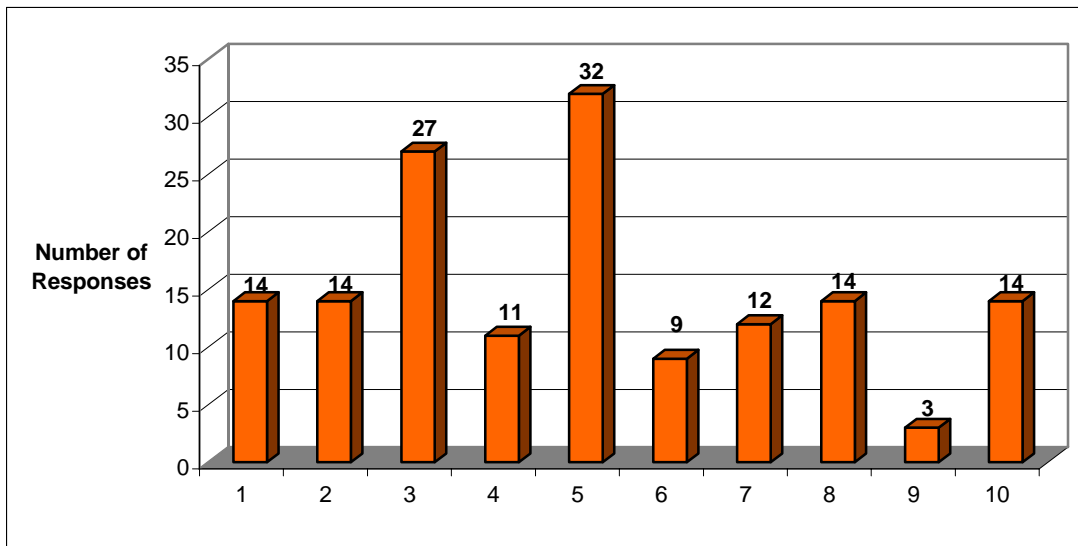
This data would indicate a fairly strong interest in knowing more about construction activities.

On a scale of 1 to 10, I would like to know only about GA development.



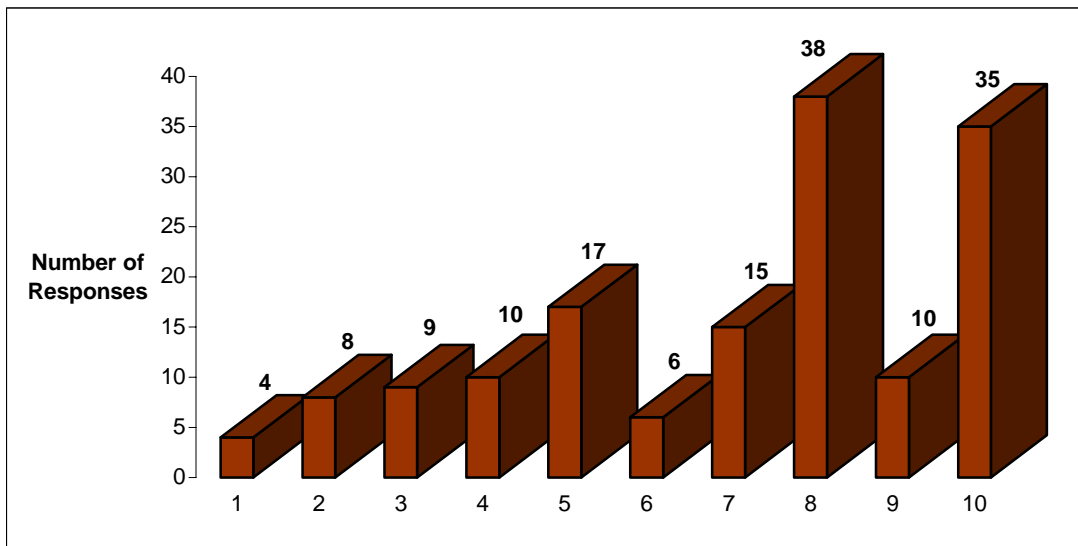
The results from this question indicate that there is an interest in knowing more about activities other than “GA development”. It is important to remember that the survey group is generally believed to be GA. A fairly large number of respondents (50+) indicated that they disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. We believe this indicates an interest in a broader range of “airport” issue on the part of GA.

On a scale of 1 to 10, I would like to know more about the history of Gowen Field.



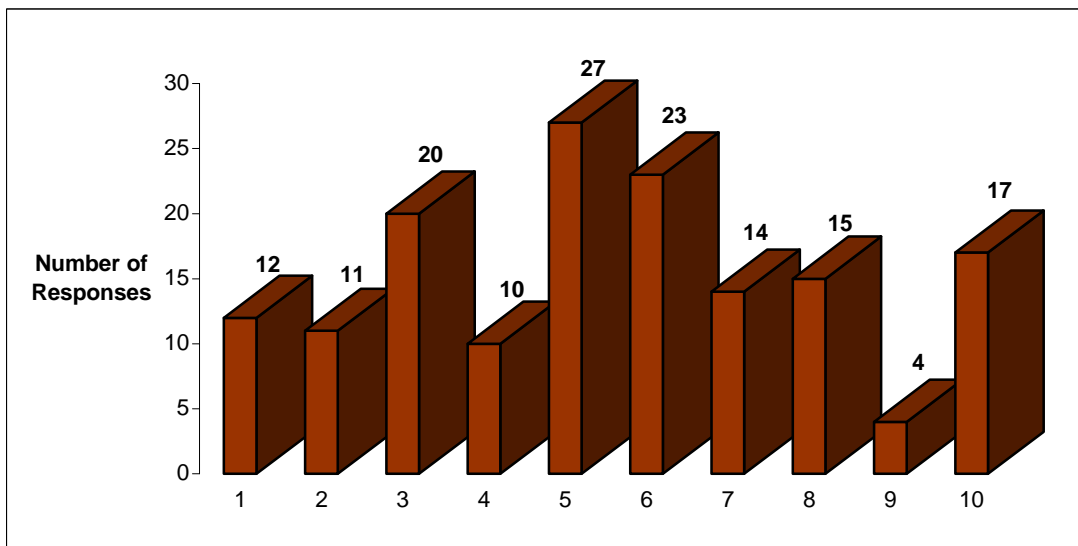
The response indicates fairly neutral opinion about this subject.

I would like to see a “Calendar of Events” published.



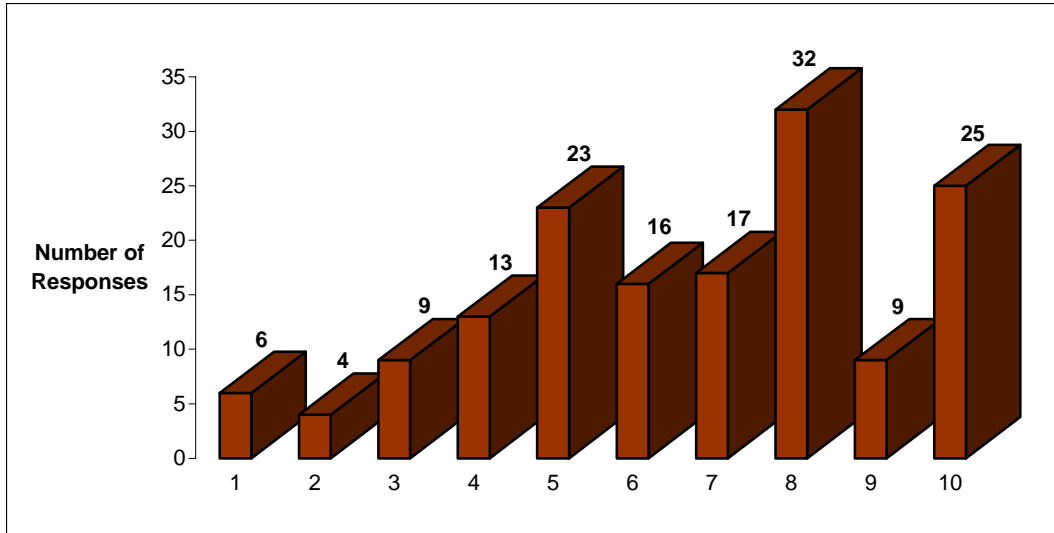
The results would indicate a fairly strong response in favor of a “Calendar of Events”. See recommendations in Section VII.

I would like to see articles about “Airport Businesses and Personalities”.



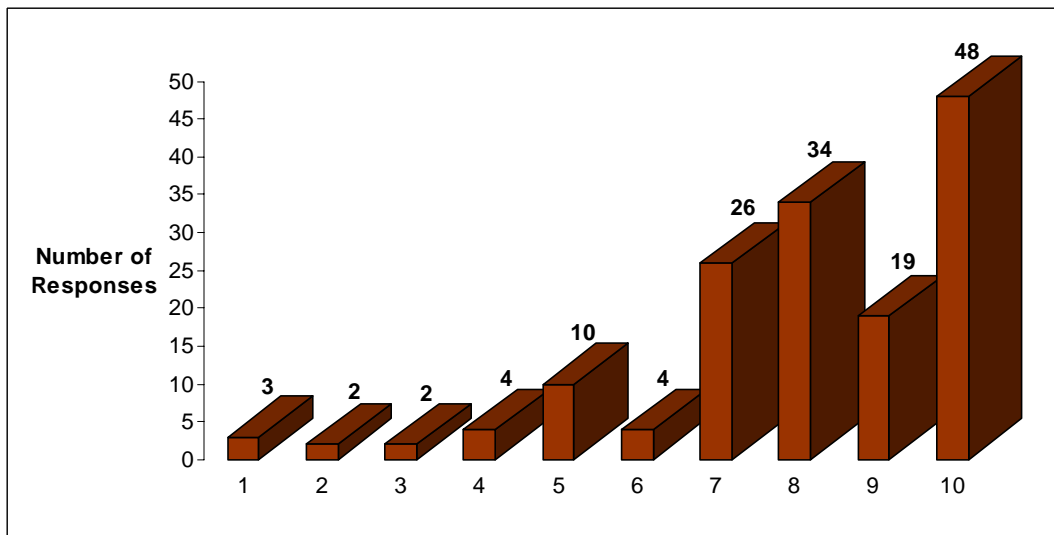
The results indicate an interest in this type of information.

I would like to see information related to airport use statistics.



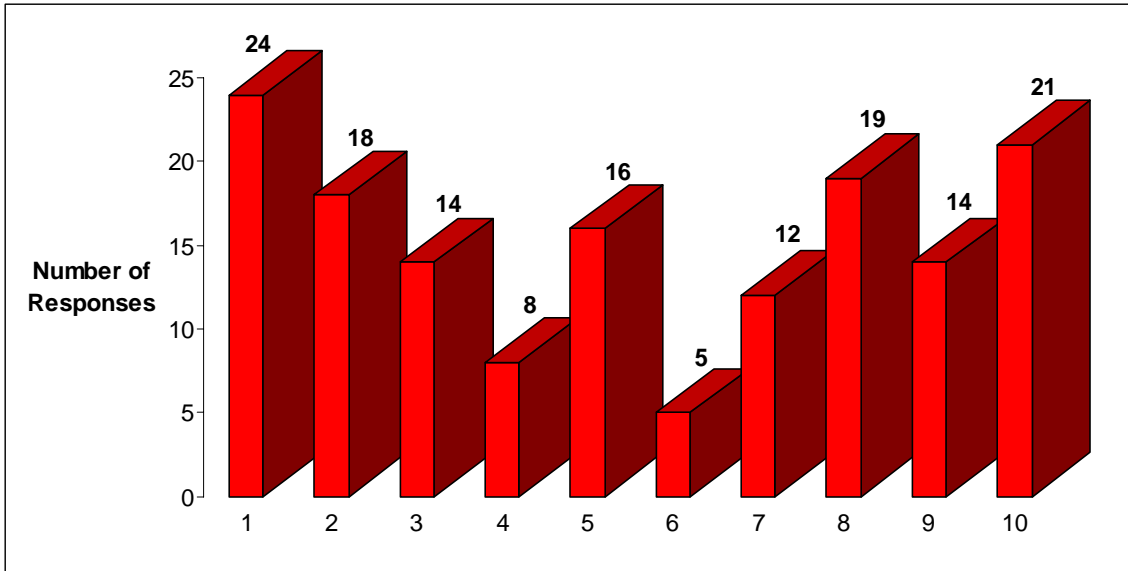
The results indicate an interest in this type of information.

I would like to see articles about current aviation industry events that impact my use of the aviation system and Gowen Field.



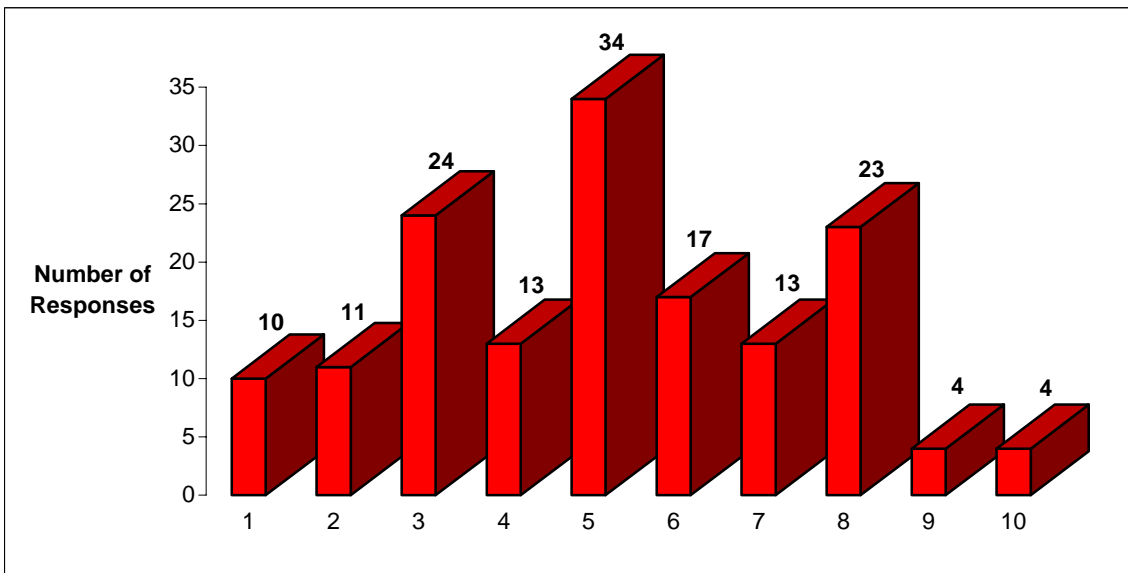
The results indicate an interest in this type of information.

When I have a question about the airport I know who to call.



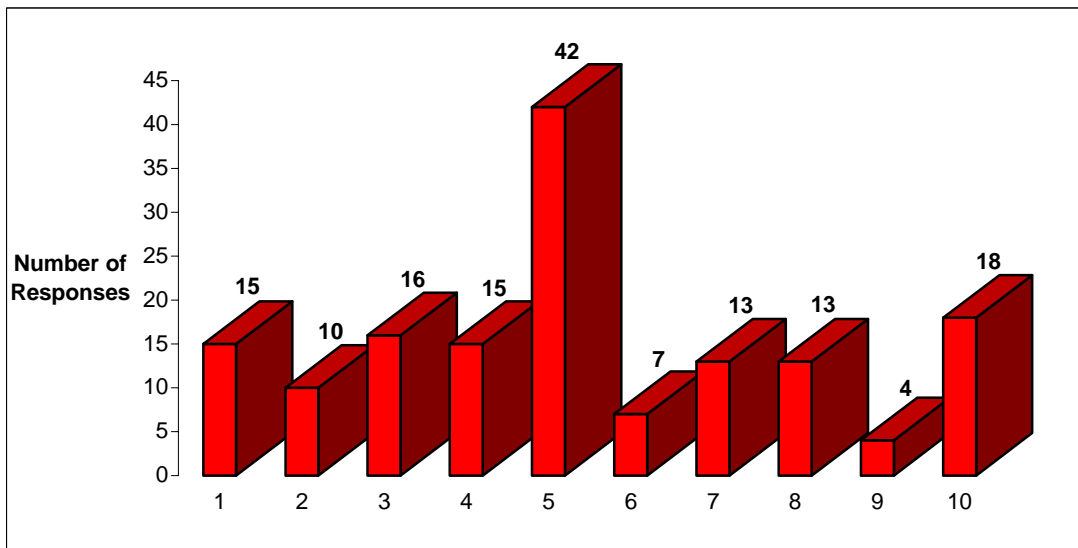
The results indicate that some improvement in this area would be helpful.

The airport currently provides acceptable levels of information to meet my needs.



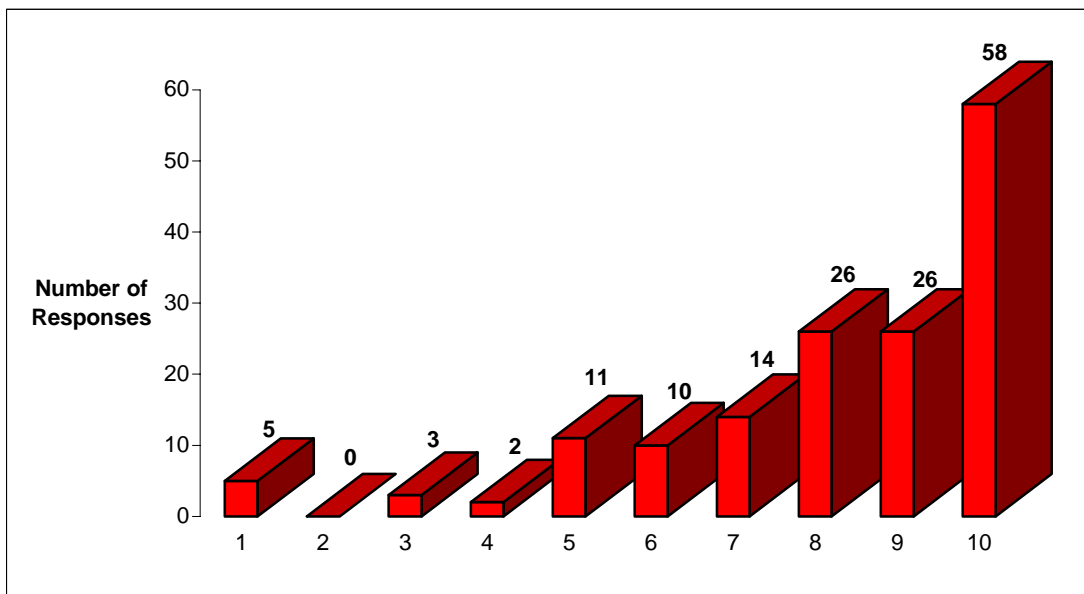
The results indicate that the airport needs to provide more information to meet the GA users needs.

I would like to see the Airport develop a “suggestion box” mechanism so that I can share my thoughts on issues



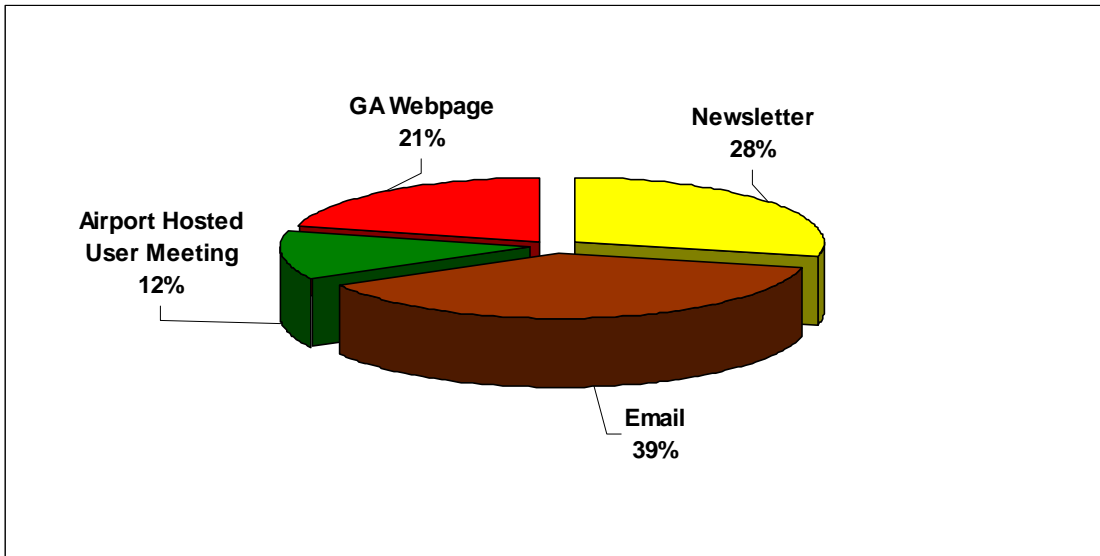
The results to this question were considered to be neutral, no strong preference in either direction. See recommendations in Section VII.

I believe a GA Sub-committee of the Airport Board would be helpful in presenting “GA views” on airport issues.



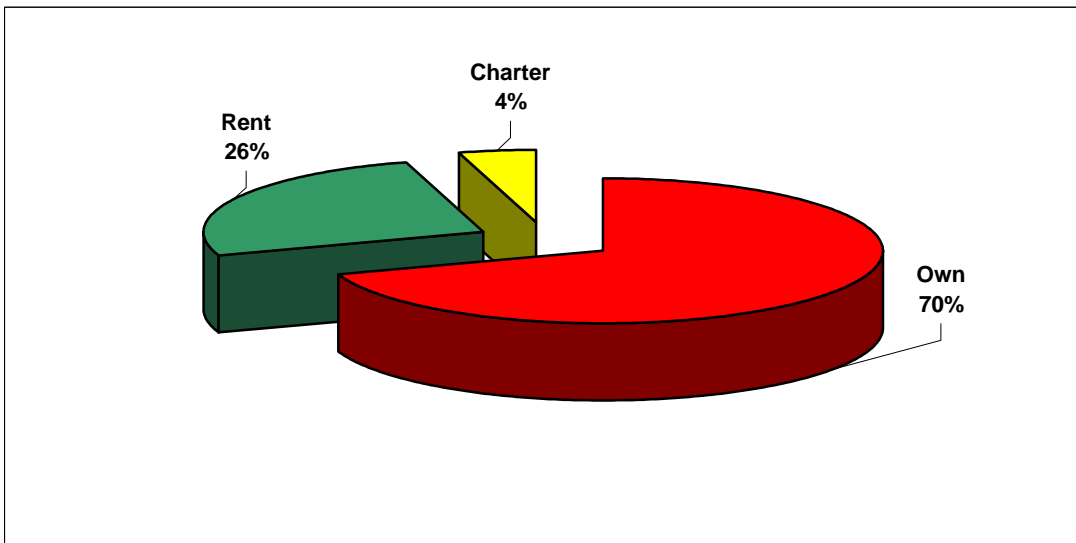
The results indicate a very strong agreement with the concept of developing this mechanism. See recommendations in Section VII.

On a personal level, the most effective type of communications for me would be:



Most of the respondents made multiple selections when responding to the question. Fifty-five respondents felt a newsletter or direct mail would be most effective, 74 indicated email would be best, 24 thought airport hosted user meetings would work, and 40 felt a GA web page would be most effective.

As it relates to your use of aircraft do you own, rent, or charter aircraft?

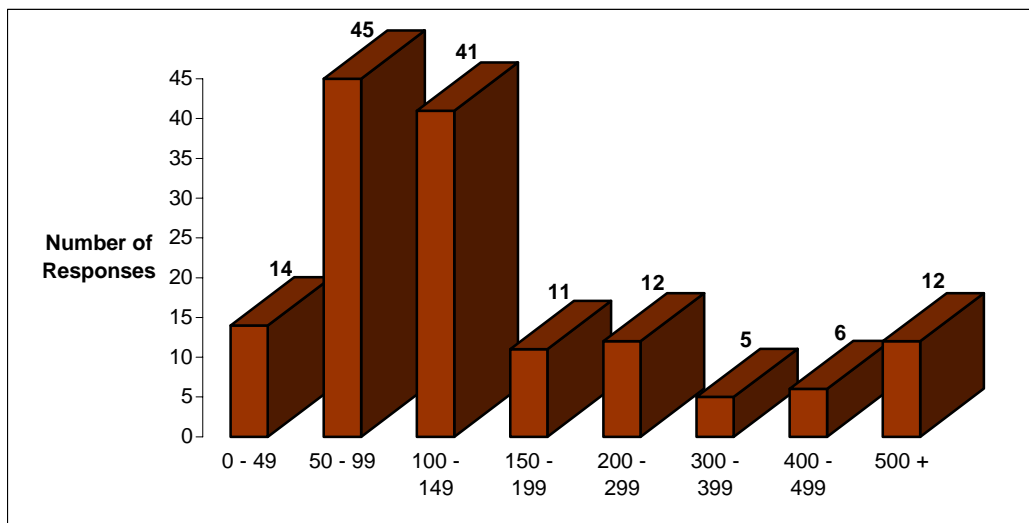


One hundred and ten respondents own their own aircraft in Ada County. Forty-one rent and seven charter. A few people own and rent aircraft. This would also seem to indicate that people who own aircraft are more likely to respond to the survey.

What make and model of aircraft do you fly most often?

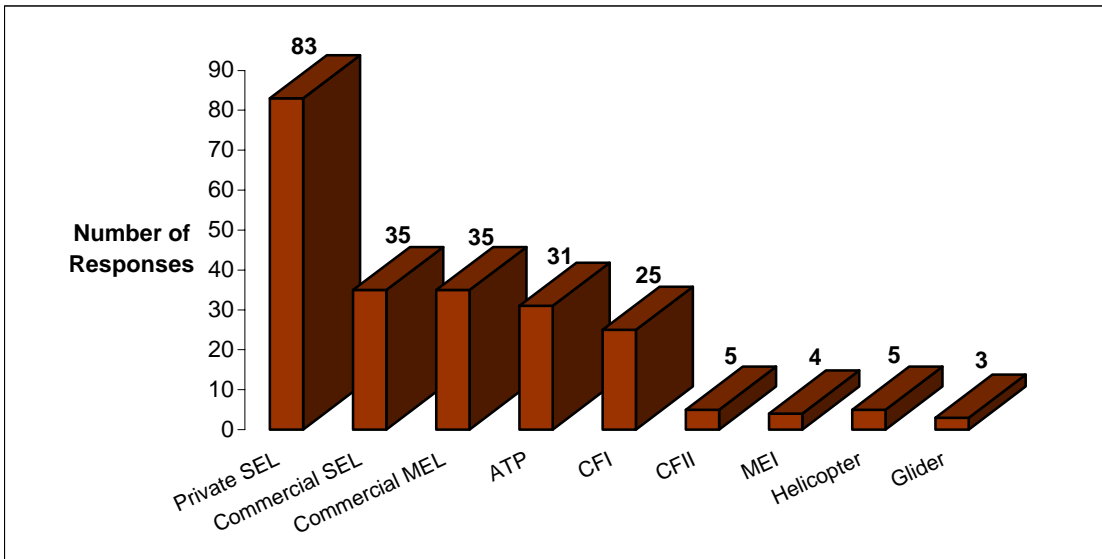
|              |    |                |   |
|--------------|----|----------------|---|
| Archer       | 3  | Experimental   | 3 |
| Baron        | 6  | Grumman        | 1 |
| Beechjet     | 5  | Hawker 800     | 1 |
| Bonanza      | 5  | Helicopter     | 6 |
| Cessna 150   | 2  | Husky A4       | 1 |
| Cessna 170   | 2  | King Air       | 1 |
| Cessna 172   | 28 | Kitfox         | 3 |
| Cessna 180   | 3  | Metro          | 1 |
| Cessna 182   | 34 | Mooney         | 2 |
| Cessna 185   | 2  | Piper Archer   | 1 |
| Cessna 206   | 11 | Piper Arrow    | 1 |
| Cessna 210   | 11 | Piper Cherokee | 1 |
| Cessna 340   | 2  | Piper Warrior  | 9 |
| Citabria     | 3  | Saratoga       | 1 |
| Citation 525 | 2  | Taylorcraft    | 2 |
| Comanche     | 1  |                |   |

How many hours per year do you log as Pilot-in-Command?

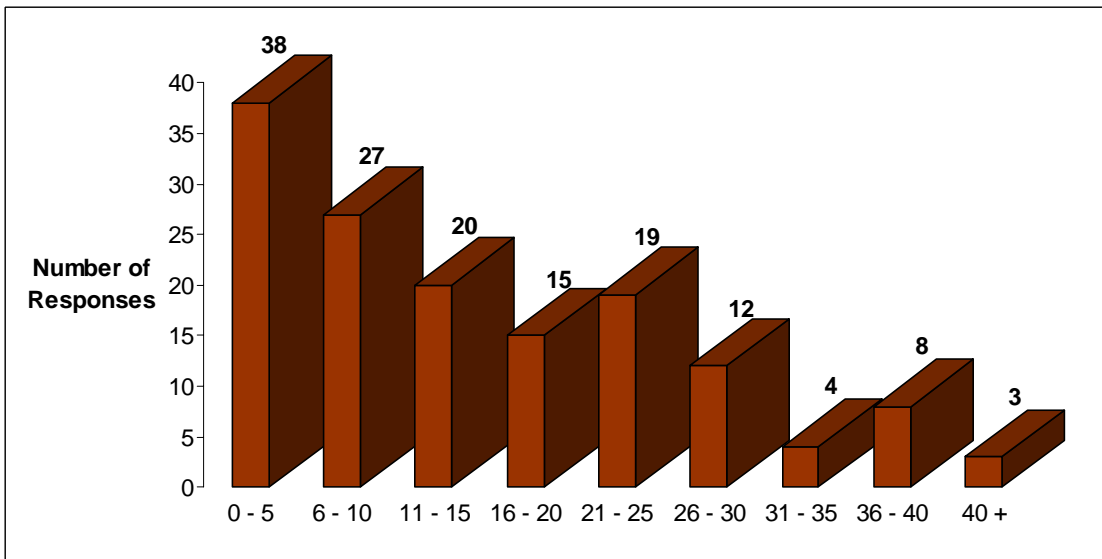


From the surveys that were returned it appears that a majority of the respondents logged less than 150 hours of pilot-in-command time annually. Many of the high timers are airline pilots that live in the area and commute to their duty stations.

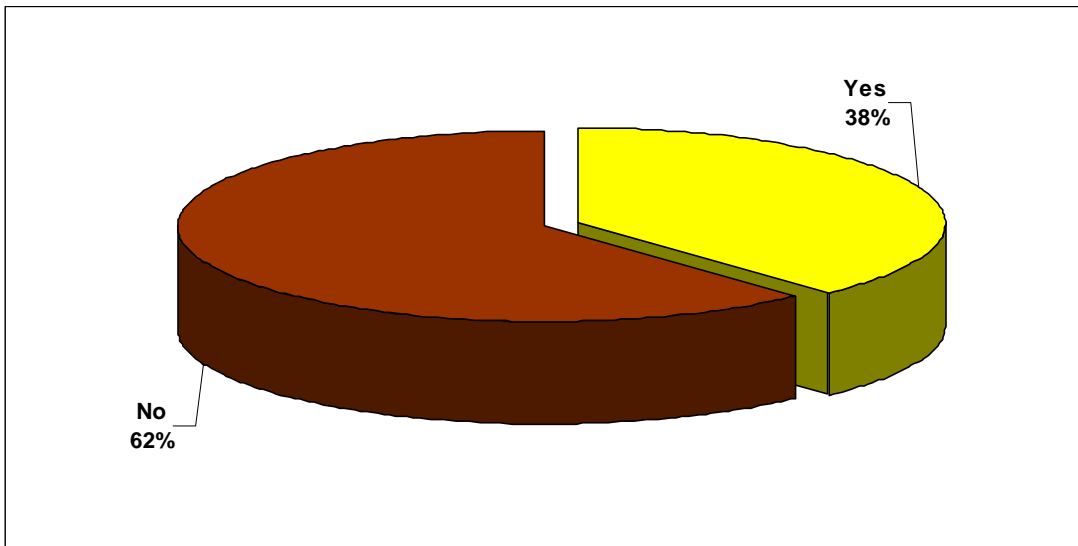
What type of license(s) do you hold?



I have been flying out of Gowen Field for (number of years).

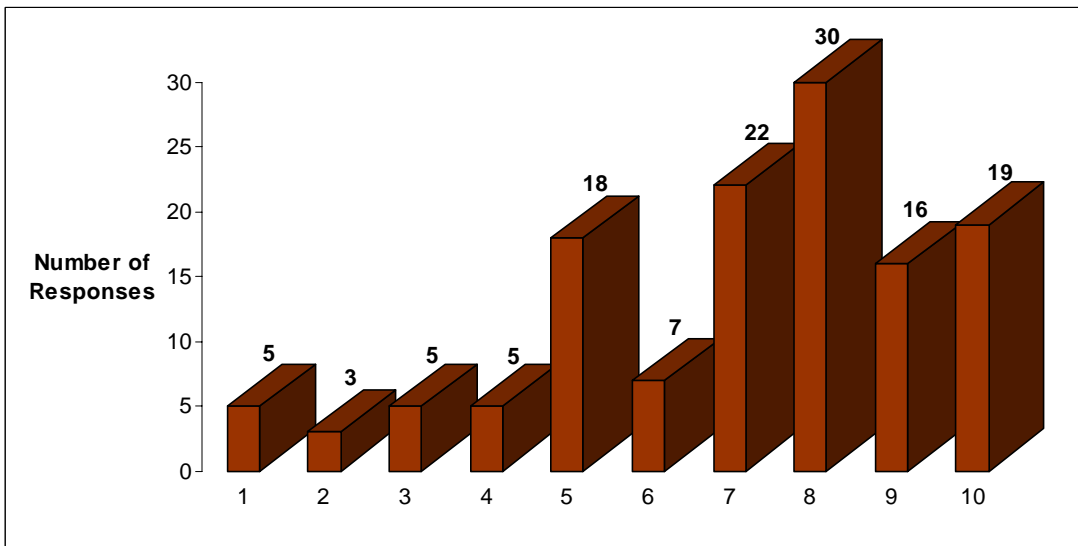


**I have read and have a copy of the Airport Rule and Regulations (Yes or No).**

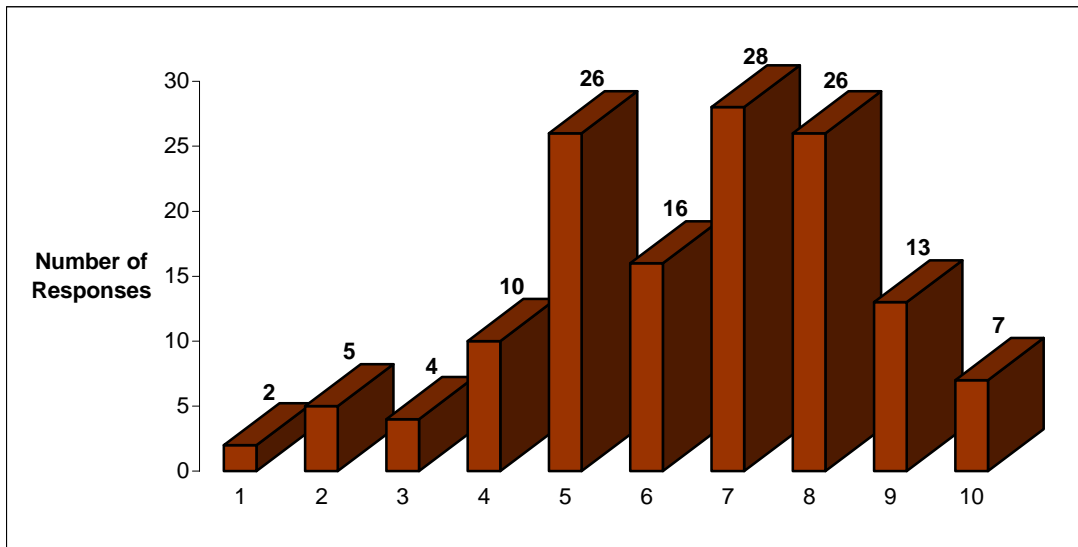


Fifty-seven respondents have read and / or have a copy of the Airport Rules and Regulations. Ninety-two people either had not read the rules and regulations or did not have a copy. A few people stated they did not know the Airport had such a document.

**Access to my aircraft is reasonably convenient.**

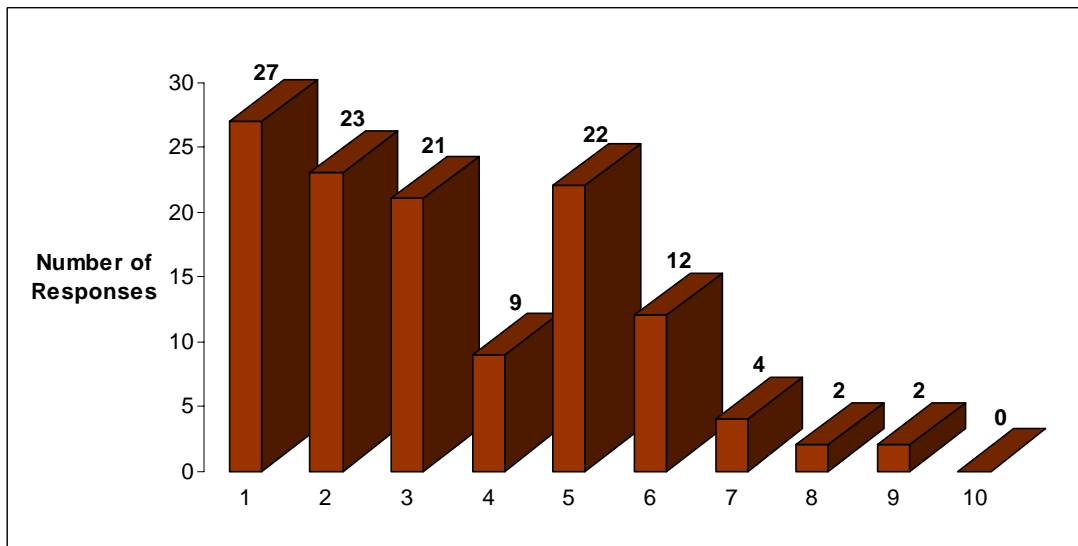


The layout of the GA facilities, i.e. hangars, tie downs, FBO sites, etc. is good.



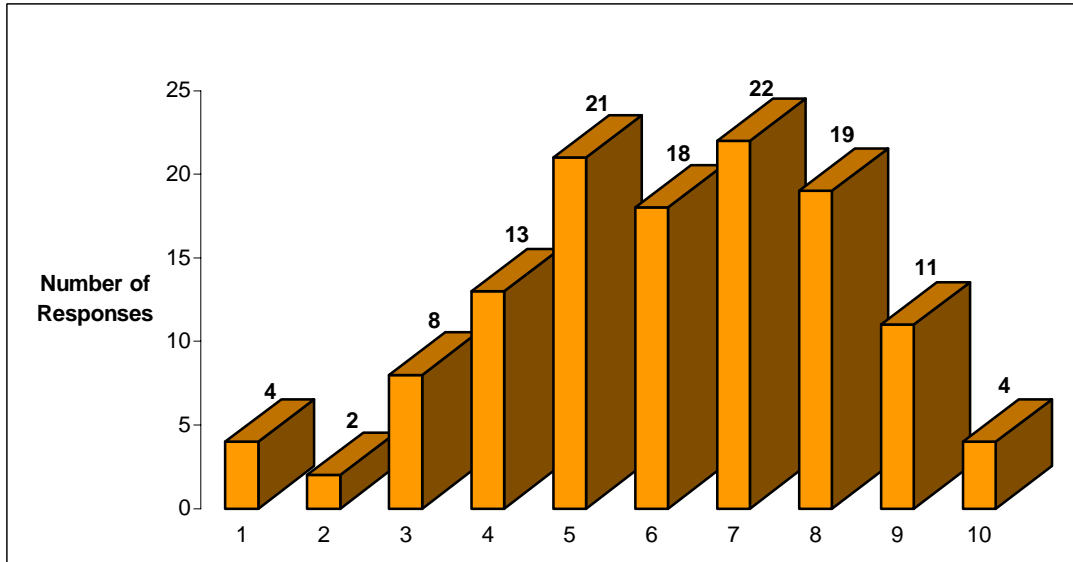
The results indicate that users are generally pleased with the layout of facilities.

I believe the number of hangars for rent is adequate.



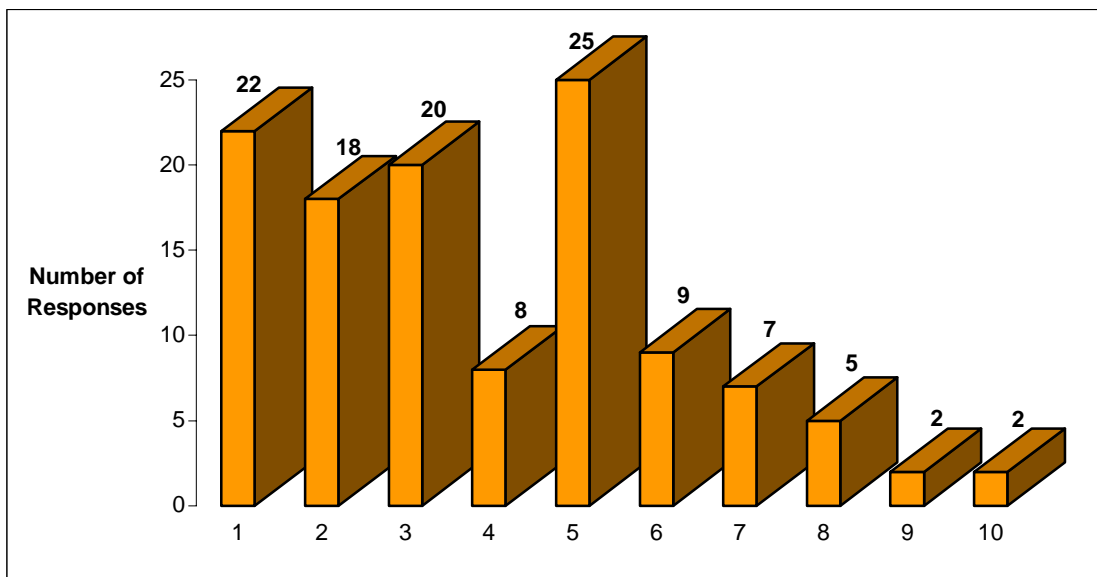
There seems to be a strong agreement that the number of hangars available for rent is not adequate.

I believe the number of tie down spaces available is adequate.



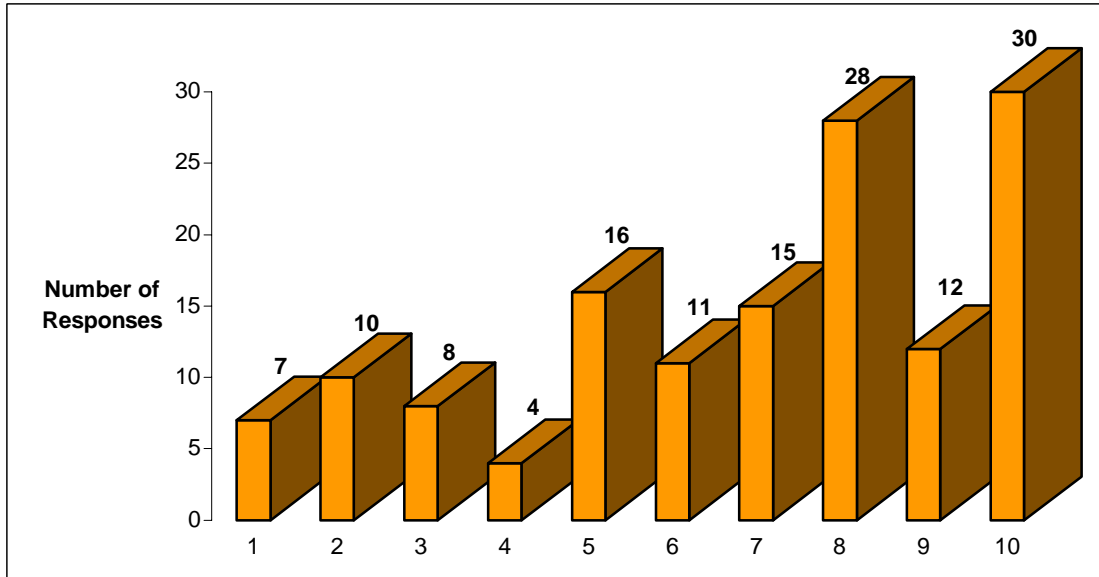
There is indication that the number of tie down space available is not adequate.

I believe the number of shade hangars is adequate.



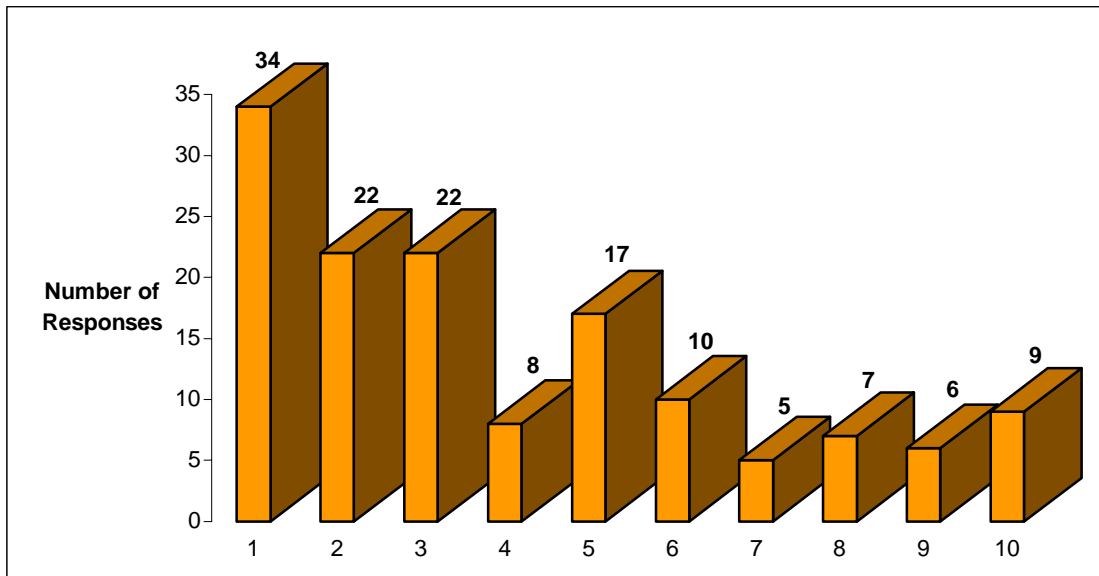
The responses indicate that there might be a need for additional shade hangars. It should be noted that the question does not consider the issue of the cost of shade hangars.

**I would use an on-airport restaurant in the GA area.**



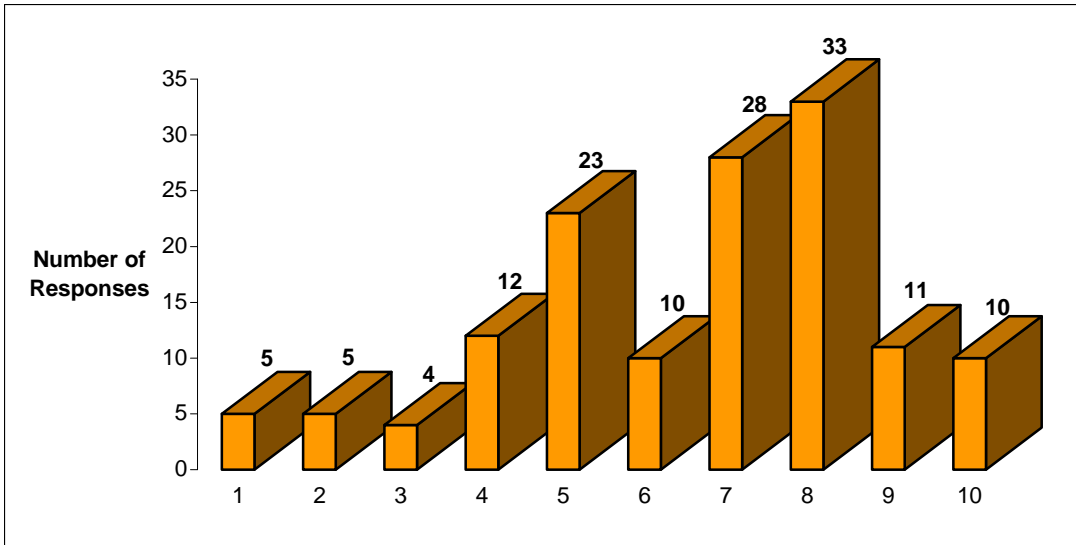
The results would indicate interest in the development of a restaurant in the area.

**I would support stronger security rules for GA users.**



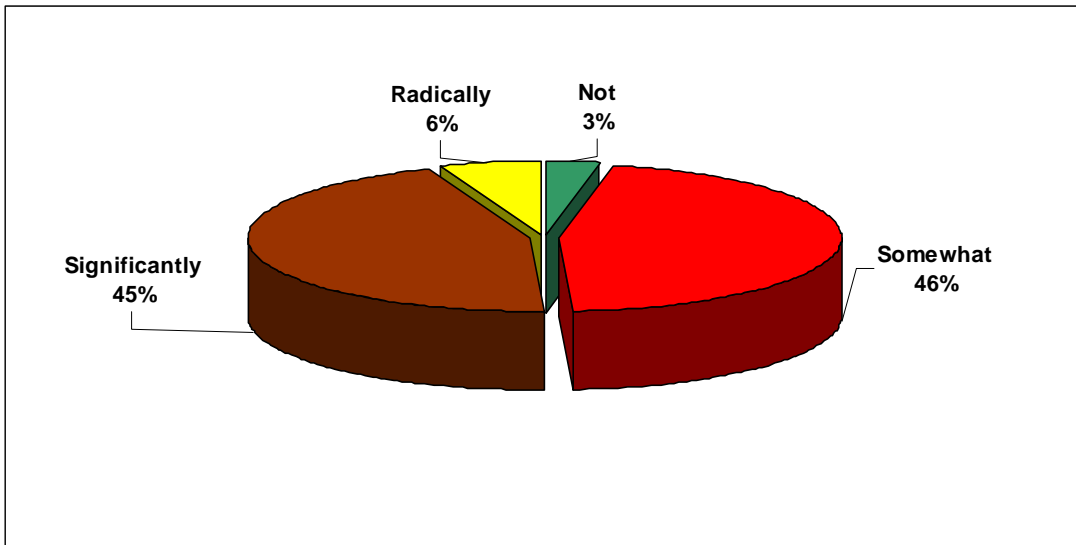
The results indicate that in general the GA community does not feel the need for stronger security rules.

In general terms, I am very satisfied with the services and facilities at Gowen Field.



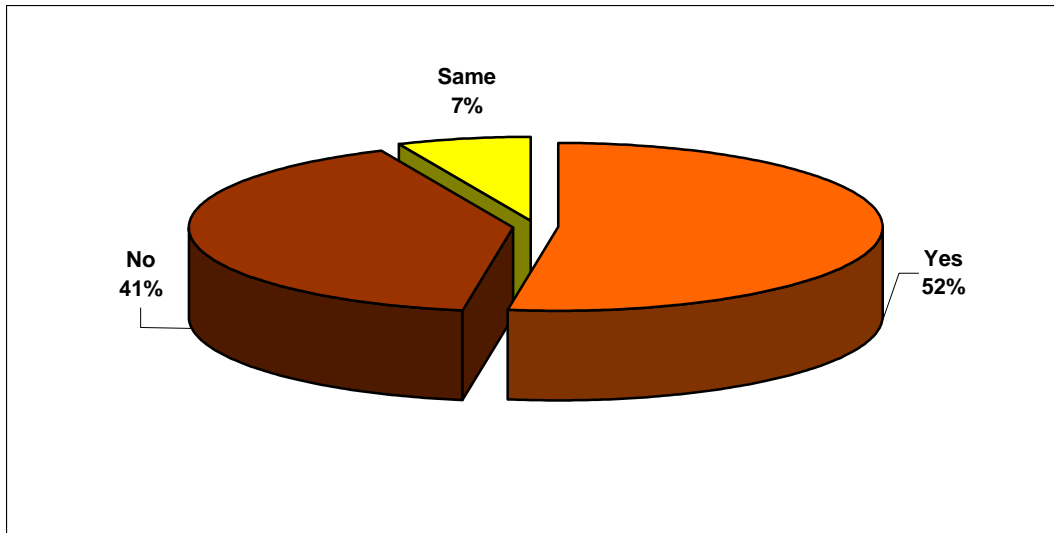
In general terms there seems to be satisfaction with the services and facilities available on the airport.

TSA actions following 9/11/2001 have impacted GA operations:  
(select one)



A majority of the respondents were in the middle on this issue. A couple vehemently voiced their concerns with the TSA; while a small sampling was on the extreme sides of the scale, most felt some sort of impact.

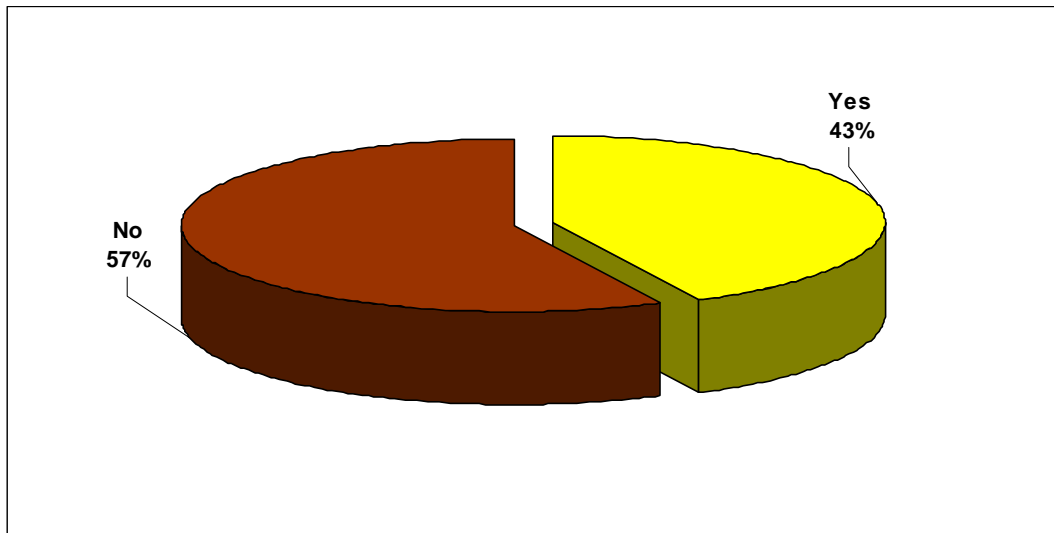
**Air space congestion is better today than five years ago in the BOI area?**



This question seemed to be a confusing one to most respondents and the operators that were interviewed. We believe this is a result of our choice of words when phrasing the question. Respondents had a difficult time determining whether congestion was “better” or “worse”. Most stated that there were no congestion problems so whether that was “better” or not was an issue. Of the respondents from the survey, 55 felt it was better, 43 did not feel it was any better, and seven felt it was the same.

The results would seem to indicate that congestion is not an issue at Boise. We believe this question should be resurveyed at some point and the phraseology adjusted to make the question more clear.

Would you be interested in a larger hangar (45' x 45') with fewer restrictions than a nested t-hangar?



Forty-seven respondents replied that, yes, they would be interested in a larger hangar with fewer restrictions than a nested t-hangar. Sixty-three stated that they would not be interested. Most respondents did not reply to this question.

What monthly lease rate would you be willing to pay for the larger hangar?

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| \$ 100.00   | 6 |
| \$ 125.00   | 3 |
| \$ 150.00   | 6 |
| \$ 200.00   | 8 |
| \$ 225.00   | 2 |
| \$ 250.00   | 6 |
| \$ 300.00   | 4 |
| \$ 350.00   | 4 |
| \$ 2,200.00 | 1 |

## VII. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, SUMMARY

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### *Conclusions*

As we worked on this project, which was designed to focus on developing a plan to improve communications with the GA community, we discovered some interesting concepts.

- The plan to communicate more effectively with the GA community is one piece of what the airport does everyday; communicates with its users. This plan focuses on GA but in reality is part of a broader effort to communicate effectively with all users.
- The line between communicating with GA and the larger “airport” community is not as much a line as it is recognition of an airport constituency with unique needs for information.
- Communications and marketing are virtually inseparable. Marketing the airport to the GA Community will send positive signals about how the airport operator embraces the value of GA.
- An active effort to communicate with the GA Community is important, should be implemented and will positively effect everyone concerned.

Our conclusions are based on the information that we gathered from the users of the airport – perceptions that we believe are fairly representative of the views of the broader GA community. Our recommendations are suggestions based on our findings / conclusions. We also believe that our recommendations are exactly that – recommendations. Phased implementation, modification and adjustments to the recommendations must be expected in light of work levels, staffing requirements, legal implications and other factors unknown to the authors.

Our specific conclusions follow, they are sub-divided into two groups for clarity: (1) comments from Boise Airport Users, and (2) comments from Nampa and Caldwell airport operators.

### *Boise Airport Users*

- We were pleasantly surprised by the robust response to the “mail-in” survey. Our experience has indicated that a response rate of 15% is very good; in this survey more than 33% of the surveys were returned. We also noted that of the returned surveys, 70% were aircraft owners. We believe this indicates a very strong interest in the operation of the airport by those most directly affected, the pilot users.
- There is no single voice that speaks for the GA Community.
- In general, we believe that the GA community would like to receive more information related to airport activities. The GA Community is particularly

interested in the airport's construction activity and plans, GA development; "Calendar of Events"; information related to airport use statistics and current aviation industry events.

- Over half of the respondents are satisfied with the level of information that is available from the Boise Airport.
- The most effective type of communication for the GA community is a newsletter via direct mail or email.
- Most respondents did not know who to contact at the airport to get a question answered.
- Different groups that make up "GA" wanted to be contacted in different ways. The FBOs felt it would be best to meet face-to-face a couple times a year with the Director, the Airport Commission or a Sub-committee. Corporate operators felt that communications were fine essentially as they are. The pilots / users generally encouraged the use of multiple media venues – newsletters, web site, email and open-house discussions.
- Some form of formal representation for the GA community to / on the Airport Commission would be beneficial.
- Reaching out to the GA community was viewed very positively.
- The FBOs expressed their concerns about available space and too much competition.
- A general feeling (identified by the surveys and interviews) held by the GA Community is that the airport is focused almost exclusively on air carrier issues.
- We identified a general "feeling" that the airport was not "GA friendly". The feeling was expressed that GA was viewed as a "thorn in the side" and not a "contributor" to the airport.
- There was consensus that there is a perceived shortage of ramp, T-hangars and tie-down space.
- Access to aircraft is viewed to be very good.
- GA facilities layout was considered "satisfactory", not a negative but not a positive either.
- There is a fairly strong expression of satisfaction with the services and facilities at Gowen Field.
- The availability of the Airport's Rules and Regulations is not well known.
- There is no consensus about the need for or viability of a restaurant oriented to the GA community. Opinions on this question covered the full spectrum of possible responses.
- The vast majority of users expressed very positive feelings about security at the airport – "the airport is staying on top of security and doing a good job."
- No conflicts with the military's operations were noted.
- Two FBOs were opposed to moving to the third runway the other two FBOs were curious and interested to learn more.
- The operators at BOI do not believe they are in competition with the operations at Nampa and Caldwell airports.

- Security requirements following 9/11 appear to be well received, accepted and understood. There seems to be a good deal of support for strong security procedures in the GA community. While most users felt some level of impact (characterized as “somewhat” to “significant”) on their operations, the impacts were not generally viewed as onerous.

### *Nampa and Caldwell Airport Operators*

- BOI is viewed by the operators of Nampa and Caldwell as “the” airport to service airline passengers, the military and for flight training in controlled airspace.
- Nampa and Caldwell airports are growing rapidly and have very serious interests in attracting GA and larger corporate operations to their facilities.
- Both airports are expanding their services and want to become THE “airport of choice” for corporate operators and smaller GA.
- Both airports expressed an interest in the concept of a Regional Aviation System Plan.
- Both airports actively advertise their airports in trade magazines and make presentations to various civic groups to promote their operations.

### *Recommendations*

Our recommendations have been prepared as suggested action items. We found it useful to place each recommendation in a particular category of action or media type. Some recommended actions are appropriately addressed in more than one media and are arranged in that fashion.

We know that the GA Community is a very diverse group with a fairly broad range of interests. These factors make it difficult for GA to “speak with one voice” and for the airport to hear the issues clearly. Given these realities we believe that mechanisms can be developed to facilitate communications.

### *Organizations and Structure*

We recommend that the Airport coordinate the development of a Boise Airport Tenant group and a Boise Pilots group. The Tenant group would be composed of FBOs, State Aviation and Corporate operators (others as appropriate). The Boise Pilot group would represent pilots through AOPA, EAA, CAP (at large) and any other organizations commonly recognized as representing pilots at Boise.

We recommend that the Airport Commission develop a General Aviation Sub-committee of the Airport Commission to address GA issues. In the absence of a GA Sub-committee, we recommend a GA Task Force to at a minimum address GA issues during the Airport Master Plan Update. We envision that the GA Sub-committee will meet with the representatives of the Tenant and Pilot groups. The

GA Sub-committee would then report to the Airport Commission its recommendations for action by the Airport Commission. This model is commonly used at other airports. The make up of the GA Sub-committee can vary from airport to airport but would generally be composed of one or two members of the Airport Commission, Airport Senior Staff and perhaps a representative from the City. We believe that it is important that the individuals selected to serve on the GA Sub-committee have a “GA” background. This will bring credibility to their position and standing with the GA community. The committee should be advocates for GA; the Airport Commission can bring the business balance needed in all considerations.

We recommend that written guidelines be developed to assist with the mechanics of the GA Sub-committee functions.

### *Meetings*

We recommend that there be tenant meetings every six months. User groups: FBOs and Corporate. The Airport Director and Senior Staff meet with users to discuss issues and share information. It could be a structured / semi-formal meeting with agenda, action items and minutes. It should be coordinated and hosted by the Airport. Some topics that should be covered that are of interest to GA are:

- Construction update
- Future plans
- Pending changes to policies and regulations
- Security issues
- Other

We recommend that there be an annual open GA meeting. We believe it would be beneficial for the Airport to host a general meeting with the GA pilots at the Boise Airport. This could be a stand-alone meeting or in association with an FAA Listening Session or other aviation gathering.

### *Distribution of Electronic Information*

We are advocates for the dissemination of information electronically through the Internet (Airport / City web site) and direct distribution (where appropriate) via e-mail.

We recommend that the Airport develop an extensive “e-mail” list for the distribution of information. The list of “interests” can be developed by:

- Use the results from the mail-in survey conducted as part of this study to solicit interest in receiving email information from the Airport.
- Develop an “opt-in” e-mail signup opportunity on the Airport web site.
- Include an “opt-in” signup notice in mail that the Airport sends to tenants; repeat the notices every six months.

- Encourage users to get other interested users to “opt-in”.
- Expansion of current e-mail lists used by the airport.
- Offer specialized e-mail notice for specific events, i.e., Airport Commission activities, security alerts, construction activities, special GA events and others specific events.
- Use the email list to distribute the Airport Newsletter or other one-time publications.

We recommend that the Airport / City of Boise develop a GA Community “button” on the Airport website that will take the user to a location that is designed specifically to present information of interest to the GA community.

### *Print Media*

We believe that an airport newsletter should be developed and distributed. We suggest an initial publication cycle of three to four months (3 or 4 issues per year). The cycle should be adjusted as appropriate for the content.

All printed material should be developed so that it can be posted to the Airport web site and printed by the readers if desired.

While not directly a GA publication, the Boise Airport might benefit by developing an Annual Report. Airport Annual Reports, while potentially (but not necessarily) expensive to develop serves a number of very useful ends, including general education about how the airport functions and its finances. Certainly a format could be developed where a section of the Annual Report focuses on GA interests. The *Boise Airport Year in Review 2003* document is a good example of what can be developed and with some changes could become the template for an Annual Report document.

The Airport may want to sponsor or share costs related to advertising GA services to the flying public. Numerous trade / industry publications are available where this effort could benefit the airport users.

### *Other Thoughts*

In this section we begin to cross the “line” between GA Communications and general marketing of the Boise Airport. We believe that the GA Communications Plan should actually be part of a larger Communications or Marketing Plan for the Airport. Airports are often viewed as reflections of the cities that they serve. The new terminal facilities say a good deal about the cities connection to the environment and the rivers in the Boise area. This reflects and projects an image that is unmistakable to the airport terminal visitor. We believe that other forms of communications (verbal, print, electronic) should reflect and project that image. Communications and marketing should be in harmony with the image that the community is projecting and the airport is reflecting. While this

can be overdone in the extreme, we believe there are many opportunities still available for the airport to project the friendly and warm yet high tech image that is Boise

- One of the best things that anyone can do in communications is use the medium that is most available to interact with their most immediate customers.
  - The airport “communicates” with their customers everyday as the citizens of the community use the airport facilities.
  - That direct contact is major capital and can be used as an effective communications tool.
    - Use the facilities and time that people are in the airport to communicate the good work about the airport. Showcase General Aviation in appropriate areas of the airport.
    - Use the airport facilities to send “indirect” messages by focusing on a user-friendly environment.
    - Provide “free” services.
    - Do things that foster the image that you want to project, if it is high-tech then provide high-tech features.
      - Parking lot systems like Buffalo International Airport
      - Internet hot-spots
      - VIP lounge / business centers by the airport, perhaps in association with airlines – a thank you to your frequent users.
      - Build on the advanced displays (FIDS) that are installed.
    - Review the messages you are sending to your clients – signage, announcements, and furnishings.
    - Kids programs bring value as the children become airport users.
    - Work with the FBO’s to make pilot-centric work centers in the FBO facilities, sponsored by the Airport Commission or City.
    - Co-op advertising programs with your tenants. Help them advertise and grow both of your businesses.

### *Summary*

**W**e have enjoyed the opportunity to work on this project with the airport tenants, users and airport staff. We see the airport staff as proactive and very interested in growing and supporting general aviation; we also believe that message is not being broadly heard by the General Aviation Community. We believe that implementing a proactive communications plan will change the perceptions to reflect reality. The upcoming Airport Master Plan Update provides and additional opportunity to enhance communications with the General Aviation Community.