

"UTAH GENERAL AVIATION ASSOCIATION" (UGAA)

- HISTORY -

The Utah General Aviation Association (UGAA) was formed in 1998 to serve as a voice for general aviation in the State of Utah.

TOWARD THIS END OUR GOALS ARE TO:

Preserve, promote, and protect the interests of all members of the General Aviation Community;

Monitor state and local laws, ordinances and administrative actions to assure they are consistent with FAA regulations and serve the interests of General Aviation;

Maintain a continuing dialog with the FAA to promote the interests of General Aviation in Utah;

Establish UGAA area representatives throughout the state to represent the strong presence of General Aviation in this State;

Maintain other outreach and lobbying efforts that promote flight safety and benefit General Aviation;

Advance Utah General Aviation through the support of safety and educational aviation programs;

Conduct or participate in aviation activities designed to promote good relations between airport users and local residents and governments;

Encourage the construction, improvement, and maintenance of air facilities and airports, both mainstream and back country.

SOME OF OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS THUS FAR:

During the UGAA's first year of existence, we successfully negotiated with the administration of the Salt Lake International Airport to obtain hangar lease agreements that were fair to both the city and general aviation users. This agreement guaranteed reasonable and proper rights and access for the hangar tenants, mechanics, and instructors, while preserving the property rights of the landlord and promoting safe activities at the airport.

In both 1999 and 2000, the UGAA worked with the Utah State Legislature to modify the state property tax structure on general aviation aircraft. These changes lowered aircraft property taxes, which went for non-aviation purposes, and increased the fuel tax which allowed the collected monies to be redirected toward airport maintenance and improvement. This taxing change remained revenue neutral so that the Utah aircraft owners saw no tax increase (some actually saw a small tax decrease) and provided much needed support to Utah airports.

General aviation input has been provided to the Salt Lake Capacity Enhancement Task Force (CETF), a group organized by the FAA to attempt to increase the throughput of the Salt Lake International Airport by altering traffic procedures at that facility. A problem exists that causes commercial air traffic to stack up in the skies over Salt Lake City during airline push times, while there is "empty pavement" on the airport below. This is caused by required traffic spacing and the unique terrain surrounding the airport. This task force is working on new solutions to handle the large aircraft, and UGAA is working on that committee to make sure that any changes have minimal impact on GA aircraft. This work is ongoing.

Members of the UGAA along with others, worked on the Salt Lake City Airport General Aviation Subcommittee to rewrite the very outdated Title 16 code. This antiquated ordinance, among other things, required all aircraft to have tail wheels when operating out of the SLC airport. UGAA worked to provide timely updates, assure that the city was not trying to control airspace (properly the responsibility of the FAA), and remove sections that were contrary to the interests of General Aviation and mechanics. This work is ongoing, awaiting adoption by the city council.

UGAA is working with the FAA, Wasatch Front Regional Council, and various security agencies to minimize the impact of the 2002 Winter Olympics on GA. Once final rules are laid down, we intend to carry out a high intensity education effort to publicize those regulations which will affect GA during the Olympics.

UGAA is working with the Utah Back Country Pilots Association to help preserve and rejuvenate back country airports in the state of Utah. Since these airports offer great potential for recreation, in addition to emergency landing sites, they are important to all of GA in the state. We strongly support the efforts of Representative Jim Hansen in the US Congress to provide protection for these airports.

Even with the added tax revenue provided for airports in the state by the above mentioned tax changes, Utah airports (other than those controlled by Salt Lake City) are suffering a shortfall in revenue for maintenance of approximately 2 million dollars each year. This has caused Utah State Aeronautics to place 20 of the 50 public use airports in the state on an "endangered list". UGAA is working with State Aeronautics, Utah Back Country Pilots, EAA, Utah Airport Operator's Association, Utah Air Travel Council, Civil Air Patrol and others to increase local interest in those airports with a number of "Round Robin" fly-ins. Local officials and the local public are invited to their local airports for a presentation by State Aeronautics and other dignitaries (such as Senator Garn) about the value of their local airports. These values include emergency medical evacuation, fire fighting, crop spraying, tourism and business. The GA community provides an input by being there that shows we care and that these airports are important also to us. Recently at one fly-in there were more aircraft parked on the Escalante airport than ever before in the history of that airport. We hope that these efforts will focus more attention on our outlying airports from the Utah State Legislature and provide the needed \$2 million on a continuing basis.

At present, meetings are held quarterly with updates on the "Utah Aviation Environment" and interesting speakers. (Refreshments of course). UGAA welcomes all those involved in or interested in General Aviation in Utah to join us in our efforts and our fun. Visit our web site at: **WWW.UGAA.ORG**

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