

25.01 Use and Operation of System Aircraft



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Policy Statement

The Texas A&M University System (system) is responsible for approving guidelines regarding the use and operation of system-owned aircraft.

Reason for the Policy

This policy establishes the specific guidelines for the use, operation, and reporting requirements of system aircraft operations.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. Use of System Aircraft

- 1.1 System aircraft (or state aircraft reserved through the System Aircraft Office) will be used only in the conduct of official state business and only in compliance with the travel regulations contained in the current General Appropriations Act and any other laws applicable to the use of state-owned or leased aircraft.
- 1.2 When any system aircraft (including state aircraft reserved through the System Aircraft Office) is flown in the conduct of official system business, passengers who are not system officers or employees on official system business may also fly provided they are state officers or employees, are persons in the care or custody of state officers or employees, or are persons whose transportation furthers the official state business purposes of that flight with approval of the priority person to whom the aircraft is assigned. In accordance with Attorney General Opinion H-1089, the system Board of Regents (board) finds that attendance of the spouses of members of the board and officials of the Office of the Board of Regents, spouses of system member chief executive officers and other administrative officers at certain official functions is in furtherance of official state business in certain circumstances. Examples include, but are not limited to, attendance at board meetings when there is an official function hosted by a system member, and retirement functions honoring long-time key employees of the system.

- 1.3 System aircraft (or state aircraft reserved through the System Aircraft Office) should be used only when the official business of the state or the system cannot be conducted as well as, or more economically, through the use of regularly scheduled commercial aircraft. Specifically, it is appropriate to use these aircraft when the destination is not served by commercial carriers, the time required to use such a carrier interferes with other obligations, or the number of state officers and employees traveling makes the use of these aircraft cost effective.
- 1.4 Requests for use of system aircraft (or state aircraft reserved through the System Aircraft Office) by members of the board will be arranged through the executive secretary to the board.
- 1.5 Except for requests by the board, the chancellor is delegated the authority to establish a priority list for use in scheduling flights.
- 1.6 In accordance with the expressed intent of the legislature that state-owned aircraft be utilized by all agencies of the state, use of system aircraft by other state officials and state personnel on official state business is appropriate and will be authorized provided that system aircraft are available.
- 1.7 System aircraft pilots will report to and act under the direction of the chancellor or designee.

2. Operation of System Aircraft

- 2.1 System aircraft will and must be operated at all times in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Aviation Agency's approved flight manual and the system's *Flight Operations Procedures*.
- 2.2 Under federal regulations, the pilot of any aircraft is responsible for and is the final authority as to the flight operation of that aircraft. All decisions concerning the flight itself will rest solely with the pilot.
- 2.3 It shall be the policy of operations for system aircraft (or state aircraft reserved through the System Aircraft Office) that two (2) pilots be on board for each scheduled flight, unless otherwise authorized by the priority person to whom the aircraft is assigned.

3. Record Keeping and Reporting

- 3.1 All flight requests should include:
 - (a) departure date and time;
 - (b) destination and intermediate stops;
 - (c) name of each passenger;
 - (d) contact name, phone number, system affiliation, and account number(s) for billing purposes; and
 - (e) purpose(s) of travel.

- 3.2 The completed passenger manifest, which includes the date of travel, aircraft identification number, name and signature of each passenger along with his or her purpose of travel and institution, the pilots' names and signatures, plus each destination, times of departure and arrival, and readings of the aircraft Hobbs meter shall serve as the official record of all flights on system aircraft (or state aircraft reserved through the System Aircraft Office).
- 3.3 An annual summary report of all flights conducted by the system aircraft will be prepared by the System Office of Budgets and Accounting. Copies of this annual summary and copies of monthly flight manifests will be submitted to the Legislative Budget Board and the TxDOT Aviation Division, as necessary, to comply with the requirements of the current General Appropriations Act. Copies of all reports prepared by the system on aircraft operations shall be submitted to the system board for review by the Committee on Finance.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[Texas Government Code Ch. 2205, Subchapter B](#)

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