



AIN FBO Survey

Data compiled by David Leach; narrative by Curt Epstein

As business aviation activity in North America continues to rebound from the depths of the downturn, that has meant good news and growing prosperity for many of the companies that service those aircraft. According to industry data provider Argus, in its 2015 Business Aviation Review, the industry posted a year-over-year rise in flight activity in 24 of the 25 months since December 2013. Last year it saw a 2.1-percent rise in flight activity and a 2.7-percent gain in flight hours. “We actually consider 2015 to be kind of a breakout year,” said Atlantic Aviation CEO Lou Pepper. “I don’t mean it was great, but it just seemed to look like a lot of the fundamentals that have driven the business prior to the downturn are coming back.”

Flight activity last year was 4.2 percent up on 2013 levels, and it was 4 percent higher than in 2012. “Each year has taken a few baby steps forward. If you put them all together, I think 2015 was the watershed year,” Pepper told AIN. “Business is back to a healthy level now.”

That corresponds to the results from the Aviation Business Strategies Group’s annual FBO Industry Fuel Sales Survey and Forecast, released this year on the eve of NBAA’s Schedulers and Dispatchers Conference in January. Some 54 percent of the FBOs reported they had sold between 1 and 8 percent more fuel last year. “This is the first time since we started the survey that more than 50 percent of the respondents sold more fuel than in the previous year,” said company co-principal and FBO industry veteran John Enticknap.

Optimism for 2016 abounded among the survey respondents, with more than 90 percent saying they expect either the same or better fuel sales than in 2015.

Certainly one of the major developments over the past year was BBA Aviation’s purchase of rival Landmark Aviation from the Carlyle Group. With that bold stroke, the service provider chains have one fewer among their ranks as the Landmark Aviation brand was retired. The company, consolidated more than a decade ago, had been flipped several times as it grew, before its final purchase, which rolled its more than 60 locations into the Signature Flight Support network. The deal was finalized on February 5 (in this year’s survey report, the locations are still listed as Landmark Aviation). Even after Signature completes U.S. Department of Justice-mandated divestiture at the six locations where the two networks had significant overlap, it will stand as a behemoth in the service industry with 195 locations (149 wholly owned), 136 of them in North America.

For Million Air president and CEO Roger Woolsey, the strategy driving Landmark’s owners was clear. “They were a merger and acquisition [M&A] machine,” he explained, noting a recent buying spree that netted, among other locations, the 19-strong Ross FBO chain. “[Landmark] was aggregating and preparing to sell.” While the sheer number of airports and FBOs in the country suggests to Woolsey the possibility of more consolidation ahead, he doesn’t expect any more blockbuster deals like that anytime soon. “I think you’re seeing the industry settle into

long-term players,” he said. There are now three large brands, “and obviously we’re the baby of the group. But we’re a long-term brand and we’re not for sale.”

While the removal of one of the major players in the market could hurt competition at some airports, Woolsey said it could also have a more widespread benefit in helping temper bidding wars for FBO properties. “Every time someone pays more and more for one of these facilities, all it does is show up in the fuel price,” he explained to AIN. “There is a \$4-a-gallon disparity in places in the U.S. right now in fuel. Is that really in the cost of extracting oil, turning it into jet fuel and transporting it to your airport? No, that’s your M&A machine at work.”

In its 2015 annual results, released last month, Signature parent BBA Aviation described Signature’s performance over the past year as “impressive” as it prepares for the task of integrating all of the new locations. “All of us know the business and general aviation market had a relatively flat level of performance in Fiscal ’15, so our outperformance against the market has definitely made a significant improvement to BBA’s overall results,” said Signature president and COO Maria Sastre. “I’ve always said that at the end of the day, what we are trying to do is create better value for our customers. This isn’t always driven around the price of fuel. This is driven around what they see as an overall value proposition, which is a combination of the service they receive and the value point. So we find that to be encouraging since we believe that we are extremely competitive on that front.”

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This year's annual FBO Special Report marks the start of a new process by which AIN collects and reports customer feedback from around the world. Earlier this year we launched our FBO website, which can be accessed anytime at www.ainonline.com/fbosurvey. This mobile-friendly website allows our readers to view, comment on and evaluate FBOs at any time that suits them, year-round. On this site we have compiled all the FBO comments and evaluations that AIN has collected over the past four years—so the average scores that you will find on the site reflect a cumulative average and not a single year in isolation.

Launching this approach, the 2016 FBO Report on the following pages looks at aggregated average scores over the past four years broken out with our usual charts showing the FBOs rated most highly overall and those broken out by region. This marks a major departure from our traditional report as an annual feature built on responses gathered during a defined survey period, which has been in existence for the past 30 years.

We believe this new survey format provides both a more compelling way for business aircraft operators to make their preferences known and a more relevant assessment of service providers.

AIN has always prided itself on innovative and trustworthy coverage of key sectors of the business aviation industry. By modernizing our approach to surveying FBO customers over the years, we have ensured that we present the most credible and independent assessment of service providers in this industry.

The survey process is now far more interactive and meaningful for the pilots who participate. The new process still ensures that only qualified readers are able to give their ratings and that each participant's rating of an FBO counts only once. So, if Captain Joe Smith rated XYZ FBO at ABC Airport in 2014, and then rated the same FBO at the same airport again in 2016, the only rating counted is the most current, 2016 rating.

We are confident that giving users the mechanism to rate FBOs in real-time will ensure a more comprehensive survey and so deliver a more accurate assessment of the companies that support operators around the world.

— D.L.

TOP-RATED FBOs IN THE AMERICAS 2013-2016 (BY OVERALL AVERAGE)

PERCENT	FBO	AIRPORT	CODE	OVERALL AVERAGE
5%	AIRFLITE AVIATION SERVICES	LONG BEACH/DAUGHERTY FIELD	KLGB	4.84
5%	TAMPA INTERNATIONAL JET CENTER	TAMPA INTERNATIONAL	KTPA	4.83
5%	BLACK CANYON JET CENTER	MONTROSE REGIONAL	KMTJ	4.80
5%	J. A. AIR CENTER	AURORA MUNICIPAL	KARR	4.78
5%	ATLANTIC AVIATION	CHARLES B. WHEELER DOWNTOWN	KMKC	4.77
5%	FARGO JET CENTER	HECTOR INTERNATIONAL	KFAR	4.76
5%	XJET	CENTENNIAL	KAPA	4.75
5%	BANYAN AIR SERVICE	FORT LAUDERDALE EXECUTIVE	KFXE	4.74
5%	JET AVIATION	PALM BEACH INTERNATIONAL	KPBI	4.73
5%	SKYSERVICE	LESTER B. PEARSON INTERNATIONAL	CYYZ	4.72
5%	PENTASTAR AVIATION	OAKLAND COUNTY INTERNATIONAL	KPTK	4.71
10%	BUSINESS JET CENTER	DALLAS LOVE FIELD	KDAL	4.70
10%	MERIDIAN	TETERBORO	KTEB	4.70
10%	MONTEREY JET CENTER	MONTEREY PENINSULA	KMRY	4.70
10%	TEXAS JET	FORT WORTH MEACHAM INTERNATIONAL	KFTW	4.70
10%	WILSON AIR CENTER	MEMPHIS INTERNATIONAL	KMEM	4.70
10%	DESTIN JET	DESTIN-FORT WALTON BEACH	KDTS	4.69
10%	SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	SCOTTSDALE	KSDL	4.69
10%	GLOBAL SELECT	SUGAR LAND REGIONAL	KSGR	4.68
10%	SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL INTERNATIONAL/ WOLD-CHAMBERLAIN	KMSP	4.68
20%	SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	ST. PAUL DOWNTOWN HOLMAN FIELD	KSTP	4.67
20%	ATLANTIC AVIATION	PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL	KPIT	4.66
20%	BASE OPERATIONS AT PAGE FIELD	PAGE FIELD	KFMY	4.66
20%	WILSON AIR CENTER	CHARLOTTE/DOUGLAS INTERNATIONAL	KCLT	4.66
20%	VAIL VALLEY JET CENTER	EAGLE COUNTY REGIONAL	KEGE	4.65
20%	WILSON AIR CENTER	LOVELL FIELD	KCHA	4.65
20%	ATLANTIC AVIATION (FORMERLY PREMIER JET)	McCLELLAN-PALOMAR	KCRQ	4.64
20%	GLACIER JET CENTER	GLACIER PARK INTERNATIONAL	KGPI	4.64
20%	MILLION AIR	ADDISON	KADS	4.64
20%	SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU INTERNATIONAL	CYUL	4.64
20%	HENRIKSEN JET CENTER	AUSTIN EXECUTIVE	KEDC	4.63
20%	DEL MONTE AVIATION	MONTEREY PENINSULA	KMRY	4.62
20%	FONTAINEBLEAU AVIATION	OPA-LOCKA EXECUTIVE	KOPF	4.62
20%	HERITAGE AVIATION	BURLINGTON INTERNATIONAL	KBTW	4.62
20%	MILLION AIR	INDIANAPOLIS INTERNATIONAL	KIND	4.62
20%	STUART JET CENTER	WITHAM FIELD	KSUA	4.62
20%	NATIONAL JETS	FORT LAUDERDALE/HOLLYWOOD INT'L	KFLL	4.61
20%	YELLOWSTONE JET CENTER	BOZEMAN YELLOWSTONE INTERNATIONAL	KBZN	4.60

*FBOs with the same overall average are listed in alphabetical order

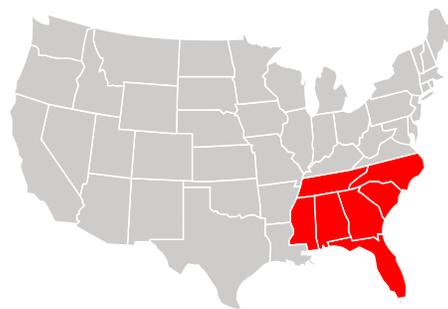
New Rating Scale

For our new FBO Survey platform AIN changed the evaluation scale to a 1-5 scale, with 5 being the highest; previously it used a 1-10 scale, with 10 being the highest. The 1-5 scale presents respondents with a simpler range to use during the evaluation process, with 3 representing average, 5 well above average and 1 well below average.

4.84

AirFlite

Long Beach Airport/Daugherty Field (KLGB), Long Beach, Calif.



Top Rated FBOs in the Americas by Region

SOUTHEAST

AirFlite is a perennial top performer in AIN's annual survey. This independent, Toyota-owned FBO garnered the overall top ranking from AIN's readers this year, and in the process earned the top score in the categories of passenger and pilot amenities. In the same facility at Long Beach Airport for nearly a quarter-century, the company lavishes attention on it to keep the 34,000-sq-ft terminal looking immaculate and fresh.

Always eager to stay on the cutting edge of technology, the company upgraded its Wi-Fi connectivity over the past year with a high-speed, fiber-optic Internet connection, a project that involved installing nearly a mile of underground cable to the airport, to give customers the same data streaming speed they expect at home.

The facility, one of five service providers on the field, claims 40 percent of the GA traffic at the airport, and general manager John Tary reported a 5-percent gain in business over the past year, which translated to a total jet fuel flowage of 1.5 million gallons for the location last year. He also noted full occupancy of the FBO's 60,000 sq ft of community hangars (which can accommodate aircraft up to a G650), and 65,000 sq ft of private hangars suited for small jets and turboprops. Currently it is home to 25 turbine-powered aircraft ranging from a G550 to a pair of PC-12s. A customer's MD-85, too large to

be sheltered, stays outdoors.

Customer Service Focus

As it is at any top performing FBO, superior customer service is a given, and AirFlite's staff earned the second highest score in the category over the past three years. "We always empower our associates to do whatever is necessary," said Tary, who is also a G550-rated pilot in Toyota's flight department. "We put a lot of faith and trust in our folks to do the right thing for the customer, whatever that takes."

Aside from the Ritz Carlton training, the staff follows Tary's lead. "Being a pilot, I've been on the other side of the fence, and I know what the customer wants," he told AIN. "In our mind, to do exactly what the customer asks you to do is 85 percent. The other 15 percent is the unexpressed things that we also try to do."

As part of the Toyota empire, AirFlite's staff has access to company-wide job listings and it occasionally experiences staff vacancies as team members move to other areas within the corporation. Tary spends three days personally instructing new employees in the FBO's and Toyota's customer service and safety culture. "The biggest thing I always try to instill in our CSRs is that our clients are not just our guests at AirFlite," said Tary. "We're hosts to them but we're also ambassadors to our city." To that end, training includes taking the CSR staff on city

tours to familiarize them with locations so they can provide directions and recommendations. To establish cohesiveness between the CSR staff and line service technicians, the company occasionally has members of both swap roles for the day, "so they can experience each other's trials and tribulations," said Tary. "A lot of places I've visited, customer service and line service don't always work together that well, and you can see it... because the left hand is not talking to the right hand."

AirFlite was a founding member of the Air Elite network, which now has 51 locations. The company has taken on a mentorship role in the network, according to Tary. It hosts "mini-internships" where member locations can send their own general managers or customer service supervisors to see firsthand what brings AirFlite's satisfied customers back year after year, and report back to their companies. That satisfaction can take many forms, including one recent situation where the wife of one of the FBO's tenants wanted to surprise her husband with a new Gulfstream G550. She managed to purchase the new aircraft without his knowledge and—with the help of the conspiring FBO staff—lured him to a conference room packed with his friends. As the group yelled surprise, his attention was drawn to the new twinjet parked just outside on the ramp, wearing a bright red bow.

Atlanta Metro Area

EPPS AVIATION	KPKD	4.33
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KPKD	4.31
HILL AIRCRAFT	KFTY	4.30
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KPKD	4.08
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KFTY	4.06

Charleston

LANDMARK AVIATION	KCHS	4.52
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KCHS	4.39

Charlotte

WILSON AIR CENTER	KCLT	4.66
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Fort Lauderdale/Palm Beach

BANYAN AIR SERVICE	KFXE	4.74
JET AVIATION	KPBI	4.73
STUART JET CENTER	KSUA	4.62
NATIONAL JETS	KFLL	4.61
SHELTAIR	KFLL	4.49

Fort Myers/Naples

BASE OPERATIONS AT PAGE FIELD	KFMY	4.66
WILSON AIR CENTER	KCHA	4.65
PRIVATESKY AVIATION SERVICES	KRSW	4.40
NAPLES AIRPORT AUTHORITY	KAPF	4.33

Jacksonville

SHELTAIR	KJAX	4.49
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Memphis

WILSON AIR CENTER	KMEM	4.70
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KMEM	3.91

Nashville

ATLANTIC AVIATION	KBNA	4.20
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KBNA	4.07

Miami Metro Area

FONTAINEBLEAU AVIATION	KOPF	4.62
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KBCT	4.54
ORION JET CENTER	KOPF	4.49
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KBCT	4.34
LANDMARK AVIATION	KMIA	4.27
LANDMARK AVIATION	KOPF	4.25

Northwest Florida

DESTIN JET	KDTS	4.69
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Orlando

ATLANTIC AVIATION	KORL	4.58
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KMCO	4.52
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KMCO	4.36
SHELTAIR	KORL	4.35

Raleigh-Durham

TAC AIR	KRDU	4.38
LANDMARK AVIATION	KRDU	4.13

Tampa Metro Area

TAMPA INTERNATIONAL JET CENTER	KTPA	4.83
RECTRIX AERODROME CENTER	KSRQ	4.56
LANDMARK AVIATION	KTPA	3.99

*FBOs with the same overall average are listed in alphabetical order

4.83

Tampa International Jet Center

Tampa International Airport (KTPA), Tampa, Fla.

In operation for 11 years, Tampa International Jet Center (TIJC) has spent most of that span in the top echelons of AIN's annual FBO survey, and this year's results were no different, with the location scoring top marks in two of the five survey categories, including facility. The building looks as good today as when it opened, testament to the care it has received for more than a decade.

"When we first opened this place, I decided that we were going to maintain it from day one, not wait for it to get tired and then do a major clean up," company president Phillip Botana told AIN. "Our owner is a great guy who allows us to do whatever we need to staff properly and maintain the facilities to a high quality standard. He gives me the latitude to do the job and keep the reputation of the company up, so we've been able to renovate as needed." The pilots' lounge recently received an overhaul, and this year Botana plans to replace the lobby furniture and refresh the facility's 14-seat A/V-equipped conference room, which has been used at times to host press conferences by state officials.

The 12,000-sq-ft terminal has an airy, two-story atrium lobby with an eye-catching mosaic map sprawling across the floor. According to Botana, when the company was in competition to establish the FBO at the airport, a rival claimed the name Tampa Jet Center, requiring the insertion of "International" in the name of what eventually became the winning bid. The design of the floor evokes air routes from all over the world heading to Tampa. A subtle globe motif continues the theme on the

FBO CHAINS: TOP FACILITIES BY OVERALL AVERAGE 2013-2016

FBO	AIRPORT	CODE	OVERALL AVERAGE
ATLANTIC AVIATION			
ATLANTIC AVIATION	CHARLES B. WHEELER DOWNTOWN	KMCC	4.77
ATLANTIC AVIATION	PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL	KPIT	4.66
ATLANTIC AVIATION (FORMERLY PREMIER JET)	McCLELLAN-PALOMAR	KCRQ	4.64
ATLANTIC AVIATION	ORLANDO EXECUTIVE	KORL	4.58
ATLANTIC AVIATION	FRIEDMAN MEMORIAL	KSUN	4.56
CUTTER AVIATION			
CUTTER AVIATION	PHOENIX SKY HARBOR INTERNATIONAL	KPHX	4.57
CUTTER AVIATION	ALBUQUERQUE INTERNATIONAL SUNPORT	KABQ	4.07
JET AVIATION			
JET AVIATION	PALM BEACH INTERNATIONAL	KPBI	4.73
JET AVIATION	TETERBORO	KTEB	4.50
JET AVIATION	WILLIAM P. HOBBY	KHOU	4.39
JET AVIATION	LAURENCE G. HANSCOM FIELD	KBED	4.24
JET AVIATION	NASSAU/LYNDEN PINDLING INTERNATIONAL	MYNN	4.21
LANDMARK AVIATION			
LANDMARK AVIATION	CHARLESTON AFB/INTERNATIONAL	KCHS	4.52
LANDMARK AVIATION	TETERBORO	KTEB	4.42
LANDMARK AVIATION	LAKEFRONT	KNEW	4.38
LANDMARK AVIATION EAST	WESTCHESTER COUNTY	KHPN	4.36
LANDMARK AVIATION	SCOTTSDALE	KSDL	4.34
LANDMARK AVIATION	TED STEVENS ANCHORAGE INTERNATIONAL	PANC	4.34
MILLION AIR			
MILLION AIR	ADDISON	KADS	4.64
MILLION AIR	INDIANAPOLIS INTERNATIONAL	KIND	4.62
MILLION AIR	SAN ANTONIO INTERNATIONAL	KSAT	4.59
MILLION AIR	ALBANY INTERNATIONAL	KALB	4.57
MILLION AIR	WILLIAM P. HOBBY	KHOU	4.50
SHELTAIR			
SHELTAIR	FORT LAUDERDALE/HOLLYWOOD INT'L	KFLL	4.49
SHELTAIR	JACKSONVILLE INTERNATIONAL	KJAX	4.49
SHELTAIR	SAVANNAH/HILTON HEAD INTERNATIONAL	KSAV	4.45
SHELTAIR	ORLANDO EXECUTIVE	KORL	4.35
SHELTAIR	JOHN F. KENNEDY INTERNATIONAL	KJFK	4.04
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT			
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	SCOTTSDALE	KSDL	4.69
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL INTERNATIONAL/WOLD-CHAMBERLAIN	KMSP	4.68
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	ST. PAUL DOWNTOWN HOLMAN FIELD	KSTP	4.67
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU INTERNATIONAL	CYUL	4.64
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	BOCA RATON	KBCT	4.54
SKYSERVICE			
SKYSERVICE	LESTER B. PEARSON INTERNATIONAL	CYYZ	4.72
SKYSERVICE	CALGARY INTERNATIONAL	CYYC	4.54
SKYSERVICE	PIERRE ELLIOTT TRUDEAU INTERNATIONAL	CYUL	4.51
TAC AIR			
TAC AIR	SALT LAKE CITY INTERNATIONAL	KSLC	4.52
TAC AIR	BLUEGRASS	KLEX	4.46
TAC AIR	EPPLEY AIRFIELD	KOMA	4.43
TAC AIR	RALEIGH-DURHAM INTERNATIONAL	KRDU	4.38
TAC AIR	CENTENNIAL	KAPA	4.25
WILSON AIR CENTER			
WILSON AIR CENTER	MEMPHIS INTERNATIONAL	KMEM	4.70
WILSON AIR CENTER	CHARLOTTE/DOUGLAS INTERNATIONAL	KCLT	4.66
WILSON AIR CENTER	LOVELL FIELD	KCHA	4.65
WILSON AIR CENTER	WILLIAM P. HOBBY	KHOU	4.36

FBO Survey Rules and Methodology

This report of AIN's FBO survey covers fixed-base operations in the U.S., Canada, Mexico, South and Central America and the Caribbean—in other words, the Western Hemisphere. Next month's report will cover FBOs in the Eastern Hemisphere.

AIN has been conducting surveys since 1981, asking about the service that FBOs provide their customers and providing reports of the results from these surveys. Initially, AIN sent out a paper survey questionnaire by mail to qualified subscribers in the U.S.—pilots, flight attendants and dispatchers—the people who use or make arrangements with FBOs. In later years, qualified subscribers in the remainder of North America and the rest of the world were added.

In 2006 AIN moved the FBO survey online. AIN has continued to add FBOs each year, and now offers our respondents a comprehensive list of 4,500 FBOs worldwide.

This year AIN collected FBO feedback via a new website integrated into ainonline.com. Qualified users were asked to create a username and password that will allow them to access this website into the future, both to provide further feedback and to research FBOs. This new website will be available to our subscribers at any time that suits them, year-round.

Between December 15 last year and February 12 this year AIN invited all qualified subscribers to participate in the survey. We contacted them via e-mail, announcements in AIN's e-newsletters and in the January issue of *Aviation International News*.

The questionnaire asks readers to evaluate FBOs they visited the previous year in five categories: line service; passenger amenities; pilot amenities; facilities; and customer service representatives (CSRs). For each of these categories, the participant is asked to assign a number from 1 to 5, 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest. This is an adjustment from our previous 1-to-10 scale.

To arrive at the averages for the categories, each FBO's ratings in each of the five categories are added separately and the resulting five sums are then divided by the total number of responses received for each respective category.

An FBO's overall average is calculated by adding all the individual category ratings received by that FBO and dividing the resulting sum by the total number of all category ratings received by the FBO. In other words, if a particular FBO was evaluated by 50 people (and assuming that all these 50 evaluators gave that FBO a rating in each of the five categories), then the FBO would receive a total of 250 category ratings. These 250 category ratings are added together and then the sum is divided by 250 to arrive at the overall average for this FBO.

To mark the launch of our new FBO website at ainonline.com, this year's FBO Survey shows the cumulative average rating from responses collected over the past four years. Only the most recent rating of an FBO is counted on a per-user basis. To view this new FBO site, please visit www.ainonline.com/fbosurvey.

— D.L.

CSR desk (which is never without a platter of freshly baked cookies).

In terms of fuel sales, 2015 exceeded by 4.5 percent the record totals achieved in 2014, and the beginning of this year has been even stronger, according to Botana. The location, one of two service providers on the airport, claims 60 percent of the GA traffic at Tampa International. The FBO's current 108,000 sq ft of hangar space is home to 25 jets and turboprops, ranging from a G550 to a Meridian turboprop single. The company has received approval from the airport to build another 32,000 sq ft hangar on the east end of its property. The \$5.5 million project is slated to break ground this summer. In return, TIJC received an additional 15 years on its lease, extending it to 2046, including options. At a height of 29 feet, the new hangar's doors will be two feet higher than the others on the property to accommodate the taller Global 7000 and 8000 when they enter service.

Keeping those aircraft moving is the role of TIJC's line service staff, which earned the highest score in the category from AIN's readers. "To me that's the most important part of doing well in your survey," noted Botana. "It's great for marketing, but at this point we've done pretty well for long enough that we've got the market share that we're going to get, but it helps a lot keeping people's motivation up if the customers recognize what efforts they go to."

At most FBOs, the neighbors are warehouses or perhaps fuel distribution terminals, and unless the facility has its own restaurant, the immediate dining options tend to be limited to vending machines or the cookies on the CSR desk. That's not the case at TIJC; one of the city's upscale shopping malls lies just across a quiet street from the FBO's front entrance, offering a Cheesecake Factory and a Capital Grille to hungry crews and passengers. Another advantage of the airport's location is its proximity to Raymond James Stadium, home of the NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers and college football's annual Outback Bowl on New Year's Day. On game days the FBO is able to shuttle arriving guests around the perimeter of the airport and pass through a security gate within a block of the stadium, allowing them to avoid any street traffic or parking congestion.

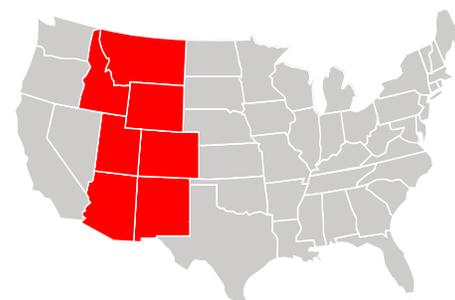
AIN asked survey respondents to identify specific FBO employees or teams who routinely go above and beyond when it comes to customer service. Below we have highlighted 21 individuals who were repeatedly recognized in this year's response.

PERSON	FBO	AIRPORT CODE
BETSY WINES	MERIDIAN TETERBORO	KTEB
BEVERLY PATTON	SHELTAIR	KFLL
CHRIS HOLDEN	GLACIER JET CENTER	KGPI
DANI AYCOCK	ATLANTIC AVIATION	KPIT
DEBBIE MORRIS	JET AVIATION	KPBI
ELAINE SILVA	EMBRAER FBO	SDCO
FELICIA SANDOVAL	JET CENTER AT SANTA FE	KSAF
GREG BOWMAN	HILL AIRCRAFT	KFTY
GREG MCQUEARY	AIRFLITE AVIATION SERVICES	KLGB
HARVEY TUCKER	MILLION AIR	KHOU
HENNING SCHYMIK	XJET	KAPA
HOLLY HOPKINS	TEXAS JET	KFTW
JILL BUCKLEY	DENVER JETCENTER	KAPA
JULIE SILBERMAN	TAMPA INTL JET CENTER	KTPA
KATIE RACK	SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KDAL
KATY BRINK	BLACK CANYON JET CENTER	KMTJ
KEVIN ENGE	SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KMSP
LOUIS HERNANDEZ	FONTAINEBLEAU AVIATION	KOPF
MELISSA THOMPSON	MILLION AIR	KADS
PABLO GARCIA	BANYAN AIR SERVICE	KFXE
SHALENE ENGLAND	J. A. AIR CENTER	KARR

4.80

Black CanyonJet Center

Montrose Regional Airport (KMTJ), Montrose, Colo.



Top Rated FBOs in the Americas by Region

ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Celebrating its 10th anniversary in operation this year, Colorado’s Black Canyon Jet Center seems to be hitting its stride, ranking among the top FBOs in the country in AIN’s annual FBO survey and achieving the highest individual category score (4.94) for its customer service. “We just continue to be dedicated to the customers’ smiles,” said general manager Ken Watson. “When each pilot departs, it’s our mission to ensure they have a smile as they pull back on the yoke.” Helping achieve that is a homegrown software data program dubbed Flight Line, which keeps track of all customer interactions. “It really fuels our ability to greet each customer by name, know what their special needs may be, even the names of their dogs,” said Watson. “It all goes in the software so when they come back we can have instantly at our fingertips all the details of their last visit. That goes a long way.”

The location is a gateway to the state’s ski resorts such as Telluride, and winter vacation travel makes up a disproportionate part

of its yearly business. Watson told AIN the company typically logs 70 percent of its annual business between December and March. With sparse snowfall in the Eastern part of the U.S., western ski destination FBOs such as Black Canyon are benefitting. “We’ve had better snow than I can remember in the last five years, and the de-ice business was robust,” he said. “In this area, a good snow year trumps everything.” As a result, fuel sales are up over the past few years, with the facility having pumped 1.7 million gallons last year. “We’re dedicated to safety and customer service overall and so as long as we don’t have any incidents there, and we continue to see a little bit of growth, we’re very happy,” said Watson.

The FBO’s 4,500-sq-ft terminal provides a passenger lounge, pilots’ lounge with snooze room, a 12-seat A/V-equipped conference room, crew cars and onsite car rental. It also offers access to an offsite fitness center and, during the warmer months, hands out free passes to the nearby

Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course. Its 50,000-sq-ft heated hangar can accommodate aircraft up to a G650, but the FBO itself is home to a lone Citation CJ, with a handful of aircraft in private hangars around the field. Watson emphasized that transient status, stating: “It’s a wonderful town and we love it, but there’s not a lot of people flying private who live here. It’s all about coming out to Western Colorado to go skiing.”

The FBO is open from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. seven days a week, and its core staff of 17 is adjusted to 20 to meet the demands at the height of ski season, when the facility sees 50 operations a day. Of those full-time employees, five have been with the FBO since it opened, providing a wealth of experience for the customer service staff. “We believe in adult decisions, and so we don’t give [employees] a lot of rules other than ‘take care of the customer,’” said Watson, “and if you are making decisions that take care of the customer, you can’t go wrong in this business.” □

Albuquerque

CUTTER AVIATION	KABQ	4.07
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Boise

JACKSON JET CENTER	KBOI	4.39
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Mountain Area

BLACK CANYON JET CENTER	KMTJ	4.80
VAIL VALLEY JET CENTER	KEGE	4.65
TELLURIDE REGIONAL AIRPORT	KTEX	4.27
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KASE	4.09

Denver Metro Area

XJET	KAPA	4.75
DENVER JETCENTER	KAPA	4.52
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KDEN	4.47
TAC AIR	KAPA	4.25
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KAPA	4.17

Glacier and Yellowstone

GLACIER JET CENTER	KGPI	4.64
YELLOWSTONE JET CENTER	KBZN	4.60

Grand Junction Metro Area

WEST STAR AVIATION	KGJT	4.45
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KRIL	4.18

Jackson Hole

JACKSON HOLE AVIATION	KJAC	4.01
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Phoenix/Scottsdale Metro Area

SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KSDL	4.69
SWIFT AVIATION SERVICES	KPHX	4.59
CUTTER AVIATION	KPHX	4.57
LANDMARK AVIATION	KSDL	4.34

Salt Lake Metro Area

TAC AIR	KSLC	4.52
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Sun Valley

ATLANTIC AVIATION	KSUN	4.56
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Tucson Metro Area

ATLANTIC AVIATION	KTUS	4.41
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*FBOs with the same overall average are listed in alphabetical order

4.76

Fargo Jet Center

Hector International Airport (KFAR), Fargo, N.D.



Last year was a mixed bag for Fargo Jet Center, the lone service provider at North Dakota's Hector International Airport, according to Darren Hall, the company's vice president of marketing. While overall fuel sales were down 3.3 percent from the previous year—a slide Hall attributed in part to the slump in petroleum prices and the attendant decline in the region's energy traffic—international arrivals (up 7 percent) helped offset that deficit. The company, which marked its 20th anniversary this year, counted 2015 as the third best year in its history.

Fargo has long positioned itself as a tech stop for European aircraft headed to Las Vegas or California, and the recent addition of a 24/7 U.S. Customs facility adjacent to the FBO has helped streamline the process. Also growing is the trickle of aircraft arriving from Asia; a Global 6000 can fly non-stop from Beijing to Fargo, Hall noted.

The facility's 145,000 sq ft of hangar space has been taxed by the demand.

With 80 based aircraft, 30 of them turbine-powered and ranging from a PC-12 to a Challenger 604, the location has had to waitlist transient customers seeking to shelter their aircraft from the brutal North Dakota winter. To remedy the situation, it built a 30,000-sq-ft precast concrete hangar, and the airport added 30,000 sq ft of ramp, giving Fargo Jet Center 10 acres of apron. The \$3.5 million hangar, which was completed last summer and can accommodate the latest big business jets, has floor heat and LED lighting. Another recent project saw floor resurfacing and the retrofit of LED lighting in the facility's avionics service hangar.

The FBO logged its highest score in customer service, and according to Hall the staff looks for “even the smallest opportunity to serve our customers.” As part of that commitment, every morning the terminal is fragrant with the smell of freshly baked muffins, made by the CSRs for the customers, in a real oven in the galley. “It doesn't

cost a lot of money, but it's something that shows them that we care about them,” said Hall, who estimates that in the last two decades the facility has made 150,000 of the treats. A more recent improvement is the establishment of a full-time “customer service ambassador” position to bridge the gap between the line service staff and the CSR desk. That person meets arriving aircraft and handles any special requests or extra needs. Cars arriving at the FBO are valet parked (a service much appreciated in sub-zero temperatures), and detailed before the owner's return, when they are brought, pre-warmed, back to the terminal door.

Fargo Jet also earned high marks for its line service, as the company prepares for its audit under the [International Standard for Business Aviation Handling](#). As part of its tech stop marketing, it specializes in quick turns and performed more than 850 last year. The NATA Safety 1st-trained line staff also completed Gulfstream's ground service program.

4.75

XJet

Centennial Airport (KAPA), Denver, Colo.



Top Rated FBOs in the Americas by Region
SOUTH

Austin/San Antonio Metro Area

HENRIKSEN JET CENTER	KEDC	4.63
MILLION AIR	KSAT	4.59
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KAUS	4.29
LANDMARK AVIATION	KSAT	4.21
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KAUS	4.12
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KSAT	4.05

Dallas/Fort Worth Metro Area

BUSINESS JET CENTER	KDAL	4.70
TEXAS JET	KFTW	4.70
MILLION AIR	KADS	4.64
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KDAL	4.39
CORPORATE AVIATION	KDFW	4.29
LANDMARK AVIATION	KDAL	4.29

Houston Metro Area

GLOBAL SELECT	KSGR	4.68
MILLION AIR	KHOU	4.50
JET AVIATION	KHOU	4.39
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KIAH	4.36
WILSON AIR CENTER	KHOU	4.36

Little Rock Metro Area

TAC AIR	KLIT	3.99
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New Orleans Metro Area

LANDMARK AVIATION	KNEW	4.38
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KMSY	4.28

*FBOs with the same overall average are listed in alphabetical order

With its member-club business model operating in the UK and two more locations in the Middle East under way, XJet has moved past its domestic boundaries to become an international service provider. Founded in Denver in 2007 as a private club for a group of jet owners, the location, one of four service providers at Centennial Airport, opened its facility to transient customers two years later. According to company founder and president Josh Stewart, that member-supported business model provides the distinction in the company's slogan "It's not an FBO, it's XJet."

Despite the competition among providers at the airport, XJet's Centennial location saw a record year in 2015, helped by the Denver Broncos' Super Bowl championship run, and 20-percent growth in membership revenue. The location also reported 27-percent growth in member hangar revenue, as several members upgraded to larger aircraft over the past year. The facility's 47,000

sq ft of hangar space is home to 16 member aircraft, ranging from a Falcon 2000LX to a PC-12.

In October the FBO joined the first handful of service providers to earn the ICAO-sponsored IS-BAH ground handling certification. "We're happy with the NATA Safety 1st training, but with operations opening in London and Dubai we love the international standard," Stewart told AIN. "We're already conducting our training upgrades in London to get that facility IS-BAH certified, and then we'll do the same for Dubai."

Despite all the work at the company's other locations, XJet Denver is not being overlooked. A \$1.5 million project scheduled for this year will see a 120,000-sq-ft expansion of the ramp (giving the FBO eight acres of apron) as well as an enlargement of the terminal. A customer advisory board consisting of member owners and pilots is being assembled to review the proposed designs.

Like many of the top-rated FBOs in this year's survey, XJet recorded its highest score in the customer-service category, and the company has a formalized three-month training program that each new team member ("partner" in XJet parlance) must complete before joining the staff. Denver remains the company's standard bearer in that regard, as staffers from all other locations will be sent there for training. "We've got to wow the customer every single time and exceed expectations," noted Stewart.

Among the location's most popular amenities is the auto spa, where customers can leave their cars not only for detailing and indoor storage but also for regularly scheduled maintenance to be performed in their absence as well. A partnership with a local car dealer sees a new Ferrari or Bentley parked on the FBO's ramp every day, available for test drives. So far, XJet's customers have bought three after taking them for a spin.

4.74

Banyan Air Service

Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport (KFYE),
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.



In operation since 1979, Banyan, one of four service providers at Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport, has become the beast of South Florida, with a sprawling facility that covers 80 acres. “It’s quite a complex,” noted company president Don Campion, who founded the FBO nearly four decades ago. “It takes about an hour to ride around on a golf cart.”

Among AIN’s readers, that facility itself earned the location its highest score in the past several surveys. “We’re not just a gas stop or just another industrial place to have your airplane maintained,” explained Campion. “We like to cater to the passengers and the owners as much as we do the crew, and the Banyan experience includes the Key West Tommy Bahama feel of our terminal; a Disney flair to the pilot shop; and then kind of a South Beach-y feel to the Jet Café.”

Banyan is home to 450 aircraft, one-third of them turbines, ranging from Caravans to Globals. Finding enough shelter for them from the hot Florida sun is a challenge, even with 300,000 sq ft of hangar space available. Last fall the company

added a 20,000-sq-ft hangar, which can accommodate aircraft up to a G650. According to Campion, it was fully occupied the day it opened.

As a result, the company, in conjunction with leaseholder Holland Builders (the parent company of Sheltair), has acquired a 20-acre parcel of land on the north side of the airport (including the Aero Toy Store property), where this summer it will break ground on another hangar complex. The \$25 million project, scheduled for completion in 2018, will provide eight 20,000-sq-ft hangars and a 5,000-sq-ft satellite Banyan terminal.

Also known for its maintenance and avionics facilities, Banyan employs 85 technicians. To meet its maintenance backlog, Campion recently went to a two-shift work day, open seven days a week, and until midnight Monday through Saturday.

Before and during the economic downturn, Banyan marketed itself heavily to South America, earning maintenance certifications from many countries and attracting foreign business, which helped buoy the company during the rough economic

period. “We went through the recession never having a recession here because Brazil and Venezuela were doing so exceptionally well from 2008 through 2012. And then they started to fall apart quite quickly,” noted Campion, who estimates that traffic from those countries has fallen off by 60 percent. Now that the pendulum has swung back to burgeoning domestic traffic, bigger market share has cancelled out any deficit.

The location also earned recognition for its customer service, which takes a tack different from that pursued by most providers, according to Campion. “We really go out of our way to have a relationship with not just the pilot, like so many other FBOs. We like to get to know the owners and have them feel free to call us, so that all of the communication does not have to go through the crews,” he told AIN. That service extends to the lobby as well. Recently when Banyan’s staff noticed an elderly passenger at the CSR desk who was having difficulty walking, a quick-thinking line service technician drove a golf cart inside the lobby to deliver the passenger directly to the aircraft stairs.

4.73

Jet Aviation

Palm Beach International Airport (KPBI),
West Palm Beach, Fla.



Jet Aviation's Palm Beach facility is the company's most lauded location in terms of performance, and a frequent place-holder in the list of top FBOs in AIN's annual survey as voted by our readers. Last year the 25-acre facility, one of three at Palm Beach International Airport, underwent a quarter-million-dollar refurbishment of its 30-year-old, 10,000-sq-ft terminal to bring it in line with the chain's new design scheme, launched at the flagship Zurich location. Over the past year, Jet Aviation PBI saw 5-percent gains in fuel sales and traffic.

The facility is home to 51 business jets, ranging from a Citation CJ1 to a G550, and a pair of G650s will take up residence shortly. To accommodate them, Jet Aviation has 160,000 sq ft of hangar space, which can shelter aircraft up to a Boeing Business Jet. The FBO also has 11 acres of ramp.

Like many in Florida's resort communities, the facility draws flocks of snowbirds escaping the Northeast winter, usually pushing the location's aircraft occupancy rates to capacity. However, this year's rather mild winter might have

eased the congestion.

According to John Langevin, the company's vice president of North American operations, the main ingredient driving Palm Beach's customer service score, its highest category, is the dedication of its employees, many of whom have known their customers for more than two decades. Over the past year, two staff members celebrated their 30th anniversaries at the location, while another two notched their 25th anniversaries. "The passion they have to serve our customers is incredible," Langevin noted. "We have an award-winning team that continuously goes above and beyond to meet our customers' needs." Like all Jet Aviation locations, Palm Beach is a member of the Air Elite Network, and its staff regularly undergoes Ritz Carlton service benchmarking.

Among the location's amenities, which include relaxation rooms with zero-gravity recliners and complementary golf passes, perhaps none is more popular than the ice cream cart in the lobby. "As you can imagine, there is nothing more refreshing than a good ice cream sandwich or cone,

once you walk in from the ramp when it's 90 degrees outside," said general manager Nuno Da Silva.

Throughout the year, several events such as the Palm Beach Boat Show, the PGA National Golf Tournament and the Barrett-Jackson auto auction (April 8-10 this year) serve as periodic boosts to the location's traffic.

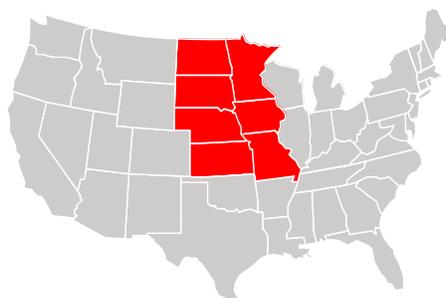
In January, Jet Aviation celebrated the 16th anniversary of La Bella Macchina, a charity event that promotes the positive impact of business aviation. Against the backdrop of a static display featuring some of the newest private jets was an array of more than 50 rare and classic Ferraris, making the evening, in the words of the company, "the ultimate in speed, luxury and technology."

Taking a more environmentally friendly stance, Jet Aviation began a robust recycling program last year, with a goal of having 50 percent of the location's trash recycled this year. In an energy-saving move, it upgraded its ramp lighting to efficient LED bulbs, and will do the same for its hangar lighting this year.

AIN's FBO SURVEY BY THE NUMBERS

Number of FBO evaluations provided by all respondents	27,540
Number of respondents who evaluated at least one FBO	5,013
Number of FBOs evaluated by at least one respondent	2,164
Highest number of evaluations received by one FBO	407
Number of FBOs in the Americas that received the requisite number of evaluations (30) to be eligible to have an overall average displayed.	192
Number of FBOs in the Rest of World report that received the requisite number of evaluations (30) to be eligible to have an overall average displayed	27
Number of countries having FBOs that were evaluated	95

* By the numbers shows the cumulative statistics from AIN's FBO Survey over the past four years



Top Rated FBOs in the Americas by Region **MIDWEST**

Fargo Metro Area

FARGO JET CENTER	KFAR	4.76
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Kansas City Metro Area

ATLANTIC AVIATION	KMCC	4.77
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Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro Area

SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KMSP	4.68
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KSTP	4.67
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KRST	4.27

Omaha Metro Area

TAC AIR	KOMA	4.43
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St. Louis Metro Area

MILLION AIR	KSUS	4.37
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KSTL	3.88

*FBOs with the same overall average are listed in alphabetical order



Top Rated FBOs in the Americas by Region **NORTHEAST**

Albany

MILLION AIR	KALB	4.57
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Boston Metro Area

JET AVIATION	KBED	4.24
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KBED	3.93
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KBOS	3.74

Burlington

HERITAGE AVIATION	KBTV	4.62
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New York Metro Area

MERIDIAN	KTEB	4.70
JET AVIATION	KTEB	4.50
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT WEST	KHPN	4.47
LANDMARK AVIATION	KTEB	4.42
MILLION AIR	KHPN	4.40
LANDMARK AVIATION EAST	KHPN	4.36

Philadelphia Metro Area

ATLANTIC AVIATION	KPHL	4.00
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Pittsburgh

ATLANTIC AVIATION	KPIT	4.57
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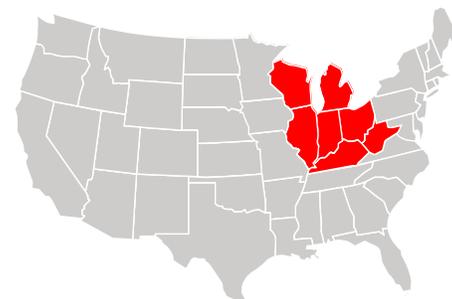
Washington D.C. Metro Area

APP JET CENTER	KHEF	4.42
LANDMARK AVIATION	KIAD	4.32
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KIAD	4.28
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KBWI	4.10

*FBOs with the same overall average are listed in alphabetical order

FBO CHAINS: AVERAGE CHAIN SCORES FOR FBOs THAT RECEIVED OVER 30 RATINGS FROM 2013-2016

FBO Chain	LINE SERVICE	PASSENGER AMENITIES	PILOT AMENITIES	FACILITIES	CSRs	OVERALL AVERAGE
SKYSERVICE	4.60	4.58	4.54	4.67	4.78	4.62
WILSON AIR CENTER	4.76	4.49	4.53	4.47	4.76	4.59
MILLION AIR	4.58	4.49	4.51	4.56	4.61	4.55
JET AVIATION	4.48	4.45	4.43	4.49	4.53	4.47
CUTTER AVIATION	4.57	4.33	4.32	4.36	4.58	4.42
TAC AIR	4.41	4.32	4.30	4.38	4.43	4.37
SHELTAIR	4.35	4.25	4.28	4.32	4.43	4.32
ATLANTIC AVIATION	4.38	4.23	4.22	4.28	4.50	4.31
LANDMARK AVIATION	4.32	4.14	4.12	4.17	4.41	4.22
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	4.26	4.16	4.16	4.21	4.32	4.22

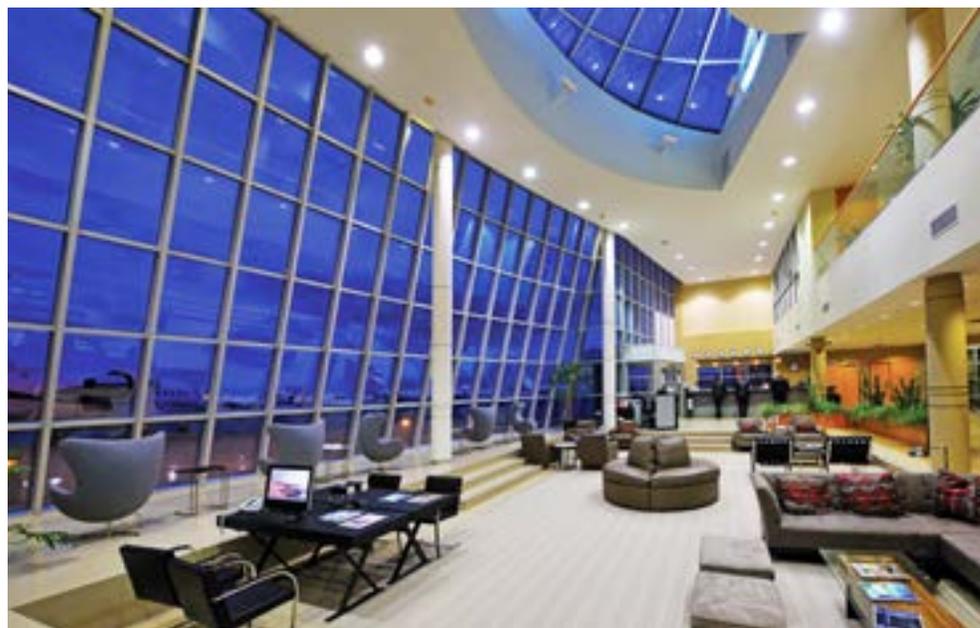


4.72

Skyservice

Lester B. Pearson

International Airport (CYYZ), Toronto, Canada



Lester B. Pearson International Airport in Toronto is Canada's busiest airport, and as the largest FBO on the field, Skyservice was the only non-U.S. service provider to rise to the highest rungs of the AIN Americas FBO Survey. The flagship of the Skyservice chain, which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year, the 50-acre Toronto facility saw record business last year, according to company president and CEO Marshall Myles. "We had double-digit gains in fuel flow and occupancy," he told AIN. A mild winter, coupled with the slumping Canadian dollar, spurred a surge in cross-border vacation and business traffic. "Toronto is the financial capital of the country, so you've got so much U.S. traffic coming in," said Myles. "When you look

at the ramp on a busy day, you just look at that row of N-registered airplanes."

One big boost for the location was Toronto's recent hosting of the NBA All Star Game, which according to general manager Mike Denham was the location's high point of the year, tallying 100 operations per day during the taxing five-day stretch compared with the normal 60 or so.

Skyservice, one of three service providers at Pearson, currently has 200,000 sq ft of hangar space for transient aircraft storage, and another 78,000 sq ft for tenant use. That isn't enough, and the company will break ground on a 26-acre development this fall, which will add 200,000 sq ft of hangarage and 40,000 sq ft of lounges and offices.

The location employs 226 workers and offers full maintenance capability,

serving as a Bombardier authorized service center as well as Gulfstream's Canadian warranty facility. It also provides AOG service and avionics repair. As Canada's sole HondaJet dealer, Skyservice is eagerly awaiting its first customer delivery this summer.

While many of the CSRs have been with the company for a decade or more, the three who run the customer reception area each have 20 years under their belts. "They are dedicated to ensuring that the customers get what they need first and foremost, and they go above and beyond to ensure it supersedes their expectations," noted Denham.

The line service staff is trained through fuel provider Imperial Oil's proprietary program, and undergoes recurrent training every year on the latest procedures.

Top Rated FBOs in the Americas by Region

GREAT LAKES

Chicago Metro Area

J. A. AIR CENTER	KARR	4.78
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KPWK	4.50
ATLANTIC AVIATION	KMDW	4.40
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KPWK	4.36
DUPAGE FLIGHT CENTER	KDPA	4.31
SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KORD	4.28

Columbus

LANE AVIATION	KCMH	4.39
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Detroit Metro Area

PENTASTAR AVIATION	KPTK	4.71
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Indianapolis

MILLION AIR	KIND	4.62
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Lexington/Louisville Metro Area

TAC AIR	KLEX	4.46
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ATLANTIC AVIATION	KSDF	4.19
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Milwaukee

SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	KMKE	4.26
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*FBOs with the same overall average are listed in alphabetical order

CANADA

Calgary

SKYSERVICE	CYYC	4.54
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Montreal

SIGNATURE FLIGHT SUPPORT	CYUL	4.64
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SKYSERVICE	CYUL	4.51
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Toronto

SKYSERVICE	CYYZ	4.72
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LANDMARK AVIATION	CYYZ	3.63
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CARIBBEAN

PROVO AIR CENTER	MBPV	4.44
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ODYSSEY AVIATION	MYNN	4.43
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JET AVIATION	MYNN	4.21
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TLC AVIATION	TNCM	3.65
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*FBOs with the same overall average are listed in alphabetical order

BRAZIL

São Paulo

LIDER AVIACAO	SBSP	3.89
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Gift Card Winners

As an incentive to participate in the 2016 FBO Survey, we offered to select 10 respondents randomly and award each a \$200 Amazon gift card. Below are the winners:

Dave Farris (chief pilot), Randy Hellerich (chief pilot), Philip Gebbie (asst chief pilot), Douglas Hunt (captain), Matthew Jung (pilot), Christian Memmott (director of aviation), Steven Boyd (corporate pilot), Jon Blackwell (chief pilot), Lauren Behrens (captain), Larry Walter (captain)

4.71

Pentastar Aviation

Oakland County International Airport (KPTK), Pontiac, Mich.



Last year was a good one for Pentastar Aviation, the largest of five FBOs at Oakland County International Airport. The company saw 15 percent more fuel flowage and operations than in 2014, and it doubled the size of its managed aircraft fleet. “We’re under a tremendous amount of competition and yet we continue to capture more market share here, so we’re pretty proud of that,” said company president Greg Schmidt, adding that the 15-acre leasehold handles more than a third of the business at the airport.

The company traces its roots to 1964, when it began as Chrysler’s flight department. It opened an FBO at Willow Run Airport in 1983, before relocating to PTK in the 1990s. From those beginnings it has evolved into an FBO with an avionics shop and a Class 4 Part 145 repair station equipped to work on large commercial aircraft.

New this year, Pentastar has added an aircraft interior showroom. “Folks can actually come in with our lead designer

and the director of our interior shop to redesign their entire aircraft with thousands of samples right here at their disposal,” said Schmidt. “They can walk off their airplane and take samples out to the ramp. It’s been a nice addition for us on that side of the business.”

Rare among FBOs, Pentastar also operates an in-house catering kitchen, Five Star Gourmet, with a full-time chef preparing food to order.

Of the location’s 140,000 sq ft of hangar space, 60,000 sq ft is reserved for transient traffic; the remainder is used for maintenance work and storage for 25 based aircraft, primarily midsize and large-cabin business jets. The facility also operates what might be the only privately owned jetway in the country. “We haven’t found another one, let’s put it that way,” Schmidt remarked. It serves large commercial aircraft at the Star Gate, a separate smaller terminal for sports teams and large charters.

The facility’s busiest period of the year

comes in mid-January, when it hosts dozens of aircraft in “Motor City” for the annual North American International Auto Show. “Those arrivals for the press and industry days are incredibly challenging, and we bring all our staff here to make sure that we’re up to speed,” noted Schmidt.

Many of Pentastar’s CSRs have served 20 years or more with the company, so it’s not surprising that its highest score came in the customer service category. “Our mission is to exceed our customers’ expectations, so they are well trained to make sure that every little detail is attended to. And we’re making sure that we’re asking customers if they are making full use of our services,” said Schmidt, adding that the entire executive team reviews comments in the company’s customer satisfaction survey.

A highlight for Pentastar last summer was when it hosted one of the few remaining airworthy Ford Tri-Motors, the aircraft built in 1928 by Henry Ford, great-grandfather of Pentastar owner Edsel Ford II. □