



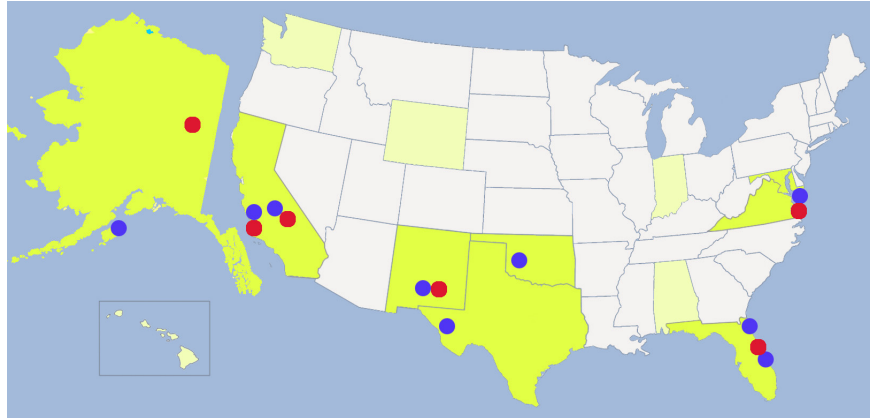
Florida Department of Transportation Research

Florida Spaceports: An Analysis of the Regulatory Framework

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Until recently, government control has restricted space flight to a few highly trained persons executing missions in the public interest using a very limited number of facilities and vehicles. This environment is changing. Imaging and communications have shown the commercial potential of space installations and a means to pay for space access. Adding to this the possibilities of space tourism and further commercial uses of and access to space, raises crucial questions for a regulatory system based on space access as inherently non-commercial, distinct from air travel, and operated under government auspices. The Federal Aviation Administration has already licensed a number of spaceports across the U.S. and more applications are expected. In Florida, a license has been granted for Cecil Field Spaceport in Jacksonville, and preliminary evaluations are underway for a joint-use, airport-spaceport in Miami-Dade County.

In 2006, Florida consolidated three aerospace-related agencies into Space Florida to focus on commercial development of the space industry. As the commercial space sector develops, Florida will face new challenges in providing a safe aviation/aerospace environment while promoting economic development, not just in aerospace activities but in the many affiliated industries. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), through its Aviation Program, is the state's lead agency responsible for guiding the development of a safe and secure air transportation system in the state of Florida. The challenge for the FDOT is identifying, balancing, and incorporating the various regulatory and economic aspects of these evolving commercial space activities with its mission to provide a safe and secure air transportation system.



Several states (gold) have federal (red) and commercial (blue) spaceports. Other states (light gold) have proposed spaceports (2010 FAA data).

In this report, researchers from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University conducted a thorough review of the existing network of international, federal, and state laws and associated regulations related to licensing of personnel, aircraft, airports, and operators, liability related to commercial space transportation, and security related to people and property. For each topic, researchers included the text of the relevant statutes, followed by comments and recommendations. The Cecil Field Spaceport is used in many practical illustrations.

The researchers advise that the end of the NASA Space Shuttle program will accelerate commercial solutions to space operations. They point out that Florida, with its strong history in the aerospace industry, has a unique opportunity, and that this is a critical moment in which the state, through FDOT and Space Florida, should examine the regulatory environment and develop its approach to formulating future state and federal regulations. This report is a first step in what needs to be a continuing and fluid look at this rapidly developing industry. The result of the FDOT's efforts has the potential to lay the groundwork for a thriving commercial space industry in Florida.