



# The PLANE PAPER

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Triple Tree Fly In—Held every September—camping by a 7,000 x 400ft grass runway.

## Guest View — “Runways are Like Roads”

Meaning – they don’t directly make money or contribute to the economy. But without them – you don’t have an economy. The State of Rhode Island values its road infrastructure as anyone who has recently driven around the state knows. Signs indicating road and bridge projects / budgets / timescale and whether on time and budget abound. The state’s value proposition for its runways are outlined in the General Laws of Rhode Island

**§ 1-2-7.1. Relating to airport and landing fields.**  
 (a) ...the general assembly recognizes that the safe and efficient operation of the airports and airport facilities is of paramount importance to the citizens of the state of Rhode Island.....

Historically the DoT managed the airports but their expertise lay with roads so the state created the “Rhode Island Airport Corporation” (RIAC) as an entity within the Economic Development Corporation and leases the airports to RIAC to operate and manage. Simplistically - the intent is it operates as a quasi-autonomous body on behalf of the state. The state doesn’t kick in any money to RIAC which must generate its own revenues while performing its mission of providing aviation infrastructure to the state. “Aviation related roads” – if you like.

A review of other state laws relating to “Aeronautics” then defines many of the duties it expects RIAC to carry out – principally by devolving powers

to the CEO / Director of RIAC.

**§ 1-4-8. Duties of director.**  
 ..... the director shall:  
 (1) Encourage the establishment of airports and other air navigation facilities;

### Economic Contribution

The RIAC sponsored and published “2016 Rhode Island Airports Economic Impact Analysis” of the 6 state owned airports details a combined contribution to the state’s economy of:

1.7% of state employment / 1.3% net income after operating expenses / 1.9% of taxes

For the purpose of this discussion I’m going to block out the “5GA” airports at North Central, Quonset, Westerly, Block

Island and Newport and compare to T.F.Green / Providence in Warwick. The “5GA” are the regular highways and side roads compared to Providence which might be considered “the Interstate”. They 5GA handle different types of aircraft. Generally smaller from business travelers, tourism, the National Guard, Medevac, private travel....

The 5GA airports create nearly 13% of the aviation related employment in the state while generating nearly 22% of the net income from aviation activity. The study also highlights the GA growth at Quonset, Newport and Block Island is principally related to tourism.

“It is not so simple” – as RIAC

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## From the President



Jim Burns

It turned out not to be such a tough call to cancel the March Meeting because we were under threat of another winter storm. Better to be on the ground wishing than up there trying to get down. It snowed—and then some. Glad we were on the ground!

The Board managed an ad-hoc meeting a few days later and have started to prioritize objectives including updating the website and methods of communication—including using new chan-

nels such as Facebook (see the back page), Twitter (coming) and making it easier to renew with RIPA through Credit Cards. We are also working on trying to get the eMail messages through more effectively. Currently we have trouble mass mailing members with COX and AOL email addresses and we will be introducing new email systems to deal with this .

I would like to thank the team of Paul Carrol, Bob Berlyn, and the Textron Team of David Nigri,

Susan Moss, Kerri Kottmann, Scott Porter for putting together an outstanding safety forum for this April (see facing page). It is not easy to corral all the moving pieces of the puzzle and get them on the ramp on the day—but this crew has done here—and for a worthwhile cause!

Hope to see you at the Safety Forum and April Meeting.

## Notice of Meeting



Date: Tuesday 10th April 2018

Time: 6:30pm Cocktails

7:00pm Dinner

Place: Chelo's in Warwick

Airport exit off Rte.95 to Post Rd South, 500 ft on right

Dinner is a buffet menu of special selections of entrees with coffee and desserts

Price: \$25 per person;  
\$45 per couple;  
\$5 just coffee and dessert.

Please make your reservations by Apr 8, 2018 via email at [captburns@aol.com](mailto:captburns@aol.com)

Please indicate if you are coming for full dinner or just coffee and the talk

## April Meeting Speaker—A Lifetime of Adventures!

### Ken Brown

...has enjoyed 72 years as an active pilot,

22 years with the CAA/FAA as an Air Traffic Controller,

13 years as an FAA General Aviation Safety Inspector,

55 years as a CFI. I

Ken will reflect upon some of his most memorable experiences in those capacities.

# Safety and Regulatory

## RI Pilots Stand Up For Safety



Come support and learn about Bridgewater State University Flight Team on their journey to the NIFA National competition. In addition to the wings credits you will have an opportunity to meet the experts and learn about the following events: Stall/Spins & Loss of Control, proper engine operation and best practices as well as Providence Tower/Approach controllers.

This regional event will celebrate the opportunities available to General Aviation pilots. There will be numerous static displays that will be available to tour aircraft including a Cessna Citation Ten+, a Cessna 172 with a G1000, and a Bell 429. This will provide a close up view of these aircraft due to the generosity of Textron, Lycoming and Cessna.

Registration, Coffee and snacks will be available at 8:00 AM. Lunch will be provided all at not cost to you. A raffle for an Apple iPad and other great prizes will be held. You must be here to win. Presentations will begin at 9:00 AM.

tations will begin at 9:00 AM.

Sponsored by:



Pilots flying into this event can contact Textron Operations on 130.8. Any landing and parking fees have been waived for this event.

Drive in - park across street at 566 Airport Road, Warwick

Register at the FAA WINGS Site:

[https://www.faasafety.gov/SPANS/event\\_details.aspx?eid=81785](https://www.faasafety.gov/SPANS/event_details.aspx?eid=81785)

## FAA Delay ADSB

In a surprise announcement last week—the FAA announced the delay of the ADSB-OUT mandate—scheduled to come into effect 1st Jan 2020. Acting FAA Administrator Harrison Skywalker — stated that “The airlines have spent so much money lobbying for the privatization of ATC that they have simply not got the funds to outfit their aircraft at this time.”

No new implementation date has been announced yet.

## Guest View (cont)

	Employment	Income	GSP	Output	Taxes
KPVD	11,567	\$465,982,000.00	\$750,532,000.00	\$1,215,170,000.00	\$76,606,000.00
5 GA	1,476	\$89,739,000.00	\$163,678,000.00	\$213,933,000.00	\$6,216,000.00
5 GA%	12.8	19.3	21.8	17.6	8.1

Employment – Measured in terms of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs  
 Labor Income – Includes the wages and salaries associated with employment impacts  
 GSP – Net value added (output less intermediate inputs); includes income, profits, taxes, etc.  
 Output – Total sales associated with all economic activity, including GSP and intermediate inputs  
 Taxes – Various taxes on production and imports (sales, property, excise, etc.), fines, licenses, etc.

Source— “2016 Rhode Island Airports Economic Impact Analysis”

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keeps telling the 5GA airports - “You are losing money”. And on paper that is true. Though with the uptick in the economy the daily operational income and expenditure shows a small profit. Debt service is the different story which is why RIAC make the claim. But I don’t believe that was the state’s original remit. The state gave RIAC the lease on the airports to run for the benefit of the state overall. For SURE we need efficiency and value for money. But I’m

not sure the Department of Transport are measuring sections of road and comparing 10 mile lengths and saying “this section loses money and this section makes money”. At some point a road (or an airport) needs to be measured in relation to its contribution to the economy. At a 22% contribution on 12% of the jobs - the 5GA airports are punching above their weight.

RIAC faces two problems: Firstly - T.F.Green at Providence has to compete with similar sized airports in New England for traffic

and so economic activity. Bradley in CT, Boston in MA, Manchester and Pease in NH. All rivals for the type of traffic that Providence seeks to attract. We want that business in the state.

Secondly - For all the aviation related economic benefit to the state – no matter how well the airports perform and increase the net income to the state – nothing comes back to the airports to develop or maintain them. The whole RIAC entity and state’s airports have to

stand or fall on their own activity. Simplistically, to be competitive at Providence, RIAC, has to keep landing fees and enplanement fees low and “loss lead” to attract new airlines – which they have recently been quite effective at doing. New low cost carriers at like Norwegian and Frontier at T.F.Green are expanding operations. But they are not paying their way yet. RIAC looked for cost savings elsewhere. At the GA airports.

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## The PLANE PAPER

### The GA Picture

RIAC has managed the GA airports at arm's length. Engaging airport management companies to run the airports for a fixed fee and whatever they can generate in the way of income. Principally from fuel sales, hanger rental and landing fees. This might also keep costs low because pension and union rates don't need to be paid to the non-RIAC employees at these airports.

The management company (currently AVPORTS) is dependent on RIAC supplied equipment to maintain the airports (grass cutting, snow plowing and infrastructure repairs). Though the management company can pass back certain un-anticipated costs to RIAC – they are under great pressure not to do so. Certain statutory items are out of the management company's hands – like maintaining safety airspace around airports, checking that no zoning issues occur next to the airports and meeting some FAA standards. It leads to a lot of finger pointing when facilities are not promptly serviced or maintained and are unable to earn money. However one cuts it - the buck stops with RIAC. The state has made them responsible and in the eyes of the Federal Aviation Administration – RIAC is the "sponsor" when it comes to grant applications.

A recovering economy and some changes made as a result of suggestions made by a previous GA Working Group had at least put the GA airports in a cash neutral/slightly profitable position. Debt service on infrastructure – in particular the FBO at Block Island and the refurbished terminal at Newport remain. Plans were formulated and developed to

install Solar power fields at North Central and Newport to create a stream of income to offset these debts.

However—lately there has been a winter of discontent brewing at the GA airports. Not helped by an apparent and complete disinterest by the new CEO who has not visited or met with tenants at the airports, with the RI General Aviation Business Association or attended the GA Working Group. The management company has not had its contract renewed. Staff morale is not at its best. Essential services like snow plowing for the businesses at North Central has not been taking place in a timely manner. Tree clearing at Westerly has run into continued opposition from neighbors and RIAC has got itself tied up in court – apparently for failing to take eminent domain in the correct manner. RIAC anticipates another 1-3 years in court to resolve this - at an "essential services" airport. At Newport – tree clearing - supposed to re-establish instrument approaches was performed in 2017 on the basis of 2008 data. When the FAA reviewed the approaches – they were not clear. Newport approaches are NOTAM'd as compromised for another earning season. This despite RIAC receiving FAA grants since 2012 totaling \$900k at Westerly and \$700k at Newport to perform the work. In addition they receive a further \$1m annually from the FAA for Westerly as an "essential service" airport (for Block Island).

At the recently reformed GA Working Group – RIAC announced that they are considering splitting the roles at the GA airports – seeking bids Fixed Base Operators (analogous to a highway service stop) to be run on a

"for profit" basis and returning the maintenance functions to RIAC control. There is nothing inherently wrong with this approach – if the airports are usable .

*Something "different" but not yet defined would be required at Block Island where there are no fuel sales or hangar rental to form a profit base. However there is an annual grant from the FAA to run it as an "essential service" airport. This is based on the number of people who use the airport and the relative remoteness of the island.*

The GA Working Group offered to help with drafting the RFP's as they are familiar with operations "on the ground" at each field. Their offer was declined. New England Airlines stressed that RIAC were possibly not aware of how safety at Block Island in the summer requires good staffing to manage the airport which is frequently filled to capacity. Representatives from other airports suggested that perhaps RIAC were not truly aware of the day to day conditions at the GA airports on which to base their RFP's.

Previously developed profit center plans for solar farms and "cookie cutter" planning authority for hangar developments – for private investment to improve the airports and create income - have vanished into thin air.

### A Conclusion

State law is quite clear the responsibility for success of the entire state's aviation system rests with the RIAC CEO. RIAC staff have mentioned they have been given no directions to work on GA airports – apart from a need to have "a quarterly GA Working Group" with no defined remit or

aims.

An errant tree on approach to T.F.Green would not last more than a few minutes – yet the GA airports delivering 23% of the net income are being allowed to fall into neglect for lack of decisive, planned and prompt overall maintenance, including keeping approaches clear through timely tree cutting. Profitable larger aircraft will simply be unable to land and spend money in our state. Never mind safety issues which this article does not explore.

Confidence that returning maintenance to RIAC control will result in no less a level of operational readiness and maintenance is not high. Given the tree issue alone - why would anyone want to submit a proposal to run an FBO in these circumstances when they could not depend on the airport being maintained to attract traffic or being open in difficult conditions?

Cut costs – at all costs – seems to be the rallying cry. Don't worry that the 5GA runways become less and less usable by profitable traffic. Sounds like a pretty good way to cut a \$163m contribution to the state economy at the same time. Just hope those airline start ups who were offered "loss-lead" pricing stay when they have to pay full freight and we don't lose current airlines who are paying full freight in the meantime.

*Graeme J W Smith is based in RI, A member of RIPA and the New England Region Advisory Board member of the Airline Owners and Pilots Association - Airport Support Network. Views expressed in this article are his own and not necessarily those of AOPA or RIPA.*

# Yesteryear in Rhode Island



I know a local pilot gave me these to publish—so it is with abject apologies—I don't remember who. Please get in touch for a credit!

And if you can identify anyone or have a story about these images—please get in touch.

[graeme@graemejwsmith.com](mailto:graeme@graemejwsmith.com)

## Calendar of Events — Save the Dates!



**Saturday, 7th Apr 2018**, 9 to 11 AM— FAA Safety Seminar - KPVD – See Page 3

**Tuesday, 10th Apr 2018**, 7 to 9 PM—RIPA's Monthly Meeting at [Chelo's Restaurant](#), Warwick, RI.  
Speaker—Ken Brown

**10-18th Apr 2018** Sun N Fun, Lakeland, FL [www.flysnf.org](http://www.flysnf.org)

**Saturday, 5th May 2018**, 9 to 11 AM— FAA Safety Seminar - KSFZ

**Tuesday, 8th May 2018**, 7 to 9 PM—RIPA's Monthly Meeting at [Chelo's Restaurant](#), Warwick, RI.  
Speaker—Stephen K. Brown of the FAA Safety Team

**Saturday, 12th May 2018** (Raindate 19th) 9 AM—1 PM - KMMK Meriden Annual Fly-In

**Saturday / Sunday 9 /10 June** — Gates Open At 9 AM - Flying Starts at 10 AM  
[Rhode Island National Guard Open House](#) KOQU—Quonset



**Tuesday, 12th June 2018**, 7 to 9 PM—RIPA's Monthly Meeting—location TBC

**Sept. 5th-9th, 2018** 12th Annual Triple Tree Aerodrome Fly-In <http://www.tripletreeaerodrome.com>

**Sunday, 23th Sept 2018** 4B9 - Simsbury Fly In

### Recurring

RIPA's Fly to Lunch Bunch. Destination varies with weather. Plan to depart from North Central State Airport (SFZ) at 10 AM on Saturday or Sunday. Anyone is welcome to join.

Weeknight Dinner Flyouts—VFR Flyouts to dinner at local airports. To be added to the notification list email. Wade Leveille - [uswle@yahoo.com](mailto:uswle@yahoo.com)

Every Saturday Morning - KUUU Pilot's Breakfast - Tickets Bar and Restaurant, Middletown 8:15 AM. If you fly in - check at the maintenance hangar for a ride no later than 8 AM



## Flight Training in Rhode Island



KSFZ — North Central  
300 Jenckes Hill Road  
Smithfield, RI 02917  
(401) 216-9359  
www.airventuresri.com  
fly@airventuresri.com



KPVD — Providence  
530 Airport Road  
Warwick RI 02886  
(401) 736-5115  
www.horizonaviation.com  
info@HorizonAviation.com



*newport*  
**aviation**

KUUU - Newport State Airport  
211 Airport Access Rd  
Middletown RI 02842

KWST - Westerly State Airport  
63 Tom Harvey Road  
Westerly, RI 02891  
(401) 846-2359  
www.flynewportri.com  
hdcorson@aol.com

## Pilot Successes!

Despite some truly dreadful and windy weather—some pilots have been plugging away at their ratings. RIPA congratulates the following on their successes!



Allison—PPL—Horizon Aviation Providence



RIPA Member—John Ayres—Instrument Rating at AirVentures



Andrew Parente—Commercial at Newport Aviation



**Rhode Island Pilots**

PO Box 20008  
 Cranston, RI 02920

www.ripilots.com  
 RIPaEmail@aol.com  
 Yahoo Group:  
 ripa@yahoogroups.com

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RIPA—to— promote and maintain an organization for the mutual benefit and welfare of its members and of the aviation community, - promote aviation safety within the entire aviation community. - exchange and disseminate information among its members and the public concerning the aviation industry and particularly general aviation. - foster a spirit of good will and camaraderie among its members. - assist its members with the problems relative to general aviation. - promote aviation education and encourage an interest in aviation and aviation careers among the members and the general public, especially the young people of this state.

## Who is Who at RIPA?

Rhode Island Pilots is an all volunteer organization. If you feel you could help fill any of the vacancies and spread the workload the President would love to hear from you!

President	James Burns	(401) 884 0750	<a href="mailto:CaptnBurns@aol.com">CaptnBurns@aol.com</a>
Vice President (acting)	John Sulyma		<a href="mailto:J.sulyma@icloud.com">J.sulyma@icloud.com</a>
Treasurer	Dan Scanlon	(401) 885-1196	<a href="mailto:Danielscanlon1@gmail.com">Danielscanlon1@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	Vacancy		
Membership	Paul and Mary Beth Tocco		
Events	Vacancy		
Website	Frank Oliveira		<a href="mailto:Franko177@verizon.net">Franko177@verizon.net</a>
News and Social Media	Graeme JW Smith		<a href="mailto:Graeme@graemejwsmith.com">Graeme@graemejwsmith.com</a>

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