Order: 2023-5-5 Served: May 2, 2023



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY WASHINGTON, D.C.

Issued by the Department of Transportation on the 2nd day of May, 2023

Essential Air Service at

GLASGOW, MONTANA GLENDIVE, MONTANA HAVRE, MONTANA SIDNEY, MONTANA WOLF POINT, MONTANA

under 49 U.S.C. § 41731 et seg.

DOCKET DOT-OST-1997-2605

ORDER REQUESTING PROPOSALS

Summary

By this Order, the U.S. Department of Transportation (the Department) is requesting proposals from air carriers interested in providing Essential Air Service (EAS) at Glasgow, Glendive, Havre, Sidney and Wolf Point, Montana, for a new contract term beginning January 1, 2024, with or without subsidy. Air carriers should file proposals no later than June 2, 2023.

Background

By Order 2019-10-11 (October 15, 2019), the Department selected Hyannis Air Service, Inc. d/b/a Cape Air (Cape Air) to provide EAS at five Montana communities captioned above. Cape Air provides air service from the five communities to Billings Logan International Airport (BIL), using 9-passenger Cessna 402 aircraft or 9-passenger Tecnam P2012 Traveller (Tecnam) aircraft, for the four-year term from January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2023, at the annual subsidy rates below.

	<u>Havre</u>	<u>Glasgow</u>	Wolf Point	<u>Sidney</u>	<u>Glendive</u>
Year 1	\$2,274,015	\$2,137,131	\$2,298,572	\$4,220,148	\$2,308,580
Year 2	\$2,342,236	\$2,201,245	\$2,367,529	\$4,346,752	\$2,377,838
Year 3	\$2,412,503	\$2,267,282	\$2,438,555	\$4,477,155	\$2,449,173
Year 4	\$2,484,878	\$2,335,300	\$2,511,712	\$4,611,469	\$2,522,648

The complete public file for EAS at the five Montana communities may be accessed online through the Federal Docket Management System at www.regulations.gov by entering the community's docket number in the "Search" field.

Request for Proposals: General Requirements

The Department is requesting proposals from air carriers interested in providing EAS at Glasgow, Glendive, Havre, Sidney and Wolf Point, Montana, with subsidy, if necessary, for a new contract period beginning January 1, 2024. Air carriers should file their proposals no later than June 2, 2023.

The Department expects clear, well-documented proposals that will facilitate their evaluation by the community and the EAS team. 1 Air carrier proposals should be submitted to the Department with all materials merged into a single document. In addition, proposals should be formatted to be viewed online. In order to evaluate air carrier proposals, the Department requires that air carriers adequately describe the service being proposed and the annual amount of subsidy being requested, if any. The Department requests that proposals include information concerning proposed schedules, projected block hours, and financial data supporting subsidy requests including information on projected expenses and revenues. In cases where an air carrier proposes to provide EAS without subsidy and the Department determines that basic EAS, as required by 49 U.S.C. § 41732, can be reliably provided without such compensation, the Department typically will not proceed with the air carrier selection case. Instead, the Department will simply rely on that air carrier's subsidy-free service as proposed. Lastly, the Department expects that air carriers will have completed due diligence regarding any community-specific operational requirements. Air carriers should prepare their proposals with every expectation that, should they be selected by the Department, they will be able to commence full EAS as described in their proposal on the first day of the new contract term.

Interested air carriers should prepare their proposals with the understanding that their initial proposals will represent their *final* and *only* proposals. However, the Department retains the discretion to negotiate proposals with air carriers when it deems it desirable; in such cases, the Department will give all applicants the same opportunity. The Department also retains the discretion to re-solicit a new round of proposals, in the event that proposals received are rejected due to being unreasonable or unrealistic.

Proposals should provide sufficient capacity to accommodate historical levels of traffic with, as a general matter, service in up to two airports that provide numerous connecting opportunities to

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¹ In selecting an air carrier to provide subsidized EAS for an eligible place not in Alaska, 49 U.S.C. § 41733(c)(1) directs the Department to consider five factors: (A) service reliability of the applicant air carrier; (B) the existence of contractual and marketing arrangements with a larger air carrier at the hub; (C) the existence of interline arrangements with a larger air carrier at the hub; (D) the preferences of the actual and potential users of the EAS, giving substantial weight to the views of the elected officials representing the users; and (E) whether the air carrier has included a plan in its proposal to market its EAS to the community. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, Pub. L. No. 117-328 (December 29, 2022), authorizes the Department to consider the relative subsidy requirements of the applicant air carriers. Interested air carriers should also be aware that the general provisions governing EAS will be included in the selection Order as part of our authorization of subsidy for the selected service. Appendix C of this Order contains those general provisions.

the national air transportation system.² When crafting a proposal, the air carrier should ensure that the proposed hub best meets the air service needs of the community. In order to assist air carriers in developing traffic and revenue projections for their proposals, the Department has provided a summary of recent historical passengers in Appendix B.³ The Department encourages air carriers to work with the community as they prepare their proposals in order to craft a service proposal that meets the community's needs with subsidy requirements that remain competitive. The Department will fully consider the views of the community and State before making an air carrier decision.

Air carriers may propose more than one service option. They can also propose service options different from what the community currently receives - lengths of contract terms or hub airports, for example. However, proposals should have at least one option that complies with the weekly capacity described below, and be compliant with all legal requirements.

Air carriers should note that it is a federal crime to knowingly and willfully make materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements, entries, or representations in an EAS proposal submitted to the Department.⁴

Request for Proposals: Specific Requirements

The Department expects proposals that meet basic EAS requirements and are consistent with what the five communities currently receive, which is 14 weekly round trips for Glendive, Glasgow, Havre, and Wolf Point, and 35 weekly round trips for Sidney, in aircraft seating 8 to 9 passengers. If larger aircraft are contemplated, the Department will consider fewer frequencies for Sidney, and 12 weekly round trips for Glendive, Glasgow, Havre, and Wolf Point.

Community requests for certain waivers

Title 49 U.S.C. § 41732(c) states: "Notwithstanding section 41733(e), upon request by an eligible place, the Secretary may waive, in whole or in part, subsections (a) and (b) of this section or subsections (a) through (c) of section 41734. A waiver issued under this subsection shall remain in effect for a limited period of time, as determined by the Secretary." For example, a community could request a waiver from the Department for its air carrier to provide fewer than two daily round trips six days per week⁵ if it is a highly seasonal market and doing so would facilitate a more reasonable subsidy rate or would better match the community's demand. A community could also request a waiver from the requirement for air carriers to provide service

² Ordinarily, where the proposal is for EAS from the community to one airport, that airport must be a medium- or large-hub, and where the proposal is for EAS to two airports, at least one of those airports must be a medium- or large-hub. See 49 U.S.C. § 41732(a)(1) and 14 CFR 398.2(b)(1). However, service to a small-hub or nonhub airport is acceptable for basic EAS if the nearest hub airport is more than 400 miles from the eligible place. See 49 U.S.C. § 41732(a)(2). In some cases, the Department may require service to two hubs, at least one of which must be a large- or medium-hub. See 14 CFR 398.2(b)(3). In the case of a community receiving two total round trips per day, the Department expects that at least one round trip per day will be to a medium- or large-hub airport, as medium- and large-hub airports provide better access to the national air transportation system. Hub classifications are provided by the Federal Aviation Administration at

https://www.faa.gov/airports/planning capacity/passenger allcargo stats/passenger/.

³ Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Schedule T-100.

⁴ See 18 U.S.C. § 1001.

^{5 49} U.S.C. § 41732(b)(1)(A).

with at least two engines and using two pilots.⁶ Waiver requests by the community may be submitted with an air carrier's proposal or during the community comment period, after proposals are received.

Community and State Comments

The communities and the State of Montana are welcome to submit comments at any time. The Department encourages interested air carriers to contact the communities *before* they submit their proposals so that they can tailor them to the community's needs, as they will not be able to amend them after the due date. After the due date, the proposals will be uploaded to www.regulations.gov, thereby making them public. Shortly afterwards, the Department will notify the community of the proposals and ask them to submit their comments by a specific date.

Other Air Carrier Requirements

The Department is responsible for implementing various federal statutes governing lobbying activities, drug-free workplaces, and nondiscrimination. Consequently, all air carriers receiving subsidy for EAS must certify that they are in compliance with Department regulations regarding drug-free workplaces and nondiscrimination, and those air carriers whose subsidies exceed \$100,000 over the life of the contract must also certify that they are in compliance with the regulations governing lobbying activities. Because the Department is prohibited from paying subsidy to air carriers that do not submit these documents, all air carriers that plan to submit proposals involving subsidy should be aware that the selected air carrier will be required to complete the required certifications. Interested air carriers requiring more detailed information regarding these requirements should contact the Office of Aviation Analysis at (202) 366-5903.8

This Order is issued under authority delegated by the Secretary of Transportation in 49 CFR 1.25a(b)(6)(ii)(D) and re-delegated to the Director, Office of Aviation Analysis.

Accordingly,

- 1. The Department requests that air carriers interested in providing Essential Air Service at Glasgow, Glendive, Havre, Sidney and Wolf Point, Montana, submit their proposals, with or without subsidy, no later than June 2, 2023. The proposals should be e-mailed to: <a href="maileo-example-exam
- 2. This docket will remain open until further Order of the Department; and

7 The regulations applicable to these areas are: (1) 49 CFR Part 20 – New restrictions on lobbying; (2) 49 CFR Part 21 – Nondiscrimination in federally-assisted programs of the Department of Transportation – Effectuation of title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 49 CFR Part 27 – Nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities receiving or benefiting from federal financial assistance; and 14 CFR Part 382 – Nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in air travel; (3) 49 CFR Part 32 – Governmentwide requirements for drug free workplace; and (4) 2 CFR Part 1200 – Government-wide debarment and suspension (non-procurement).

^{6 49} U.S.C. § 41732(b)(5).

⁸ The certifications are available online under "Reports and Publications" at http://www.transportation.gov/office-policy/essential-air-service-reports.

⁹ Questions regarding filings in response to this Order may be directed to Mr. Michael Gormas at (202) 366-1853 or michael.gormas@dot.gov.

3. The Department will serve this Order on the on the mayors of Glasgow, Glendive, Havre, Sidney, and Wolf Point, Montana; the airport managers at Glasgow Valley County Airport, Dawson Community Airport (Glendive), Havre City-County Airport, Sidney-Richland Regional Airport, L.M. Clayton Airport (Wolf Point), the Montana Department of Transportation, and the courtesy distribution list for requests for proposals for EAS communities.

By:

TODD M. HOMAN

Director Office of Aviation Analysis

(SEAL)

An electronic version of this document is available online at www.regulations.gov.

AREA MAP



Map generated by the <u>Great Circle Mapper</u> - copyright © <u>Karl L. Swartz</u>

Passenger Traffic at Glasgow, MT¹

CityMarketName_1	Glasgow, MT 🕶			
Sum of T110_Rpax		Direction _		
Year	Month	Deplanements	-	
2021	1	171	198	369
	2	156	171	327
	3	244	241	485
	4	258	277	535
	5	305	300	605
	6	317	331	648
	7	325	337	662
	8	304	332	636
	9	279	294	573
	10	291	310	601
	11	258	274	532
	12	258	265	523
2021 Total		3166	3330	6496
2022	1	197	212	409
	2	203	201	404
	3	236	237	473
	4	255	228	483
	5	202	179	381
	6	191	188	379
	7	356	347	703
	8	342	367	709
	9	331	324	655
	10	295	306	601
	11	194	199	393
	12	192	194	386
2022 Total		2994	2982	5976
2023	1	173	192	365
	2	150	175	325
2023 Total		323	367	690

¹ Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics: Schedule T-100 Market data.

Passenger Traffic at Glendive, MT

CityMarketName_1	Glendive, MT 🕶			
Sum of T110_Rpax		Direction <u></u>		
Year	Month		Enplanements	
2021	1	147	117	264
	2	97	116	213
	3	139	140	279
	4	167	164	331
	5	182	217	399
	6	220	199	419
	7	207	241	448
	8	175	185	360
	9	180	186	366
	10	191	195	386
	11	155	167	322
	12	176	199	375
2021 Total		2036	2126	4162
2022	1	175	146	321
	2	154	166	320
	3	191	212	403
	4	416	420	836
	5	533	570	1103
	6	491	484	975
	7	527	529	1056
	8	535	543	1078
	9	491	507	998
	10	384	390	774
	11	159	172	331
	12	154	174	328
2022 Total		4210	4313	8523
2023	1	163	139	302
	2	122	146	268
2023 Total		285	285	570

Passenger Traffic at Havre, MT

CityMarketName_1	Havre, MT 🚾			
Sum of T110_Rpax		Direction		
Year	Month _	Deplanements	Enplanements	Grand Total
2021	1	191	185	376
	2	126	134	260
	3	207	219	426
	4	251	249	500
	5	242	257	499
	6	265	290	555
	7	280	289	569
	8	281	291	572
	9	248	261	509
	10	267	269	536
	11	255	241	496
	12	246	256	502
2021 Total		2859	2941	5800
2022	1	238	208	446
	2	204	212	416
	3	240	227	467
	4	210	223	433
	5	254	245	499
	6	198	208	406
	7	238	283	521
	8	285	273	558
	9	235	264	499
	10	251	286	537
	11	244	253	497
	12	170	181	351
2022 Total		2767	2863	5630
2023	1	181	183	364
	2	226	225	451
2023 Total		407	408	815

Passenger Traffic at Sidney, MT

CityMarketName_1	Sidney, MT 🚾			
Sum of T110_Rpax		Direction <u></u>		
Year	Month _		Enplanements	
2021	1	585	583	1168
	2	426	443	869
	3	637	690	1327
	4	713	690	1403
	5	763	767	1530
	6	750	740	1490
	7	807	762	1569
	8	758	768	1526
	9	647	680	1327
	10	684	708	1392
	11	673	673	1346
	12	605	647	1252
2021 Total		8048	8151	16199
2022	1	576	533	1109
	2	538	560	1098
	3	562	591	1153
	4	375	430	805
	5	560	552	1112
	6	433	489	922
	7	548	515	1063
	8	521	518	1039
	9	492	551	1043
	10	592	612	1204
	11	596	635	1231
	12	501	549	1050
2022 Total		6294	6535	12829
2023	1	510	525	1035
	2	517	568	1085
2023 Total		1027	1093	2120

Passenger Traffic at Wolf Point, MT

CityMarketName_1	Wolf Point, MT 🗷			
Sum of T110_Rpax		Direction _		
Year	Month	Deplanements	Enplanements	Grand Total
2021	1	238	254	492
	2	145	158	303
	3	232	275	507
	4	274	296	570
	5	304	305	609
	6	300	323	623
	7	312	332	644
	8	289	309	598
	9	252	267	519
	10	255	280	535
	11	262	290	552
	12	217	260	477
2021 Total		3080	3349	6429
2022	1	190	209	399
	2	251	240	491
	3	226	250	476
	4	245	277	522
	5	179	210	389
	6	243	255	498
	7	295	299	594
	8	333	332	665
	9	326	337	663
	10	291	308	599
	11	242	250	492
	12	210	236	446
2022 Total		3031	3203	6234
2023	1	212	187	399
	2	168	200	368
2023 Total		380	387	767

Example of General Terms and Conditions for Essential Air Service

The air carrier understands that it may forfeit its compensation for any flights that it does not operate in conformance with the terms and stipulations of the rate Order, including the service plans outlined in the Order and any other significant elements of the required service, without prior approval. The air carrier understands that an aircraft take-off and landing at its scheduled destination constitutes a completed flight; absent an explanation supporting subsidy eligibility for a flight that has not been completed, such as certain weather cancellations, only completed flights are considered eligible for subsidy. In addition, if the air carrier does not schedule or operate its flights in full conformance with the Order for a significant period, it may jeopardize its entire subsidy claim for the period in question. If the air carrier contemplates any such changes beyond the scope of the Order during the applicable period of these rates, it must first notify the Office of Aviation Analysis in writing and receive written approval from the Department to be ensured of full compensation. Should circumstances warrant, the Department may locate and select a replacement air carrier to provide service on these routes. The air carrier must complete all flights that can be safely operated; flights that overfly points for lack of traffic will not be compensated. In determining whether subsidy payment for a deviating flight should be adjusted or disallowed, the Department will consider the extent to which the goals of the program are met and the extent of access to the national air transportation system provided to the community.

If the Department unilaterally, either partially or completely, terminates or reduces payments for service or changes service requirements at a specific location provided for under this Order, then, at the end of the period for which the Department does make payments in the stipulated amounts or at the stipulated service levels, the air carrier may cease to provide service to that specific location without regard to any requirement for notice of such cessation. Those adjustments in the levels of subsidy and/or service that are mutually agreed to in writing by the Department and air carrier do not constitute a total or partial reduction or cessation of payment.

Subsidy contracts are subject to, and incorporate by reference, relevant statutes and Department regulations, as they may be amended from time to time. However, any such statutes, regulations, or amendments thereto shall not operate to controvert the foregoing paragraph.

Funds may not be available for performance under this Order beyond [DATE]. The Government's obligation for performance under this Order beyond [DATE], is subject to the availability of funds from which payment for services can be made. No legal liability on the part of the Government for any payment may arise for performance under this Order beyond [DATE], until funds are made available to the Department for performance. If sufficient funds are not made available for performance beyond [DATE], the Department will provide notice in writing to the air carrier.

All claims for payment, including any amended claims, must be submitted within 90 days of the last day of the month for which compensation is being claimed. For example, claims for service provided in July must be filed by October 31st; August claims must be submitted by November 30th, and so on.