

Report on Results of Key Stakeholder Interviews and SCRAA Survey
Prepared on January 17, 2008
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I. INTRODUCTION

Upon executing a contract and scope of work to assist the Southern California Regional Airport Authority (SCRAA) in the development of a mission statement for its future, RRM Design Group scheduled a series of key stakeholder interviews and structured a computerized online survey to obtain opinions about the past and potential future activities of SCRAA. The following is a summary of results of both the interviews and online survey and our assessment, findings, and conclusions on those results. These findings as well as the alternatives for the future of SCRAA are to be discussed at the facilitation session scheduled before the Voting Board of SCRAA on the afternoon of Thursday, January 31, 2008 from 2:00 pm – 5:00pm.

II. RESULTS OF KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Over a period of several days during the months of October, November, and December 2007, RRM Design Group conducted a series of individual meetings – some in person and some by phone – with several key stakeholders identified by the SCRAA Board, the SCRAA Working Group, and Interim Staff of SCRAA. These meetings took place in Los Angeles, Orange and San Bernardino Counties with additional stakeholders participating via phone from Ventura, San Diego, and Riverside Counties.

Stakeholders included the voting members of SCRAA, the Interim Staff of SCRAA, appointed representatives of SCAG, decision makers from each county, regional airport operators, and other individuals with an interest in SCRAA. The interviews were held to determine the issues and ideas that will need to be faced by any effort to reconstitute SCRAA and to establish the foundation for the future mission and purpose of SCRAA. The main questions asked during the interviews and a summary of responses are provided below.

A. *Is SCRAA the best vehicle to address meeting air traffic demands in the Southern California region?*

- Answers varied on this topic and no commonly held strong statement or opinion came through during the interview process.

B. *What should SCRAA's mission and purpose be as an organization? If not SCRAA, what is the best organization to accommodate these needs?*

- “Regionalization” needs to be better defined – which airports should be the senders and receivers of regionalization?
- There needs to be a better plan and implementation method in place for regional air traffic
- The economic benefits of regionalization need to be identified

- SCRAA should focus on working with the airports that want to expand (i.e. So Cal Logistics, Ontario, San Bernardino, Palmdale) rather than working with those who don't (i.e. Long Beach, John Wayne, Burbank, etc.)
- SCRAA should help to promote growth where it is desired and where expansion is feasible
- Funding for infrastructure and mitigating impacts should be provided to airports that are looking to expand to accommodate the demands of airports who do not want to grow
- Regional involvement is desired – the benefit to airports that don't want to expand is the future improvements to ground transportation
- SCRAA should focus on ground access, collaboration, marketing, advocacy
- SCRAA should bring everyone to the table to share information, facilitate ground access (dedicated freeway, Metrolinks, high speed rail) and solicit ground transportation resources to connect senders to receivers
- SCRAA should lobby the State and Federal Department of Transportation Agencies for funding of improved access projects and direct ground access resources
- SCRAA should be a cheerleader, sponsor, and supporter to develop political clout – SCRAA needs to be persuasive and articulate
- SCRAA should meet with airline groups (i.e. head of Southwest airlines, etc.) to facilitate redistribution of flights to underutilized airports
- SCRAA should work with the FAA to regulate and redistribute flights to underutilized airports
- SCRAA should provide incentives to airlines that relocate and airports that accept relocation
- Orange County's proposed Mission Statement:
“The Southern California Regional Airport Authority (Association) seeks to accommodate future aviation demand at airports where the growth is desired by the airport sponsor, through collaborative planning, marketing, and policy recommendation that will minimize congestion and environmental impact on communities throughout Southern California”

C. *What can SCRAA do to elicit a more meaningful involvement from other counties and airport operators who are not presently involved with SCRAA?*

- Show more commitment from voting members to attend SCRAA meetings
- Eliminate some of the threats and powers of SCRAA to facilitate more participation (see results from question 5)
- Maintain small group participation to maximize effectiveness
- SCRAA should be organized as a smaller, more flexible, and approachable group served by aides and proxies rather than having decisions administered from the dais of formal meetings

- Airport operators should have voice
- Incentives should be created for airports that are willing to help solve the problems of others

D. *Should the powers of SCRAA be changed and if so, how?*

- SCRAA's powers of eminent domain should be removed
- Airport siting and operations should be viewed as a local issue rather than a regional one. SCRAA should not have the power to operate an airport
- The rights and legal settlement agreements of local entities should be recognized and respected in the deliberations and actions of SCRAA
- Approval by unanimous vote should be eliminated as it can paralyze the process
- The veto power among SCRAA members needs to be eliminated if SCRAA is to be effective
- If the existing active members of SCRAA continue the organization, the JPA should be amended rather than recreated or creating a new agreement
- Existing JPA would work better with a new mission and elimination of some of the existing powers
- A director should be hired to report to the board members & meet with politicians
- If it is to be perpetuated, SCRAA should hire staff to supervise work conducted by consultant teams

E. *What are the potential strengths, weakness, and threats of SCRAA?*

- SCRAA is focused and currently has the attention of the major airport operators in the region
- SCAG is a potential threat to the future of SCRAA because it has "pull" on transportation funds - "SCAG must have piece of the glory"
- SCRAA is too LA-centric - the distrust throughout the region limits opportunities for success - there is a perception that LA / LAWA is controlling everything
- SCRAA should not be LAWA's avenue for dispersing problems on other airports
- There is a perception that information is provided to SCRAA that doesn't get objectively analyzed or distributed
- The term "Authority" causes participants to get nervous and limits participation & voice

F. *How should SCRAA and SCAG interact? How are their roles and responsibilities different?*

- SCAG Aviation Task Force, SCAG Aviation Technical Advisory Committee, SWAAE, FAA, and Caltrans have an existing overlap of purpose and potentially could accomplish the same objectives
- SCAG/SANDAG could be structured to accomplish the same purpose as SCRAA
- SCAG should be more effective – SCAG studies should be implemented
- SCAG has a published 30 Year Regional Plan that identifies funding sources and projects – updated plan will be released in spring
- SCAG should be a voting member

III. RESULTS OF THE COMPUTER SURVEY

RRM Design Group worked with the SCRAA appointed working group to develop a 31 question online survey to determine the participants' current perception of SCRAA and their opinion of its future. The working group participated in the selection of the stakeholders and in finalizing the survey content.

A. Who Responded

A total of 45 individuals filled out the computer survey. The results revealed that 47.1% or nearly half of the respondents were members of the public and that 29.4% were members or staff of transportation agencies. It also indicated that 14.7% of the respondents were not associated with SCRAA. That being said, of those who responded to the survey, a total of 11 people or 24% decided to skip this question. Therefore, of those who completed the survey, responses were dominated by either members of the public or the staff of transportation agencies and that very few members of SCRAA responded to this question.

Of those who responded to question #2 as to how long they have been involved with SCRAA, 75.6% or over three quarters have either never been involved with SCRAA or have been only recently involved for one year in the activities of SCRAA. Therefore, only 25% of those who have been with SCRAA for any appreciable period of time completed this survey and only one member of the SCRAA Voting Board responded to it. All questions answered through the remainder of this questionnaire should be taken in the context of this filter, and this composition of respondents must be taken into account in evaluating the validity of responses to this survey.

B. Statements with a Supermajority of Support

There was an overwhelming majority of support -- or support in excess of 75% -- for the following questions/statements reflecting their respective amounts of support:

Question #9: *Should SCRAA work together with regional transportation authorities and airport operators to improve ground transportation connections between airports?*

Yes 91.9%

Question #11: *Should SCRAA promote legislation that would encourage and incentivize regionalization of commercial aviation in the Southern California region?*

Yes 86.7%

Question #10: *Should SCRAA act as a regional lobbyist on Local, State, and Federal levels to secure funds to meet transportation needs?*

Yes 81.8%

Question #8: *Should SCRAA work to meet air traffic demands for both passengers and cargo via the better utilization of underutilized facilities rather than building new or expanding existing airports?*

Yes 79.1%

Question #12: *Should FAA, MTA, and Caltrans be invited to participate as nonvoting members of SCRAA?*

Yes 78.6%

Question #24: *Should SCRAA be involved in the marketing of underutilized airports to the airline industry?*

Yes 77.8%

C. Statements with a strong majority of support

There was a strong majority of support -- or support ranging from 60-74% of respondents -- to the following questions:

Question #22: *Should voting members of SCRAA be allowed to appoint proxies to attend SCRAA Board Meetings?*

Yes 72.1%

Question 15: *With some revisions to the Joint Powers Agreement, would a reconstituted SCRAA be the best vehicle to address air transportation needs in the Southern California region?*

Yes 69%

Question #6: *Should the power of eminent domain as contained in the SCRAA Joint Powers Agreement be eliminated?*

Yes 68.9%

Question #14: *Should SCRAA hire an Executive Director?*

Yes 67.4%

Question #7: *Should SCRAA's power to own and operate airports be removed from the SCRAA Joint Powers Agreement?*

Yes 64.4%

Question #23: *Should SCRAA specifically designate the airports in the region that are being targeted to accept the additional air traffic associated with the concept of regionalization?*

Yes 63.6%

Question #26: *What type of legal authority should SCRAA operate under?*

A total of 63.6% of the respondents supported continuing to work under a formal Joint Powers Agreement.

Question #20: *Attendance of SCRAA meetings is critical to its success. If SCRAA were reconstituted under an amended Joint Powers Agreement, would you attend and participate in its meetings?*

60.5% said yes, and that they would attend once every other month or six meetings per year.

Question #13: *Would a different entity be better suited than SCRAA to meet the air transportation needs of the Southern California region?*

Yes 60%

Question #31: *What is your position on the following statement? "Attendance at SCRAA Board meetings has been one of SCRAA's biggest problems in getting anything done at this point. If the members of SCRAA can't meet regularly, it will go nowhere".*

Yes 60%

D. Statements with a majority of support

There was a majority of support -- or 50-59% support -- for the following questions:

Question #25: *If SCRAA's proprietary powers are removed from the Joint Powers Agreement, it will no longer be necessary for the voting members to have veto power over decisions of SCRAA.*

58.5% agreed yes and this should be viewed as one of the more revealing answers of the survey.

Question #17: *Should SCRAA take "Authority" out of its name?*

Yes 57.5%

Question #16: *How much should the voting members of SCRAA be willing to pay in dues to sustain a revised mission of the organization and to employ an Executive Director?*

52.6% supported maintaining the dues at the existing level of \$20,000 per year per entity.

Question #18: *If SCRAA were to be renamed, what term would you use for the last "A"?*

51.2% supported the word Alliance.

E. Statements that were opposed

A majority of those polled -- or more than 50% -- opposed the following statements:

Question #3: *Should SCRAA hold onto its proprietary powers?*

No 62.2%

Question #4: *Should SCRAA retain its existing Joint Powers Agreement?*

No 54.8%

F. Results of multiple choice questions

Of the multiple choice questions, the results were as follows:

Question #5: *Which of the following vehicles do you feel will allow for the most constructive path for addressing regionalization and decentralization of air transportation in Southern California?*

A total of 38.1% of the respondents felt that a reconstituted SCRAA with other counties as voting members would be the best vehicle, followed by having SCAG reassume SCRAA's functions with 23.8 %. Expanding SCRAA and moving toward a Memorandum of Understanding either with existing members or expanded

membership received only 11.9% and 16.7% support respectively, and only 9.5% supported a reconstituted SCRAA with just its existing members.

Question #16: How much should the voting members of SCRAA be willing to pay in dues to sustain a revised mission of the organization and to employ an Executive Director?

While 52.6% of the membership felt that the existing \$20,000 per year in annual dues was adequate, 48% felt that the dues should be increased. In context to the answers to Question #27 to expand the voting membership of SCRAA, these dues could raise significant revenues if all members either paid the existing level or a higher level of dues. However, 7 respondents or nearly 20% of the 45 participants declined to answer this question.

Question #18: If SCRAA were to be renamed, what term would you use for the last "A"?

A total of 51.2% supported using the term "Alliance", followed by nearly 28% who supported "Association", 18.6% for "Administration", and only 2.3% for "Advocates".

Question #19: Who should be members of the Technical Advisory Committee to provide assistance to the voting board of SCRAA?

The overwhelming answer with 66% of the respondents was "all of the above" including airport operators, Federal Aviation Administration, transportation agencies, airlines, and SCAG.

As for the support indicated for "individual" organizations, the involvement of the airport operators was viewed as most strongly supported at 43.2% followed closely by transportation agencies with 36.4%, the FAA with 34.1%, and the airline operators with 29.5%. The lowest number of respondents supported SCAG as a member at 20.5%.

Question #20: Attendance at SCRAA meetings is critical to its success. If SCRAA were reconstituted under an amended Joint Powers Agreement, would you attend and participate in its meetings?

While 60.5% supported one meeting every other month at six meetings per year, 23.7% wanted to meet once a month and only 15.8% wanted to meet once quarterly. There were seven individuals or about 17% of the respondents who failed to answer this question.

Question #21: Voting members of the SCRAA Board should make major program decisions by:

The most favored response at 45.2% was "by a majority vote of the full Board." This was followed by "a majority of Board Members in attendance at the meeting" and "a super majority" with 21.4%, only 11.9% felt "unanimous consent" was necessary. Three respondents declined to answer this question.

Allowing the Board to take actions only with a majority vote of the full Voting Board could cause complications and create administrative problems if some Board Members

do not attend the meetings. Perhaps this could be addressed by allowing proxies to attend on behalf of SCRAA Voting Members as set forth in Question 22 to ensure full attendance at the SCRAA Board Meetings.

Question #26: *What type of legal authority should SCRAA operate under?*

A total of 63.6% of the respondents felt that a formal Joint Powers Agreement should remain the primary legal vehicle to guide the operations of SCRAA. This was followed by 22.7% who favored an informal Memorandum of Understanding agreement while 13.6% supported another type of coalition less formal than a JPA.

Question #27: *Who should be the voting members of a reconstituted SCRAA?*

A total of 36.6% of the respondents felt that the voting members should include LA City, LA County, San Bernardino County, Orange County, Riverside County, Ventura County, San Diego County, airport operators in Southern California, and cities containing airports in Southern California.

A total of 26.6% supported an expanded membership of LA City, LA County, San Bernardino County, Orange County, and Riverside County only. Four (4) of the respondents declined to answer this question.

The individual entities receiving support for membership indicated that 7.3% favored LA City, LA County, and San Bernardino County, as well as airport operators in Southern California. No individual support was indicated for Orange County, Riverside County, Ventura County, and San Diego County, other than to include them in an all inclusive membership panel.

Should all of these entities be members of the Voting Board, it will present some administrative and scheduling challenges that would likely require a fixed calendar of bimonthly Board Meetings.

Question #28: *If proprietary powers and powers of eminent domain are removed from the SCRAA JPA, what function could SCRAA serve that could not be served by other entities in the region?*

The answers to this question really revealed what SCRAA should concentrate on doing if it continues to exist. The response with the most support was to become “a facilitator for marketing air transportation within the region” with 73.3% support, followed by “a facilitator of targeted airport regionalization” with 65.8%, and a “forum for ground transportation associated with airports” and “lobbyists for the region” with 60.5% each. Only 42.1% of the respondents or less than half felt that SCRAA could be an effective implementer of ground transportation connections between coastal and inland airports. A total of 7 respondents declined to answer this question.

Question #29: *If SCRAA were to be eliminated, what entity would be best equipped to address regionalization, decentralization of air transportation?*

Should SCRAA be disbanded, a total of 34.1% supported SCAG taking over SCRAA's responsibilities followed closely by "a new MOU with parties who want to work together toward that end" with 29.5%, and a "new JPA only between those parties who want to work together toward that end" with 27.3%. A total of 18.2% of the respondents said the Aviation Task Force could resume SCRAA's responsibilities while the same number felt that "none of the above" was the answer to replace SCRAA. Thus, these answers reflected no clear support for an organization that would assume SCRAA's responsibilities were it to be eliminated.

Question #30: *If SCRAA were to be disbanded, what entity would be best equipped to address connecting coastal airports to inland airports with ground transportation?*

A tie of only 25% of the respondents indicated support for "a new JPA between those parties who want to work together toward that end" and "SCAG" the most likely entity to facilitate ground transportation followed closely by a new MOU. Receiving only 15.9% were "none of the above", and "MTA", the number one ground transportation agency in Los Angeles County that received the least amount of support with 13.6%.

Question #31: *What is your position on the following statement? "Attendance at SCRAA Board Meetings has been one of SCRAA's biggest problems in getting anything done at this point. If the members of SCRAA can't meet regularly, it will go no where."*

While 60% of the respondents agreed with this, only 2.2% held no position on it, and 17.8% disagreed with this statement.

IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In reviewing the results of the key stakeholder interviews and the computer survey, one can readily come to certain findings and conclusions regarding the existing functionality and effectiveness of SCRAA, its potential future activities, its limitations, and its perceived ability to advance the interests of regionalization and decentralization of passenger and cargo air traffic in the Southern California region. With the caveat that the reader needs to understand that this survey was completed primarily by individuals with limited experience in dealing with SCRAA, these are the fundamental findings and conclusions we have developed as part of our analysis of the results.

A. Findings

1. SCRAA is currently viewed as an ineffective body that as presently constituted is incapable of advancing regionalization and decentralization outside of Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties.
2. While there are serious concerns about the effectiveness of SCRAA and about the real or perceived redundancy of some of its activities with other agencies, there still seems to be strong sentiment for reconstituting SCRAA with modified powers and expanded membership to advance the interests of regionalization.
3. There appears to be little support for retaining the proprietary powers or the powers of eminent domain as part of the SCRAA Joint Powers Agreement.

4. There remain serious concerns that the SCRAA Board has not been able to meet on a regular basis with full attendance by all members and that reliance upon SCRAA to advance the interests of regionalization with such inconsistent attendance of meetings will be ineffective.
5. While there is a minority interest in eliminating SCRAA, there does not appear to be enough support for any of the other identified organizations to take over the activities that many have in mind for SCRAA.
6. Simply reconstituting the mission of SCRAA as recommended in the Steven P. Erie report is not enough to propel the interests of regionalization and decentralization in Southern California's airports.
7. It was felt that if SCRAA is to be reconstituted and remain as an organization, there are a number of responsibilities that could be better advanced by SCRAA as opposed to any other organization in Southern California, such as the following:
 - o Marketing for receiver airports, counties, and airline operators
 - o Serving as a forum for air and ground travel organizations associated with airports
 - o Promoting regionalization and decentralization of air travel demand from sender airports to receiver airports
 - o Lobbying for State and Federal funds to advance the interests of regionalization and decentralization in the Southern California region
 - o Facilitating improvements to ground transportation linkages between sender and receiver airports
8. If SCRAA continues to remain ineffective in advancing the interests of regionalization, the opportunity to achieve regionalization and decentralization may be more difficult to achieve.
9. SCRAA needs to clearly identify and designate airports with legal and capacity limits (senders) and those who are capable and willing to handle increased air traffic.
10. While most interviewed or surveyed believe that SCRAA can play a role in helping facilitate the strengthening of ground transportation linkages between sender and receiver airports, there are few who feel that SCRAA should be the implementing agency for such improvements.
11. If SCRAA is to lead the effort on regionalization, there is solid support for hiring an Executive Director, for expanding the membership of the SCRAA Voting Board, and for paying dues at the existing or at higher levels to sustain its activities.
12. If SCRAA is to continue, there is strong support for allowing the voting members of the SCRAA Board to appoint proxies to attend Board Meetings in their stead.

B. Conclusions

As a result of our findings and review of the results of the survey and the key stakeholder interviews, we have come to certain professional conclusions about the effectiveness of SCRAA.

1. As presently constituted, SCRAA cannot effectively advance the interests of regionalization and decentralization of air traffic in the Southern California region. If it were to continue to exist in its current form and effectiveness, there is little hope for its future and little patience for its continuance.
2. While SCRAA was initially provided with some authority (i.e. proprietary powers and powers of eminent domain, etc.) that has essentially been removed through the unanimous voting requirements and the veto powers retained by member agencies. A regional agency without power can not effectively advance regionalization in Southern California.
3. If it is truly to advance the interests of regionalization and decentralization in Southern California's airports, SCRAA needs to be strengthened rather than weakened if it is to be effective and continue to exist.
4. The counties and airport operators that were originally part of the SCRAA Voting Board, but are no longer active members of the Voting Board, are participating out of fear rather than out of a commitment to solving common problems or creating a "public good". When faced with regionalization opportunities, most see protecting their local turf and abiding by their legal settlement agreements as a priority over the concepts of regionalization.
5. In order to address these fears, there needs to be clear recognition of sender and receiver airports as part of the SCRAA Joint Powers Agreement. Sender airports (those airports with legal agreements limiting their capacity) must make a political and financial commitment to improve ground transportation to receiver airports.
6. When designating receiver airports, SCRAA should provide assurance to sender airports that they will not be seeking to break legal agreements or force airports to take additional traffic above and beyond the ceilings expressed in said legal agreements.
7. The sender counties and operators need to understand the impacts that their settlement agreements are having on ground surface transportation serving receiver airports in Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties. Also, they need to recognize their responsibilities as an integral political and economical part of the solution for alleviating those impacts on the surface transportation network serving those counties containing receiver airports.
8. As presently constituted, SCRAA's tepid approach to regionalization is incapable of propelling the concept in a meaningful and constructive way.

9. If SCRAA is to be effective as the agent of regionalization, it needs to hire an Executive Director and staff who need to be provided with increased funding by member agencies to sustain its activities in propelling regionalization.
10. An expanded SCRAA Board will require greater administrative and coordination responsibilities that will necessitate regularly calendared meetings, a mission statement, a directed work program, and a schedule to advance that work plan to achieve regionalization in Southern California.
11. Allowing SCRAA Board Members to send proxies in their stead would better facilitate a regular more reliable meeting schedule and spur a more consistent dialog between member agencies.
13. If SCRAA is to remain as the functionary of regionalization there is solid support for continuing to do so under a modified Joint Powers Agreement. There is little support for a Memorandum of Understanding approach or any other form of a new agreement.

In order to address the future of SCRAA – its mission, its purpose and its functionality, it will be essential to outline a set of alternative futures to flush out what the current SCRAA Voting Board perceives SCRAA should and should not do in advancing the interests of regionalization and decentralization of air traffic demand in the Southern California region. Those alternative futures should address the purpose and approach of SCRAA, the steps that would need to be taken to pursue that approach, the implications of each approach, and an initial mission statement that would capture the essences of that approach. By providing these choices, it is hoped that the SCRAA Board will be able to craft a consensus on the approach it wants to pursue and the steps it wants to take in pursuing it.