



Bradley Airport Fire Department Changes

The COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating to the entire aviation industry. Bradley Airport has felt the following impacts:

- Passenger volume plunged by 97% in April, and generally remains down 70-75% year-over-year on any given day
- Roughly 50-60% of Bradley Airport's flights are still suspended due to lack of passenger demand
- The airport finished FY20 Q4 approx. \$10 million under the budgeted revenue amount (about 50% of the revenue budget)

To meet this historic challenge, the CAA has taken aggressive steps to maintain stability and avoid the need for any CAA employee layoffs:

- The CAA achieved 10% across-the-board budget cuts in FY20, and the CAA eliminated an additional 8% under those final FY20 levels in the current budget year;
- Over \$22 million worth of capital projects have been deferred, an organization-wide hiring freeze was established, and salary increases have been deferred for all non-union staff; and
- Other difficult unit-specific decisions were made to generate as many efficiencies as possible.

Specifically, as it relates to the Bradley International Airport fire department, the CAA recently made two changes. Despite meeting with the union multiple times over the summer about these ideas and offering union leadership several opportunities to provide alternative cost-savings measures, the CAA unfortunately was not provided any alternatives. As a result, the following two changes were enacted:

1. First, the CAA has changed the airport ARFF "Index" at Bradley Airport. An airport's Index determines an airport's minimum staffing and equipment needs, and it is based on the size of the aircraft that commonly use the airport. For decades, Bradley International Airport had maintained an Index level significantly higher than what was warranted per federal guidelines. Now, in the current industry environment, the CAA can no longer afford such a luxury. Changing the airport index in no way affects the operations, safety, or the job security of any existing employees at BDL, and the CAA still intends to maintain previous staffing levels whenever possible. However, making a formal Index change simply means that the CAA will no longer maintain equipment or pay operating costs to meet status requirements that far exceed the actual operations and FAA requirements. This change was approved by the FAA.
2. Second, the CAA has implemented a schedule change for the ARFF unit to allow the CAA to maximize efficiency and maintain the use of the organizational hiring freeze. By shifting schedules to an alternative format that has been previously approved for use by the Connecticut Police and Fire Union, the CAA is able to properly staff its work groups and provide the airport with the coverage necessary to ensure safety for both the traveling public and CAA firefighters. When factoring in additional days off that are factored into the new schedule, this equates to roughly two additional hours per week. This decision was not made lightly, and the CAA understands that a change of schedule causes personal hardship for employees. However, the CAA believes it is necessary in the face of these unprecedented challenges to maximize efficiencies and stabilize the organization's financial position.

The CAA is very confident that these changes and staffing levels do not represent a safety risk, and that both are well within FAA requirements

- There are currently 27 firefighters on staff at Bradley Airport, which is down from 34 firefighters in 2015
 - Milwaukee Airport, which is very similarly sized to BDL, currently has 24 firefighters
 - Other regional competitor airports have even lower staffing levels
- BDL's 27-member-strong firefighter department does not even account for the fact that BDL is one of the few airports that has another state-funded Air National Guard (ANG) fire department on-site with an additional 18 firefighters
 - The total of 45 firefighters on Bradley International Airport property is a truly incredible staffing level for a medium-hub airport like Bradley

The CAA is very confident that there are no safety concerns as a result of any changes. The CAA's chief goal, above all others, is to provide safe and secure facilities for our passengers. The CAA is achieving that goal today, and the organization is committed to meeting and exceeding that obligation in the future.