



# Designing the High-Performance Airport Organization

Aviation



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**ICF's airports team includes seasoned experts in strategic planning, organizational development, and governance, with experience as trusted advisors to the management teams of many of the top 100 airports. Our airport strategy and organization services include the following:**

**Strategic planning:** Development of strategic plans and associated action plans; assistance with implementation of the plans

**Organizational development:** Review and design of organizational structure, capabilities, resources, and processes required to achieve organizational goals and objectives; provision of organizational development support

**Governance advice:** Advice to improve the governance process, tailored to the client environment (e.g., separation of management and board roles, refinement of powers and jurisdictions, and transition to alternate governance forms such as authorities or commissions)

A high-performance organization consistently exceeds the expectations of its internal and external stakeholders and continuously adapts to changing conditions. The design of an organization for high performance includes two key elements:

- 1. Organization structure** – the right structure to enable efficiency and effectiveness
- 2. Workforce planning** – the right levels of resource to do the job required

The organization design that has worked in the past may not necessarily be the most effective design to deliver success in the future. Airport organizations must continually adapt to respond to rapid changes taking place in the aviation industry including:

- **Competition** – Increased competition between airports for air service, following airline consolidation and route network rationalization
- **Customer service focus** – Pressure from all airport stakeholders to improve passenger service, requiring not only better facilities but also process improvements, technological innovations, and a more service-oriented culture
- **Security** – An ever-greater emphasis on security, including initiatives such as protecting against insider threats to shore up areas of perceived vulnerability

### Our Approach to Organization Design

ICF offers a proven, well-defined approach to organization design in which we work closely with client staff to optimize the organization structure and develop robust workforce plans:



## Organization Structure

Our approach to designing organization structures is based on five key principles:



### Designing the Organization Structure - Five Key Principles

<b>1. Structure follows strategy</b>	Organization designed to deliver the strategy and facilitate accomplishment of goals and objectives
<b>2. Objective, evidence-based approach</b>	Design from first principles rather than starting from the current structure
<b>3. Single point responsibility</b>	Elimination of functional duplication, organizational overlap, and split responsibilities, resulting in greater clarity and organizational agility
<b>4. Efficiency of management structure</b>	Reasonable spans of control; minimization of unnecessary management layers resulting in greater organizational efficiency
<b>5. Capability to manage future demands</b>	Creation of new capabilities to handle future business changes and challenges

## How We Work with You

ICF works collaboratively with your management and staff to build consensus and trust through a process that:

- Identifies key organizational challenges that may inhibit the achievement of your strategic goals and objectives
- Respects confidentiality and focuses on positions—not individuals—to defuse sensitivities
- Brings our industry experience and expertise to compare against similar best-in-class airport organizations
- Develops and tests organizational solutions with your management team and staff through a series of workshops

The first of these principles—"structure follows strategy"—means that the organization's key priorities must be reflected in the structure. For example, if improving passenger experience is a strategic goal, then it needs senior representation in the organization. For this reason, Step 1 of each organization design project is a strategic assessment, which includes a review of the organization's strategic plan.

The remaining principles are aimed at ensuring that the organization structure is designed objectively to enable the goals and objectives to be achieved with agility and efficiency. This requires more than just rearranging existing positions, as new capabilities may be required to address the rapid pace of industry change (e.g., a number of airport organizations now include a Chief Innovation Officer or similar).

## About ICF

ICF (NASDAQ:ICFI) is a global consulting and technology services provider with more than 5,000 professionals focused on making big things possible for our clients. We are business analysts, policy specialists, technologists, researchers, digital strategists, social scientists, and creatives. Since 1969, government and commercial clients have worked with ICF to overcome their toughest challenges on issues that matter profoundly to their success. Come engage with us at [icf.com](http://icf.com).

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## Workforce Planning

With the organization structure established, the next question is: "How many staff do I need in each function, and how will this change in the future?" Informed by benchmarking with peer airports (Step 2 of the overall approach to organization design), we work with functional managers to develop staffing plans as follows:

- **Goals** – Identify key goals for each function
- **Activities** – Determine the activities required to deliver the goals; which are essential and which are discretionary?
- **Workload** – Identify key workload drivers (e.g., passenger volumes and capital program size) and assess current levels and future trends
- **Efficiencies** – Consider opportunities for improving efficiency (e.g., use of technology, outsourcing, or alternative work scheduling—especially for 24/7 functions)
- **Recommended staffing** – Estimate number of full-time equivalent staff required now and for next 3-5 years based on planned growth and development at the airport

## An Experienced Team to Deliver Results



**Nick Davidson** has more than 30 years of experience in management consulting and is a recognized leader in airport strategic planning. He has led strategic planning efforts, organizational reviews, and governance studies for more than 25 organizations, including Los Angeles World Airports, Houston Airport System, the State of Hawaii Department of Transportation (Airports), the Port of Houston Authority, and Port of Seattle's Aviation Division.



**Richard Batty** has over 25 years of experience in business strategy and organizational effectiveness, mainly for airports and other transportation organizations. He has recently managed projects for Los Angeles World Airports, the Connecticut Airport Authority, the Port of Seattle's Aviation Division, and the City of San Jose Airport Department.



**Nigel Womersley De Zaldua** offers 17 years of strategy development for a wide range of major corporations and has focused exclusively on airports for the last nine years. He has conducted strategy projects at airports such as Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport, Helsinki Airport, Bahrain Airport, and Denver International Airport. Additionally, he acted as Head of Corporate Planning, Risk, and Performance at Abu Dhabi Airports Company.