

ND Aeronautics Commission Members



Dr. Kim Kenville, Chairperson, Grand Forks
Kim began teaching for the University of North Dakota's John D. Odegard School of Aerospace Sciences in the fall of 1999 where she currently teaches airport management. Since 2008, Kim has been the director of the graduate program for the Department of Aviation and holds the rank of full professor. Prior to returning to UND, Kim worked in airport operations for Detroit Metropolitan and Milwaukee County airports. She is a certified member (C.M.) of the American Association of Airport Executives and holds a private pilot's license.

Appointed 2011



Rodney Schaaf: Vice Chair, Bowman
Rodney has been an active member of the North Dakota aviation community throughout his life. He became a pilot in the Air Force in the early 1970s stationed at the Grand Forks Air Base as a KC-135 flight crew member. Following his honorable discharge in 1978, Rodney became a pilot for Delta Airlines and had a successful career through his retirement in 2004. In 2007, Rodney was appointed to serve on the Bowman County Airport Authority, and he has acted as the chairman of the board for over a decade. In this role, he was instrumental in the planning, design, and construction of the new Bowman Regional Airport which was opened to the public in 2015. Rodney was inducted into the North Dakota Aviation Hall of Fame in 2023.

Appointed 2023



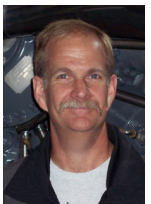
Kyle Humann, Member, Mandan
Kyle is the Chief Pilot for Missouri Valley Aviation Management, responsible for daily operations of two corporate jets, flying both domestic and international flights. He has been flying for over 30 years with experience as a flight instructor, a line pilot, and Director of Operations for a local fixed base operator. Kyle has also served as the Director of Flight Operations for the State of North Dakota. He and his wife, Kimberly are working to pass a passion for aviation and farming on to their two young boys.

Appointed 2019



Steve Blazek: Member, Fargo
Steve grew up in Fargo and earned both a bachelor's and master's degree in Business Administration from North Dakota State University. He is a past or current member of a number of community organizations including the Municipal Airport Authority for the City of Fargo, Fargo Planning Commission, Fargo Air Museum, Fargo AirSho, FMWF Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs, and ND Governor's Task Force MIND. Outside of work, Steve is interested in "all things" aviation. He is a private pilot and enjoys music, sports, community engagement and development.

Appointed 2022



Warren A. Pietsch, Member, Minot
Warren soloed at the age of 16 and has continued in aviation. He began chartering for the family business, ventured into airshows in 1981, and worked for ATA Airlines 1989-2008 serving as a captain for L-1011, B-727, B-737. Warren is a current and founding board member of the Dakota Territory Air Museum and the Chief pilot for the Texas Flying Legends Museum, Houston TX. Holding a single & multi-engine ATP, SeaPlane rating, Commercial glider CFIG & CFIs and is an Aerobatic Evaluator.

Appointed 2012



A Statewide Voice for Aviation

Agency Mission

To serve the public by providing economic and technical assistance for the aviation community while ensuring the safe and cost effective advancement of aviation in North Dakota.



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Agency History

The North Dakota Aeronautics Commission was established in 1947 by the State Legislature to provide representation of the state in aviation matters and to provide responsibility for the state's aviation programs and regulatory framework. The Governor appoints the five members of the Aeronautics Commission to the board for terms of office of five years. The Commission appoints an Executive Director to administer the agency and to oversee the agency's support staff. The office location is at the general aviation pilot terminal on the Bismarck Municipal Airport, Bismarck, ND (KBIS).

Agency Purpose

The North Dakota Aeronautics Commission supports aviation activities in the state through communication with state and local organizations, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), congressional offices, local airports and national aviation groups. The commission is largely funded through aviation fuel taxes, aircraft excise taxes, and aircraft registrations. This small and efficient state agency is able to leverage its financial efforts by teaming with the FAA, and staying involved with aviation activities across the state through a strong network of communication. The North Dakota Aeronautics Commission appreciates those that assist with airport operations, promote the aviation industry and utilize the airport system that the state has developed.

Public Airports in North Dakota



Agency Activities

Airport Intern Program: Encourages commercial service airports in ND to hire a management intern by reimbursing airports for internship costs.

Airport Grant Funding: The Aeronautics Commission disperses approximately 15 million dollars annually to airports across the state for airport improvement projects. These funds are derived from aviation fuel taxes, aircraft excise taxes, and aircraft registrations, and oil revenues from the "Operation Prairie Dog" legislation.

Airport Inspections: Each public airport is inspected at least once every three years and safety recommendations are made at the time of each inspection. North Dakota airport information that is used in the FAA Airport Facility Directory is also updated by the Aeronautics Commission staff.

AWOS Maintenance: The Aeronautics Commission maintains a statewide contract to provide tri-annual inspections for the automated weather observations systems at the public-use airports. This ensures that the aviation community and the public at large benefits from real-time weather data.

Aviation Education Grant Funding: The Aeronautics Commission provides grant funding for aviation education programs and support for the Aviation Museums in Fargo and Minot. Applications are accepted at any time from aviation enthusiasts, airports, or aviation organizations.

Aviation Publications and Planning Documents: Aviation Economic Impact Studies, Aeronautical Charts, Airport Directories, State Aviation System Plan, Pavement Condition Index Study for ND Airports are examples of planning studies that are made available to the public.

Flight Training Assistance Program: A program that reimburses airports for flight instructors' when they need to travel from another location in order to provide local training opportunities to rural areas of the state.

International Aviation Art Contest: An annual event encouraging students ages 6 through 17 to express their creativity while celebrating aviation.

ND Aviation Association Support: The Commission works with the ND Aviation Association in supporting and promoting aviation and its activities. The ND Passport Program, Fly-ND Conference, Aviation Career Expo and the ND Aviation Hall of Fame are a few of the activities.

Regulatory Function: The office is responsible for administering North Dakota's laws to ensure the registration of aircraft, licensing of aircraft dealers, aerial applicators, and the collection of aircraft excise tax.

Aviation Facts about North Dakota

- Approximately 32,200 jobs in North Dakota are created from airports, aviation, and related aerospace fields.
- \$1.6 billion in economic output activity is created each year by North Dakota airports.
- Over 100 ND aerial applicators provide services to approximately 4 million acres of crops annually.
- North Dakota's eight commercial service airports serve approximately 2.4 million passengers each year.
- Approximately 4,000 manned pilots and 2,000 unmanned pilots hold FAA certificates in North Dakota.
- Approximately 2,200 aircraft are based within the state of North Dakota.

North Dakota Aeronautics Commission Staff

Kyle Wanner – Director
Gaye Niemiller – Administrative Officer
Janell Pederson – Licensing Specialist
Adam Dillin – Airport Planner
Grant Erwin – Airport Planner
Mike McHugh – Aviation Education Coordinator