

# HILLSBOROUGH

Community College

## Needs Assessment Survey for Aviation Programs Summary of Findings

Office of External Affairs

September 2003

### Executive Summary

At the request of the Dean of Associate Science and Technical Programs, Dale Mabry campus, a survey of local aviation businesses was conducted in the summer of 2003. The Workforce Projections Report [Florida Labor Market] was used to determine occupational growth in Hillsborough County. Other community colleges in Florida offering aviation programs were researched to determine their program information. The purpose of this report is to describe (1) local need and workforce projected need, and (2) student demand for aviation programs.

The results indicated that:

- ◆ According to the Florida Labor Market occupational publication, the total annual local demand for aviation pilots is seven and local demand for aviation mechanics and technicians is fifteen.
- ◆ Survey respondents, excluding commercial airlines, employed forty-three pilots, eighty-nine aircraft mechanics and 503 aviation operation or management employees.
- ◆ Of those polled, excluding non-locally based commercial airlines, a total of nine pilots and six aircraft mechanics were expected to be hired this calendar year.
- ◆ Seventy-five percent of the survey respondents would be interested in hearing from HCC graduates of an aviation program and thirty-three percent would write a letter of support for an aviation program at HCC.
- ◆ The minimum reported salary for an aviation pilot was \$25,000 annually; however, most respondents reported starting salaries greater than \$40,000 annually. Average salaries for aviation mechanics ranged in the 30's (thousands) annually.
- ◆ Over the next five years, "a great deal" of growth in demand was anticipated by 42% of the respondents, 33% expected "some" growth, 17% predicted "stable activity" and 8% predicted a "decline in activity".
- ◆ Four Florida community colleges offer aviation programs, none are in adjacent counties.

## **Purpose**

At the request of internal management, an assessment of local demand, a review of workforce projections, and current program offerings were considered to determine the feasibility of providing programs in aviation occupations at HCC.

## **Method**

### State projections

The Florida Department of Labor Market Information was the primary data source to determine the top growth industries and high wage occupations for Hillsborough County. A report titled *Occupational Employment Statistics Projections* (<http://www.labormarketinfo.com/oes-proj/oes.htm>) was used to determine if aviation occupations were prominent in the future employment demands of the County.

### Local employers

Eight of 29 local aviation businesses and four of 17 non-locally based commercial airlines that fly into TIA was contacted and participated in the telephone survey. All aviation cargo employers were contacted and all indicated they had no employees that matched the survey aviation occupations; their employees more closely matched ground transportation occupations.

The 9-item survey was designed to:

- Describe the number of aviation related employees in the field,
- Establish current and anticipated demand for aviation employees,
- Document the average starting salaries paid to specific aviation employees,
- Assess growth in the field, and
- Determine the level of local interest in HCC program graduates.

### Local and State Aviation Programs

Four community colleges in Florida and several private schools were identified as having an aviation program, none were in adjacent counties. All of the programs at state community college's were for an AS or AAS degree. Programs included: Aviation Maintenance, Aviation Operations, Aviation Management and Professional Pilot

## Results

### State Projections

There is an average annual demand for seven aviation pilots in Hillsborough County through 2010; this position requires a bachelor's degree according to the workforce projections report. The average wage for aviation pilots is \$22.92 per hour according to the state report for this county. The average annual demand for aircraft mechanics and technicians is fifteen annually in the county for the same period; average salary is listed as \$24.59 and this occupation requires post-secondary education.

### Local Employers

The survey asked for the total number of employees and the number of specific aviation employees employed by the respondents. The following two paragraphs and tables address those questions.

Fifty percent of the respondents (N = 6) had between 5 and 20 total employees at their establishment. Six respondents (50%) had over thirty total employees. Commercial airlines ranged from 3,600 to 35,000 total employees. Table 1 summarizes these descriptors of respondents.

**Table 1: Respondent Workplace and Size of Workforce (total employees)**

Number of employees	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
Less than 10	2	17
11 - 15	2	17
16 – 20	2	17
21 - 30	0	0
Over 30	6	50

Commercial airlines, all of which are non-locally based, greatly influence the specific occupation totals; therefore, local establishment numbers and commercial airlines are listed and totaled separately.

Table 2 summarizes these descriptors of respondents.

**Table 2: Respondent Workplace and Size of Workforce (employees by occupation)**

Number of employees	Local Establishments	Commercial Airlines
Private/professional pilot	43	6,548
Airport operations	0	11,227
Aircraft mechanic	89	2,207
Aviation operations/management	503	4,261
Other aviation occupations	0	2,500
Total	635	26,743

One survey question pertained to the number of anticipated aviation occupation job openings. Survey results indicated:

- Nine pilots and six aircraft mechanics would be hired locally this calendar year.
- Commercial airlines surveyed expected to hire 40 pilots, 290 aviation operational employees, 13 aircraft mechanics and 92 other aviation related employees this year.

One survey question assessed salary. The most frequently reported average salary range for pilots was between \$40,000 and \$65,000 annually (commercial airlines paid up to \$130,000); aircraft mechanics ranged between \$ 30,000 and \$40,000 annually and aviation operational employees were paid from \$8.50 to \$16.00 per hour depending on the position.

All respondents were asked to anticipate the growth of the business over the next five years. “A great deal” of growth was reported most frequently (N=5, 42%). Thirty-three percent (N=4) of the respondents indicated there would be “some growth” in the business and 25% (N=3) of the respondents predicted either stable growth or a decline in activity for the next five years.

Most respondents (N=9, 75%) reported that they would be interested in hearing from HCC aviation program graduates. If requested, a letter of support for the program would be forthcoming from 33% (N=4) of the respondents; 42% (N=5) were not willing to write a letter of support and 25% declined to respond to this question.

#### Survey respondent additional comments

- Would be interested in talking to someone about aviation programs, also interested in allowing HCC to use their facilities. (Tampa North Aero Service – Angela Lankford (813) 973-3703)
- Tough restrictions and economy, would like to talk to someone about HCC starting an aviation program. (Plant City Airport – David Mitchell (813) 752-4710)
- Wants HCC to call regarding the aviation programs. (Hillsborough County Aviation Authority – Don Welch (813) 870-8716)
- Low turnover rates, hiring freezes in affect, not local (all commercial airlines surveyed)
- Market is flooded with pilots, would only hire experienced. (Walk About Air, Inc.)
- Would hire an entry-level aviation mechanic only if there was an experienced mechanic to work with the new hire. (Air Logic Systems)

## Local and State Aviation Programs

Four community colleges offer aviation programs in Florida according to the Facts.org website and state data; none are adjacent to Hillsborough County. The tables below show the most recent data available from the FETPIP web site about these programs and the total state completers over the last three reporting years as currently posted.

Table 3: 1998/1999 reporting year of completers of state CC's aviation AS and AAS degree programs

Number of completers	Broward	FCCJ	Miami-Dade	Palm Beach	All state aviation programs
Professional pilot	5	0	13	7	33
Aviation operations	0	0	0	0	0
Aviation maintenance	13	0	9	0	22
Aviation administration	3	2	17	0	24
Total	21	2	39	7	79

Table 4: 1999/2000 reporting year of completers of state CC's aviation AS and AAS degree programs

Number of completers	Broward	FCCJ	Miami-Dade	Palm Beach	All state aviation programs
Professional pilot	5	2	5	9	25
Aviation operations	0	0	0	0	0
Aviation maintenance	13	0	6	0	19
Aviation administration	6	2	11	1	21
Total	24	4	22	10	65

Table 5: 2000/2001 reporting year of completers of state CC's aviation AS and AAS degree programs

Number of completers	Broward	FCCJ	Miami-Dade	Palm Beach	All state aviation programs
Professional pilot	3	7	7	7	12
Aviation operations	4	14	11	0	24
Aviation maintenance	9	1	9	1	11
Aviation administration	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16	22	27	8	47

## Conclusion:

According to local workforce projections, aviation pilots are in low demand and aviation mechanics are in moderate demand for the county through 2010. The majority of survey respondents (75%) anticipates either "a great deal" of growth or "some growth" over the next five years and expects to hire nine pilots and six aviation mechanics within the next year. With the exception FCCJ, state completers in aviation programs from the above tables indicate a downward trend in enrollment. These findings, according to the survey respondents and workforce projections, indicate that local demand for aviation employees in Hillsborough County is moderate to low. Based upon these findings and analysis, local demand may support a new aviation program at this time; however, it is strongly recommended that local aviation businesses, especially those indicating a desire to be called, be further questioned by the program manager to prove adequate support and need for a new program in aviation at HCC.