



City of Yakima
Statement re: ICE detainee flights at Yakima Air Terminal/McAllister Field

The City of Yakima has been informed by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials that private charter flights involving ICE detainees will utilize the Yakima Air Terminal/McAllister Field (the Yakima airport) while ICE works to resolve issues that are currently preventing the flights at Boeing Field.

The City has reviewed its contractual agreements with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the fixed-base operator (FBO) at the Yakima airport, McCormick Air Center, as well as correspondence from the U.S. Department of Transportation general counsel's office to King County Executive Dow Constantine (King County owns Boeing Field). Based on that review, the City has concluded that federal law and the City's contractual agreements with the FAA and the Yakima airport FBO require that flights such as those involving ICE detainees be allowed to utilize the Yakima airport once all proper notification protocols are properly followed.

The acting Seattle field office director for ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO), Brian Wilcox, told Yakima City Manager Cliff Moore that efforts are currently underway to restore ICE detainee flights to Boeing Field.

Mr. Wilcox indicated to the city manager that ICE detainee flights will be utilizing the Yakima airport periodically, but that the frequency of flights will be based on the Seattle ICE ERO's needs rather than according to a specific schedule. Airport protocols require an air carrier to provide not less than 24-hour prior notice to the Yakima airport administration office of any flight planning to utilize the Yakima airport.

Some concern has been expressed locally that ICE activities in the Yakima area may increase because ICE detainee flights are utilizing the Yakima airport. Mr. Wilcox has assured the city manager that the ICE detainee flights are not connected to other ICE enforcement activities. Mr. Wilcox told the city manager that ICE enforcement activities in the Yakima area would not be increased simply because the ICE detainee flights are utilizing the Yakima airport.

The City will continue to comply with federal law and meet its contractual obligations to the FAA and the Yakima airport FBO with regard to ICE detainee flights utilizing the Yakima airport. Doing otherwise could place the City in jeopardy of losing critical FAA funding (more than \$19 million since 2010) used to improve the safety and operational readiness of the Yakima airport, put the City in conflict with federal law, and violate other contractual obligations of the City.