

Business aviation strategy

Using private aviation as an efficiency tool to create healthy Kansas communities, drive economic growth

The University of Kansas has owned an airplane for about 40 years. Today, KU owns a Cessna Citation CJ4, which was purchased entirely with private donor funds. We also have a fractional ownership share of a second plane, which we can use a set number of days per year.

KU staff make every effort to fly commercial — and *do* fly commercial most of the time. But as a research university with national interests and a mission to serve all corners of Kansas, there are times when commercial flight is either inefficient or not available. In those cases, private aviation is a powerful asset. We keep a close track of this resource like we do all resources, and we use it because it's an efficiency tool with a return on investment for KU and the state. Here are some key points about KU's private aviation use:

Our aviation arrangement has a strong return on investment for students and taxpayers

KU uses about \$1.5 million per year in state funds to operate its private aircraft. That amount is more than offset by the amount of new money the plane helps bring to Kansas through activities like donor relations and from KU Athletics, which alone provides more than \$12 million per year to the university for student scholarships and other academic purposes. And that doesn't even begin to account for the millions of dollars in research funding that flow into Kansas in part because staff and administrators can travel.

More than half of our flights are for medical outreach

More than half of our flights are used for medical outreach, including direct services to Kansas patients who would otherwise have to decide between incredibly long drives to see specialists or not seeing a specialist at all.

Our aviation needs were validated by a national consultant

Our aviation strategy was validated by the VanAllen Group, a respected aviation consulting company that examined our flight history, resources, and needs, and compared us to peer universities. For example, we recently updated our aging plane (purchased with private dollars) because VanAllen demonstrated it would be more efficient than maintaining an older aircraft.

Federal regulations limit how we can pay for aircraft operation

Federal Aviation Administration regulations don't allow KU to charge other entities — like KU Athletics — for flight services. That is why state funding is used for operational costs.

The way we use it, private airfare is an efficiency tool

The time it takes staff to travel is not just about miles on a map; it's about matching the back-to-back schedules of staff to commercial flight availability. Kansas is a rural state and the 15th largest state in the country in square mileage. Try finding conveniently timed commercial flights to Goodland or Colby. Why not drive? By any standard, it's not a good use of Kansans' money to pay an administrator or coach upwards of \$100 per hour to drive I-70 or the Turnpike for a day.



\$60M

Provided to KU for scholarships and academic support by KU Athletics over the past five years, while Athletics' travel costs were **\$2.4 million**

+50%

KU flights used for medical outreach to rural Kansas

40%

KU donors who live outside Kansas

NBAA

Arrangements like KU's are common among our peers, per the *National Business Aviation Association*: Auburn Univ., Penn State Univ., Clemson Univ., Iowa State Univ., Univ. of Alabama, Univ. of Arizona, Univ. of Florida, Univ. of Iowa, Univ. of Michigan, Univ. of Oregon, Univ. of Tennessee, Univ. of Texas

Big XII

To our knowledge, **nearly every Big XII school** has a business aviation arrangement involving private planes or charter services.

(Updated 3/16/2015)