



National Agricultural Aviation Association

Long Range Strategic Plan

This is the National Agricultural Aviation Association's updated 2013 Strategic Plan outlining long-range direction for the Association over the next half decade and beyond. The Strategic Plan was first developed in 1998

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Definitions of Strategic Planning Terms

MISSION STATEMENT

A precise, concise and inspiring statement declaring the fundamental purpose for which the organization exists (i.e. The mission statement should answer the following questions: 1) Why do we exist? 2) Who do we exist for? 3) In the broadest sense, how do we accomplish what we set out to do? 4) What is supposed to happen, for whom, as a result of what we do?

GOAL

A timeless, unbounded statement that describes the condition or attribute that we seek to attain.

CHECKPOINTS / MILESTONES

Measurable, attainable checkpoints / milestones that we want to achieve by a specific point in time on the way to accomplishing the goal.

STRATEGIES

How we will organize and focus our resources and actions to maximize our effectiveness and efficiency in achieving our goals.

PROGRAM

Product(s) or service(s) that are provided or delivered to a specific group.

KEY ACTIVITY / ACTION PLANNING

A specific action to be taken on an annual basis in response to the environment in order to achieve the strategy. Action plans define how a strategy will be implemented and make progress towards the goal.

STRATEGIC VS. OPERATIONAL PLANS

A strategic plan is not a reiteration of what the organization is doing today - a listing of all its current activities, events, business plans, marketing plans and budget – it identifies what the organization must do to successfully transport the organization into the future.

An organization also needs an annual operational plan (directed by the strategic plan) that identifies operations, budget and activities for the current year.

Overview

NAAA first developed a Long-Term Strategic Plan in 1998. This 2013 version of the Plan is the second time the Association has reviewed and updated the Plan. The first was in 2003. The Association's Long Range Planning Committee reviewed the Plan to determine the Association's progress in following its' long range goals. The Committee determined that due to a number of industry and societal changes, especially in the realm of technology and communications, an updated Strategic Plan was warranted. As a result, the Committee tasked itself and all of NAAA's standing Committees with reviewing the Strategic Long-Range Plan and making necessary amendments to the document concerning how the association will meet new challenges and opportunities facing the aerial application industry.

Updating the Strategic Plan was based on the following components:

- Determining the future, external trends, challenges and issues that are impacting, or will impact, the agricultural aviation industry; areas where NAAA needs to change its mission and to move into the future; and opportunities for NAAA to better serve its members.
- Identifying where NAAA should be by 2018 and beyond, and how NAAA will provide beneficial outcomes to its members and changes that NAAA will need to make as an organization.
- Determining strategies for certain goal statements to define how NAAA will organize and focus its resources and actions in order to maximize its effectiveness and efficiency in achieving each goal. The strategies define how NAAA will commit its limited resources to make its goals a reality. Milestones were determined to measure the ongoing progress towards the achievement of each goal.
- NAAA's infrastructure was reviewed to determine if changes will be needed to align the infrastructure with the strategic plan, including structure, membership, governing process and staff structure.

Again, this strategic plan builds on NAAA's 1998 and 2004 strategic plan and the Association's successful history to this point. Furthermore, it identifies the strategic areas where it should focus over the next 36 to 60 months in order to continue its excellence and success.

A strategic plan is not intended as a substitute for an annual program or operation plan. It does not detail all current and on-going initiatives, programs and activities NAAA will undertake in the course of serving its membership and the industry. This strategic plan identifies where NAAA must focus to be successful, as well as accomplishments that are needed. The plan does not focus on maintaining or continuing current activities.

Developing a strategic direction is not a one-time event. It is an ongoing commitment and process to govern and lead NAAA in a strategic orientation. The strategic plan represents a compass that the Association will use to guide its work over the next 36 to 60 months. Each year of its life, the strategies, missions and goals will be updated based on experience, new circumstances and new challenges.

From time to time, NAAA will update its strategic plan based on the changing needs of its members and the aerial application industry.

Strategic Assumptions

The following external trends, challenges and issues were identified based on factors and circumstances that will impact the agricultural aviation industry in the future. These trends may represent opportunities or threats — and sometimes both to NAAA.

- There will be fewer/less:
 - Agricultural aviation operators and those remaining will have larger capacity aircraft and a growing number of satellite operations.
 - Small farms due to farm consolidation (more large corporate farms).
 - Useable farm land due to urban encroachment and an increasing population.
 - Agricultural pilots belonging to the Veterans (1922-1945) and Baby Boomers Generations (1946-1964).
 - Crop support and subsidies for farmers due to federal debt issues

- There continues to be an increase in:
 - The risk of agricultural activity moving out of the U.S. due to regulatory and labor costs and federal debt concerns that may affect U.S. agricultural research and subsidies.
 - The challenge of business insurance coverage and requirements.
 - The reduction of the total quantity of chemicals that can be applied per area and an increased focus on variable rate technology covering more acreage using less product.
 - Corporate ownership due mainly to vertical integration & present and future value of aerial application businesses that will come up for sale.
 - Obstacles to low-level aviation ranging from unmanned aircraft systems and towers being erected in agricultural areas for wind energy and communications purposes
 - The global population and global middle class greatly increasing the demand for agricultural products worldwide.

- There will be continuing:
 - Regulation focusing on food safety, worker protections, environmental protection, and strengthening homeland security.
 - Integration of all types of agricultural services— single farm services entities that offer products, application services and crop consulting.
 - Biotechnology developments that could change the need for aerial application.
 - Adverse public opinion, stereotyping and misperceptions concerning aerial application.
 - Diversification of aerial application companies operating beyond crop protection (e.g., forest fires fighting, public safety, fertilization contracts, etc.).
 - Need to educate, professionalize and perhaps certify application businesses and support industries.

- Need for the continued development of aerial application engineering research designed to ensure on-target applications, mitigating drift and making aerial applications more efficacious.
- Industry, government and public focus and attention on environmental protection, security and safety.
- Need for communicating to the industry and public using electronic communications technologies from social media to smart phones.

The review of the Strategic Plan also amended or developed the current internal areas where NAAA must monitor and where necessary change to:

1) Better serve its members

2) Successfully move the Association and industry into the future:

- Continually evaluate NAAA Infrastructure to ensure it to be fluid, flexible and responsive, including the elimination of programs and policies that are antiquated, inefficient and/or unnecessarily resource intensive
- Ensure adequate office facilities, informational technologies, staff resources and staff compensation to ensure staff institutional knowledge, effectiveness and efficiencies to carry out objectives
- Evaluate its current and potential new programs and services to provide increased value to current and prospective members.
- Better market the association to members and industry (value) and to key external constituent groups.
- Amend its governing structure to maximize efficiency and ensure compliance with government policies regulating non-profit organizations.
- Develop closer collaborative relationships with governmental agencies
- Focus on important issues and come to consensus on outcomes.
- Develop continued financial security and stability.
- Further strengthen trust and unity throughout both the association and the industry.
- Increase marketing and technology capabilities, expertise and functions.
- Strengthen credibility with members and the public.

Mission Statement

A mission statement is a concise and inspiring description of the fundamental purpose for which NAAA exists as it pursues its vision (goal statements).

NAAA Mission Statement:

The National Agricultural Aviation Association (NAAA) is the national trade association representing the aerial application industry. NAAA works on behalf of its members to ensure a workable public policy environment for the aerial application industry; to strengthen the economic environment of the industry; to provide educational programs and obtain technological resources for the industry that strengthens the security, flight and environmental safety of aerial application; and to provide information to the industry about the industry related to the above pursuits and to the public about the industry's importance so as to ensure a positive public image of the aerial application industry.

Strategic Long Range Goals

The following represents NAAA's strategic long-range goals for the next five years and beyond. These goals encompass NAAA's vision and determine the direction it will pursue. These goals are outcome oriented statements representing what constitutes NAAA's future success. The achievement of each goal will move the Association toward the realization of its envisioned future. They are not in any order of priority.

In 2018 and beyond:

- NAAA will be the recognized public policy, media and public advocate for the agricultural aviation industry.
- NAAA will be its members' primary resource for agricultural aviation knowledge exchange, education and business services that focus on strengthening the industry in terms of safety, security, technological advancement, environmental protection and economic viability.
- NAAA will be the public's professional source of agricultural aviation industry information.
- NAAA will be financially secure and stable and have an efficient and effective governance system in order to achieve its mission.

Accomplishing Long Range Goals & Strategies

Strategies indicate how NAAA will organize, focus and expend its resources and actions to maximize its effectiveness and efficiency in achieving the goals.

Milestones are used to determine the overall progress toward a goal. They indicate how close NAAA is to achieving a goal as it executes the individual strategies for each goal. Milestones measure goal achievement, not strategy achievement. The Association Leadership, Board and Committees should constantly evaluate and prioritize its strategies and milestones before each meeting to ensure the Association is pursuing the clearest pathway towards accomplishing its goals/mission to benefit the aerial application industry. Three key questions should be considered when determining if a strategy/milestone is worthwhile: (1) is it a service that NAAA members need and are unable to get elsewhere; (2) is it a service that NAAA is the best-positioned to offer; (3) does it make economic sense to the association and its membership for NAAA to offer the service.

Goal A

NAAA will be the recognized public policy, media and public advocate for the agricultural aviation industry.

Strategies

A1. Develop an integrated public policy plan prioritizing issues that NAAA be effective in establishing a legislative and regulatory environment favorable to the aerial application industry.

The plan should include:

- Having the Board assume responsibility for the overall direction of public policy based on member and industry concerns.
- Determining a process to develop timely public policy positions and priorities, developing procedures to better mobilize individual members to participate and influence national issues in collaboration with state associations.
- Developing databases that includes information from members pertaining to their key legislative and regulatory contacts.
- Strengthen legislative and regulatory influencing mechanisms such as the PAC, grassroots actions by the membership and the state and regional agricultural aviation associations to public officials and relationships with appropriate legal and lobbying firms to positively influence the law and policy making process in the aerial application industry's favor.

A2. Strengthen communication with members - utilize electronic communication:

- Strengthening the Member's Only website, offering useful information on aerial application topics for paying members.
- Strengthen government relations issue analysis on website and other methods of communication, such as email and social media, and further develop and implement more user-friendly methods for members and industry to involve themselves in positively influencing the government and public affairs of the industry.

- Developing a legal hotline or legal consultative service for members.

A3. Augment and enhance alliances with other associations and organizations that share similar public policy positions with NAAA.

A4. Enhance the Association 's website where members can volunteer to be part of “grassroots” public policy efforts contacting government offices and advocating the Association’s position on key policy issues.

A5. NAAA should continue to be recognized as the professional public policy advocate and/or spokesperson for the industry. As such it should continue to run programs that select individuals in the industry—at the membership, board, committee and staff level—to develop and enhance their leadership and communication skills to fulfill the Industry’s and Association’s goals (Leadership Training Program).

Milestones

- An increase in the number of:
 - Members volunteering to contact legislators/policymakers.
 - Contacts with Federal legislators and policymakers.
 - Individual members involved in NAAA public policy activities.
 - Government attendees at meetings.
 - Key public policy alliances with other organizations
 - An increase in the number of regulatory and legislative decisions favoring a healthy work environment for the aerial application industry.
- The existence of:
 - An integrated public policy plan.
 - Easy to use instructions and calls-to-action to members prompting them to take action on legislative, regulatory and public relations enhancing issues.
 - Procedures to develop public policy positions.
 - More aerial application businesses as members.

Goal B

NAAA will be its members' primary resource for agricultural aviation knowledge exchange, education and business services that focus on strengthening the industry in terms of safety, security, technological advancement, environmental protection and economic viability.

Strategies

B1. Develop an internal marketing plan and resources that include:

- Improved membership assessment and feedback.
- Improved marketing of program and service benefits.
- Improved marketing to members of the benefit of belonging to NAAA — building credibility with members.

B2. Continue to strengthen educational programs for members.

- B3. Expand training to aviation technical areas that could include: engines, propellers, accessories, air frames, ground support, etc.
- B4. Develop collaborative partnerships with other associations and organizations to create a resource of programs and services.
- B5. Develop formal training for application support personnel (loaders, mechanics, etc.)
- B6. Provide improved business and professional training for targeted members.
- B7. Better utilize technology in the delivery of programs, education and meetings. Bring the sessions to members.
- B8. Solicit more involvement from all membership classifications (pilot, women, allied) in NAAA's informational, educational and professional development programs.
- B9. Establish NAAA standards for educational and professional development programs.
- B10. Investigate, and if accepted, implement an aerial application certification program with input from crop protection product manufacturers and insurers. The program could be tied to PAASS, Operation S.A.F.E., and other industry educational programs in terms of teaching a substantive aerial application curriculum and include testing and annual or biannual renewal.
- B11. Develop information for prospective aerial applicators wanting to join the industry. This should include help for new, prospective pilots and operators, as well as pilots who wish to develop or purchase an aerial application business. This should include information on legal, insurance and financing issues.
- B12. Develop website links to provide access for members to technical and legal information.
- B13. Strengthen the Annual Meeting & Expo content and explore the feasibility of joint expositions and expanded key industry content.
- B14. Offer more NAAA programs, products and services outside of the United States (worldwide).
- B15. Continue to obtain and increase the amount of government and private dollars directed to aerial application technological research.
- B.16. Establish NAAA standards for professional aerial application operations.

Milestones

- An increase in the number of members to the Association.
- An increase in the amount of content on NAAA's website.
- An increase in the number of attendees at training/educational activities and at the annual meeting and exposition.

- An increase of new Association programs and services.
- The existence of:
 - Collaborative relationships to develop member resources.
 - New and advanced training programs.
 - NAAA standards of training.
 - On-line technical information databases.
 - An internal marketing plan.
 - A secure funding mechanism for aerial application technology development

Goal C

NAAA will be the public's professional source of agricultural aviation industry information.

Strategies

C1. Develop an external marketing plan for public relations:

- Continually enhance the amount and quality of material for public consumption on the website.

C2. Provide training and materials for members to increase their capability to better communicate and advocate the importance of the agricultural aviation industry, as well as the importance of the NAAA.

C3. Better publicize members' good community relations activities and successes. Improve the dissemination of information pertaining to members' good deeds — markedly improve the industry's public relations.

C4. Augment the communications process to disseminate information to be updated frequently to include things like: state/regional association communications projects, NAAA membership reports by state, state association activities (e.g. fly-ins, ag in classroom programs, convention programs) information submitted by members – training reminders, notes on equipment maintenance or operation tricks, mechanical problems and solutions and others that are suggested by members. Much of this material should be member generated – submitted to a staff email. All entries, regardless where they are posted, should indicate the name of person contributing information.

C5. Continue to host external events, including visits to aerial application operations, for the media and public.

Milestones

- An increase in the:
 - Content of the website.
 - The budget allocated to external marketing.
 - The number of public requests for information.
 - The number of positive media releases concerning the industry.
- The existence of:
 - An external marketing plan and budget.

- Updated classroom programs.
- The website's external public pages.
- Positive media stories pertaining to the industry.
- NAAA sponsored sites in social media sources and referenced stories.

Goal D

NAAA will be financially secure and stable and have an efficient and effective governance system in order to achieve its mission.

Strategies

D1. Develop an NAAA long-range financial plan that includes:

- Long-range revenue and expense projections.
- A formal plan that analyzes the Association's membership classifications and dues and works to adjust them accordingly based on the current makeup of the industry and need to adequately fund the Association's programs..
- An increased focus on new sources of diversified non-dues revenue (increase profitability in NAAA educational programs).
- A budgeting process that will maintain consistent, annual, excess fund balances (annual retained earnings exceeding, at a minimum 3 - 6 % of the annual gross expenses) for planned growth of reserves.
- Utilizing a more zero-based budgeting concept that requires all activities to be justified on an annual basis — using the strategic plan as a guide.
- Strengthen marketing the benefit of belonging to NAAA to non-members.
- Providing a process to continually review NAAA programs and services and evaluating its profit and loss.
- Establish internal workings and information technology to ensure the Association's database, website, accounting services, etc. are designed in such a way to ensure efficiency for the staff.
- An analysis of NAAA's governing documents ensuring their construction is representative of the industry, comply with non-profit government policies, and allow for adequate, efficient and expeditious Board and Committee governance.
 - Consideration of allowing people from outside of the membership representing other aviation, agricultural and related groups supportive of aerial application to serve on NAAA's Board and or Committees to provide additional and important outside perspectives.

D2. Develop a plan to increase corporate/allied support of sponsorships, advertisements and other contributions.

D3. Collaborate with other associations to reduce program expenses, educational activities, meetings, etc.

Milestones

- An increase in:
 - Membership dues revenue.
 - Non-dues revenue after expenses that contributes to overall net income.

- Corporate support revenue.
 - Net margins on all financial activities.
- The existence of:
 - A long-range financial plan.
 - A business planning process.
 - Financially collaborative partnerships.
 - Staff and information technology efficiencies
 - A Board representative of the industry and populated in a matter to adequately, efficiently and expeditiously offer broad and sound perspectives and make key decisions, policies and programs benefitting the industry.

Targeted Members

NAAA's targeted members are defined as those who must directly or indirectly benefit from all of NAAA's products, programs, services, publications and activities. Programs and services may also meet the needs of other members and non-members. However, NAAA must first meet the needs of its targeted members. NAAA's targeted members are businesses that provide aerial application services; aerial application pilots in the U.S. whose primary function is to provide aerial application services to agriculture, forestry and the public health. Another important member constituency are the businesses that support aerial application operations with equipment, parts, resources, inputs and services.

NAAA's future-2018 and beyond

In 2018, the National Agricultural Aviation Association will:

- Be a powerful and proactive political force in public policy that actively advances members' needs.
- Be the members' resource for knowledge, information, education, services, etc. utilizing advanced technology and focusing on strengthening the industry in terms of safety, security, environmental protection and economic viability.
- Be financially secure and stable.
- Have a highly functional, competent, efficient, knowledgeable and effective staff.
- Have a large membership consisting of all U.S. aerial application businesses and pilots who are involved in a broader scope of aerial application (e.g., fire fighting, public health, etc.) as well as a large membership of allied businesses to support such aerial operations.
- Possess an improved image and a formal proactive public relations plan — external marketing.
- Have improved and frequent communication throughout the association and industry on important industry related news using the latest methods of print, electronic and social media. Members will be provided with information enabling them to be well informed.
- Have an infrastructure that is flexible and responsive, and allows the association to quickly seize opportunities to better serve and provide more value to members.
- Enjoy strong credibility with its own members and key external audiences.
- Provide high member value through advancing industry technological research; and educational programs, services, and training designed to maximize safety and environmental stewardship.
- Offer an annual meeting and trade show with substantive content, attendance and profit.