

CEO Newsletter

2019 State of the Air & Space Port



Karina Drees, CEO

Greetings! Welcome to 2019. We saw many great achievements from Mojave Air & Space Port in 2018, and we expect to see even more in 2019.

It has been 14 years since any vehicle has flown to space from Mojave Air & Space Port. Perhaps even more shocking is that in 2018 Virgin Galactic and The Spaceship Company put two Americans into space from American soil on a completely American-built spacecraft. This country hasn't seen humans launch from American soil in seven long years. We were honored to play host to such an achievement and congratulate VG and TSC on such an outstanding accomplishment!

In addition to Virgin Galactic's successful flight test program, Stratolaunch continued their taxi testing program throughout the year, managed by partner company Scaled Composites. Scaled continues to design and flight test many firsts in Mojave, and Masten Space Systems was selected by NASA to help America return to the moon. Some of our pilots have achieved prestigious honors in 2018 as well. Dr. Allen Peterson was inducted as an SETP Fellow. Mike Melvill and Dick Rutan were inducted into the California Aviation Hall of Fame.

The airport also experienced a devastating loss in 2018 with the passing of Paul Allen. Mr. Allen played a significant role in aerospace and aviation in Mojave and we are deeply saddened by his passing in October.

Airport Improvements in 2018

Mojave Air & Space Port has welcomed several new additions to our team in 2018 within our facilities, fire and air traffic departments. These additions to the team will provide exceptional services to our customers into the future and we are delighted to have them on the team.

We continue to invest in maintaining our airfield and pavement. Runway 12/30 received a new coat of paint down the center as well as rubber build-up removed. We also completed the first phase of our taxiway B extension with assistance from the FAA. The facilities team renovated the Mess Hall within our event center building to offer an on-site lunchroom to the growing workforce in Mojave.

Plans for 2019

We continue to promote safe airspace integration and expect even greater things to come in 2019. We will likely see a commercial space launch originate from Mojave Air & Space Port. Additionally, Stratolaunch is expected to fly for the first time in 2019, and we will continue to see some additional spaceship flight tests in Mojave.

We continue to partner with the FAA's Office of Airports to assist with some much-needed pavement improvements. Engineering work should begin in 2019 for future pavement upgrades. In addition, the airport is making some substantial investments airport-wide. We will be upgrading our control tower radios as well as upgrading the radar system to STARS in 2019. We will also begin overhauling some of the decades-old water line infrastructure and improving our perimeter roads. With a little luck from the State of California we may even see some new hangars built in 2019.

2019 will be an exciting new year for Mojave Air & Space Port. Please join us for the ride!