

# Configuration of Airport Passenger Buildings

**Dr. Richard de Neufville**

Professor of Engineering Systems and  
Civil and Environmental Engineering  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Outline

- **Introduction**
  - Motivation
  - Important Ideas
- **Range of Configurations**
- **Process of Evaluation**
  - Criteria of Selection
  - Method of Analysis
  - Differences in Traffic Loads on Buildings
- **Performance of Configurations**
- **Recommendation**
  - “Hybrid” design responsive to future traffic

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Motivation

- **No Agreement in Industry about good configuration**
  - NACO -- X-shaped satellites in parallel rows:  
Bangkok/2nd Airport; Kuala Lumpur /International
  - “Atlanta” -- Midfield lines: Denver/International
  - Aeroports de Paris -- Triangles onto spine roads  
Paris/ de Gaulle
- **Many Errors -- Many Choices have been inadequate for eventual traffic**
  - Dallas/Ft Worth -- linear building bad for transfers
  - Boston/Logan -- International => NY Air => domestic hub

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Important Ideas

- **“Airport Passenger Building”**
  - NOT A TERMINAL, many passengers do not end their air trips there
  - Many passengers “transfer” between
    - Airlines ; Buildings ; Aircraft of an Airline
- **“Correct Choice”**
  - NOT THE OPTIMUM, for assumed conditions
  - RIGHT RESPONSE, over range of conditions

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Change to View of Airport as “Passenger Buildings”

|                                      |                            | Criteria Considered                                 |  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|
|                                      |                            | Single (or Few)                                     | Multiple   |
| F<br>o<br>r<br>e<br>c<br>a<br>s<br>t | N<br>a<br>r<br>r<br>o<br>w | Prevalent in<br>Current Practice<br><br>"Terminals" |  |
|                                      | B<br>r<br>o<br>a<br>d      |   | Broad Range,<br>Multiple Criteria<br>Performance<br><br>"Airport Passenger<br>Buildings" |

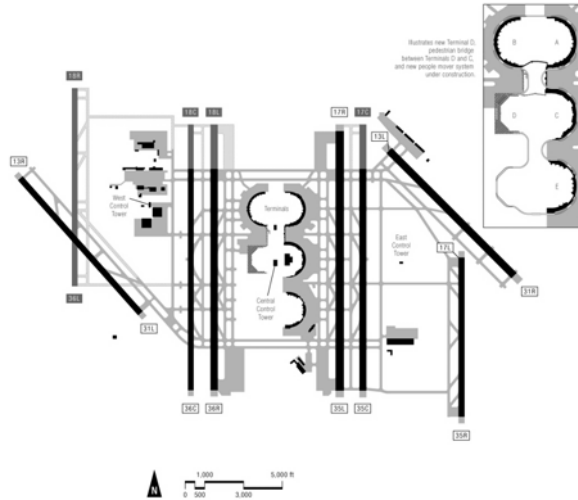
Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Range of Conditions

- **“Pure” Concepts**
  - Linear or Gate Arrival
  - Pier ; Satellite
  - Midfield
  - Transporter
- **“Hybrid” Concepts**
  - Combinations of Pure Elements
- **Centralized and Decentralized**
- **Rail Access**
  - Automated People Movers
  - Metropolitan

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

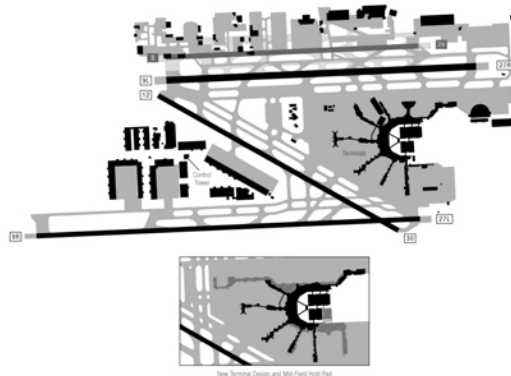
# Linear: Dallas/Forth Worth



Source: FAA Office of System Capacity  
Aviation Capacity Enhancement Plan

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Finger Pier: Miami/International



Source: FAA Office of System Capacity  
Aviation Capacity Enhancement Plan

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

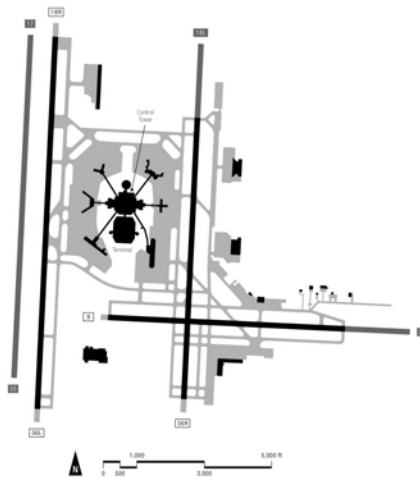
# Satellites (New York/Newark)



Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Satellites: Tampa

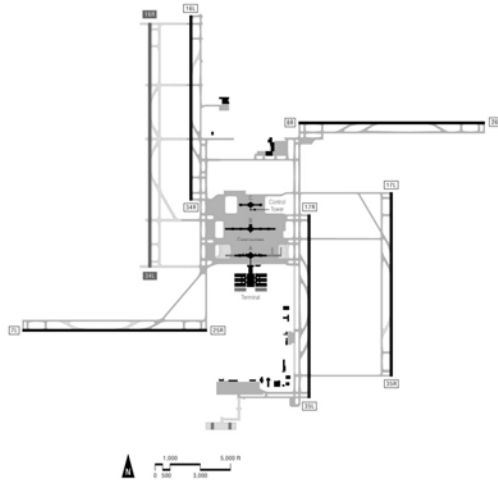
Source: FAA Office of  
System Capacity  
Aviation Capacity  
Enhancement Plan



Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Midfield, Linear: Denver/Intl

Source: FAA Office of System Capacity  
Aviation Capacity Enhancement Plan



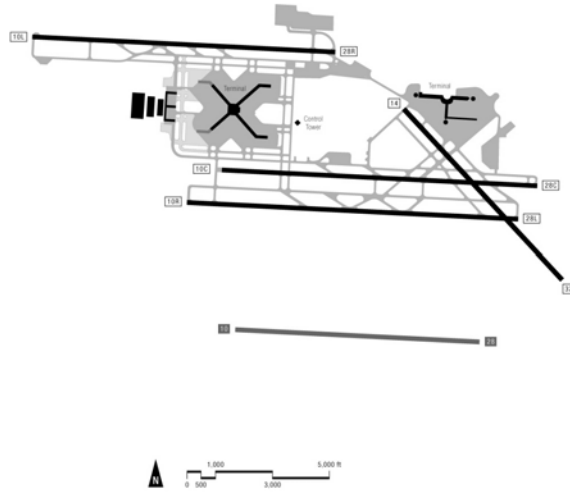
Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Midfield: London/Stansted



Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Midfield, X-shaped: Pittsburgh

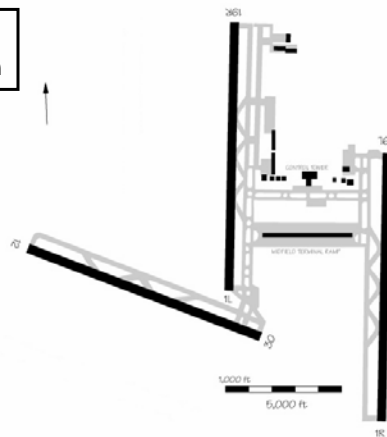


Source: FAA Office of System Capacity  
Aviation Capacity Enhancement Plan

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Transporter: Washington/Dulles

Configuration  
as it has been



Source: FAA Office of System Capacity  
[www.asc.faa.gov](http://www.asc.faa.gov)

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN





# Hybrid: Chicago/O'Hare

Source: FAA Office of  
System Capacity  
Aviation Capacity  
Enhancement Plan



Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Note: new trends in layouts

- **Low-cost buildings for low-cost airlines**
  - Outside US, where Government has built buildings this is novelty – In US airlines pay and define
  - Jetblue facility in New York/Kennedy; Orlando/Sanford
  - Paris/de Gaulle, Singapore, Marseille
- **Common Rental Car Facilities, often linked by people mover**
  - Increasing popular, eliminates circulating vans
  - New York/Newark, San Francisco, Atlanta, etc

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Process of Evaluation

- **Criteria of Selection**
  - Multiple Criteria
  - Broad Forecasts
- **Methods of Analysis**
  - Rapid, Computerized
- **Differences in Traffic Loads on Buildings**
  - Percent Transfers
  - Variability of Traffic
  - Need for Services
- **Performance of Buildings**

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Criteria of Selection

- **Multiple**
  - Walking Distances – effect on passengers
    - Average, Extremes
    - Terminating, Transfers
  - Aircraft Delays – these can be decisive  
(for example: 250,000 ops x 4 min x \$100/min = \$100Million --- this justifies about \$1 billion in construction !)
  - Costs of construction
- **Under Range of Conditions**
  - High, Low Traffic
  - High, Low Transfer Rates

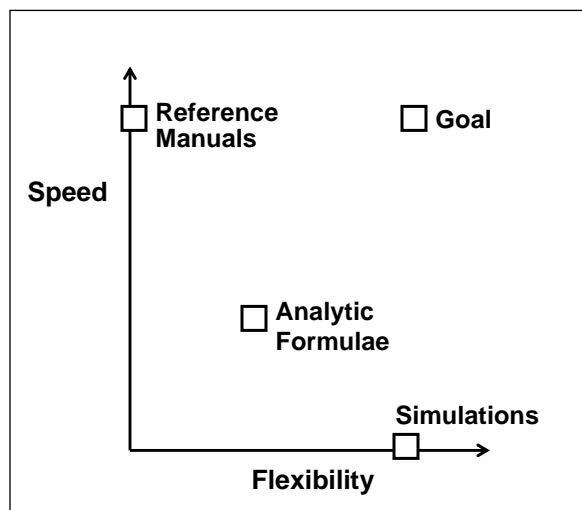
Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Methods of Analysis

- **Manuals (IATA, ICAO, etc.)**
  - Limited Perspective
  - Unsuitable for Major Projects
- **Analytic Formulas**
  - Unrealistic
- **Detailed Simulations**
  - Difficult to Set Up with appropriate data
  - Too Slow for Planning most initial planning
- **Need: General, Computer Analysis**

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Problem Statement (Graphically)



Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Current Decision Support Is Inadequate

|   | Reference<br>Manuals/Texts  | Analytic<br>Formulae                          | Computer-<br>Based  |
|---|---|---|---|
| <u>Step 1</u><br>Selection Of<br>Initial<br>Configuration and<br>Geometry | LATA, ICAO, FAA, TRB,<br>Parsons, Transport Canada,<br>Ashford, Blow, Hart,<br>Blankenship, Horonjeff and<br>McKelvey | Bandara, Robuste,<br>Vandebona,<br>Wirasinghe | <div style="border: 2px solid black; width: 40px; height: 20px; margin: auto;">Need</div> |
| <u>Step 2</u><br>Detailed Layout<br>of Floor Plan                         | LATA, ICAO, FAA, TRB,<br>Parsons, Transport Canada,<br>Ashford, Blow, Hart,<br>Blankenship, Horonjeff and<br>McKelvey | Impractical                                   | Dunlay, Pararas, BAA,<br>FAA, Transport<br>Canada, Private<br>Industry                    |

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Difference in Loads

- **“Total Number of Passengers” does not properly define loads on Buildings**
- **Effective Loads depend on Passenger Needs**
- **Key Load Characteristics:**
  - **Transfer Rates (%) -- passengers changing aircraft, buildings or airlines**
  - **Variability of Traffic -- Daily, Seasonal Patterns**
  - **Need for Services -- International controls; Meals and accommodations**
  - **Industry Structure**
  - **Aircraft Types**

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Transfer Rates

- **Transfer passengers require:**
  - Easy Internal Flow ; No Airport Access
- **Hub-and-Spoke Airports**
  - have very high transfer rates, more than 50%
  - common worldwide (fewer in US, more in Europe and Asia)
- **Examples:**
  - **High Rates:** Chicago/O'Hare, Minneapolis/St.Paul, Denver/Intl, Dallas/Fort Worth, Detroit/Metro, Salt Lake City...  
Hong Kong/CLK, Tokyo/Narita (Northwest), London/Heathrow, Amsterdam/Schiphol...
  - **Low Rates:** Boston/Logan, San Francisco/Intl, Montreal/Trudeau, London/Gatwick...

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

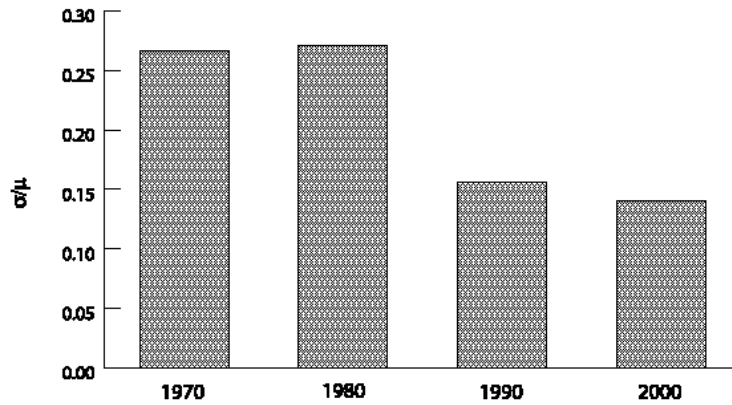
## Variability of Traffic

- **Steady Loads**
  - Low Cost/Passenger for Built Facilities
  - Typical Case: Business Market
  - Example: New York/LaGuardia
- **Variable Loads**
  - Low Utilization for Marginal (less Attractive) Facilities
  - High Cost/Passenger for Built Facilities
  - Typical Case: Tourist, Special Event Markets
  - Examples: London/Gatwick; Jeddah

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Variability decrease with traffic

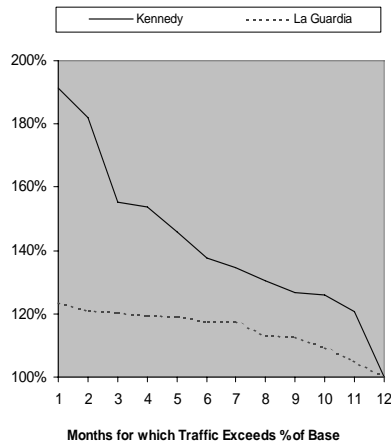
Reduction in Relative Peaks as Traffic Increases \*



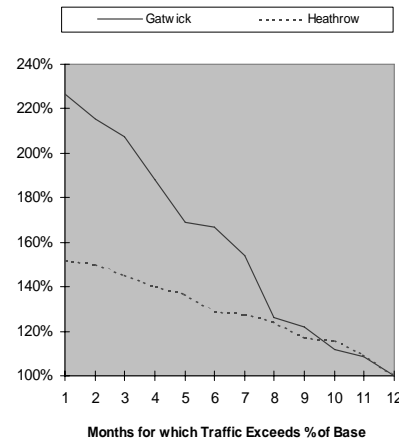
\* Data comes from a typical day of daily operations in October at Lester B. Pearson International Airport in Toronto

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Variations in Traffic at New York and London Airports (1995)



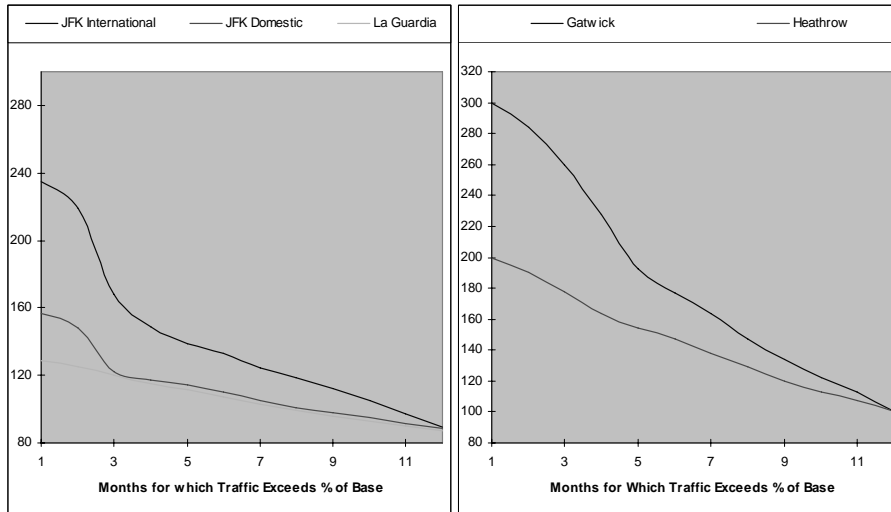
Source: Port Authority of NY/NJ, 1995



Source: ICAO Digest of Statistics, 1995

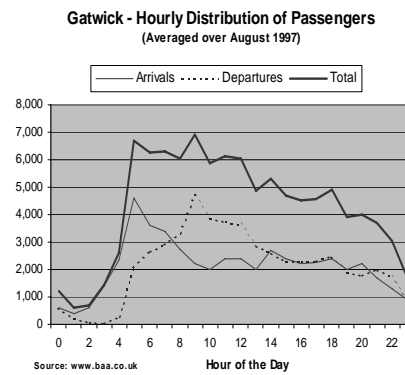
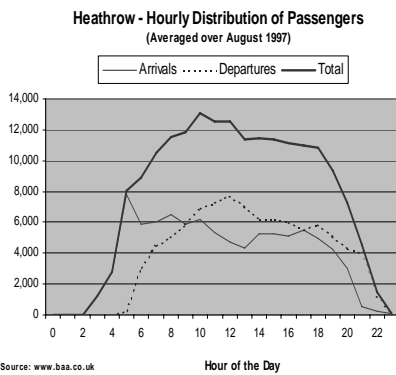
Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Variations in Traffic at New York and London Airports (c.1975)



Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Example of Daily Traffic Fluctuations



Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Performance

- **Linear**
- **Centralized**
- **Satellite**
- **Midfield**
- **Transporter**
- **Sensitivity to**
  - Transfer Rates
  - Industry Structure

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

# Performance: Linear

- **Cost**
  - High ( in terms of relative cost/gate)
  - Only one side of “fingers” used by aircraft
- **Access**
  - Mixed
  - Passengers: OK for locals, Terrible for Transfers
  - Aircraft: Good
- **Services:**
  - Poor (examples: Kansas City; Munich 1)
  - Excessive Staff/Passenger
  - Low Traffic for Concessions

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN



## Performance: Centralized

- **Cost**
  - Relatively Low
  - High per Passenger if Variability is high and expensive building often under used
- **Access**
  - OK in General
  - Especially good for transfers
  - Not so good for aircraft
- **Services**
  - Good
  - Efficient use of Personnel
  - High traffic for concessions

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Performance: Satellite

- **Efficient Use of Waiting Areas**
  - Because waiting areas can be shared by many flights
- **Efficient for Transfers**
  - If volume not too high
- **Designs Sensitive to Transfer Rates**

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Performance: Midfield

- **Big Differences between**
  - Linear buildings (Atlanta, London/Heathrow T5)
  - X-Shaped (Pittsburgh, Kuala Lumpur)
- **Linear**
  - Space Needed/Aircraft Stand: Excellent
  - Delays to Aircraft: Minimal
  - Practical When distances between runways large
- **X-Shaped**
  - Suitable for Narrow Airfields
  - Space Needed/Aircraft Stand: Poor
  - Delays to Aircraft: Large

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Performance: Transporter

- **Cost**
  - Mixed
  - Variability high: Good -- costs are reduced when service not needed (busses parked...)
  - Low Variability: High Costs
- **Access**
  - Good Overall
  - Passengers: generally good... delays on short flights
  - Aircraft: Great (can be parked for easy operation)
- **Services**
  - Good (because can be concentrated)

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Recommendation: “Hybrid” Designs Best

- **Hybrid designs best because:**

- Meet Variety of Existing Needs
- Adapt Easily to Future Needs
- Cost-Effective
- Maximize quality of service to
  - Passengers
  - Airlines
  - Airport Owners

- **Example:**

- Paris / Charles de Gaulle (Air France)

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN

## Conclusion

- **Configurations**

- Cannot be best for all conditions
- ... only for some limited conditions

- **Since Conditions Vary**

- For Airport Users:
  - Business Shuttles, Holiday Traffic
- Over Time
  - With Traffic Levels and Types
  - Changes in Industry Structure

- **Do not apply single configuration!**

Airport Systems Planning & Design / RdN