

NEWS

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For more information, contact
David Wert, Public Information Officer
(909) 387-5412
dwert@sbcounty.gov

Edison brings helicopters and jobs to Chino Airport

Southern California Edison will permanently house its fleet of six maintenance helicopters at the County of San Bernardino's Chino Airport under an agreement unanimously endorsed Tuesday by the County Board of Supervisors.

SCE is relocating its fleet of aviation workhorses from LA/Ontario International Airport to the less-congested Chino Airport, which features a unique location, access to Southern California's skies, and a convenient location within a 10-minute drive of four other Southern California counties.

"This move to Chino Airport will provide improved logistical support for our operations. It will enable our work crews to have better access to remote locations, improving reliability and service to our customers," said Cecil House, senior vice president, Safety, Operations Support and Chief Procurement Office for SCE.

The 20-year lease with SCE is expected to generate approximately \$11,000 per month in revenue to the Department of Airports and add approximately 20 full-time jobs to the airport. The lease will bring even more indirect economic benefits to the County and the communities surrounding the airport.

Chino is one of six general aviation airports owned and operated by the County of San Bernardino.

Construction of the 40,485-square-foot facility consists of aircraft hangars and associated support space. Construction is scheduled to be complete by the fall of 2010. Construction costs for the project are estimated at \$7 million, SCE officials said.

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SCE's initial investment and ongoing presence at the 1,000-acre airport will bring a new vibrancy to the Chino Airport, said Fourth District County of San Bernardino Supervisor Gary C. Ovitt, whose district includes Chino Airport.

"Chino Airport is positioning itself to become the region's premier general aviation center as it welcomes the overflow from Southern California's over-crowded airports," Ovitt said. "The Airport is set to become a haven for general aviators, corporate and commercial users who are being turned away from other airports."

Director of Airports for the County Mike N Williams, A.A.E. said the County is in the early phases of updating Chino Airport's master plan. Once completed, the comprehensive planning document will include plans for preserving the airport's rich military history and developing it into a state-of-the-art aviation business and education airport, Williams said.

"This update to the Airport Master Plan will explore opportunities for continued aeronautical development at the Airport, as well as potential non-aeronautical development and engage the surrounding communities in these discussions," Williams said.

According to the 2002 Chino Airport Master Plan, the airport generates 238 on- and off-airport jobs and has an overall economic impact of about \$145 million a year. There were 134,000 flight operations at Chino Airport in 2008.