

# ACRP INSIGHT Event: Exploring the Impact of AI on the Airport Industry

Artificial intelligence (AI) and its applications are growing exponentially across all industries. At airports, use of AI can improve operations, increase traffic forecasting accuracy, and enable system diagnostics. The industry still has much to uncover about the technology’s benefits, risks, and limitations. Join airport practitioners in discussing research gaps around the use of AI at airports. Sessions will cover use cases, barriers to implementation, and technical readiness. **Register for this event** [here](#).

**Questions?** Contact the Principal Investigator for the Project at [Tanay.Gupta@wsp.com](mailto:Tanay.Gupta@wsp.com)

## Day 1: Tu May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – Context and Initial Gap Ideation

Proposed Times	Session
9:00 – 9:15 am	<p><b>Welcome</b> NAS and CRP staff will introduce the event and kick off the keynote speaker.</p>
9:15 – 9:45 am	<p><b>Keynote Speaker</b></p> <p>Keynote Speaker: <b>Rishma Khimji</b>, CIO, Greater Orlando Aviation Authority</p> <p>TRB staff will introduce the event, while an industry expert will provide inspirational perspective on AI. TRB/ACRP will deliver welcome remarks, setting expectations for the sessions. The expert will then share an inspirational yet grounded overview on the types of AI, providing AI trajectory to encourage big picture thinking.</p>
9:45 – 10:30 am	<p><b>How Applications and Challenges Scale by Hub Size</b></p> <p>Moderator: <b>Art Rempp</b>, CIO, Reno-Tahoe International Airport</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Eduardo Valencia</b>, CIO, Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport</li> <li>• <b>Marcus Session</b>, CIO, Tampa International Airport</li> <li>• <b>Chuck Miwa</b>, CIO, Ontario International Airport</li> </ul> <p>CIOs from airports of varying hub sizes with an experienced moderator. This session aims to highlight what AI technologies airports have implemented, how they overcame challenges, and share gaps, etc. These speakers will help energize attendees to continue engaging.</p>
10:30 – 10:45 am	<p><b>Break</b></p>

Proposed Times	Session
	Brief stretch and time buffer before break out groups. Earlier break to facilitate relationship building early in the event. Opportunity for folks to use sticky boards to asynchronously list potential research gaps.
10:45 am – 12:00 pm	<p><b>Cross-Perspective Pair &amp; Share: Shaping Future ACRP Research on AI for Airports</b> Lead: <b>Chuyang Yang</b> (Embry-Riddle)</p> <p>This interactive session brings together attendees from airport, industry, and regulatory perspectives for a structured exchange on AI opportunities, barriers, and unmet needs in the airport industry. Through paired discussion, small-group synthesis, and a color-coded voting activity, participants will help surface and prioritize ideas that may inform future ACRP research.</p>
12:00 – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>
1:00 – 1:45 pm	<p><b>Airport Ecosystem – Use Cases (breakout sessions)</b></p> <p>Use case examples/discussion in breakout rooms that can include three of the following: (A) operations, (B) security, and (C) passenger experience. Discuss how practitioners are using AI, what is possible, and implications. Folks can potentially rotate to a second breakout session after 30mins. Each session will have an assigned note-taker who will report key highlights in the last 15 minutes of the break-out discussion.</p> <p>Breakout Session Leads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operations Lead: <b>Arturo Garcia</b>, COO, Avports</li> <li>• Security Lead: <b>Eve Machol</b>, Commercial Aviation Lead, Leidos</li> <li>• Passenger Experience: <b>Renee Jonat</b>, SVP Transformation and Enterprise PMO, Avolta (HMSHost, Hudson)</li> </ul>
1:45 – 2:45 pm	<p><b>Barriers to AI Implementation</b></p> <p>Moderator: <b>Kartik Ganeshan</b>, Tech Lead for AWS US State and Local Government Transportation</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Heather Day</b>, Chief Administration Officer, Gerald R. Ford International Airport Authority</li> <li>• <b>Jamie Ritchie</b>, Assistant Chief Information Officer, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport</li> <li>• <b>David Danks</b>, Polk JSF Distinguished University Professor of Philosophy, AI, &amp; Data Science at the University of Virginia</li> </ul>

Proposed Times	Session
	Covering topics such as regulatory constraints, privacy concerns, technical problems, and costs.
2:45 – 3:00 pm	<p><b>Networking Break</b></p> <p>Opportunity for folks to again use sticky boards to add potential research gaps.</p>
3:00 – 3:45 pm	<p><b>Key Regulatory Concerns and Compliance</b></p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Marty Reynolds</b>, Managing Director, Cybersecurity, Airlines for America</li> <li>• <b>Seth Cutter</b>, VP-Industry Affairs, Airports Council International – North America (ACI-NA)</li> </ul> <p>Aviation associations' legislative experts present on the top 10 things airports should know from a regulatory perspective about AI.</p>
3:45 – 4:30 pm	<p>Regroup on research gaps, recap on day 1, looking ahead.</p> <p>Discussion leads share back first set of research gaps identified during day 1.</p>
4:45 – 5:30	<p><b>(Optional) Evening keynote in atrium</b></p> <p>Fun way to close the day through an unconventional topic with hors d'oeuvres provided by ACRP. Folks can alternatively go straight to happy hour or adjourn.</p> <p>Keynote Speaker: <i>TBD</i></p>

## Day 2: W May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – Defining Guidance Needed

Proposed Times	Notes
9:00 – 9:15 am	<p><b>Day 2 Opening Remarks</b></p> <p>Recap/Setting Expectations for the final session of the day.</p>
9:15 – 10:15 am	<p><b>AI Readiness at Airports</b> (<i>breakout sessions</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Readiness: data and technology readiness, procurement of AI systems, cybersecurity.</li> <li>• Governance: organizational/strategy (overarching plan and roadmap) - evaluation process - ethics conversation, Internal policies, accessibility considerations</li> <li>• People: workforce readiness – culture and comfortable with using the tools being provided, skills, training, change management. Workflows and how they may change.</li> </ul> <p>Breakout session leads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tech Readiness - <b>Enrique Melendez</b>, Executive Advisor, Airport IT &amp; Digital Systems, The JW Group</li> <li>• Governance - <b>Renie Subin</b>, Senior Director, Technology and External Affairs, Airports Council International (ACI-NA)</li> <li>• People - <b>TBD</b></li> </ul>
10:00 – 10:15 am	<p><b>Networking Break</b></p>
10:15 – 11:30 am	<p><b>Problem Statement/Research Needs</b> (<i>breakout session</i>)</p> <p>ACRP will present on problem statements. Will do small breakout sessions to synthesize problem statements and then end back together as a large group, with the moderator of each small group reporting on what they discussed. Potentially leverage white boards or running digital list of research needs identified during the two days. (see note 3 below)</p> <p>Speaker: <b>Jordan Christensen</b>, Senior Program Officer, Transportation Research Board</p>
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	<p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <p>Session covering next steps to formally develop research statements, ways to stay engaged, and other statements from NAS. Can potentially be condensed to 15 mins depending on prior session</p>