

United States Marshals Service FY 2027 Performance Budget

President's Budget

Justice Prisoner Air Transportation System Revolving Fund



April 2026



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I. Overview

The Justice Prisoner Air Transportation System (JPATS) coordinates and completes prisoner and detainee movements safely, securely, and humanely in a timely and economical manner. JPATS operates as a revolving fund with total operating costs reimbursed by its customers. JPATS' current, primary customer agencies are the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS, Prisoner Operations Division), and the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP, Correctional Programs). JPATS also transports prisoners from other Federal agencies as well as state and local agencies on a reimbursable basis. Under the current administration, JPATS engaged with Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to determine if JPATS may renew its former partnership with ICE to support the Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) mission.

Using USMS and BOP self-reported projected prisoner movement requirements as the basis, JPATS develops total projected costs to provide the air transportation services requested by its customers. JPATS uses OMB Circular A-126 guidelines to identify fixed and variable cost categories and applies activity-based costing to develop flight hour rates. JPATS bills its customers based on the number of flight hours and the number of seats used to move prisoners/detainees.

The JPATS revolving fund stabilizes costs for customer agencies because it can absorb fluctuations in operating expenses such as jet fuel and unplanned aircraft maintenance on a short-term basis. JPATS accumulates carryover no-year reimbursable budget authority to replace aging aircraft, major aircraft parts, aircraft Ground Support Equipment (GSE), and hangar/facility improvements.

JPATS is committed to ensuring each scheduled mission is properly staffed with a well-trained, professional crew. Each mission includes qualified pilots and aircraft maintenance personnel to safely operate the aircraft. Experienced law enforcement and security officers ensure crew and airlift site safety and the safe, secure transfer of prisoners. Each flight is also staffed by a certified medical specialist who validates required screenings and medical records ensuring all prisoners are medically stable and fit to fly. The medical specialist also responds to all medical situations whether on the ground or in the air.

JPATS continually strives to improve the quality of prisoner movement services, optimize the transportation network, and produce efficiencies for the customer.

II. Budget Assumptions

A. Three Main Cost Pillars

The three main cost pillars in JPATS budget include personnel costs (~30% of budget), aircraft maintenance (~22% of budget), and jet fuel (~19% of budget).

Personnel

- JPATS continues to successfully maintain its operations with a stable number of government employees, currently capped at 114 positions as approved through the budget process by the customer representatives on the JPATS Executive Committee . JPATS also continues to engage approximately 110 personal service contractors who supplement the government employees providing the ground and cabin security for the prisoners and detainees transported by JPATS. To stay in line with recent changes in other parts of the USMS, JPATS solicited a security guard contract that would have potentially replaced the personal service contractors. However, the increased costs to customers for the security guard contract were not justified by the expected program benefits. Therefore, JPATS will continue to use personal service contractors for the foreseeable future.
- JPATS' operations combine two inherently risky tasks: air transportation and managing prisoners. Therefore, a key personnel expense is training to enhance the professional skills of our staff. JPATS training is focused on how to operate aircraft safely (pilot initial certification and annual recurrent training, cabin crew safety training, and flight planning and following training), and includes all USMS-mandated law enforcement operations training.
- For cabin crew safety training, JPATS forged a new partnership in 2026 with the Department of Transportation's Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) to provide the biennial training on cabin crew safety topics such as emergency evacuation techniques, firefighting, in-flight medical emergencies, etc. to JPATS' aviation and law enforcement staff. This new interagency partnership proves more cost-effective than using a private vendor for the same training. TSI's location in Oklahoma City allows JPATS to send new hires for the introductory training in a timelier manner and eliminates JPATS' travel costs.

Maintenance

- For the contract period of FY 2019 through FY 2023, JPATS transitioned its aircraft maintenance provider from the Federal Aviation Administration Universal Service Agreement to an industry leading commercial aircraft maintenance vendor. This transition increased value to JPATS customers by reducing maintenance costs and minimizing aircraft downtime. Given this success, JPATS re-competed the contract. The same commercial vendor was awarded the contract for FY 2024 through FY 2028. The vendor is a proven experienced maintainer that provides exceptional maintenance and

repair capabilities, quality aircraft parts service, and contributed to sustaining a 100 percent Boeing 737 mission reliability rate in FY 2025.

Fuel

- Jet fuel is a market-driven commodity. Fortunately, the price has moderated in the recent past, but this can change quickly depending on geopolitical or other factors. JPATS mitigates the cost impact by purchasing less-expensive Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) contract fuel wherever possible, but DLA vendors are not available at some mission critical airlift stops.

B. Mission Aircraft Fleet

Large Aircraft

- Ownership of large aircraft, including a contingency aircraft, ensures greater availability for missions, affords surge capability, and is more cost-effective than leasing large aircraft.

Small Aircraft

- Various leased small aircraft support identified higher risk or higher visibility movements, medical transports, or OCONUS movements. These leases remain the more cost-effective option in these scenarios.

Cyclical Replacement

- Costs associated with operating and maintaining complex, advanced aircraft continue to increase due to normal market forces. Costs increase even more dramatically for aging aircraft due to the cumulative effects of usage as well as the scarcity of replacement parts.
- The FY 2027 Budget is built under the assumption that the final phase of the planned cyclical replacement of JPATS-owned B-737-400 Classic Series aircraft will be completed in FY 2026. JPATS chose to replace Classic Series aging aircraft (approximately 35 years old) with Next Generation (Next Gen) 737s (approximately 25 years old) from the aviation industry. Next Gen aircraft offer JPATS employees, customers, and stakeholders greater capabilities and more value in the form of reliability, fuel efficiency, and operational safety. Next Gen aircraft also provide improved technologies and greater mission capabilities.
- JPATS completed Cyclical Replacement Phase I in FY 2022 with the purchase of a B737-800. Phase II was completed in FY 2024 with the purchase of a second B737-800.

C. Potential Re-Engagement with ICE and Addition of Other Federal Partnerships

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)

- If JPATS and ICE re-engage even as early as FY 2026, JPATS anticipates the increased prisoner and detainee movements to be integrated into the National Transportation Network in an even and seamless manner, such that a fundamental shift in the size and scope of JPATS' reimbursable budget authority would not be required. Therefore, the plan presented herein remains consistent with the immediate prior year budgetary narratives.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

- JPATS is nearing completion of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the BIA to move its prisoners on a space-available, reimbursable basis. The anticipated volume of BIA movements would not require an adjustment of JPATS' reimbursable budget authority.

III. Performance Discussion: JPATS Strengths and Successes

Transporting Federal Prisoners in Support of the American Justice System

A. Award Winning Culture

JPATS leverages the extensive aviation professional experience of its staff with established practices and proven technologies to maximize safety, reliably perform to standards, and minimize risk. The organization continues to enhance its comprehensive aviation Safety Management System. JPATS has been recognized by the Federal community for its program that defines and documents operations and adheres to the International Standards-Business Aviation Organization (IS-BAO) and Federal Aviation Interagency Committee for Aviation Policy (ICAP) best practices.

JPATS continues to maintain an IS-BAO Stage III Certification, which is considered the gold standard for safe and effective operations in Federal Aviation and International Commercial Aviation organizations. In January 2026, JPATS successfully passed its most recent IS-BAO audit, which also fulfills requirements of the International Civil Aviation Organization for aviation operations outside the United States.

In March 2025, ICAP recognized JPATS with three 2024 Federal Aviation Safety Awards: Premier Federal Aviation Program (Small Program) and Premier Federal Aviation Professionals in the Safety and Maintainer categories. For 2023, JPATS also won the Premier Federal Aviation Program (Small Program) award as well as Premier Federal Aviation Professionals in the Pilot and Management categories.

B. High Quality Custody and Care on the Ground and During Flight

Over the past few years, JPATS completed improvements to its security program to increase its protective posture, raise threat awareness, and reduce risk.

New Aviation Enforcement Officers (AEOs) complete the USMS Training Division-approved AEO induction program and a rigorous Federal Enforcement Officer Training Program curriculum at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

This program reduces risk and standardizes weapons, tactics, and aviation safety training for JPATS operational personnel, enabling JPATS to sustain its superior aviation safety and enforcement posture.

JPATS continues to ensure professional and competent airlift perimeter and hangar security procedures by committing to monthly, quarterly, and annual weapons and tactics training. Additionally, JPATS procured improved tactical gear, radios, tasers, and firearms to align with USMS and Department of Justice (DOJ) policies.

JPATS improved professional development of its personnel by expanding its training cadre of instructors in firearms, less-than-lethal, use of force, emergency medical, and emergency aircraft

procedures. The development of the instructor cadre allows for all operational personnel to be on the cutting edge of tactics and procedures to promote officer safety and standardization.

JPATS also improved intelligence capabilities by providing analysts with additional database access allowing for more robust risk assessments. JPATS analysts enhanced their capabilities through partnership with local, regional, and national law enforcement intelligence centers to provide operational personnel with the current risk data. These enhancements heighten threat awareness while providing an enhanced security posture, thus improving officer, crew, and public safety. By continually evolving its technologies like JPATS Management Information System (JMIS) and the USMS operational system, CAPTURE, it allows JPATS to increase the acquisition of prisoner attribute data and to develop daily intelligence products for its crews to access through mobile devices. These capabilities and ease of this technology allow operational personnel to quickly address, manage, and mitigate emerging intelligence issues to ensure the safe transportation of prisoners from both ground and air.

JPATS employs a team of medical experts (Public Health Service physician, JPATS nurses, and mission-deployed paramedics) to ensure proper medical screening of prisoners and detainees prior to the flights. Each flight has a paramedic on board the aircraft to respond to medical emergencies when they occur.

C. Scheduling Efficiencies

JPATS continues to lead optimization efforts to improve performance and increase efficiency. The data and analysis made possible by JMIS are central to current and planned program initiatives. JMIS assembles more accurate and timely data to help management analyze program areas and yields performance data to identify potential problems, create solutions, and drive program improvements.

JPATS' goal is to automate 80% of planned prisoner movements requests. Automated planning without human intervention allows transportation specialists to focus on high priority, complex prisoner transportation scheduling. For over 10 years, JPATS utilized a commercial off-the-shelf shipping software product to perform automated planning. That system successfully performed prisoner movement planning, but the configuration of the software was labor intensive and costly to maintain to fulfill JPATS requirements. In January 2024, a customized solution was put in place that utilizes machine learning based upon historic movement data and business intelligence to provide more accurate prisoner movement planning and that requires much less maintenance with a lower cost of ownership. This new product exceeded set goals and achieved significant speed and accuracy improvements leading to over \$200k per year in direct cost savings and significantly reduced the level of effort to maintain its configuration data. The new planning and scheduling system save the DOJ time and money by greatly improving prisoner planning performance, accelerating movement of prisoners out of paid housing, and expeditiously transporting them to their designated BOP Facility.

IV. Performance Discussion: Challenges on the Horizon

A. Transfer of Function

JPATS completed a Transfer of Function (ToF) by re-stationing an aircraft and the associated 13 positions to an operating site in Kansas City, Missouri from Las Vegas, Nevada in September 2023. The purpose of this ToF was to improve the National Prisoner Transportation Network by creating another operating site closer to the main JPATS operating site in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

The ToF was designed to replace the lower-volume flights from the Las Vegas operating site with higher-volume flights out of Kansas City. This plan assumed that in-transit housing would be available from the BOP at FCI Leavenworth near the Kansas City International Airport (MCI). Due to mission changes at BOP, the anticipated bedspace has not been made available yet. Furthermore, due to the current ICE ERO mission expansion, paid bedspace near MCI has been difficult to obtain. The collaboration between the JPATS OKC operating site and the BOP Federal Transfer Center (FTC) makes Oklahoma City such a crucial hub in the National Prisoner Transportation Network, and JPATS envisions a similar synergy between an operating site at MCI with FCI Leavenworth. To date, this has not materialized. JPATS continues to evaluate options to make the Kansas City operating site a productive hub in the National Prisoner Transportation Network. If these efforts prove unsuccessful over the next few years, JPATS may have to consider new options for a second operating site to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the National Prisoner Transportation Network.

Notwithstanding the above-described issues, the JPATS aircraft operated more efficiently in Kansas City, averaging 24.8 prisoner moves per flight hour in FY 2025, compared to 16.5 prisoner moves per flight hour in Las Vegas in FY 2019. (FY 2019 was the most recent pre-pandemic fiscal year for Las Vegas operations.)

B. Budget Cycles

Since JPATS is a revolving fund, it relies upon its customers to project their air transportation needs two years in advance. Receipt of flight hour projections allows JPATS to publish its budget and flight hour rates prior to the customers submitting their appropriations requests timely. This budgetary cadence creates challenges for JPATS and its customers on multiple levels. First, on the customer side, it becomes difficult to predict the amount of transportation services that will be needed two years in advance. When the fiscal year arrives, their appropriations may not support the planned level of air transportation, presenting challenges with deciding how to allocate budgetary resources. Second, on the JPATS side, operating a small airline requires investments in equipment, long-term service contracts, and people that cannot be quickly adjusted depending on the budget reality faced by its customers. JPATS can evolve with longer-term trends, but it is not prudent for JPATS to make abrupt changes if longer-term trends are not evident.

JPATS' main challenges when inefficient or ineffective processes surface are, first, to find common ground with its partners in understanding evolving trends with the National Prisoner Transportation Network; and then, second, to develop strategies to manage the evolution of the

JPATS program. Despite these budgetary cycle challenges, JPATS remains a long-term cost-effective solution for its partners. The FY 2025 average flight cost per prisoner to move from origination to destination was \$984. Comparing JPATS' cost to a commercial airline, it would be difficult to transport a hypothetical prisoner and security at this average cost level.

C. Evaluating the Composition of the Aircraft Fleet

Based on how customer movement requests are distributed in the western region of the country and Alaska, JPATS plans to investigate whether a contract vehicle for a small or medium size aircraft might be a more appropriate solution than flying one of JPATS' owned 737 aircraft on certain transport missions.

V. Performance Discussion: Opportunities for Growth

Due to timing of the budget submission, Estimated Revenue amounts shown in the charts below deviate from amounts shown in the Budget Appendix.

A. ICE Re-engagement

After consulting with ICE ERO leadership as they seek options for air transportation beyond their current contract support, JPATS remains ready and willing to support the ICE ERO mission. JPATS shared a draft reimbursable agreement with ICE to restart the partnership. JPATS has the current capacity to support ICE on a recurring or surge basis. Furthermore, JPATS is open to augmenting its current capacity if ICE requests that level of support.

B. Looking for Deeper Efficiencies and Cost Effectiveness

The JPATS Business team constantly seeks to manage costs to provide excellent service to customers in the most cost-effective manner. The JPATS IT team seeks to provide the Scheduling team with tools that maximize flight planning efficiency with movement requests. JPATS leadership asked teams to combine perspectives to determine if additional benefits for customers can be realized by a more comprehensive approach to marrying cost-effectiveness with route efficiency.

VI. Budget Summary

A. Reimbursable Budget Authority

JPATS Revolving Fund program estimates for Obligation Authority (OA) and Personnel Data are based upon customers' projected requirements and estimated carry forward authority.

Financial Operations, FY 2025 – 2027 (\$ in thousands)

	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate	FY 2027 Estimate
Operating	57,267	79,957	82,206
Less Depreciation	(3,544)	(8,493)	(8,068)
Operating Authority	53,723	71,464	74,138
Unobligated Balance-End of Year*	54,428	20,428	25,500
Total Authority	108,151	91,892	99,638
Civilian Positions	123	123	123
Civilian End Strength	87	114	114
Contract Guard Services	109	135	135
Average GS Salary	\$101,198	\$101,741	\$105,634
Average SES Salary	\$196,997	\$187,200	\$205,570

* From SF-133, "Report on Budget Execution and Budgetary Resources," dated November 30, 2025.

B. Revenues and Expenses

Estimated Accumulated Operation Results (AOR) for FY 2025, FY 2026 and FY 2027 are shown below.

	FY 2025 Actual	FY 2026 Estimate	FY 2027 Estimate
Revenue	62,273	79,957	82,206
Cost Of Operations (includes depreciation)	(54,228)	(79,957)	(82,206)
Operating Results	8,045	0	0
Non-Operating Adjustment – Other	0	0	0
Net Operating Results (NOR)	8,045	0	0
Prior Year AOR	72,132	80,177	80,177
AOR Adjustments	0	0	0
Net Accumulated Operating Results (AOR)	80,177	80,177	80,177