



METROPOLITAN
WASHINGTON
AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

Position Brief

Senior Vice President and General Counsel Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

March 2025



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The Opportunity

Join the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) in their mission to shape the future of aviation infrastructure and services in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. If you are a dynamic and results-oriented General Counsel with a passion for excellence in aviation law, we invite you to apply for this executive leadership opportunity. Come be a part of MWAA's dynamic team and lead the way in delivering world-class aviation facilities and connectivity to the region.



About MWAA

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) is an independent authority responsible for overseeing the management, operations and capital development of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Washington Dulles International Airport, and the Dulles Toll Road. Committed to excellence in aviation infrastructure and services, MWAA strives to provide world-class facilities and connectivity to the National Capital area.

The Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority hosted 53.54 million total passengers in 2024, setting a new travel record at Reagan National and Dulles International airports. This achievement was primarily attributed to significant growth at Dulles International Airport, which alone saw 27.25 million passengers—a jump of 8.4% from the previous year. This spike in traffic was helped by the addition of six new airlines and expanded services by existing carriers. Reagan National Airport also saw a growth in passenger numbers, with 26.29 million passengers in 2024, which was a 3.3% increase over the prior year.



Mission and Core Values

The Airports Authority's primary mission is to develop, promote, and operate safely Reagan National and Dulles International airports, continually striving to improve our efficiency, customer orientation, and the level of air service provided. The core values of the Airports Authority are Integrity, Pride, Collaboration, and Mutual Respect.

Governance

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority is a public body politic and corporate, created with the consent of the Congress of the United States by the District of Columbia Regional Airports Authority Act of 1985, as amended, and Ch. 598, Virginia Acts of Assembly of 1985, as amended. The purpose of this entity is to plan, provide and actively manage world class access to the global aviation system in a way that anticipates and serves the needs of the National Capital area.

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority is governed by a 17-member [Board of Directors](#). The Board establishes policy and provides direction to management, and its authority is plenary. Members of the Board are appointed by the Governors of Virginia and Maryland, the Mayor of Washington, D.C., and the President of the United States.

Operations and Funding

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority is not taxpayer-funded but is self-supporting, using aircraft landing fees, rents and revenues from concessions and parking to fund operating expenses. The Authority is responsible for capital improvements at the airports, which are funded in part by passenger facility charges collected through airline tickets, Federal Airport Improvement Program funds and the proceeds of bonds issued by the Airports Authority.

In 2008, the Airports Authority's responsibilities were expanded to include the operation of the Dulles Toll Road and management of the construction project to extend the metropolitan Washington region's Metrorail mass transit system for 23 miles from the existing East Falls Church station in Virginia to Dulles International Airport and beyond into Loudoun County, Virginia.

Tolls collected on the Dulles Toll Road are used to operate and improve the Toll Road and fund a portion of the construction of the Metrorail extension project. Additional funding for the Metrorail project is supplied by federal grants and loans and by contributions from the Commonwealth of Virginia, and Loudoun and Fairfax counties in the commonwealth.

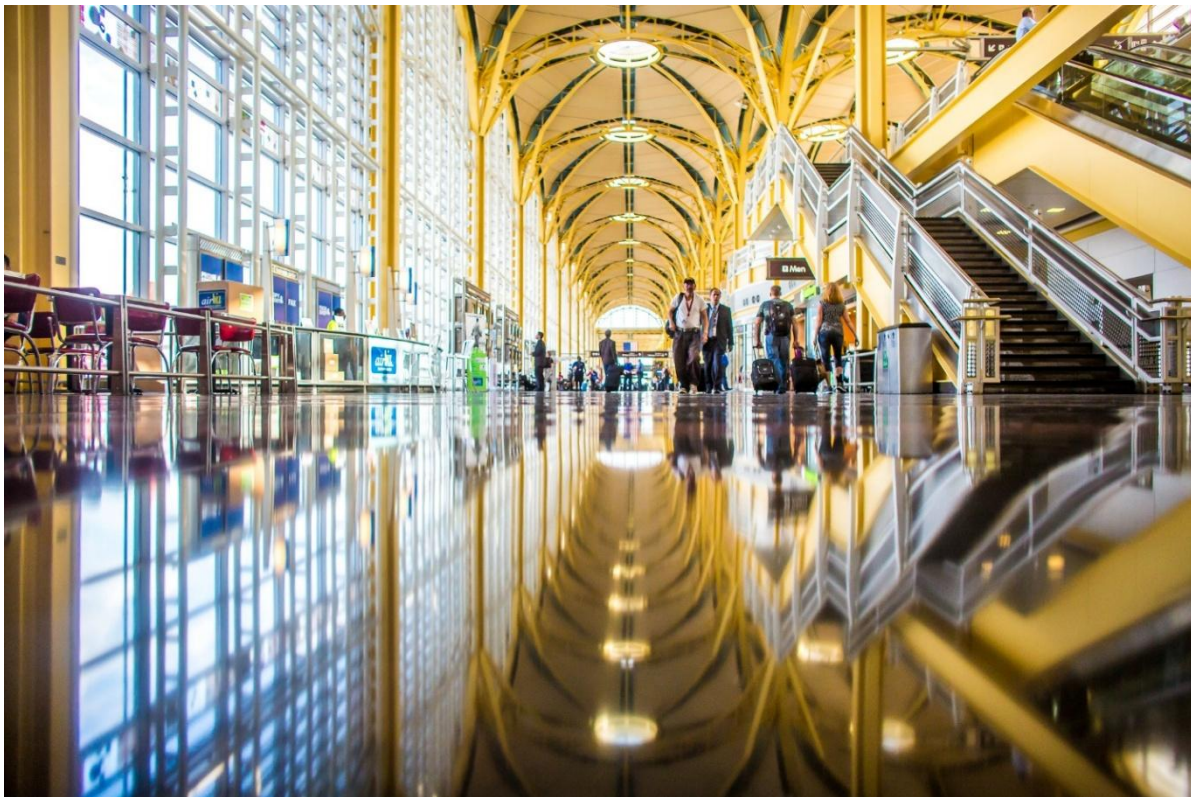


Location

The authority's headquarters is located less than one mile from Reagan National Airport in the Crystal City neighborhood of Arlington County, Virginia.

For more information, please visit:

- [MWAA Website](#)
- [Reagan National](#)
- [Dulles Metro](#)
- [Dulles International](#)
- [Dulles Toll Road](#)
- [2025 Budget Book](#)



The Position

Our client the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority is seeking an individual for the role of Senior Vice President and General Counsel. This executive position manages the Airports Authority's legal program, serves as chief legal counsel, and is the focal point for all legal issues and matters. The General Counsel's advice and other services affect the functioning of the Dulles Toll Road and Dulles Rail Project, in addition to IAD and DCA airports, which are critical links in national and international transportation systems.

Overseeing the Office of General Counsel at MWAA's Headquarters Office, this role includes managing the work of in-house attorneys and coordinating the activities of external legal counsel, addressing all major legal issues and proceedings relevant to the organization. The General Counsel works under the administrative supervision of the President and CEO and works closely with the Board of Directors.

Responsibilities

The SVP & General Counsel responsibilities will include:

- Providing advice and a full range of legal services essential to policy formulation, compliance with applicable laws, and the day-to-day operation of the airports.
- Ensuring that all legal documents, including memoranda, contracts, and real estate instruments, are legally robust, clearly written, and uphold the highest standards of quality.
- Providing expert interpretations, advice, and support across a wide array of legal matters, ensuring all legal analyses are thoroughly researched and grounded in applicable federal and state laws.
- Leading the drafting of comments on legislative and regulatory changes affecting the Airports Authority, preparing regulations, resolutions, and other legal documents for the Board of Directors' review and approval.
- Drafting and updating directives, orders, and other documents establishing rules for tenants and users of the airports, ensuring clear and enforceable guidelines.



- Overseeing the development and updating of the Codes of Ethics for the Board of Directors and Airports Authority employees, ensuring the effectiveness of the organization's ethics and compliance programs.
- Representing the Airports Authority in adversarial administrative and judicial proceedings, negotiating settlements favorably when it aligns with the organization's interests.
- Directing the activities of outside legal counsel and acting as the primary legal liaison with governmental bodies, including the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia.
- Remaining informed on recent legal developments to ensure the organization's legal strategies adapt to the changing legal landscape.
- Undertaking other responsibilities as needed to support the mission and objectives of the Airports Authority.



The Candidate

MWAA is seeking a highly respected and experienced legal professional to assume the Senior Vice President and General Counsel position. The ideal candidate will have the gravitas to succeed in a complex, multi-stakeholder environment dealing with a broad range of public and private sector issues and be comfortable with dual reporting responsibilities.

Competencies & Areas of Expertise

Ideal candidates for this role will have:

- Legal experience working with public sector organizations governed by a board of directors or other governing body, such as other airports, state councils or commissions, and or local governments
- Knowledge of and skill in general law practice with reasonable experience in aviation law
- Skilled in the interpretation and application of a wide variety of laws and legal decisions and precedents
- Experience in the development of regulatory or legislative proposals to meet the unique operational needs of the airports
- Proven ability to perform complex analyses of data and information
- Current and/or prior exposure in collaborating with Federal stakeholders like the DOT, FAA, FRA, and FTA
- Understanding of the nuances of working and succeeding within a highly transparent, public sector environment
- Experience interacting with and advising a Board of Directors
- Excellent leadership, coaching, and mentoring skills with proven ability to succeed in a complex stakeholder environment
- Ability to delegate and distribute workload as required



- Strong interpersonal, presentation, verbal, and written communication skills, with emphasis on negotiation and persuasive techniques
- Exceptional analytical, problem solving, and strategic thinking skills
- Hands-on leader with the ability to work under pressure and maintain emotional self-control, providing leadership during critical situations
- Patience and ability to deal with ambiguity
- A reputation of unquestioned integrity and ethics

Essential Qualifications

Candidates for the General Counsel role must have:

- Eleven plus years of progressively responsible experience in the practice of law in the United States.
- Experience as a second or higher level supervisor of attorneys.
- Juris Doctor degree.
- Current Virginia Bar membership or must be able secure admission to the Virginia Bar within six months of hire, promotion, or placement in the role.
- A state driver's license in good standing.

Other Necessary Special Factors

- A background security investigation will be required for all new hires.
- Must maintain required certifications and licenses.
- Must meet in-service and continuing education/training requirements.
- Work is typically reviewed in progress and upon completion for quantity, quality, timeliness, teamwork, customer service, and other factors.



About Odgers Berndtson



Odgers Berndtson Executive Search is a leading global executive search firm, assisting private and public sector organizations find the highest caliber, people, for senior management appointments across North America and internationally.

Our reputation at the top of the executive search profession is over 50 years old. With offices in over 60 cities worldwide, our experienced executive search specialists operate with absolute discretion, integrity, and care, and are experts in finding exceptional individuals for challenging roles.

WE ARE GLOBAL

We have the support of an excellent international network of offices expanding across more than 30 countries globally.

To apply:

Please submit a comprehensive CV along with a cover letter which sets out your interest in the role and encapsulates the aspects of your experience relevant to the required criteria.

The preferred method of application is by email to: Allison.Zobrist@odgersberndtson.com





ODGERS BERNDTSON

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