

Okaloosa County News Release

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Departments of Airports to Recommend Re-branding to Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners in January

The results of the study are in – Northwest Florida Regional Airport has an identity problem. The results of the research concluded that the current name is perceived as “vague,” “generic” and is generally confusing as it is strikingly similar to a nearby airport. Like many other airports that are going through re-branding efforts for this same reason, the Department of Airports intends to make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners that the airport name be changed to **Destin-Ft Walton Beach International Airport** at their regular scheduled meeting on **January 21, 2015 in Ft Walton Beach**.

Here is why - It is located on Eglin Air Force Base, referred to as Ft Walton Beach, its three-letter airport identifier (VPS) is associated with the nearby town of Valparaiso, and many of the people flying here are vacationing along our beautiful beaches in Destin and Ft. Walton Beach.

Currently, 72% of airports are named after the primary municipalities they serve. Airports such as John Wayne Airport in Orange County and Bob Hope Airport in Burbank, CA have monikers that do not help travelers determine the airport’s location, and they are going through re-branding efforts that will include the municipality in the name.

The results of the research overwhelmingly suggest that the names Destin and/or Ft Walton Beach be in the airport name, as discovered and recommended from Market Dynamics Research Group, a research firm located in New Orleans, LA, who conducted a qualitative exploratory phase as well as a quantitative survey phase to identify the optimal name for Northwest Florida Regional Airport (VPS).

The recommended name of Destin-Ft Walton Beach International Airport will alleviate this identity problem, greatly alleviate any confusion, better pinpoint the location due to its clearer geographic reference, and will ultimately help to bolster passenger numbers . The three letter VPS identifier as well as the well branded Fly VPS would remain unchanged.

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