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# Report values Wallops impact on Lower Shore at \$200M

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Written by  
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WALLOPS ISLAND -- A new study says government and business operations at Wallops Island have an economic impact of almost \$200 million in the lower Eastern Shore region.

The region is comprised of Accomack and Northampton counties in Virginia and Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester counties in Maryland. Accomack County alone receives around \$78 million in value from Wallops, according to the report.

Business and government activities at Wallops support 1,206 jobs in the county and a total of 2,341 jobs in the region, plus another 704 outside the area, the report says.

Additionally, the impact on tax revenue is \$2.6 million a year in state and local taxes and \$2.3 million in federal taxes.

The study was commissioned by the Eastern Shore Defense Alliance with support from Accomack County and was done by the Business, Economic and Community Outreach Network of the Franklin P. Perdue School of Business at Salisbury University.

Accomack County contributed \$8,000 toward the cost to update a similar but differently focused 2005 study, which valued the U.S. Navy's annual economic impact on the county at \$81 million and its impact on the region at more than \$100 million.

The new analysis in measuring Wallops' economic value took into account three factors: the annual impact of business operations there; the employment impact generated by workers' pay spent locally; and the value of Wallops-related tourism in Accomack County.

The value of those factors in Accomack County is \$26.4 million for operations, \$50 million for employment and \$1.1 million for tourism. On the lower Eastern Shore region, Wallops business operations generate nearly \$47 million and 187 jobs, employment's effects are \$139 million and 738 jobs, and tourism brings in \$2.4 million and generates 18 jobs, according to the study.

Operations studied included Computer Sciences Corp., Lockheed Martin, NASA Wallops Flight Facility, NASA Visitor Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Wallops CDA Station,



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Northrop Grumman, Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority and VT Griffin/Wallops Institutional Consolidated Contract.

The analysis used 2008 data inflated to 2010 figures from the five counties in the region and analyzed it using IMPLAN computer software, which is based on 1973 Nobel Prize winner Wassily Leontief's Input-Output economic theory.

BEACON Economic Development and Transportation Planner Sarah Bunch, who headed up the project, said the actual value of Wallops is likely even higher than the report indicates.

"Beyond the quantifiable value of the activities of the Wallops entities studied, there are several factors that further increase total value to the local economy. Many of the jobs at and around Wallops are highly technical and bring a highly educated and above average income workforce to the area," Bunch said in a statement.

The presence of those educated workers leads to intangible benefits that tend to raise the quality of life throughout the region, she said.

The release also said increased activities related to the upcoming Taurus II missions to the International Space Station will add to the regional economic value and are estimated to represent hundreds more jobs and tens of millions of dollars of total economic value, according to BEACON Director Memo Diriker.

A copy of the study is available at the Eastern Shore Defense Alliance website, <http://easternshoredefensealliance.org>.

For more information, contact BEACON at 410-546-6001 or e-mail [beacon@salisbury.edu](mailto:beacon@salisbury.edu).

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