

BREAKING NEWS

USM Moves to Block Info on the USM Plane's Movements

HATTIESBURG – Reporters at USMNEWS.net have learned that USM has completed the necessary steps to prevent the general public from finding out about the movements (whereabouts) of the newly-leased USM airplane. According to word received by USMNEWS.net from officials at FlightAware, the online service that tracks movement of registered aircraft, USM has recently placed its Beechcraft King Air 200 on the National Business Aviation Association's (NBAA) Blocked Aircraft Registration (BAR) list. The NBAA operates and maintains the BAR listing in conjunction with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). According officials at FlightAware, although inclusion on the BAR prevents the general public from tracking the movements of aircraft, USM can make its aircraft's movements available to selected individuals by subscribing to FlightAware's Selective Unblocking Service (SUS).

News of USM's highly controversial \$1.89 million [lease agreement](#) with the USM Foundation for the BKA 200 has been circulating for [more](#) than a month. USMNEWS.net, *The Hattiesburg American* and other media outlets have been covering the controversial story (via reports and editorials) since November of 2008. Editorials have called for USM to relinquish the airplane, a move that would free up almost \$2 million that the University could use to get through the tough economic times that the nation and state are facing currently. Through inclusion on the BAR list, Saunders and USM seem to dismissing out of hand such advice. Sources say that such a move toward secrecy, which was likely motivated by the launch of USMNEWS.net's new series [Air Farce One](#), will only heighten the general public's skepticism and cynicism about what is going on at USM with regard to stewardship of taxpayers' dollars.

This recent turn of events also contradicts what Saunders told **Pointe Innovation** [magazine](#) reporter Lynne Jeter, for Jeter's article "Spunky Saunders." [There](#), Jeter wrote, "... Saunders is focused on building trust, building a team and building a campus. 'By building trust, by making sure our processes are transparent, our people know what to expect when they come to work here and to school here, and know what's expected from them, that our policies are sound and adhered to[.]' [Saunders said]." With the application (from USM) for the BAR, one source stated "... and with \$2 million at stake, so much for 'building trust' and 'transparen[cy]'."