Message from the Director

The Aviation Division accomplished great things this year, growing our number of projects and investing in Texas airports even as the economy continues its tenuous recovery. We are proud to support general aviation in Texas, which provides more than 56,000 jobs, with $3.1 billion in payroll and $14.6 billion in total economic output. This year’s highlights include the completion of a $52 million multi-year project at Collin County Regional Airport, which represents the Texas Department of Transportation’s (TxDOT’s) largest aviation construction project ever. The centerpiece of the project was a new 7,002-foot runway and relocation of FM 546.

Our significant projects and programs are represented in this annual report. This format provides readers with quick access to a broad spectrum of our work.

We know that more work remains and that we can continue to improve the 294 airports in our system that serve the 31,260 registered aircraft and 50,246 active pilots who flew over 2 million hours in Texas. However, we are committed to our vision, and we have the resolve to see it through. Our progress this year is a tribute to our remarkable staff. It is also a tribute to our airport managers, our stakeholders, and city governmental officials who help make the Texas airport system the finest in the country.

David Fulton, Director
Texas Department of Transportation

Division Overview

The Aviation Division helps cities and counties obtain and disburse federal and state funds for reliever and general aviation airports included in the nearly 300-airport Texas Airport System Plan (TASP). The division also participates in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) State Block Grant Program, through which it implements a federal improvement program for general aviation airports.

Division staff responsibilities include oversight for the planning, engineering, and grant management of aviation capital improvement projects across the state. The division also operates a fleet of state-owned aircraft for the transportation needs of state officials and employees.

Capital Investment Highlights

In 2012, a total of $120 million was invested in airport infrastructure from reliever airports to small, rural general aviation airports. This number includes:

- $48.7 million in maintenance/rehabilitation/reconstruction work to maintain and preserve the existing system
- $26.5 million in capacity improvements for runways, taxiways, and apron space
- $26.9 million in airport improvements to ensure they meet FAA standards and safety compliance
- $2.4 million in master plans, business plans, and feasibility studies
- $1.5 million in environmental impact studies
Funding the Airport System

The Aviation Facilities Development and Financial Assistance Program is administered by the division. Funding for airports in the TASP comes from federal, state, and local sources. Texas, one of ten states, is a participant in the FAA State Block Grant Program, and takes the lead in carrying out the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) for general aviation and reliever airports in the state. As such, TxDOT acts as the agent for the state and political subdivisions with airports for the purpose of applying for, receiving, and disbursing federal airport improvement funds.

The AIP uses Aviation Trust Fund monies to invest in the National Plan of Integrated Airports Systems (NPIAS). Trust Fund revenues come from an assortment of aviation user fees and taxes authorized at the national level. In addition, TxDOT provides funding for important non-federally eligible airports in the Texas Airport System Plan.

Combined, the TxDOT Aviation Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) contains specific federal and state eligible projects for development during an upcoming three-year period and implements the program through grants to public entities for the purpose of establishing, constructing, reconstructing, enlarging, or repairing airports, or navigational facilities. The number of projects in the program at any one time is constrained by available funds and system priorities. Local governments also provide a match for funding airport projects, which is typically 10 percent.

Federal Programs

Hangar/Fuel Program

If all airside needs are met, an airport sponsor may pursue funding for the construction of hangars. Federally eligible airports can use Non-Primary Entitlement (NPE) monies for the construction of hangars. Similar to the hangar program, airports without a fuel-dispensing system are eligible to participate in 75 percent grant funding for the aboveground Fuel Facility Development Program.

2012 highlights include:

- Investment of $5 million for hangar development
- Five fuel farms were constructed for $890,000

Air Traffic Control Towers

In 2003, following the passage of a federal funding bill, the Air Traffic Control Tower (ATCT) Program offered 90 percent grants up to a maximum of $1.5 million to qualifying sponsors for construction of air traffic control towers and associated communication equipment. Beginning in 2012, the ATCT Program maximum funding amount was changed to $2 million.

2012 highlights include:

- $265,000 invested for the design of an air traffic control tower

State Programs

Airport Terminal Grant Program

The TxDOT Aviation Division Airport Terminal Grant Program provides 50 percent matching funds up to $500,000 to sponsors of eligible publicly owned airports for construction of new terminal buildings or remodeling existing terminal buildings, as well as up to $100,000 in matching funds for appropriate vehicle parking and entrance roads.
2012 highlights include:
• $1.7 million invested for the construction of two terminal buildings

Automated Weather Observing Systems (AWOS)
AWOS can detect and report weather information like surface wind speed and direction, ambient air temperature, dew point temperature, atmospheric pressure, visibility, sky condition, and precipitation. The system’s “voice” broadcasts local, minute-by-minute weather data from the ground directly to the pilot in the aircraft. This important information improves safety for pilots flying en route and when landing aircraft.

The division’s AWOS program began in 1997, and today, 90 systems have been built and maintained. This year, three new systems were installed, and two existing airport systems were upgraded and relocated.

2012 highlights include:
• $513,000 invested for the construction of AWOS

Routine Airport Maintenance Program (RAMP)
RAMP is a cost share program between the Aviation Division, the 25 TxDOT districts, and the general aviation airports in Texas. The program is designed to assist communities with needed maintenance by offering state financial assistance. RAMP funding is a $50,000 match per airport for each fiscal year. The program includes lower-cost airside and landside airport improvements. Over the years, the program has grown from 30 participating airports with total expenditures of $250,000 to nearly 200 airports with state grant funds of over $3.5 million.

2012 highlights include:
• 188 grants issued
• $3.7 million invested for routine airport maintenance with an additional $3.7 matched by the airport sponsor

Aviation in Texas—Facts and Figures

Number and Types of Airports
• 27 Commercial Service—Public airport with a minimum of 2,500 passenger boardings each year; has scheduled passenger aircraft service
• 24 Reliever Airports—Very high levels of activities with many jets and multiengine propeller aircraft; around 200 based aircraft
• 67 Business/Corporate—Jet-capable runways with high levels of activity with some jet and multiengine propeller based aircraft
• 108 Community Service—Business access to smaller communities; 20 based aircraft and around 6,000 operations
• 68 Basic Service—Typically lower activity levels providing additional convenience for clear-weather flying and training operations
• 3 Heliports—Used by individuals, corporations, and helicopter taxi and medical services

Flight Services
TxDOT Flight Services provides low-cost travel to state officials, employees, or sponsored contractors traveling on official state business. The Aviation Division operates and maintains the fleet, which is based at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. Besides providing transportation, Flight Services also provides maintenance services to a fleet of 48 state-owned aircraft—18 helicopters and the remainder a variety of fixed-wing airplanes—with 13 full-time mechanics. In 31 years, Flight Services has 66,000 hours of incident- and accident-free flying.

2012 highlights include:
• Providing services for 40 different state agencies
• Transporting nearly 3,000 passengers
• Flying approximately 1,300 total hours
2012 Construction Highlights

1. Collin County Regional Airport/McKinney
   - Opened a 7,002-foot runway
   - Installed approach lighting, new runway lighting and navigation aids

2. Hearne Municipal Airport
   - Installed fuel system
   - Improved runway lighting and security fencing

3. South Texas International at Edinburg
   - Reconstructed taxiways
   - Installed erosion/sedimentation controls
   - Installed NavAids and airfield signage

4. Addison Airport
   - Reconstructed runway holding bay and taxiways
   - Improved geometric layout of taxiways
   - Improved movement area lighting and marking

5. Mesquite Metro
   - Constructed new hangar access taxiway for capacity
   - Installed new localizer shelter
   - Improved precision approach path indicator (PAPI) guidance system

6. Arlington Municipal
   - Constructed new west parallel taxiway
   - Installed new taxiway lighting system and guidance signs
   - Repaired runway shoulders

7. Avenger Field/Sweetwater
   - Rehabilitated and marked runways
   - Improved drainage

8. Aransas County Airport/Rockport
   - Installed game-proof fencing

9. Gillespie County Airport/Fredericksburg
   - Rehabilitated and marked runway and taxiways
   - Relocated and upgraded AWOS
   - Installed game-proof fencing and apron

10. Andrews County/Andrews
    - Constructed concrete fuel apron and marked airfield pavements
    - Rehabilitated runways and taxiways
    - Replaced runway lighting

11. TSTC-Waco Airport
    - Constructed terminal building
    - Rehabilitated taxiway system and terminal apron
    - Upgraded airfield signage

12. Hemphill County Airport/Canadian
    - Reconstructed cross-wind runway
    - Rehabilitated main runway
    - Installed new airfield signage

13. Reagan County Airport/Big Lake
    - Rehabilitated and marked runways and taxiways
    - Installed game-proof fencing

14. San Marcos Municipal Airport
    - Reconstructed taxiway
    - Constructed northside apron and new access road
    - Improved drainage

15. Denver City Airport
    - Rehabilitated and marked runways
    - Replaced runway lights
    - Installed rotating beacon and lighted wind cone

16. Scholes International Airport/Galveston
    - Constructed south hangar development area

17. Wharton Regional Airport
    - Rehabilitated runway and taxiways
    - Replaced taxiway culverts

18. Perry Lefors Field/Pampa
    - Constructed terminal building and auto parking