2013 Aviation Division Annual Report

Message from the Director
We Texans are proud of many things that are unique to our state. Whether it is the vast expanse of land that stretches from the Panhandle to the Rio Grande Valley or the vibrant economy led by the rapidly increasing production from the Eagle Ford Shale and the Permian Basin, it is truly a great time to be a Texan. We at the Aviation Division are particularly proud of the general aviation airport system in Texas, which provides more than 56,000 jobs, with $3.1 billion in payroll and $14.6 billion in total economic output. Among the 2013 highlights was the Aviation Division investing more than $5.5 million in the design and construction of hangars and more than $10 million at the Addison Airport in the reconstruction of runway holding bays and taxiways. The improvements at the Addison Airport required approximately 12 separate stages of construction and over a year to complete, but have greatly improved the efficiency and safety of one of the state’s busiest general aviation airports.

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 297 airports in our system that serve the 28,953 registered aircraft and 49,886 active pilots who flew over 2 million hours in Texas last year. It is also a tribute to our airport managers, our stakeholders, and governmental officials who help make the Texas airport system the finest in the country.

David Fulton, Aviation Division Director
Texas Department of Transportation

Division Overview
The Aviation Division helps cities and counties obtain federal and state funds for reliever and general aviation airports included in the 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 2013, $67 million was invested in airport infrastructure from reliever airports to small, rural general aviation airports. This number includes:

- $11.5 million in maintenance/rehabilitation/reconstruction work to maintain and preserve the existing system;
- $21.9 million in capacity improvements for runways, taxiways, and apron space;
- $32.5 million in airport improvements to ensure they meet FAA standards and safety compliance;
- $1.06 million in master plans, business plans, and feasibility studies; and
- $479,000 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 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. 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 TASP.

Combined, the TxDOT Aviation Capital Improvement Program 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 monies for the construction of hangars. State airports are also eligible under the same policy. Hangars are eligible for 90/10 grant funding. Airports without a fuel-dispensing system are eligible to participate in 75/25 grant funding for the aboveground Fuel Facility Development Program.

2013 highlights include:
• investment of $5.5 million for hangar development,
• five fuel farms constructed for $2.2 million.

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.

2013 highlights include:
• construction and opening of Mesquite Metro air traffic control tower. The project was paid for by a $1.7 million federal grant and $925,000 of local matching funds.

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 of existing terminal buildings. The Terminal Grant Program also provides up to $100,000 in matching funds for appropriate vehicle parking and entrance roads.
2013 highlights include:
• construction and opening of a terminal building at Texas Gulf Coast Regional Airport located in Brazoria County, and
• $100,000 for design and engineering of a terminal building at Eastland Municipal Airport.

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, 92 systems have been built and maintained. This year, two new systems were installed, and one existing system was upgraded and relocated.

2013 highlights include:
• $343,000 invested for the construction/upgrade of three 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.

2013 highlights include:
• 214 grants issued, and
• $3.7 million invested for routine airport maintenance, with an additional $3.8 matched by the airport sponsor.

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 32 years, Flight Services has 67,000 hours of incident- and accident-free flying.

2013 highlights include:
• providing services for 40 different state agencies,
• transporting nearly 3,000 passengers, and
• flying approximately 1,300 total hours.

Aviation in Texas—Facts and Figures
Number and Types of Airports

- 27 Commercial Service Airports—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 Airports—Jet-capable runways with high levels of activity with some jet and multiengine propeller based aircraft
- 108 Community Service Airports—Business access to smaller communities; 20 based aircraft and around 6,000 operations
- 68 Basic Service Airports—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

At Addison Airport, two new concrete aircraft holding bays were constructed on both ends of Taxiway Alpha. The north aircraft holding bay capacity was increased by 35 percent compared to the existing holding bay configuration.
2013 Construction Highlights

1. Texas Gulf Coast Regional Airport
   • Constructed and opened terminal building

2. Mesquite Metro
   • Constructed and opened air traffic control tower

3. Coulter Field
   • Installed AWOS
   • Constructed new hangar

4. Houston County Airport
   • Installed new AVGAS fuel system

5. McCampbell-Porter Airport
   • Installed drainage culvert for new hangar under construction
   • Constructed 13-unit T-Hangar (50 x 295)

6. Slaton Municipal Airport
   • Rehabilitated and marked runway 18-36
   • Rehabilitated apron and stub taxiway
   • Constructed concrete fueling pad

7. Terrell County Airport
   • Replaced medium intensity runway lights for 13-31

8. Terry County Airport
   • Rehabilitated and marked runway 13-31
   • Reconstructed west-side hangar access taxiway
   • Constructed access taxiway and aprons for west-side hangars

9. Llano Municipal Airport
   • Constructed four-unit hangar and paved surrounding access area

10. Dimmit Municipal Airport
    • Rehabilitated and marked runway 1-19, taxiway, and apron

11. Lampasas Municipal Airport
    • Currently constructing hangar and hangar access taxiway and apron entrance

12. Kieberg County Airport
    • Reconstructed runway 13-31 and south taxiway