

STATEMENT OF WILLIAM SHEA, ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR FOR AIRPORTS, FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, CONCERNING AVIATION ISSUES IN MISSISSIPPI. JANUARY 9, 1984.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am Bill Shea, FAA's Associate Administrator for Airports. Accompanying me is Jonathan Howe, FAA's Southern Region Director. We are pleased to be here, today, to discuss aviation issues in the State of Mississippi, notably the contributions to airport development made possible by the Airport and Airway Improvement Act which was passed by the Congress in 1982.

The State of Mississippi plays an important role in our Nation's air transportation system, and, conversely, air transportation is important to promoting the growth of commerce within Mississippi. The FAA estimates that, in 1982, there were 2,252 active aircraft based in Mississippi, accounting for slightly more than 1% of the Nation's total active aircraft. These aircraft were flown about 373,000 hours in 1982, representing about 1% of the national total. Our statistics also show an estimated 5,135 pilots in Mississippi, which is about 0.7% of the total number of pilots in the United States. Looking ahead into the next decade, we see a continued increase in aviation activity in Mississippi, paralleling fairly closely anticipated aviation growth in the United States generally.

The distribution of funds--or the apportionment of funds, as it is called--is done in accordance with a formula specified in the Act. Under this formula, not more than 50% of the funds are apportioned to the owners or operators of primary airports, with each such apportionment based upon the number of passengers enplaning at that airport. Each primary airport is apportioned at least \$200,000, and the money apportioned to an airport may be used for eligible projects during the fiscal year it is first authorized or for the two fiscal years immediately thereafter. Also, 12% of the funds are apportioned for use within the States and Insular Areas (the amount made available to airports in each State being based upon a population/proportion of Federal land formula). The remainder of the funds authorized for the Airport Improvement Program are discretionary but are used to assure that the following legislated minimums are satisfied: 10% for reliever airports; 8% for noise compatibility projects; 5.5% for commercial service airports (other than primary airports); and 1% for integrated system plans. The remaining approximately 13.5% can be used for any priority projects designated by the FAA.

Eligible development projects may include facilities and equipment associated with the construction, improvement, or repair (other than routine maintenance) of an airport. Typical kinds of work items include: land acquisition; construction or

sponsor. The grant made by the FAA is based upon the amount contained in the application and is generally about the same as specified in the Notice of Allocation. The offer outlines the work to be accomplished, the United States' share of the project, and the maximum obligation of the United States. Acceptance by the sponsor of the offer completes the grant agreement.

In the field, the grant program is primarily administered through Airport District Offices. For the eight states encompassed in the Southern Region there are four such offices. One of these Airport District Offices is located here in Jackson and is responsible for airport programs in Mississippi and Alabama.

Having described the general framework for the Airport Improvement Program, let me take a moment to relate this program to airports in Mississippi. In Fiscal Year 1982, there were a total of 9 airports in the State of Mississippi which received grants from the FAA. These grants totalled \$4.39 million. In Fiscal Year 1983, the FAA was able to fund 21 projects in Mississippi. Because of an increase in the Airport Improvement Program authorization level, we were able to increase substantially the amount of grants provided airports in Mississippi; in fact, the \$8.84 million in grants more than

another site where the sponsor has not met its responsibilities for runway approach clearances.

Second, we know that there is substantial interest in the selection of a site for the State's automated flight service station. While we are still a long way off from any site selection since we just held the Area Flight Plan meeting on November 1, 1983, we do expect to receive initial offers by January 16. Based on offers received, we will proceed with the site selection process.

Mr. Chairman, that completes my prepared statement. We would be pleased to respond to questions you may have at this time.