

STATEMENT OF ARTHUR K. WEATHERS, MANAGER, PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
BRANCH, AIRPORTS DIVISION, SOUTHERN REGION, FEDERAL AVIATION  
ADMINISTRATION, BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS, CONCERNING JOINT CIVILIAN-MILITARY USE  
OF DOBBINS AIR FORCE BASE, GEORGIA. AUGUST 7, 1987.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I welcome the opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee today to discuss with you joint civilian-military use of Dobbins Air Force Base (AFB). This issue is of great importance to those interested in the continued growth of aviation in the Atlanta Metropolitan area.

There is a significant airport capacity problem facing our Nation's airports, including Hartsfield International Airport, which serves the Atlanta Metropolitan area. Quite frankly, the airport capacity problem means that there are not enough runways, taxiways, parking aprons and other facilities to accommodate the aviation demands placed on the national airspace system by commercial, corporate, and personal users. The demand for additional capacity in the Atlanta Metropolitan areas is forecast to continue into the next decade and beyond.

Historically, analyses and studies of air traffic control operations have focused on individual airport capacity. In large metropolitan areas such as Atlanta, where there are several military and reliever airports, it has long been recognized by the FAA's Air Traffic Operations Service that there is an

interdependence of aircraft operations because of the close geographic proximity of those airports. While there has not been a recent comprehensive analysis of airspace capacity of the Atlanta Terminal Area, we nevertheless believe additional growth can be accommodated without significant delay increases.

With regard to joint civilian-military operations at Dobbins AFB, we believe some increased operations can be safely intergraded into the Atlanta Air Traffic Control System. It should be noted, however, that Dobbins AFB, DeKalb-Peachtree, and Fulton County Airports operate independently from Atlanta Hartsfield, but for air traffic control separation purposes they are treated as one. Continued growth at Atlanta Hartsfield and the reliever airports will result in these operations becoming more interdependent. This means that flow rates, in-trail restrictions and controlled departure times would apply equally to all airports within the Atlanta Terminal area. For example, aircraft departing Atlanta Hartsfield or Dobbins AFB may have to hold for aircraft departing from the other airport.

We support any effort, which is safe and environmentally acceptable, to increase system capacity in the Atlanta Metropolitan area. As you are aware, the FAA does not operate and maintain airports. We do, however, provide support and encouragement to local communities to provide aviation facilities to meet their aviation needs. With regard to joint

civilian-military use of Dobbins AFB, we support and encourage the local community and the Air Force to work out a satisfactory arrangement where civilian use of Dobbins AFB can be accommodated. If this were accomplished, the FAA would support that decision and work with the local community to develop the facilities for civilian use.

This completes my prepared statement, Mr. Chairman. I would be pleased to respond to any questions you or other Members of the Subcommittee may have.