INTRODUCTION

The overall goal of the *Pennsylvania Statewide Airport System Plan (SASP)* is to provide the Commonwealth's Department of Transportation with the tools necessary to make decisions about the preservation, enhancement, and promotion of its air transportation system. The last full-scale Pennsylvania Statewide Airport System Plan was completed in October 1984. Since the completion of that report, updates of various volumes were prepared through a continuous aviation system planning process.

During the 15 years since the completion of the last SASP, many changes have occurred in the Commonwealth's aviation system. Airports have opened and closed, funding sources and financial resources have changed, and the economic conditions throughout the Commonwealth have been altered. Based on these events, the Department of Transportation saw the need to evaluate the roles of the State's airports and to establish a vision for the system of airports that is essential to meeting the Commonwealth's future aviation needs. This vision will be developed throughout the SASP process.

The SASP is comprised of a series of steps, the first of which is to identify a set of system performance criteria that can be used to characterize an adequate airport system and establish the vision for the development of the system. Within these criteria, specific performance objectives and measures will be developed that will be used to evaluate the adequacy of the Commonwealth's airport system from a qualitative and quantitative standpoint. These measures will provide the means to determine airport roles and, in the end, will help to form the basis for a long-term strategic development plan for the Commonwealth's airport system.

Subsequent chapters of the SASP include:

- Inventory
- Airport Role Evaluation
- Forecasts of Demand
- System Adequacy Analysis
- Options Analysis
- Recommended Plan

In addition to the SASP, there are four other primary outputs of the overall planning process. These outputs represent updates to other elements of the State's continuous system planning process, including the Economic Impact Study, Air Service Study, and Airport Properties Directory. Also, an Air Cargo Study is being prepared as part of this planning process to evaluate the feasibility of and need for an air cargo airport in Pennsylvania. Each of these independent studies will be documented separately, but are considered integral elements of the overall system planning process for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

A Project Oversight Committee (POC) has been assembled by the Department of Transportation to provide input, focus, and direction for the study. The POC is comprised of volunteer members with a broad base of knowledge and includes representatives from the following:

- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Commercial service airports
- Publicly-owned general aviation airports
- Privately-owned general aviation airports
- Governor's Action Team
- Department of Community and Economic Development
- Pennsylvania's regional planning agencies
- Bureau of Aviation

This committee provides the Department with outside input into the system planning process and the Consultant Team with first-hand knowledge of the key factors impacting aviation demand and needs throughout the Commonwealth. The POC members are responsible for reviewing the Consultant's documentation, providing comments, and attending meetings to discuss the study's progress and findings.

In addition to the POC, public input and involvement will be sought during the SASP at key milestones. Two sets of public informational meetings are scheduled to take place in the five aviation regions of Pennsylvania. The purpose of the meetings will be to provide information on the study's progress and findings, and to seek comments from aviation users, municipalities, airport owners/sponsors, and the public regarding their long-term vision for the airport system.