



Subcommittee on Airports' Report to the FAA Research, Engineering, & Development Advisory Committee

Presented by:
Chris Oswald
ACI-NA
April 14, 2022

Airports Subcommittee Meeting

- Met virtually on March 8-9, 2021
- Reviewed the current Airport Technology Research & Development portfolio and research progress
- Briefed by the Airport Cooperative Research Program, Airport Asphalt Pavement Technology Program, and Airport Concrete Pavement Technology Program on complementary research areas
- Had specific research briefings on:
 - Vertiports
 - Airport firefighting research
 - Sustainable airfield pavements
 - Airport environmental projects
 - Airfield pavement testing program
 - Noise research

Airport Technology Research & Development Program Overview

Safety & Planning RPAs		Pavement RPAs		Airport Noise, Environmental, and Innovation RPAs	
S1	Airport Planning & Design	P1	National Airport Pavement Testing Facility	N1	Airport Noise*
S2	Airport Safety Data Mining			E1	Airport Environmental*
S3	Aircraft Rescue & Fire Fighting	P2	National Airport Pavement Materials Research Center	I1	Airport Innovation
S4	Wildlife Hazard Mitigation				
S5	Visual Guidance	P3	Field Instrumentation & Testing		
S6	Runway Surface Safety Technology	P4	Advanced Materials		
		P5	Pavement Design & Evaluation		
S7	Airport Safety & Surveillance Sensors	P6	Non-destructive Testing Technologies		
S8	UAS/New Entrants Integration	P7	Software Program Development and Support		
		P8	Extended Pavement Life		

* The FAA Office of Airports and FAA Office of Energy & Environment co-manage the Airport Noise & Environmental RPAs.

RPA: Research Project Area

Observations

- Subcommittee supports the Program's current research portfolio and appreciates the addition of airport innovation as a research program area in recent cycles.
- Also appreciate the FAA's continuing focus on time-critical research projects. These include evaluation of alternative aircraft fire fighting agents, assessment of uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS) applications at airports, and vertiport design standards.
- Pleased to see results of research into new airspace entrants, the impacts of climate change on airport operational and infrastructure needs, and sustainable airfield pavement research.
- Found it valuable to expand Subcommittee discussions to include complementary research programs, including recently reactivated Airport Asphalt and Concrete Pavement Technology Programs.
- Concerned about impacts of construction and materials cost inflation on pavement research programs and planned support facilities.

Subcommittee Finding

Construction cost inflation is affecting planned pavement testing facility improvements, notably the new pavement materials laboratory, which the Subcommittee has supported in our past findings and recommendations. Additionally, costs of pavement materials have increased sharply in recent months as petroleum costs and construction demand have increased.

These cost increases could adversely impact the rate at which pavement research that can be conducted in the near to mid-term future.

Subcommittee Recommendation

The Subcommittee recommends that FAA Program staff assess the impacts of construction and materials cost inflation on ongoing facility construction and pavement research schedules and brief the Subcommittee on these impacts at our Fall 2022 meeting.

Allowances for inflation should be included in future Program funding estimates so these can be taken into account in FAA reauthorization and other budgeting efforts.

Subcommittee on Airports Report to the FAA Research, Engineering, & Development Advisory Committee

Presented by:
Chris Oswald
ACI-NA
April 14, 2022
