

New England Regional Airport System Plan – General Aviation

February 2012

Dear Airport Manager:

For the past 24 months, officials representing the New England state aviation agencies have been meeting to discuss common problems related to the funding and development of general aviation airports in New England. Coincidentally, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) embarked on a national assessment of general aviation (GA) airports that will serve as the foundation for potential revisions in the National Plan for an Integrated Airport System (NPIAS).

Our discussion of GA needs included an effort to fund a New England wide GA airport system study to address the challenges we are facing to maintain and develop airport facilities. Despite a very difficult funding year, we secured FAA funding for Phase One of this study. We are therefore delighted to report that on December 21, 2011 a contract was issued to the Louis Berger Group (LBG) for a New England regional assessment of our GA airports.

Phase One of the study will evaluate the evolving role GA has in meeting a wide spectrum of air transportation services and what it means for the system of airport facilities required to support these services. It will also include a pioneering analysis of FAA flight plan data to document the network of connections provided by the segment of GA flying Instrument Flight Rules (IFR).

Phase Two, when funded, involves an analysis of how to maintain and develop our airport system to support these projected needs within the fiscal constraints of current funding programs and policies. We all realize there is a tremendous demand on a national level for monies to maintain and improve our GA airport system. However when you compare current airport needs to the funds available under state and federal grant programs it is clear that airport needs will exceed potential funding sources. The outlook for the future isn't any more optimistic. It is reasonable to assume the funding gap will become even greater. Identifying ways to prioritize and improve the efficiency of the airport development program, and if appropriate, finding supplemental funding sources, is one of major goals this study is committed to achieve.

Given the fiscal challenges we face for infrastructure improvements at GA airports, it is essential that we work together throughout this study process. Your participation and timely responses to future project surveys and data collection efforts will be critical in the overall success of this regional planning study. We appreciate your anticipated cooperation throughout the study.

The project management team represents an aviation official from each of the New England states. These representatives can be a source of information for you, but our primary interest is to keep you informed through our website www.nerasp-ga.com. We hope you will take the time to check it out. We will do our best to keep you informed and involved on this important study about our New England GA airport system.

Sincerely

The Project Management Team

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Finding A Way For New England GA