

## FUTURE DEMAND

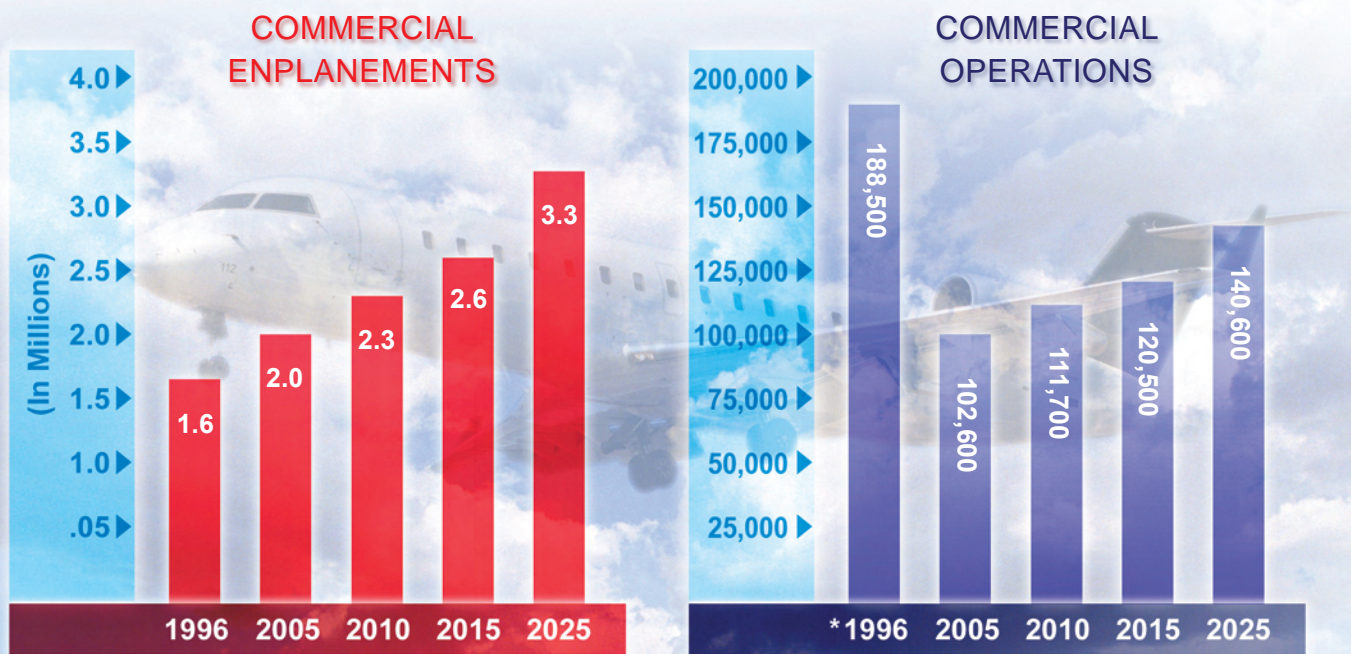
The system plan considered which airports in Arkansas have experienced the greatest increase in aviation demand since the last system plan was published in 1996. Historic growth at commercial and general aviation airports throughout Arkansas and projected socioeconomic and demographic growth were all used to develop both statewide and airport specific projections of future demand. Understanding which system airports are expected to experience the most notable growth is important to various facets of facility planning.

### COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY

Including Ozark Regional Airport at Mountain Home, which anticipates securing scheduled airline service in the fall of 2006, Arkansas has nine airports that have varying levels of scheduled airline service. For this plan, commercial airline activity was measured by enplanements (passengers boarding commercial aircraft) and commercial operations (landings and takeoffs by scheduled commercial airlines).

In 1996, all commercial airports in Arkansas served a total of 1.6 million enplaned passengers. By 2005, this number had increased to just over 2 million. Some of Arkansas' statewide growth in commercial enplanements has been fueled by the presence of Southwest Airlines at Little Rock National Airport. The opening of Northwest Arkansas Airport Regional also stimulated growth in commercial demand. Projections developed for this study show that by 2025, commercial enplanements for all of Arkansas' commercial airports are expected to top 3.3 million.

While commercial enplanements increased between 1996 and 2005, annual commercial operations actually decreased. Projections of demand developed by this plan show that by 2025, statewide annual commercial airline operations will reach 140,600.



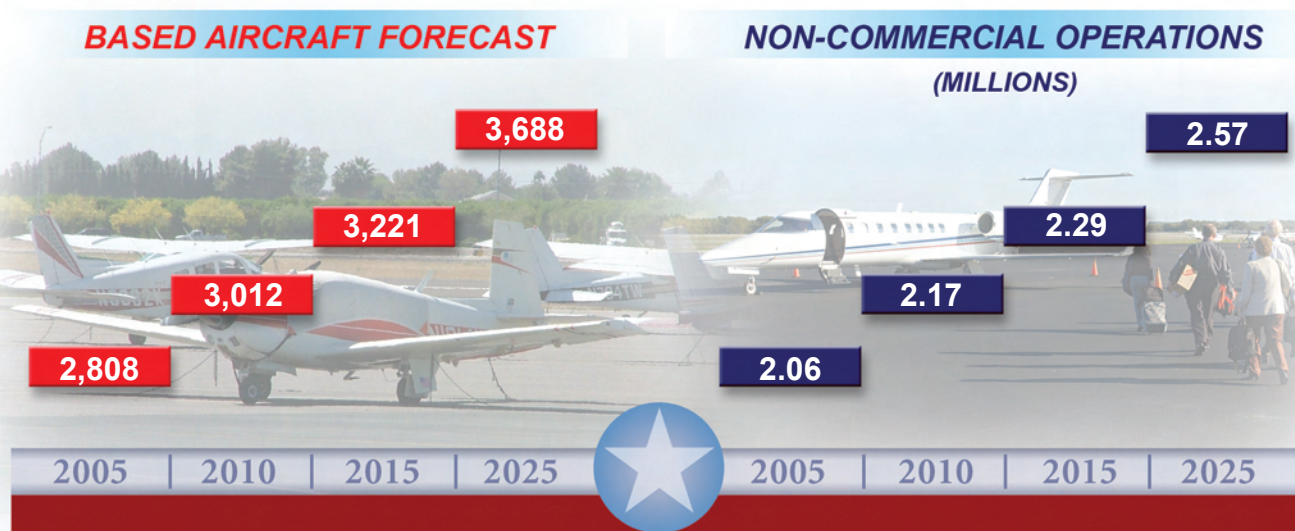
\* Between 1996 and 2005 commercial operations fell as a result of a change to aircraft with higher seating capacities, closure of airline connecting hubs that served Arkansas, 9/11, and airline efforts to balance flights with demand.

## GENERAL AVIATION ACTIVITY

All airports in the Arkansas system, including the commercial airports, serve general aviation aircraft. For this study, both based general aviation aircraft and total annual general aviation operations were forecast. Based aircraft are those that are permanently stored at a particular airport, and annual operations include both takeoffs and landings.

Ten years ago, Arkansas airports reported approximately 2,300 based general aviation aircraft. By 2005, the number of based general aviation aircraft had increased to 2,808. As shown, Arkansas' based general aviation aircraft are projected to reach 3,688 by 2025.

In 2005, just over 2 million total annual general aviation operations were reported among all system airports. It is worth noting that in Arkansas, a significant number of the state's total annual general aviation operations are attributable to general aviation aircraft that are used for agricultural applications. By 2025, statewide general aviation annual operations are expected to reach almost 2.6 million. Activity by general aviation business jets in Arkansas is expected to grow between 2005 and 2025. The number of based business jets is expected to increase from 182 to 531. General aviation plays a vital role in supporting businesses throughout the state. While single-engine aircraft are expected to continue to be the predominant type of general aviation aircraft operating in the state, the percentage of "very light jets" and traditional business jets is projected to grow.



## SYSTEM ROLES FOR AIRPORTS IN ARKANSAS

For a long range plan to be effective, it is essential to understand current conditions in order to plan for the future. Determining how airports are functioning in the system and identifying the role that they play, is important. Within Arkansas, the 91 study airports were assigned to one of five system roles or levels. These levels are generally reflective of the role the airport plays in the system and the types of users it accommodates. Establishing a role for each airport aids in determining the types of facilities and services the airport should have.