

CIVIL SUPERSONIC TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT

A. Nature and authority for the program: To develop a safe, superior commercial supersonic transport aircraft that will be economically profitable for the industry to build and operate.

The authority of the Administrator under section 312(b) of the Federal Aviation Act to develop and construct a civil supersonic aircraft was transferred to the Secretary of Transportation by section 6(c)(1) of the Department of Transportation Act (Public Law 89-670). The act became effective on April 1, 1967. By departmental order DOT 1100.1, also effective April 1, 1967, the Secretary of Transportation delegated the authority for the supersonic transport program back to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (49 CFR 1.4(b)(2)).

B. Brief identification of outputs: Engineered designs, technical operations data, and economic information required to fabricate prototype SST aircraft.

C. Official having direct operational responsibility: Maj. Gen. J. C. Maxwell, USAF, Director of Supersonic Transport Development.

General McKee. I can do it in less time than that, Mr. Chairman.

We are responsible for the operation of the air traffic control system in the United States. We have shown you this morning the number of aircraft in the system. We are confronted with the most fantastic growth in civil aviation that we have ever seen. It has far outstripped the forecasts made by us, and far outstripped the forecasts made by the industry experts. I think it is only fair to say, as Mr. Boyd has pointed out, it is not only a question of having too few people. Right now in the operation of this system we are behind the power curve, and we are confronted with major problems in the air traffic control system. When I talk about the air traffic control system, I would like to get the point across to you that the airport—and by the airport I am talking about the concrete part, the runways, the taxiways, the ramps—is considered as an integral part of the air traffic control system. As a matter of fact, the major impediment—and we have lots of impediments—to the efficient operation of this system is the airport. We are short of concrete; we are short of airports; we are short of additional parallel runways at some of these major hubs and we are going to have to have these components if we are going to run the kind of system we should.

And now I want to make several points. Our primary objective in this operation obviously is safety and we live with that 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. When that phone rings at my house in the middle of the night I reach over and pick it up like this (indicating) because when I get a call in the middle of the night—and it has happened many times—I think, "My God, do we have another accident and more people killed."

Safety is No. 1. It always is. It always shall be.

Our No. 2 objective is the operational effectiveness of the system. By that I mean a smooth flow of traffic, minimizing delays to the maximum extent we possibly can and thereby giving service to the public. Right now the delays we are having around the country are intolerable and these delays are going to get worse. They are just going to grow and grow until we have the capabilities to handle this system.

The third point I want to make, and the reason we are pressing so hard in the Department of Transportation for a more modernized air traffic control system, is that civil aviation in this country is of vital importance to the economy of this country. More and more every day the economy of this country is dependent on air transportation. I