The Future of the Block Grant Program

- Steve Brian, Manager, Aviation Program, Georgia Department of Transportation, Moderator
- Bob Craven, Director, FAA Office of Airport Planning and Programming
- Brad Brandt, Director, Louisiana Department of Transportation, Aviation Division
- Rachel Bingham, PE, Aviation Development Manager/Deputy Director, Division of Aviation, North Carolina Department of Transportation
The Future of the Block Grant Program

The Session is intended to provide understanding of the future of the Block Grant Program from several perspectives. The FAA perspective is vitally important to ensuring the intended purpose of the Program remains as flexible as possible to allow States to deliver the Program for Airport Sponsor success. Future changes to the Block Grant Program will impact current and potential State participation. Bob Craven, Director of the FAA Office of Airport Planning and Programming is with us virtually to provide this perspective.

Then we will hear from the State of Louisiana who is considering entering the Program and what this agency has researched to determine if the Block Grant Program is right for their State. Brad Brandt, Director, Louisiana Department of Transportation, Aviation Division is also here virtually to provide his perspective.

Finally, we will hear from North Carolina, a State that was one of the early entrances in the Block Grant Program. With this State’s experience, their viewpoint on changes the Program has seen and what they see as potential changes that would help the Program’s continued success. Rachel Bingham, PE, Aviation Development Manager/ Deputy Director, Division of Aviation, North Carolina Department of Transportation is also virtual to explain this perspective.
FAA State Block Grant Program

Session: “The Future of the Block Grant Program”

Presented to: National Association of State Aviation Officials

By: Robert J. Craven
   Director, Airport Planning and Programming

Date: September 12, 2021
SBGP Grant Award History
## SBGP Grant Award History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Total Amounts Awarded</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>$234,402,405</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>$253,885,573</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$339,819,893</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>$193,439,907</td>
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<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,021,547,778</strong></td>
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### States Total FY 2021 Award Amounts & Number of Awards in FFY 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Total FY 2021 Award Amounts</th>
<th>Number of Awards in FFY 21</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>$33,890,189</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
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<td>New Hampshire</td>
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<td>Pennsylvania</td>
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<td>Tennessee</td>
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<td>Texas</td>
<td>$11,349,777</td>
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<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>$27,756,058</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$193,439,907</strong></td>
<td><strong>55</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Relief Acts Administrative Funds Reimbursements

- Completing $63,461 reimbursements to State Block Grant States (SBGSs) for CARES Act administrative expenses - payment can be made in 2022

- Utilizing a Federal payment mechanism

- Plans to provide similar payments under ARPA in 2022 and beyond

- CRRSA payments were not feasible due to small amounts and time limits
The Future of FAA and SBGP

- Requests to Congress for additional FAA support to SBGS
- Enhanced Data Management Systems (SOAR Airports External Portal)
- Customizable Memorandum of Agreement Template
- Applications of Interest from States in fiscal year 2022
OIG Audit of SGBP FY 2014 - FY 2018

- 13 recommendations to revise existing guidance, formalize certain procedures, and core training program

- FAA Action Plan
  - Streamline documentation of planned subgrantees, planned projects, and anticipated use of Federal funds into a single document
  - Improve efficiencies by creating tools (Delphi Supporting Documentation Record) and procedures to assist FAA and SGBP reconcile payment and reimbursement issues
  - Establish Triennial SBGP-wide Audit Schedule to enable areas of study and future development opportunities
  - Expand AIP Alert notifications to improve clarity and simplify ID of Federal and FAA policies
  - Create MOA Template with flexibility to accommodate unique State considerations
  - Enhance coordination to ensure communication of audit resolutions
  - Formalize availability of FAA training to SBGS on AIP-related courses
Future of the Block Grant Program

State of Louisiana

NASAO Annual Conference
September 12, 2021
Program Analysis

- Workload
- Forecasted Workload
- Risk Analysis
- Staff Requirements
  - Training Needs
- Regulation and Policy
- MOU Review
- Attachment “C”
  - Pros / Cons
Strategic Planning

- Staff
- Workload
- Operations
- Financial

- State Block Grant Program
Staff Analysis

Average Staff Levels

- GA: 13
- IL: 34
- LA: 12
- MI: 24
- MO: 8
- NC: 21
- NH: 8
- PA: 13
- TN: 25
- PA, TN

Average Staff Levels

Remove Outliers

Average Staff Levels

- GA, IL, NC, PA, TN

Dedicated Engineers

Unique Staff or Training

NEPA/DBE/Compliance
Staff Analysis

Experience

Training

Work Processes

Personnel
Staff Analysis

Experience → Training → Personnel → Work Processes
Return on Investment

- Historical Allocations
- Increase in Funding
- Investment Strategies
  - Safety / Runway Out
  - Economic Impact
Operational Analysis

- Organizational Change
- Strategic Innovation
- Programmatic Integrity
- Program Architecture
Analysis Takeaways

- Improve Programming Structure
- Right Size Program
- Engagement
- Strategic Infrastructure Investments
The Future of the Block Grant Program

Rachel S. Bingham, P.E., Deputy Director and Development Manager
NCDOT Division of Aviation
September 12, 2021
North Carolina Overview

- One of three inaugural Block Grant states in 1989
- **62 GA airports** in program
- **2021 Funding**
  - Federal $20.7M
  - State $132.3M
- **62 CARES Act** contracts ($2.8M)
- **61 CRRSSA** contracts ($1.1M)
- **61 ARPA** contracts ($2.4M)
- **10 staff** members support the program:
  - 1 planner/environmentalist
  - 5 project managers
  - 4 grant administrators
Program Benefits for State DOTs

- More efficient use of government resources
- More efficient project delivery by leveraging project scheduling to accomplish an entire project/program
- Flexibility to combine and prioritize federal and state funding to optimize funding for the airport system
- Opportunity to make “whole” projects by leveraging multiple funding types
- Ability to use, not lose, federal funding in certain instances
- Higher profile for the state agency that administers the program
Program Benefits for Airports

• Greater service and knowledge of airport needs
• More consistent oversight and service delivery
• Single point of contact, strengthening state-local partnership
• Lower administrative burden for grant recipients
• State project and airport management, operations and maintenance guidance, helping airports comply with AIP requirements
Program Benefits for Airports

- Ability to tap all **state expertise and resources** to address airport needs and issues
- State **workshops and consultations** that advance airport knowledge and abilities
- State **coordination** with state/federal environmental agencies to ensure reasonable and appropriate mitigation
- States can **clarify AIP requirements** as a generic question to FAA
Bottom Line

The State Block Grant Program blends federal and state airport development grant programs into one program managed by a single entity resulting in more efficient use of resources in meeting system and airport needs.
Key Challenges

- Training
- Operational/Administrative requirements and expenses
- Workflow changes
- New guidance and MOA – will require consideration of staff availability and knowledge to manage
Looking Ahead

- Training
- Administrative funding
- Relationships
- Additional funding through infrastructure bill
- United voice through NASAO
- Diversify resources for capital improvement
North Carolina: Forever First In Flight

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