WHAT IS ACRP?

The Airport Cooperative Research Program (ACRP) is an industry-driven, applied research program that develops near-term, practical solutions to problems faced by airport operators. ACRP is managed by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the National Academies and sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The research is conducted by contractors who are selected on the basis of competitive proposals.

HOW IS ACRP FUNDED?

ACRP is authorized by Congress and funded as part of the annual FAA appropriations process.

HOW IS ACRP GOVERNED?

The U.S. Secretary of Transportation appoints individuals to an independent governing board called the ACRP Oversight Committee (AOC). The AOC has an FAA representative along with individuals from airports and elsewhere in the airport industry. Ex Officio representatives on the AOC include individuals from industry associations such as the Airports Council International–North America (ACI-NA), the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), the National Association of State Aviation Officials (NASAO), the Airlines for America (A4A), and the Airport Consultants Council (ACC).

WHERE DO THE RESEARCH IDEAS ORIGINATE?

Research ideas, or "problem statements," are essentially demonstrations of a problem that needs a solution and an explanation for funding a research project to find a solution. Because ACRP has limited funding, it is essential that funds go to research projects that the industry believes will give the greatest benefit to airports; therefore, a well-thought-out and well-written problem statement is important. While anyone can submit a problem statement to ACRP, at any time, authors will find it helpful to have both a good understanding of the airport industry and familiarity with how ACRP conducts research. ACRP provides detailed guidance for writing problem statements on its website.

WHO SELECTS THE RESEARCH TOPICS?

The AOC reviews the problem statements and selects the ones that will be funded. Emphasis is placed on selecting topics that are important to airport operators and that will result in "applied research" products, which airport operators will be able to use immediately upon the completion of the research.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER RESEARCH TOPICS ARE SELECTED?

TRB follows a cooperative research process that it has used very successfully for more than 50 years in other programs. First, TRB forms a project panel of individuals with expertise and interest in the topic area. This project panel uses the original problem statement to develop a detailed scope of work that serves as a basis for a request for proposals (RFP). The RFP is prepared and distributed to the airport community, as well as posted on the ACRP website. Individuals and agencies then respond to the RFP by submitting proposals to perform the work. The project panel reviews the proposals and selects the contractor to perform the work. The panel then provides technical guidance, reviews deliverables, and provides general oversight throughout the life of the project.

HOW LARGE ARE PROJECT PANELS, AND WHO SERVES ON THEM?

A project panel consists of approximately six people, typically from the airport industry, consultant community, and academia. TRB selects project panel members because of their expertise and interest in the research topic and attempts to balance relevant perspectives associated with the topic. Panel members serve as individuals, not as representatives of their affiliations. In addition to members, project panels also include liaison representatives from FAA, TRB, and other industry organizations.

WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT OF ACRP PROJECT PANEL MEMBERS?

The time commitment expected from project panel members is modest. An initial 2-day meeting focuses on developing an RFP. A follow-up 1-day meeting allows members to share their proposal evaluations and select the contractor for the project. An interim 1-day meeting brings the project panel together with the research contractor approximately 6 months after the project has begun. The research phase of a typical research project is 12 to 18 months. The remaining work, done from the panel member's place of work or via teleconference, includes reviews of draft documents and other deliverables.

ARE PROJECT PANEL MEMBERS COMPENSATED?

Project panel members serve as volunteers without compensation. However, ACRP pays for travel costs that panel members incur to attend the meetings, including airfare, lodging, meals, and incidentals.

HOW CAN I OBTAIN ACRP PRODUCTS?

Emphasis is placed on publishing results that are relevant and useful to airport operating agencies. ACRP Reports—the primary series of research publications—are for use by airport operators, local agencies, consultants, industry associations, FAA, and other interested parties. Anyone can sign up to receive notification of new publications as they become available. All ACRP products are available on the ACRP website at www.TRB.org/ACRP.

HOW CAN I BECOME INVOLVED IN ACRP?

Begin by registering with MyACRP at www.trb.org/ACRP/Portal.aspx, so we can provide you with customized access to various aspects of the Airport Cooperative Research Program. In exchange for telling us about yourself, we can customize content to meet your needs, help you find projects or publications that may interest you, and help you get more involved in the program.

There are five ways to become involved in ACRP:

Submit a research idea or "problem statement."
Provide a general description of the problem, including a clear, concise statement of the objectives expected to be met and any anticipated products of the research. Briefly describe the research proposed and how it relates to the problem. Include an estimate of the funds and time needed to complete the research. A problem statement outline can be found on the ACRP website at www.TRB.org/ACRP. The AOC meets in July to review problem statements and select projects for the next fiscal year's program. Problem statements received by spring are considered for the next fiscal year's program. Those received later are held for consideration in the following fiscal year.

Volunteer to participate on a project panel.
Each project is assigned to a panel, which provides technical guidance and counsel throughout the life of the project. TRB normally solicits nominations in August and September for people to serve on project panels for the next fiscal year's projects. In response to TRB's solicitation for nominations, any interested person may self-nominate or be nominated for membership on a project panel. Submit a synopsis of the individual's interest, background, and experience in the topic area; a resume; and an ACRP nomination form, which can be downloaded from the ACRP website at www.TRB.org/ACRP.

Answer an ACRP survey.
ACRP research projects are based on a thorough assessment of current knowledge and practice within the airport industry. The best way to assess the depth and breadth of such knowledge and practice is to ask airports to share their experience. The value of ACRP research results is a direct reflection of the participation we gain from airport practitioners.

Prepare a proposal to conduct research.
In response to ACRP RFPs, any interested individual, agency, or others with extensive, demonstrated capability and proven experience in the problem area may submit a proposal to do the research work. Information on how to prepare and submit a proposal is provided on the ACRP website at www.TRB.org/ACRP.

Use the research results.
ACRP products are developed in response to problems faced by airport operators. When faced with an airport issue, use ACRP products as references.

SCOPE OF ACRP PROJECTS

ACRP can address any issue faced by airport planners, operators, and managers as well as others with a role in the aviation industry. Some projects may apply to only specific types of airports, such as general aviation or air carrier airports, while others apply to virtually all airports. Projects target areas as diverse as safety, security, operations, environment, planning, design, construction, maintenance, administration, policy, and human resources.

ACRP products are a series of research reports, guidebooks, tools, and other resources that airport operators, the FAA, consultants, and other interested parties can consult in addressing airport issues.

AIRPORT COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM

SPECIAL ACRP PROJECTS

Synthesis of Information on Airport Problems
This series of publications reports on current knowledge and practice, in a compact format, without the detailed directions usually found in handbooks or design manuals. Each report in the series provides a compendium of the best knowledge available on those measures found to be successful in resolving specific problems. Anyone can submit a proposed new ACRP synthesis topic at any time of the year by visiting the ACRP website. As with research topics, each new synthesis project is overseen by a panel of experts. Each year, new topics are selected by an oversight panel and posted on TRB's homepage. Individuals with expertise in the topic area are invited to express interest in serving on the topic panel. Consultants interested in performing the work are invited to submit a letter-of-interest. Portals for these submissions will be on TRB's website at the Programs—Synthesis —Airport—New Topics drop-down.

Legal Aspects of Airport Programs
This series reports on legal topics of special interest to the airport legal community. Each document provides airport attorneys and other airport practitioners with authoritative, well-researched, specific information on legal issues and problems of national significance to the airport industry.

Graduate Research Award Program
This project is designed to help foster the next generation of aviation leaders by stimulating thought, discussion, and research by those who may become the future airport managers, operators, designers, and policy makers in aviation. The award includes a stipend during the academic year and an opportunity to present quality papers at the TRB Annual Meeting the following January. Papers are also considered for publication in a stand-alone volume of TRB's peer-reviewed journal, the Transportation Research Record.

University Design Competition
ACRP is sponsoring a national competition for universities that engages students in addressing issues relating to airports and the National Airspace System. The competition challenges individuals and teams of undergraduate and/or graduate students working with faculty advisors at U.S. colleges and universities to consider innovative approaches related to airport issues. Students can win cash prizes for their winning innovative design solutions. First place winners present their work at a national award ceremony.

ACRP Dissemination Program
ACRP facilitates the dissemination of published results in various ways. The industry may arrange for workshops, seminars, presentations, training aids, webinars, and other activities to ensure that results are successfully implemented by airport-industry practitioners.

ACRP Ambassadors
ACRP ambassadors strengthen our connection to the airport industry by creating a cadre of high-level practitioner-ambassadors who serve as representatives of ACRP and engage with stakeholders at conferences and industry events. Ambassadors receive the training, guidance, support, and materials they need to amplify efforts to disseminate ACRP solution-based research products. Ambassadors serve as liaisons between the Transportation Research Board and the ACRP audiences.

ACRP Champions
A new initiative for early-to-mid-career private sector airport consultants and airport professionals serves a vital role in helping airport practitioners connect to ACRP's research and resources while also offering several benefits to employees and their sponsors. Champions will join an elite group of airport industry professionals; receive news, information, and ACRP research products before they are released; gain expertise in ACRP's processes and products; network with other ACRP Champions; and add value to their organizations through ACRP–sponsored professional development and networking experiences.

ACRP Speakers Bureau
ACRP produces dozens of publications each year. Each publication has a group of "connected" individuals who have related subject expertise and who also possess interest and proficiency in presenting the publication and related information to other industry practitioners. ACRP invites these individuals to post their interest to speak on an ACRP publication so that industry program organizers have an easy way to identify and contact potential speakers.

ACRP Webinars
ACRP regularly hosts webinars that present the results of ACRP research. These webinars are free and open to the public and focus on the benefit of ACRP research products to airport practitioners. Moderated by industry experts and presented by research project Principal Investigators, ACRP's webinars are typically organized by a theme covering a wide range of topics of value to the airport industry.

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GET INVOLVED WITH TRB
The Transportation Research Board provides leadership in transportation innovation and progress through research and information exchange. TRB's Aviation Group consists of standing technical committees that support aviation and airport research and provide an open forum to inform practitioners of current research results. Each of the technical committees is a community of individuals from around the world who share common interests and expertise. Participation is open and encouraged. Visit the website to see a complete list of all standing committees in TRB's Technical Activities Division. www.TRB.org/Aviation/TRBCommittees.aspx

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