

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Good Morning. My name is Michael Ball, NEXTOR associate director from the University of Maryland. On behalf of Amedeo Odoni, NEXTOR co-director from MIT, Adib Kanafani, co-director from the University of California at Berkeley and Toni Trani, associate director from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, I welcome you to the Second annual NEXTOR research symposium. We are very excited to have gotten to this point and are looking forward to a stimulating day of presentations and discussions. Professor Kananfani regrets that he is unable to lead off the symposium, but he had a long standing commitment to travel to Europe, which he was unable to break when we rescheduled the symposium to this date two months ago.

As most of you are aware NEXTOR, the National Center of Excellence for Aviation Operations Research was founded a little over two years ago. It consists of four core universities, MIT, the University of California at Berkeley, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and the University of Maryland, 20 industry partners and several affiliate universities. Its mission is to carry out research on aviation operations in support of the FAA and the greater aviation community.

When we look across the aviation research landscape on systems and operations issues, we feel that NEXTOR has a special role to play because it is centered in academia. One aspect of this is that NEXTOR should always maintain a research stream that investigates very fundamental questions that may have a long term payoff or may serve to integrate aviation research into the broader cross section of operations and systems research. A second aspect is that students play a central role in all of our research projects. This serves the dual purpose of accomplishing our research objectives and, at the same time, educating some of our brightest young people in analysis and principles of aviation operations. Right now across the four campuses there are over 40 graduate students directly involved in NEXTOR research projects. I take personal pleasure in announcing that the dissertation written by Bob Hoffman placed second in the INFORMS Transportation Science Dissertation competition. Bob worked with me at the University of Maryland and is now a NEXTOR post-doc.

While NEXTOR has maintained a stream of research on basic issues, it recognizes the importance of also carrying out projects whose impact is more immediate. It is only by looking into real immediate problems that one can develop a deep understanding of what the important longer term issues are. Furthermore, NEXTOR feels it has a responsibility to aid in the analysis of important current problems when their special expertise is required. This responsibility is greatly aided by the participation of NEXTOR's industry partners in most of our research projects. NEXTOR's administrative structure requires that all grants be matched by funds provided by other sources. NEXTOR's industry partners provide the bulk of this support both in cash and through in-kind contributions. Additional matching support is provided by each of the four core universities. NEXTOR has received over \$2,150,000 in matching funds which exceeds the grant funding received to date.

When you listen to the presentations today you will notice a diversity of research that has addressed both long and short term issues. The project mix also reflects the broad cross section of disciplinary expertise within NEXTOR. NEXTOR faculty span disciplines including operations research, civil engineering, aeronautical engineering, economics, business, systems engineering and electrical engineering. This breadth has enabled NEXTOR to work with a broad cross section of FAA constituencies, including the Office of System Safety, Office of Air Traffic System Development, the Office of Aviation Research and the Office of Commercial Space Transportation.

We are especially pleased that Steve Zaidman has agreed to provide the Introduction to the Symposium. As most of you probably know, Steve was recently appointed as the FAA's Associate Administrator for Research and Acquisition.