Jan Brecht-Clark Remarks
First Annual Research Symposium
National Center of Excellence for Aviation Operations Research
November 15, 1997

Good afternoon, and thank you for inviting me to be a part of this important symposium.

As the nation's premier research organization for aviation technology, the FAA's research and development program has made significant contributions to assure the safety, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of the national aviation system.

Today that system is under heavy pressure to keep pace with rising traffic demand, needs for essential safety and security improvements, airspace user requirements for more flexible and efficient air traffic management operations, and demands for further mitigation of the environmental impacts of aircraft operations.

As air travel increases and budgets decrease in the years ahead, the FAA is taking the lead in developing a global aviation system for the 21st century and beyond.

To meet those future challenges, the FAA employs a comprehensive research, engineering, and development program that assures all available resources remain customer-focused and targeted on the highest priority activities.

As you know, the FAA's primary mission is to ensure the safety of the flying public.

One of the ways we are accomplishing this goal is by strengthening alliances and partnerships with all segments of aviation.

The National Center of Excellence for Operations Research is one of the partnerships we are relying on to help us maintain and enhance the safety of the National Airspace System.

Maintaining that safety is not an easy task.

An annual 1.5 percent increase in traffic is projected for the next decade in the U.S.

But, we are also helping to maintain safety of our international travelers. Last year, almost 97 million passengers traveled by air between the United States and destinations around the world. All the forecasts tell us this is a trend that will continue well into the new century.

Throughout its history, the aviation industry has succeeded and thrived largely because of the vision and dedication of its pioneers--those who have charted new airways, designed new aircraft, and harnessed new technology.

Aviation's continued success depends on the ability of its present day pioneers and innovators to visualize the future, to predict and then to prepare for the challenges that lie ahead.

This COE represents the new generation of aviation pioneers.

Times have changed. Aviation and industry have matured. Technology has advanced and will continue to advance at a dramatic rate. The issues have become much more complex. No one entity -- public or private can solve the problem alone.

We need a new safety model -- one where government can be both a partner and, when necessary, an enforcer. Yes, we need compliance, but to make further breakthroughs in safety, we must collaborate on the safety agenda and the means to fulfill it.

By sharing resources and facilities the COE team, the FAA, and industry achieve substantial economies and efficiencies with respect to continuing research and development activities.

Not only are we working to increase safety and efficiency, we are also leveraging critical research dollars in the best possible way to make a safe aviation system even safer.

We are developing cutting edge technologies that will lead us into the next century.

And, that is what this FAA/COE partnership is all about -- to provide leadership to the world in aviation research -- to pave the way to the 21st century.