

Program allocates \$23.7 million for participating airports

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell announced today that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has selected Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport to participate in the 2009 Military Airport Program (MAP), which uses federal funds to convert former military airports to civilian or joint-use airports.

"This is great news for Gateway, the City of Mesa and the entire East Valley," Mitchell said. "Gateway is already having a significant economic impact on our region, and this funding will provide another boost to the airport's growth. Funding like this would not be possible without the excellent planning and initiatives taken by the city of Mesa and the Williams Gateway Airport members to develop and grow the airport."

Airport Authority Executive Director Lynn Kusy added, "Gateway is already supporting more than 4,500 jobs in its service area with an annual economic impact of \$534 million. MAP grants will further the creation of jobs as we continue to expand passenger service and the 'just plane easy' culture of flying in and out of Mesa."

Airports participating in MAP for fiscal year (FY) 2009 will share the \$23.7 that has been set aside for the program. Individual airport allocations, including the exact amount of Gateway's portion of the funding, have not yet been determined, according to airport officials. No more than 15 airports can participate at one time, and Gateway joins 11 other participating airports. Airports may receive financial assistance for up to five years.

Gateway will receive funds for an additional three years to complete terminal area projects designed to meet the needs due to the rapid growth of the airport, which is the third busiest airport in Arizona, and the busiest contract tower airport in the country.

In late 2007, Allegiant Air began air service at IWA and within two months the airport had 21,103 passenger boardings. In the first nine months of 2008, there were 120,150 passenger boardings with the planes 88 percent full.

Mitchell has been a strong advocate for Gateway and has fought to secure funding for the airport. He secured \$1.75 million in Fiscal Year 2008 and another \$950,000 in Fiscal Year 2009 to support runway expansion and improvement projects.

MAP awards grants to current or former military airfields to assist in converting them to civil use and to reduce congestion at existing airports experiencing significant delays. MAP provides financial assistance to the civilian sponsors who are converting, or have already converted, military airfields to civilian or joint military/civilian use.

To aid in this process, MAP grants may be used for projects not generally funded by the Airport Improvement Program (AIP), such as building or rehabilitating parking lots, fuel farms, hangars, utility systems, access roads, and cargo buildings. [Source: [Federal Aviation Administration](#)].