

**Marion C. Blakey
President and CEO
Aerospace Industries Association**

**House Aviation Subcommittee
ATC Modernization and NextGen: Near-Term Achievable Goals
March 18, 2009
2167 Rayburn House Office Building**

Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

Good morning, Chairman Costello, Ranking Member Petri, and other distinguished members of the committee. I am very pleased to have the opportunity to testify before you once again. I am here representing the Aerospace Industries Association and our almost 300 member companies. Our industry is responsible for more than 2 million well-paying jobs and \$95 billion in exports last year, leading to a positive foreign trade balance of \$57 billion – the largest of any U.S. manufacturing sector.

It was good to hear the remarks from the members of the first panel. The support they expressed for NextGen is certainly echoed from our industry side.

I was especially interested in Dr. Dillingham's remarks. As you know, we worked very hard in my time at the FAA to make the agency an example of program efficiency and responsibility, and I'm pleased to see the FAA's air transportation system modernization work off the GAO high-risk list.

I'd like to make just a few points about NextGen and what we can achieve in the near-term, with one overall theme – the benefits of NextGen are closer than most think.

I spend a lot of time advocating for NextGen. People are always surprised when I tell them that NextGen implementation has already begun, with 11 ADS-B ground stations installed, commissioned and in-use in South Florida. I understand all 793 stations are on schedule to be installed across the country by 2013.

But there's an issue. Aircraft are not required to be equipped with the ADS-B avionics to take full advantage of NextGen's benefits until 2020. So we have this seven-year period during which we have half of the puzzle in place.

The obvious solution is to provide equipage incentives for operators to shrink that seven-year gap and reap the benefits of NextGen as soon as possible. The interactive nature of ADS-B technology means that we must reach a critical mass of operator equipage to realize the system's full potential for all of us.

Now, we all know the industry came together to request grants for NextGen-enabling avionics equipment in the recovery package. Unfortunately, we weren't persuasive enough with that request, but we continue to believe its important.

With the focus coming up in this Congress on environmental legislation, let's not forget that the environmental gains possible through NextGen are considerable. Continuous Descent Arrivals, Required Navigation Procedures and Area Navigation Departures and Arrivals – also known as CDAs, RNP and RNAV – are already being designed, built and flown throughout the country. They are available today and are a big part of the efficient air traffic technology and management that will cut fuel burn and emissions by as much as 15 percent when NextGen is fully implemented.

The manufacturing industry and government are working hard on many other advances to reduce carbon emissions – composite materials, alternative fuels and engine technologies, among other steps. These are part of the three pillars of environmental efforts we believe our industry must fully exploit in order to achieve sustainable growth. The three pillars are:

- Green R&D and technology development
- Improved air traffic management
- Streamlined operational procedures

There is a fourth pillar – market measures. Committees in the House and Senate are considering variations on the theme of emissions trading, or “cap and trade.” Aviation in Europe is under an emissions trading system slated to go into effect in three years. While we do not oppose economic market measures for reducing aviation's CO2 emissions, we believe that in today's economic climate, such measures must provide positive – not negative – incentives.

And in the case of an industry like civil aviation – already very efficient and with no current commercially viable alternative energy source – any economic measure must be global in nature, consensus-based, and developed through a body like the UN's International Civil Aviation Organization.

Another NextGen challenge worth mentioning is incorporating Unmanned Aircraft Systems into the civilian airspace. To allow these valuable assets to be used by domestic agencies, the FAA needs sufficient investment to be able to safely integrate them into the National Airspace System.

We must have the foresight to invest in the full slate of NextGen technologies today. That's the point I hope we take away from this hearing today. This is just one of the long list of benefits that NextGen can provide, not only in the near-term, but immediately.

Thank you.