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OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS & GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

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Centralizing Aviation Operations and Implementing Cost-Saving Strategies Could Reduce State Spending

at a glance

Florida state aircraft are decentralized among six state agencies. The Department of Management Services is statutorily authorized to coordinate these agency aviation programs but only serves an advisory role. This fragmented system hinders coordination, reduces efficiency, and increases costs. In addition, some agency practices may increase state costs; these include not seeking cost reimbursement for aircraft services provided to other entities, underutilizing aircraft, and using aging and surplus aircraft.

The Legislature could consider several options for improving state aircraft management and reducing costs, including centralizing all state aviation programs into a single aviation authority, consolidating all law enforcement aviation operations under a single agency, directing the Department of Management Services to exercise its statutory authority to centralize aviation operations, and creating an agency coordinating council for aircraft management. Each option has advantages and disadvantages as well as varying fiscal impacts.

Scope

The Legislature directed OPPAGA to examine state agency aviation programs to identify options for reducing costs and centralizing aircraft management, an operational model that has been used to varying degrees in other states.

Background

State aviation programs in six agencies provide services in five broad areas: emergency response, law enforcement, environmental protection, aerial mapping and photography, and passenger services. Agencies use fixed-wing airplanes and helicopters to carry out their assigned missions. For example, aircraft allow the

- Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to conduct search and rescue missions over water;
- Department of Law Enforcement to provide aerial surveillance for criminal investigations;
- Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' Florida Highway Patrol to enforce traffic laws;
- Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Division of Forestry to respond quickly to wildfires in remote, inaccessible areas; and
- Department of Transportation to photograph and map the state's highway system.

In addition, until February 2011, the Department of Management Services operated the executive aircraft pool, which provided passenger services for state officials.[1] Appendix A provides additional information about each agency's aviation program.

However, aircraft are expensive to own, operate, and maintain, and expenses continue to accrue for insurance, salaries, upkeep, and hangar space even when the aircraft are not in use. In addition, to meet federal and state regulations, pilots must be trained and mechanics must be trained and certified to work on the different types of aircraft operated. Exhibit 1 shows that in Fiscal Year 2009-10, the six state agencies owned a total of 61 aircraft. During this period, agencies flew 9,467 flight hours and spent over $7.5 million to operate and maintain these aircraft.

[1] On January 5, 2011, the Governor directed the Department of Management Services to discontinue passenger air service for state officials and personnel and to sell the two aircraft used to provide these services. The state sold the aircraft on February 13, 2011, for $3.7 million.

Exhibit 1
Six State Agencies Owned and Operated 61 Aircraft in Fiscal Year 2009-10

Agency	Fiscal Year 2009-10		
	Aircraft	Flight Hours	Expenditures
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	31	2,889	$2,224,400
Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles	8[1]	2,811	795,990
Department of Law Enforcement	3	414[2]	104,620[2]
Department of Management Services[3]	2	276	2,084,187
Department of Transportation	1	203	179,834
Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	16[4]	2,874	2,138,149
Total	**61**	**9,467**	**$7,527,180**

[1] A Cessna 172 Skyhawk transferred from the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in April 2010 to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (HSMV), but not operated by HSMV during Fiscal Year 2009-10, is not included in the number of HSMV aircraft. Maintenance and repairs totaling $55,668 incurred during the period April 2010 through June 2010 for the Cessna 172 are included in HSMV expenditures.

[2] Flight hours incurred by department staff on an aircraft owned by the Monroe County Sheriff's Office are not included; however, salary expenditures totaling $15,154 incurred for these flight hours are included in the department's expenditure amount. In addition, expenditures are reduced through the use of unpaid reserve special agents to pilot some flights.

[3] On January 5, 2011, the Governor directed the Department of Management Services to discontinue passenger air service for state officials and personnel and to sell the two aircraft used to provide these services. The state sold the aircraft on February 13, 2011, for $3.7 million.

[4] Includes a Cessna 172 Skyhawk transferred to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles on April 2, 2010, and a Partenavia P86C acquired in March 2010 but not operated.

Source: Data provided by state agencies.

Findings

State aviation programs are decentralized, which reduces operational efficiency and increases costs

Florida's aircraft programs are decentralized among six state agencies. Although the Department of Management Services (DMS) is statutorily authorized to coordinate agency aviation programs, it serves only an advisory role. This fragmented system limits the state's opportunities to use its aviation resources in the most cost efficient and effective manner.

DMS does not fully exercise its statutory authority to coordinate aviation functions across agencies. The Department of Management Services has statutory authority to make decisions regarding the management of agency aviation functions. Section 287.16, *Florida Statutes*, authorizes the department to operate central facilities for the acquisition, operation, maintenance, and regulation of all state-owned or leased aircraft. However, DMS does not exercise this authority. Instead, the department only provides advisory services to other state agencies for aircraft acquisition, disposal, insurance, and licensing and produces an annual report on utilization of all state owned aircraft. The agencies that operate aircraft do so independently of each other and each is responsible for the management, scheduling, and upkeep of assigned aircraft and for providing all aircrews and other personnel. Operating and fixed costs are included in each agency's legislative budget request.

Since the agencies' aviation funding requests are not aggregated, the Legislature cannot evaluate the use and funding of state aviation assets as a whole. This lack of centralized management and discrete funding streams hinders program coordination, resulting in overlap and lost opportunities to reduce costs.

Lack of aircraft standardization and sharing across agencies decreases efficiency and increases costs. Florida does not have a statewide strategic plan for acquiring or sharing aircraft used for similar functions, and agencies use 14 different types of aircraft housed at 24 locations throughout the state. Each agency purchases aircraft independently according to its needs, even though airplanes and helicopters could be shared among departments for similar purposes. For example, three state agencies—the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, the Department of Law Enforcement, and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission—use aircraft for similar law enforcement activities. These activities include

traffic enforcement, fisheries enforcement, search and rescue, and surveillance flights. However, to accomplish their missions each agency operates its own aircraft (the three agencies operate seven different types of aircraft). (See Appendix A.)

Standardizing aircraft fleets among agencies can help reduce state maintenance and personnel costs. Different aircraft models require specialized tools as well as trained mechanics qualified to service them. In addition, pilot training costs are higher when pilots must be trained and qualified to fly all aircraft models in an agency's air fleet.

Agencies generally do not coordinate operations and maintenance functions. As shown in Exhibit 2, multiple state agencies house aircraft at the same airports throughout the state. However, the agencies typically do not coordinate operations and maintenance, instead developing their own resources at 24 different locations. For example, the five aviation programs located at the Tallahassee Regional Airport do not coordinate maintenance operations.[2] Two agencies operate separate maintenance shops, another provides limited services, and the remaining two programs contract out for all maintenance services.

In addition, agencies typically do not share fuel or other operational resources such as mechanics and hanger space to store aircraft.[3] For example, DMS negotiated a bulk rate fuel contract with a private vendor, but the contract is not available to other agencies. In fact, there are no statewide maintenance or fuel contracts available to all agencies that operate aircraft. Fuel cost is a large part of the cost of flying state airplanes. For example, the Citation B operated by DMS used 210 gallons of fuel per hour. With the fuel contract, the department paid about $3.12 per gallon, over $2 less than the $5.54 per gallon paid at other airports, a difference of over $500 per hour.[4]

Without comprehensive data, policymakers cannot make informed decisions regarding agencies' aircraft programs. Florida does not have a centralized repository for collecting aircraft cost data across agencies. Cost data helps policymakers measure the effectiveness of an agency's aviation program and can help identify opportunities to reduce operating costs, such as changing maintenance practices and replacing old, inefficient aircraft with newer more fuel-efficient models that require less maintenance. Neither the Legislature nor agencies can make informed decisions about the efficiency of aviation programs if cost data is not systematically collected and used to analyze aircraft operations.

While DMS produces an annual report on the status of all agency aircraft fleets, it does not have a shared data system to capture aviation costs. In addition, it appears that several agency aviation managers are not collecting cost data to use when making decisions on whether or not to deploy aircraft. For example, some agencies report flying employees to routine meetings; cost data would inform them of whether this is a sound fiscal decision. Consulting cost data when making such decisions is prudent, because these practices can significantly increase the costs of air operations.

Several agency practices decrease efficiency and may increase state aviation costs

Some agency practices have the potential to increase state aviation costs. These practices include not seeking cost reimbursement for aircraft services provided to other entities, underutilizing aircraft, and using aging and surplus aircraft.

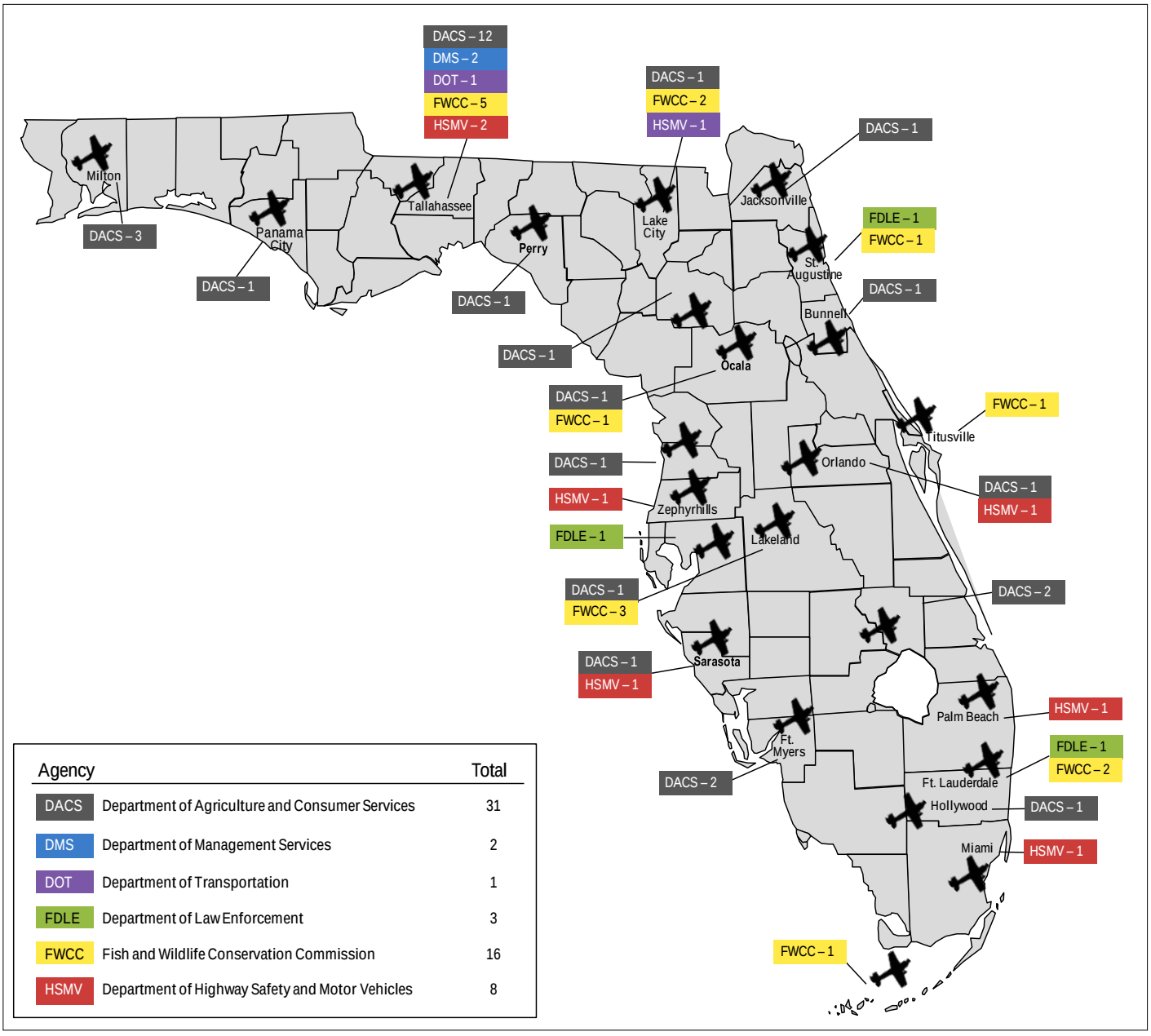
Agencies often provide services to other entities but do not always recover all associated costs. State aviation programs provide support to federal, state, and non-state entities. However, some operational costs that are reimbursable from these sources are not always recovered. This practice may lead to subsidizing other entities' operations using state resources, without the state realizing any benefits.

[2] The five agencies are the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, the Department of Management Services, the Department of Transportation, and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

[3] DMS provides some hangar space to agencies at the Tallahassee Regional Airport.

[4] The fuel price of $3.12 per gallon was reported by the department in August 2010.

Exhibit 2
Florida Aircraft Were Based at 24 Locations Across the State in Fiscal Year 2009-10



Source: OPPAGA analysis.

For example, the Florida Highway Patrol provides services to counties and state entities, but often does not seek reimbursement or recover all associated costs. Services to counties include aerial speed enforcement and crash response. While speeding tickets and other law enforcement activities resulting from aerial surveillance had an estimated value of $7.4 million in Fiscal Year 2009-10, the Highway Patrol did not seek reimbursement from counties for its related aviation costs. In addition, state aviation programs provide services to federal, state, and county entities during emergencies and often receive little or no reimbursement.[5] For example, during the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the Department of Transportation provided aerial photography and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission provided aerial surveillance and information to the Department of Community Affairs' Division of Emergency

[5] Some of these services are provided as part of interagency agreements, while others are provided as a courtesy.

Management. The commission also provides support during presidential visits, homeland security operations, federal drug enforcement task force operations, and super bowls. Similarly, the Department of Transportation performs aerial mapping for state agencies, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and receives no compensation for these services. Agency managers report that they bill the federal government and private entities such as BP for some of these services, but are unsure of the extent to which services are reimbursed.[6]

Underutilized and aging aircraft are costly to operate and are less reliable. Many of the state's special purpose aircraft have very low flight hours and high maintenance costs. In Fiscal Year 2009-10, approximately one-third (23) of the state's 61 aircraft fleet flew fewer than 100 hours. Regardless of aircraft utilization, some costs, such as salaries, training, maintenance, insurance, and hangar space, continue to accrue. For example, DMS's per flight hour costs for providing passenger flight services dramatically increased from $2,958 in Fiscal Year 2007-08 to $9,701 in Fiscal Year 2009-10 as flight hours significantly decreased from 1,048 to 277.[7]

Another cost driver for agencies' aviation programs is aging aircraft, which require more frequent repairs and replacement of parts. Furthermore, it is more difficult to find skilled technicians to maintain older aircraft. Aviation experts report that maintaining reliability for older aircraft means more time spent in the hangar and less time available for flight operations. According to aviation industry experts, when an aircraft is 30 years old, its availability for flights declines by nearly 50%; thus, programs need two aircraft on hand to ensure that one is always flight-worthy. Aircraft availability is a direct function of recurring and extensive maintenance problems.

Within Florida's fleet of 61 aircraft, 43 are 20 years old or older. The oldest is a Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services 1964 Huey helicopter. Exhibit 3 lists some of these older aircraft that have low flight hours and high flight costs per hour, particularly helicopters.[8]

Some federal surplus aircraft may not be worth the cost of operation. Many of Florida's older aircraft are also surplus aircraft. Surplus aircraft are typically obtained from the federal government at no cost, often as military surplus when the U.S. Department of Defense no longer needs them.[9] The state owns 18 surplus aircraft; the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services owns 14 and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission owns the remaining 4.[10]

[6] The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles also assisted with the BP oil spill but has received full reimbursement.

[7] The Fiscal Year 2007-08 and Fiscal Year 2009-10 per flight hour costs are based on budgeted costs.

[8] Flight costs per hour include fuel costs, all maintenance costs, insurance, hangar rental, pilot compensation, and indirect costs.

[9] The Federal 1033 Program permits the Secretary of Defense to transfer, without charge, excess U.S. Department of Defense property (supplies and equipment) to state law enforcement agencies.

[10] The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Division of Forestry recently acquired another surplus aircraft from Georgia, which has decided to discontinue using surplus aircraft.

Exhibit 3
Many Aging State Aircraft Have Low Flight Hours and High Costs

State Agency	Registration Number	Model Year	Make/ Model	Type of Aircraft	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Flight Hours	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Cost per Flight Hour
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	N124FC	1964	Bell UH-1H	Helicopter	62.9	$2,036
	N122FC	1965	Bell UH-1H	Helicopter	53.6	2,218
	N107FC	1970	Piper PA-31	Airplane	35.7	2,426
	N114FC	1971	Bell OH-58A	Helicopter	67	3,979
	N130FC	1976	Bell 209	Helicopter	7.2	3,419
	N2860M	1978	Piper PA-28	Airplane	42.1	1,246
	N109FC	1980	Piper PA-31	Airplane	39.8	1,682
Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles	N91HP	1967	Piper PA-31	Airplane	104	727
Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	N205FW	1969	Bell UH-1H	Helicopter	94	1,288
Department of Law Enforcement	N5446D	1979	Cessna 172N	Airplane	24.7	595

Source: Data provided by state agencies.

Aviation experts report that surplus aircraft are often expensive to operate and may raise safety concerns. In addition, like other older aircraft, parts and maintenance technicians can also be difficult to find. Division of Forestry staff report that surplus aircraft are often near the end of their useful life and the division may need 25 surplus aircraft to obtain the necessary parts to make 3 surplus aircraft flight-worthy. Moreover, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission staff report that they now provide some services for local sheriff's offices that are disposing of surplus aircraft due to higher costs and limited budgets.

Another disadvantage of surplus aircraft is the restrictions on use. Surplus aircraft operated by Florida agencies do not have air worthy certificates from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA); therefore, use of the aircraft is restricted to certain specified purposes.[11] For example, surplus aircraft acquired for firefighting can only be used for that purpose. Consequently, agencies cannot share these aircraft, which decreases their usefulness. In Georgia, the state aviation manager has chosen to replace several surplus helicopters with one newer multi-use helicopter, which can be shared among agencies. According to the Georgia Aviation Authority manager, the newer helicopter is safer, more fuel-efficient, and has lower maintenance costs.

Like Florida, other states' aviation programs are decentralized, but Georgia has recently consolidated aircraft management

With the exception of Georgia, most state aviation programs we examined operate similarly to Florida, with varying degrees of decentralization. Among the states, there is variation in which agencies are assigned responsibilities for managing the various state aviation programs and how some aviation programs are combined across agencies. States' departments of transportation (Illinois and Utah) or law enforcement/public safety agencies (Alabama, California, and New York) have combined some aviation operations. However, law enforcement and forestry aviation programs are often managed separately from other state aviation units.

Several states offer on-demand flight services to state officials (Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah) and often require subsidies because hourly rates generally are insufficient to cover both fixed and operating costs. A recent Texas report noted that the rates charged for its passenger services did not include important fixed costs such as capital expenditures for new aircraft and building expenses. The report recommended that the state contract for private charter services rather than continuing passenger service.[12] In contrast, a Utah General Aviation Association issue paper recommended that the Utah Legislature use state general funds rather than airport construction funds to subsidize the state's aviation program.

The state that appears most similar to Florida is North Carolina. The state's aviation program is fully decentralized, with management of its 72 aircraft spread across eight state programs. A recent report by the General Assembly's Program Evaluation Division identified many of the same inefficiencies found in Florida: lack of cost data; underutilization of aging aircraft; inefficient use of facilities; and duplication of staff and aircraft because of the lack of consolidation of resources.[13] The report recommended closing 5 of 11 forestry facilities and selling 25 underutilized aircraft to generate $8.1 million in revenue and save $1.5 million in operating costs annually.

Georgia recently consolidated and modernized its state aviation programs. The 2009 Georgia Legislature created the Georgia Aviation Authority and implemented recommendations from the Commission for A New Georgia task force on aviation management.[14, 15] The task force recommended merging the state's 74 airplanes and helicopters at 18 locations into a consolidated fleet with pilots cross-trained to fly any mission. This model will allow the state to centralize administration, reduce staff and aircraft, and standardize aircraft, training, and maintenance.

To date, the Georgia Aviation Authority has sold two executive jets and reduced the number of surplus aircraft. It ultimately plans to reduce the working air fleet from 55 to 36 and reduce operating bases from

[11] Lack of an air worthy certificate from the FAA does not mean the aircraft is unsafe to fly, but it limits the use of the aircraft.

[12] *Window on State Government*, Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2003.

[13] *Selling 25 Underutilized Aircraft May Yield Up to $8.1 Million and Save $1.5 Million Annually,* Program Evaluation Division, North Carolina General Assembly, Report No. 2010-04, April 2010.

[14] Georgia Code, Title 6, Chapter 5, Aviation Authority.

[15] Georgia's governor created the commission in 2006 to improve the efficiency of state programs. Over five years, the commission created 20 task forces, engaged over 300 citizens to identify key findings and issues, and made recommendations for improving state government.

18 to 10.[16] According to the chair of the aviation task force, the key to obtaining buy-in from state agencies for consolidation was task force member aviation qualifications and the support of the governor and legislature.

Several opportunities exist to improve aircraft management and reduce operational costs

There are several options the Legislature could consider for improving state aircraft management and reducing costs, including centralizing all state aviation programs into a single aviation authority, consolidating all law enforcement aviation operations under a single agency, directing DMS to exercise its statutory authority to centralize aviation operations, and creating an agency coordinating council for aircraft management. Each option has advantages and disadvantages as well as varying fiscal impacts, as described in Exhibit 4.

The Legislature also may wish to consider establishing a task force of experienced aviation professionals to review the state's aviation programs and assets and make recommendations to the Legislature on what assets to retain and where to station state aircraft.

Option 1: Centralize all state aviation programs into a single aviation authority. This option would transfer aircraft, assets, and employees to a new authority, which would significantly reduce duplication of aircraft, locations, and management. Aircraft that are not needed could be sold. With all funding requests coming from a single authority with common goals rather than fragmented among several agencies with competing priorities, the Legislature could better evaluate how aviation assets should be funded and used.

However, there are challenges to centralizing state aviation programs. Several agencies report that their pilots are certified law enforcement officers or firefighters and perform other duties in addition to flying airplanes. For example, Division of Forestry managers report that their pilots spend 50% to 60% of their time flying, with the remainder devoted to training, fitness, and inventory of property. Similarly, law enforcement officers conduct criminal investigations when not flying airplanes. Thus, personnel adjustments would need to be made when consolidating staff resources.

In addition to these staffing concerns, if state aviation programs were centralized, decisions would also need to be made about the location of base operations and provision of maintenance and fuel services. The Division of Forestry purposely decentralized operations and assigned an aircraft to each of its 15 field units in 1985 when the state experienced a large number of fires. Consequently, many operations are not located near major maintenance centers that are easily accessible to other aviation units. Moreover, staff reports that the division obtains fuel through a federal forestry contract at $1 to $2 per gallon less than market price.[17]

Some of the division's concerns about centralization were also cited by other agencies. These challenges include overcoming conflicting mission priorities among agencies, restrictions on the use of surplus aircraft, and increased flight times to and from base operations, which could adversely affect response times to emergencies. Administrative challenges include acquiring adequate facilities in appropriate locations and assigning resources for personnel, rent, equipment, and other operations that are now divided among the agencies.

The Georgia Aviation Authority addressed many of these concerns by merging all operations. The authority established three sites for statewide maintenance operations and addressed emergency response concerns by using various sites for staging aircraft and support operations when responding to emergencies such as forest fires.

The authority's director estimates that it saved the state $500,000 in its first year of operation and expects additional long-term savings through continued downsizing, standardizing of the air fleet, and through cross-training of staff. Specifically, all pilots are now certified law enforcement officers and are on call to respond to any aviation need, from dropping water on fires to criminal surveillance.

Option 2: Consolidate all law enforcement aviation operations under a single agency. Other states have successfully used this model to consolidate some operations. For example, the New York state police aviation unit performs aerial fire suppression, search and rescue, and environmental missions in addition to providing law enforcement support. In Florida, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

[16] Georgia's fleet does not include 30 planes owned by the state's university system that are used to train student pilots and mechanics.

[17] The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission also purchases Jet A aircraft fuel at some locations for its helicopters through a federal government contract.

aviation unit already serves as the operations coordinator for all declared emergency operations. Consolidating all law enforcement aviation operations into a single unit would provide an opportunity to consolidate resources and administration of law enforcement aviation assets.

Potential savings would vary, depending on how the assets would be combined and the number of aircraft eliminated. For example, if two of the most costly to operate and maintain older aircraft were eliminated, we estimate that the state would save approximately $197,000.[18]

However, to reduce duplication and overlap of operations and personnel, law enforcement aviation program managers would need to overcome competing priorities among agencies and establish common goals. At a minimum, Florida's law enforcement agencies should be able to co-locate some operations and have the expertise to negotiate maintenance and fuel contracts for law enforcement agencies. Aircraft stationed in rural areas may still require additional maintenance support.

Option 3: Direct DMS to exercise its statutory authority to centralize aviation operations. The Legislature could direct DMS to exercise its statutory authority to centralize and standardize some aviation operations across agencies and identify the most cost effective sites for basing operations. DMS could base its approach on the federal General Services Administration (GSA), which acts as the coordinating office for aircraft management at the federal level with the assistance of an interagency aircraft policy working group. DMS could establish a similar interagency working group to improve coordination across agencies and learn what other aviation programs have done to reduce operating costs.

The GSA is also charged with identifying opportunities to share aircraft among agencies, reduce aircraft operations and maintenance costs, and replace obsolete aircraft. If Florida could increase the efficiency of state aviation programs by 5%, it could potentially realize first year cost savings of $270,000.[19] Efficiencies include reducing staff overlap; leveraging group purchasing for parts, fuel, and maintenance; closing some sites by co-locating services; and centralizing budget and expense management.

The GSA must also produce an annual study of the costs of operating the different categories of government aircraft and provide feedback to agencies regarding cost comparisons. In addition, the Office of Management and Budget directed the GSA to develop specific cost effectiveness measures with the assistance of the interagency working group. By exercising its statutory authority to oversee the activities of all state-owned or leased aircraft, DMS could perform similar functions at the state level. The primary disadvantage of this option is that historically, DMS has not maintained such a relationship with other state agencies, adopting a service rather than a regulatory stance. Consequently, the Legislature should direct DMS to exercise its statutory authority to regulate aircraft operations if it wanted the department to implement the option.

Option 4: Establish a coordinating council for aviation managers. As an alternative to consolidating some or all aircraft operations, the Legislature could establish an interagency council under the oversight of one agency to coordinate aircraft management for the state. Potential lead agencies include the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, the Department of Law Enforcement, and the Department of Transportation.

At a minimum, the interagency group would foster better communication across the agencies, which does not exist now except for emergency management operations. In fact, several agency aviation managers that we interviewed were not aware of the location of other agencies' aviation operations.

In addition, the Legislature could direct the council to develop acquisition policies to standardize aircraft used for similar purposes, identify opportunities to share and co-locate aircraft to achieve lower maintenance costs, and assist the lead aviation agency or the DMS procurement unit with developing fuel and maintenance contracts. However, the main disadvantage of this option is that the council would have little or no authority to compel agencies to work toward common goals, which could reduce potential efficiencies.

[18] The savings estimate is based on eliminating the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles' 1967 Piper PA31 Navajo airplane with Fiscal Year 2009-10 costs of $76,000 and the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's 1969 Bell UH-1H helicopter with Fiscal Year 2009-10 costs of $121,000.

[19] In addition, the elimination of the executive air pool and the recent sale of assets will save $2 million in fixed and operating costs. The state sold the two aircraft for $3.7 million on February 11, 2011.

Exhibit 4
The Legislature Could Consider Four Options to Reduce Aviation Programs Costs

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
Option 1 – Centralize all state aviation programs into a single aviation authority		
Transfer all aircraft assets and employees to a new aviation authority	▪ Reduces duplication of aircraft, overlap of locations, and management of aviation programs ▪ Establishes a plan for acquiring aircraft that are used for similar purposes ▪ Facilitates centralized data collection, which will help to identify opportunities to reduce costs ▪ Decreases costs for pilots and mechanics if pilots are trained to serve multiple missions and the air fleet is standardized ▪ Consolidates funding requests to the Legislature so the use and funding of aviation assets can be evaluated as a whole ▪ Reduces costs in the first year of operation by disposing of aircraft, reducing staff, co-locating operations; long-term cost savings would be achieved by better budget and expense management, standardizing the fleet across agencies, and acquiring newer, more efficient aircraft that serve multiple functions	▪ Resistance to centralization from agencies and other stakeholders because of competing priorities ▪ Reassignment of some current pilot personnel (certified law enforcement and firefighters) that perform other duties if staff were reduced ▪ Costs associated with creating a unified cost data system ▪ Costs associated with cross-training pilots to fly multiple missions and some loss of mission-specific expertise ▪ Restrictions on use of surplus aircraft may reduce the viability of these assets
Option 2 – Consolidate all law enforcement aviation operations under a single agency		
Consolidate all law enforcement aviation operations into a single unit	▪ Reduces some duplication of assets and personnel and overlap of services among law enforcement agencies ▪ Streamlines operations and maintenance and standardizes management processes, which should reduce costs ▪ Helps support development of a strategic plan for the acquisition and disposal of law enforcement aircraft	▪ Difficulty selecting a lead agency because agencies may be unwilling to relinquish authority ▪ Resistance to consolidation from agencies and other stakeholders because of competing priorities ▪ Reassignment of support staff that often have multiple duties to handle personnel, financial, and administrative work now performed by separate agencies ▪ Restrictions on use of surplus aircraft may reduce the viability of these assets
Option 3 – Direct DMS to exercise its statutory authority to centralize aviation operations		
DMS would exercise its authority to centralize and standardize some operations across agencies and to identify the most cost effective sites for basing operations	▪ Facilitates better coordination and communication across agencies ▪ Reduces personnel overlap and service locations ▪ Improves the state's ability to negotiate favorable fuel and maintenance contracts for some services ▪ Standardizes acquisition and management practices across agencies to improve efficiency ▪ Enhances accountability through increased feedback to agencies on aviation costs	▪ Difficult and costly to find a well-qualified aviation manager ▪ Diminished results or standardization across agencies and consolidation of assets if agencies are not all required to participate ▪ DMS may not be the best agency to serve as a coordinating entity if it no longer provides aviation services
Option 4 – Establish a coordinating council for aviation managers		
Establish an interagency council under one agency to coordinate aircraft management	▪ Facilitates better coordination and communication across agencies ▪ Supports the long-term goal of centralization without major personnel, resource, and management changes ▪ Increases potential for cost savings by consolidating service areas and examining agency best practices ▪ Provides a coordination mechanism in lieu of DMS	▪ Limited results if full-time staff is not assigned to perform council duties ▪ Unwillingness by agencies to work toward common goals without specific legislative direction and oversight ▪ Lack of authority for council to require agencies to centralize personnel and assets or otherwise work toward common goals

Source: OPPAGA analysis.

Appendix A

State Agencies Use Aircraft to Augment Their Assigned Missions

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Aircraft used for fire detection, fire suppression, survey of fire and insect damage, aerial coordination of ground personnel, and the transportation of firefighting and other department personnel.

Table A-1
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Aircraft Are Primarily Used for Wildfire Prevention and Suppression Missions

	FAA Registration	Model Year	Make/Model	Seats (Crew/ Passengers)	Date Acquired	Original Acquisition Cost	Home Base	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Flight Hours	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Cost per Flight Hour
1	N107FC	1970	Piper PA 31 Turbo Navajo	2/5	Dec. 1985	$162,615	Tallahassee	35.7	$2,426
2	N109FC	1980	Piper PA 31 Navajo	2/5	Dec. 1995	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	39.8	1,682
3	N110FC	1971	Bell OH-58A	1/3	July 1999	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	66.1	1,610
4	N114FC	1971	Bell OH-58A	1/3	May 2000	Federal Excess	Milton	67	3,979
5	N120FC	1970	Bell UH-1H	1/7	July 2007	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	88.8	1,863
6	N122FC	1965	Bell UH-1H	1/7	May 1989	Federal Excess	Ocala	53.6	2,218
7	N124FC	1964	Bell UH-1H	1/7	May 1992	Federal Excess	Okeechobee	62.9	2,036
8	N128FC	1969	Bell UH-1H	1/7	Oct. 2000	Federal Excess	Ft. Myers	69.8	2,066
9	N130FC	1976	Bell 209	1/1	July 1999	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	7.2	3,419
10	N131FC	1976	Bell 209	1/1	July 1999	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	0	N/A
11	N132FC	1977	Bell 209	1/1	June 1999	Federal Excess	Milton	0	N/A
12	N134FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	July 1982	39,905	Sarasota	74.4	743
13	N135FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	July 1982	39,905	Tallahassee	0	N/A
14	N136FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	July 1982	39,905	Perry	132.2	470
15	N137FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	July 1982	39,905	Jacksonville	196.2	573
16	N138FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	Nov. 1997	Federal Excess	Orlando	99	520
17	N139FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	July 1982	43,449	Hollywood	115.9	507
18	N140FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	July 1982	44,694	Gainesville	261.5	470
19	N141FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	July 1982	44,694	Tallahassee	18.3	778
20	N142FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	July 1982	44,694	Lakeland	62.3	569
21	N143FC	1982	Piper PA 28 Archer II	1/3	July 1982	44,694	Panama City	120.5	610
22	N147FC	1979	Piper 28-161	1/3	Oct. 1985	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	84.3	539
23	N151FC	2006	Cessna 182T	1/3	Aug. 2006	383,080	Lake City	173.8	510
24	N153FC	2005	Cessna 182T	1/3	July 2005	383,080	Ft. Myers	106.9	543
25	N154FC	2005	Cessna 182T	1/3	July 2005	383,080	Bunnell	190.7	580
26	N155FC	2005	Cessna 182T	1/3	July 2005	383,080	Milton	125.2	544
27	N157FC	2006	Cessna 182T	1/3	Aug. 2006	383,080	Tallahassee	136.7	487
28	N158FC	2008	Cessna 182T	1/3	April 2008	387,250	Brooksville	242	497
29	N159FC	2008	Cessna 182T	1/3	April 2008	387,250	Okeechobee	172.1	497
30	N2860M	1978	Piper 28-161	1/3	June 1985	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	42.1	1,246
31	N3749I	1976	Piper PA 32	1/5	July 1982	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	44.5	628

Source: Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles. Aircraft used for law enforcement, highway traffic work, surveillance, search and rescue, transporting department law enforcement and other state employees as well as persons in the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and other non-state persons.

Table A-2
Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicle Aircraft Are Used to Enforce Highway Traffic Regulations

FAA Registration	Model Year	Make/Model	Seats (Crew/ Passengers)	Date Acquired	Original Acquisition Cost	Home Base	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Flight Hours	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Cost per Flight Hour
1 N251HP	1983	Cessna 172	1/3	Aug. 1986	$52,000	Lake City	366	$243
2 N25HP	2006	Cessna 182	1/3	Dec. 2006	359,064	Miami	360	277
3 N267HP	2002	Cessna 172	1/3	Jan. 2003	209,900	Tallahassee	423	274
4 N611HP	2006	Cessna 182	1/3	Jan. 2007	359,064	Zephyrhills	440	235
5 N706HP	1985	Cessna 182 RG	1/3	Aug. 1985	91,200	Sarasota	417	247
6 N714HP	1983	Cessna 172	1/3	Aug. 1986	52,000	Palm Beach	260	215
7 N91HP	1967	Piper PA-31	2/5	April 1995	Confiscated	Tallahassee	104	727
8 N9575B	1982	Cessna 172 RG	1/3	Dec. 1992	72,585	Orlando	441	209

Source: Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

Department of Law Enforcement. Aircraft used for surveillance for criminal investigations.

Table A-3
Department of Law Enforcement Aircraft Are Used for Law Enforcement Surveillance Activities

FAA Registration	Model Year	Make/Model	Seats (Crew/ Passengers)	Date Acquired	Original Acquisition Cost	Home Base	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Flight Hours	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Cost per Flight Hour
1 N1336S	1976	Cessna 182P	1/3	March 1983	Confiscated	Tampa	262.2	$206
2 N4751G	1980	Cessna 172N	1/3	June 1980	$42,114	Ft. Lauderdale	127.3	164
3 N5446D	1979	Cessna 172N	1/3	June 1979	35,881	St. Augustine	24.7	595

Source: Department of Law Enforcement.

Department of Management Services. Aircraft used to transport passengers as part of the Executive Aircraft Pool.

Table A-4
Department of Management Services Aircraft Are Used to Transport Passengers

FAA Registration	Model Year	Make/Model	Seats (Crew/ Passengers)	Date Acquired	Original Acquisition Cost	Home Base	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Flight Hours	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Cost per Flight Hour
1 N102FL	2000	Beechcraft King Air 350	2/9	Jan. 2005	$3,250,000	Tallahassee	133	$5,729
2 N104FL	2003	Cessna Citation Bravo	2/8	Dec. 2003	5,369,950	Tallahassee	143	9,218

Source: Department of Management Services.

Department of Transportation. Aircraft used for aerial photography and mapping in support of Florida's highway system.

Table A-5
The Department of Transportation's Aircraft is Used for Aerial Photography and Mapping

FAA Registration	Model Year	Make/Model	Seats (Crew/ Passengers)	Date Acquired	Original Acquisition Cost	Home Base	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Flight Hours	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Cost per Flight Hour
1 N106FL	1978	Aero Commander 500S	2/1	Feb. 1989	$160,000	Tallahassee	203	$888

Source: Department of Transportation.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Aircraft used for law enforcement patrol, wildlife/fisheries protection, wildlife management activities, and emergency responses (both to hazards and for search and rescue).

Table A-6
Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Aircraft Are Used to Enforce Wildlife Laws

	FAA Registration	Model Year	Make/Model	Seats (Crew/ Passengers)	Date Acquired	Original Acquisition Cost	Home Base	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Flight Hours	Fiscal Year 2009-10 Cost per Flight Hour
1	N117FW[1]	1981	Cessna 172	1/3	July 1982	$42,947	Lake City	134	$533
2	N118FW	1991	Bell 206B-III Jet Ranger	2/3	Sept. 1991	644,213	Lakeland	163	810
3	N205FW	1969	Bell UH-1H	2/11	June 2008	Trade	Tallahassee	94	1,288
4	N233FW	1972	Bell OH-58A	1/3	June 1996	Federal Excess	Lakeland	187	782
5	N235FW	1972	Bell OH-58A	1/3	Sept. 1995	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	118	1,057
6	N239FW	1970	Bell OH-58	1/3	March 2002	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	266	705
7	N401FW	2006	Bell LongRanger	1/6	May 2006	1,500,000	Ft. Lauderdale	276	818
8	N402FW	2006	Bell LongRanger	1/6	May 2006	1,500,000	Lake City	255	821
9	N419FW	2001	P68 Observer 2	2/4	July 2002	408,000	Tallahassee	241	712
10	N420FW	2004	Cessna 182T	1/3	Nov. 2004	335,010	St. Augustine	161	562
11	N421FW	2004	Cessna 182T	1/3	Nov. 2004	335,010	Ocala	186	579
12	N483FW	1983	Partenavia P68C	2/5	June 1990	70,000	Marathon	272	650
13	N800AT	1984	Partenavia P68C	2/5	March 2010	Federal Excess	Tallahassee	0	N/A
14	N86FW	1976	Bell 206-III Jet Ranger	1/4	Aug. 1985	192,000	Titusville	222	712
15	N932FW	1985	Cessna 182B	1/3	June 1990	95,000	Lakeland	209	526
16	N945FW	1979	Cessna 182 RG	1/3	Dec.1996	82,000	Ft. Lauderdale	90	678

[1] This aircraft was transferred to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles in April 2010.

Source: Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

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