

Sunset Advisory Commission



State Aircraft Pooling Board



Staff Report

2000

SUNSET ADVISORY COMMISSION

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In 1977, the Texas Legislature created the Sunset Advisory Commission to identify and eliminate waste, duplication, and inefficiency in government agencies. The 10-member Commission is a legislative body that reviews the policies and programs of more than 150 government agencies every 12 years. The Commission questions the need for each agency, looks for potential duplication of other public services or programs, and considers new and innovative changes to improve each agency's operations and activities. The Commission seeks public input through hearings on every agency under Sunset review and recommends actions on each agency to the full Legislature. In most cases, agencies under Sunset review are automatically abolished unless legislation is enacted to continue them. This report is the Commission staff's recommendations, which serves as the starting point for the Commission's deliberations.

STATE AIRCRAFT POOLING BOARD

SUNSET STAFF REPORT

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SUMMARY

Summary

Overview

The Sunset staff review of the State Aircraft Pooling Board (SAPB) concluded that the agency is providing cost-effective air transportation to State officials and employees. The agency meets State needs by providing air transportation throughout Texas, including areas not served by commercial aircraft. These services are provided on a flexible schedule, allowing state travelers to save time and money. As a result, the report recommends the continuation of the SAPB. However, SAPB does not effectively plan for changes needed for its aircraft fleet.

- SAPB operates a fleet of 13 aircraft, 11 of which are used for air transportation. The fleet is aging and certain aircraft no longer operate on a cost-recovery basis. This report shows that the agency has not developed a system of long-range planning to determine which aircraft to replace or when to replace them.

To help address this concern, this report recommends that the agency develop an approach to long-term aircraft fleet planning that considers the expenses, necessity, demand, and return on investment of its individual aircraft. This requirement will help prepare the Legislature to make informed decisions about the State's aircraft fleet.

Issues / Recommendations

Issue 1 The State Needs a Better Approach to Planning for the Future of Its Aircraft Fleet.

Key Recommendation

- Require the SAPB to conduct long-range planning for its aircraft usage and needs.

Key Findings

- SAPB is operating an aging fleet of aircraft that increases maintenance cost.
- The SAPB does not have a program for replacing aircraft that cost the State more in operations than revenue received.
- SAPB does not estimate future demand for aircraft services and does not provide the Legislature with a long range plan for its aircraft fleet.

Issue 2 The State Aircraft Pooling Board is not Providing State Agencies with Current and Easily Accessible Air Travel Information.

Key Recommendations

- Require the State Aircraft Pooling Board to maintain an electronic Web site that provides current travel-related information.
- The State Aircraft Pooling Board should provide ride share information through an electronic medium.

Key Findings

- Outdated airfare information on the SAPB Web site inhibits accurate travel cost comparisons.
- SAPB does not provide agencies with a convenient method of coordinating shared flights.
- SAPB could more effectively coordinate Web resources related to air travel.

Issue 3 The State Has a Continuing Need for the Services Provided by the State Aircraft Pooling Board.

Key Recommendation

- Continue the State Aircraft Pooling Board for 12 years.

Key Findings

- The State Aircraft Pooling Board provides necessary and cost-effective travel services to state officials and employees.
- SAPB provides a flexible schedule of air transportation service to remote locations of the state.
- SAPB provides more cost effective air transportation services than the private sector.

Fiscal Implication Summary _____

These recommendations will not have a significant fiscal impact to the State.

ISSUES / RECOMMENDATIONS

Issue 1

The State Needs a Better Approach to Planning for the Future of Its Aircraft Fleet.

Summary

Key Recommendation

- Require the SAPB to conduct long-range planning for its aircraft usage and needs.

Key Findings

- SAPB is operating an aging fleet of aircraft that increases maintenance cost.
- The SAPB does not have a program for replacing aircraft that cost the State more in operations than revenue received.
- SAPB does not estimate future demand for aircraft services and does not provide the Legislature with a long range plan for its aircraft fleet.

Conclusion

While the SAPB operates an effective system of air travel for state officials and employees, its aircraft fleet is not efficiently sized for current needs. Compounding this problem is the lack of a long-range planned approach for the acquisition, replacement, or sale of aircraft for the fleet in the future. While a private aircraft charter company would have a business plan to deal with inefficient aircraft and future needs, SAPB operates on a two-year time frame and handles aircraft replacement issues on an ad-hoc basis. The agency should improve its planning efforts and provide the Legislature with better information on the future needs of the State's fleet.

Support

The average age of SAPB's passenger aircraft is 19 years.

Current Situation: The SAPB's primary mandate is to operate a fleet of aircraft to provide safe, efficient air transportation to state officials and employees.

- The SAPB operates a fleet of 13 aircraft; 11 of these are for transportation, and two are special purpose aircraft not used for passenger transport. The agency reports the estimated value of its 11 aircraft to be a little more than \$11 million.¹ The agency also has a maintenance facility to support its air transportation services. To help manage its operations, the agency produces reports on the cost of operations, cost of maintenance, usage, and revenues for each aircraft it flies or services.
- Besides operating a pool of aircraft, SAPB is authorized to maintain and purchase replacement aircraft. The SAPB has a rider appropriation of \$1.4 million dollars to acquire a replacement aircraft in FY 2000. This will be the first acquisition of an aircraft since 1990, when the agency acquired a 1982 King Air 200.
- The SAPB is required to charge fees for its services that recoup the actual cost of operations. Actual cost of operations includes fixed and variable cost. (See text box *FY 1999 Aircraft Cost Analysis King Air 200* for an example of operating costs.)

FY 1999 Aircraft Cost Analysis King Air 200	
<i>Fixed Cost:</i>	
Liability Insurance	\$4,065.00
Pilots Salaries & Ben.	\$39,537.72
Scheduled Salaries & Ben.	\$5,259.28
Admin. Salary & Ben. (40%)	\$6,960.16
Total	\$55,822.16
<i>Variable Cost:</i>	
External Maintenance/Avionics	\$3,612.27
In-House Maintenance/Avionics	\$51,796.81
<i>Operations:</i>	
Engine Reserve	\$24,864.00
Fuel/Oil	\$42,827.79
Supplies/Misc.	\$7,227.55

Problem: SAPB is operating an aging fleet of aircraft that increases maintenance cost.

- The average age of the passenger aircraft in SAPB's fleet is 19 years. The newest aircraft in this fleet is 17 years old, while the oldest is 25 years old. In its 2001-2005 Strategic Plan, the agency reports that the life expectancy of the airframe for high hour aircraft is 25 years. As is seen in the table *State Aircraft Age and Cost Information*, several of SAPB's aircraft will soon be approaching this 25-year threshold. Although neither the FAA nor industry standards mandate taking aircraft out of service after 25 years, the factors discussed below indicate the importance of maintaining a close watch on aircraft as they age.

State Aircraft Age and Cost Information				
Description	Years Old	Date of Purchase	Purchase Price	Bluebook Value
1981 King Air 200	19	1986	\$850,000	\$1,530,000
1978 King Air 200	22	1978	\$1,706,294	\$1,200,000
1982 King Air B200	18	1982	\$1,775,446	\$1,580,000
1982 King Air B200	18	1990	\$1,467,900	\$1,580,000
1975 King Air E90	25	1983	\$578,000	\$775,000
1983 Cessna 425	17	1983	\$700,000	\$1,090,000
1983 Cessna 425	17	1987	\$854,000	\$1,090,000
1983 Cessna 425	17	1987	\$700,000	\$1,090,000
1983 Cessna 425	17	1989	\$799,820	\$1,090,000
1980 Cessna 402C	20	1989	\$239,148	\$255,000
1981 Cessna 402C	19	1989	\$311,953	\$285,000
Average	19.0	--	\$907,506	\$1,051,364

- The agency's current strategic plan reports that maintenance cost for one of its older planes is 30 percent more than for the newer models in the fleet. Increased maintenance cost can be caused by several reasons, but two key ones are: (1) as the aircraft airframe ages, more parts begin to wear out, and (2) the cost and time involved in finding parts for older aircraft increases. The agency reports that several of its older planes experience more down time during repairs because parts cannot be found or must be manufactured. More down time results in less revenue resulting in a higher ratio of maintenance cost to revenue for these aircraft.

Problem: The SAPB does not have a program for replacing aircraft that cost the State more in operations than revenue received.

- In FY 1999, the SAPB cost of operations for all of its aircraft exceeded revenues by a total of \$388,377.² During this time, five aircraft accounted for \$320,706 or 82 percent of the operating cost losses. (See table *Aircraft Cost of Operations Analysis for Selected Aircraft - FY 1999* for an itemized listing of each aircraft with revenues and costs.) Agency reports show that these losses are not limited to fiscal year 1999, but are persistent over the previous five years as well. (See *Selected Aircraft Revenue Versus Cost - FY 1994-1998*.) Since these five aircraft did not generate sufficient revenue to cover expenses, the excess cost

Aircraft Cost of Operations Analysis for Selected Aircraft FY 1999				
Aircraft	Cost of Operations	Revenue Billed	Hours Flown	Loss
KA 90*	\$171,543	\$27,163	54	\$14,380
402**	\$91,753	\$3,227	114.6	\$59,626
402**	\$121,522	\$31,625	116.3	\$89,897
206***	\$28,725	\$10,467	66.2	\$18,258
182***	\$15,574	\$7,029	68.5	\$8,545

* King Air, six passenger, turbo-engine

** Cessna, six to seven passengers, piston engine

*** Cessna, single engine, specially equipped and are not used for passenger service

Selected Aircraft Revenue Versus Cost FY 1994-1998			
	Aircraft	Revenue	Cost
1998	KA 90	\$68,088	\$94,025
	68752	\$84,082	\$108,176
	2615Q	\$44,214	\$128,520
1997	KA 90	\$50,185	\$89,427
	68752	\$52,430	\$119,155
	2615Q	\$42,127	\$83,397
1996	KA 90	\$86,462	\$129,864
	68752	\$88,657	\$108,245
	2615Q	\$25,674	\$94,921
1995	KA 90	\$59,553	\$93,751
	68752	\$74,664	\$140,347
	2615Q	\$57,469	\$100,618
1994	KA 90	\$74,175	\$103,538
	68752	\$62,723	\$104,009
	2615Q	\$38,457	\$110,555
Total		\$908,987	\$1,500,303

must be recovered through increased fees for the remaining seven aircraft in the fleet. These increased fees are paid by the user agencies who, in effect, subsidize the use of the five aircraft described above.

- Other aircraft in the SAPB's fleet operate at more cost-efficient levels. During FY 1999, the four King Air 200s and the four Cessna 425s in SAPB's fleet generated 93 percent, or \$1,181,245, of total passenger revenues.³ These aircraft made up the revenue losses from the other five aircraft. Although significant, this information is not reported or considered in the current strategic plan as a part of the capital replacement schedule.
- Because of state agencies' varying needs, each individual aircraft may not operate at full cost recovery. For example, the special purpose aircraft used for aerial photography and map making may not be in constant use but are needed for legitimate business purposes. However, SAPB has not analyzed the use of these aircraft and evaluated alternatives such as privatization or reducing the number of these aircraft.

Problem: SAPB does not estimate future demand for aircraft services and does not provide the Legislature with a long-range plan for its aircraft fleet.

- SAPB does not maintain information sufficient to determine the number or type of aircraft it needs to meet future needs of the State. The agency does not maintain precise information on the causes of flight request cancellations, such as agencies canceling or choosing not to use SAPB services because the faster or larger aircraft are not available. Also, SAPB does not survey user agencies as to their future needs for services. Without information about the demand for its services, the agency cannot accurately determine its needs.
- For example, SAPB indicates that at times agencies opt not to schedule or to cancel flight requests when the only aircraft available are the Cessna 402 models. These aircraft fly at lower altitudes, fly slower, and accommodate fewer passengers than the King Air 200 or the Cessna 425. The popularity of these two aircraft is shown in the number of hours flown. During the past five years, the King Air 200s and the Cessna 425s have averaged more than 270 hours flown per year, while the King Air 90 and the Cessna 402s have averaged less than 150 hours flight time per year. However, the agency does not provide the Legislature this information as part of a long-range capital program.

- The SAPB has not provided the Legislature with a complete picture of its need for replacement aircraft. As its fleet of aircraft ages and the need for replacement aircraft increases, the agency has not developed a system of long-range planning for determining which aircraft to replace or when to replace them.
- The Legislature approved SAPB expending \$1.4 million in FY 2000 for replacement aircraft. However, the replacement item was not listed in the agency's strategic plan or in its Legislative Appropriation Request prior to the 76th legislative session.

The agency's current strategic plan does recognize the future need for replacement aircraft. However, the schedule for replacement is not based on a long-range plan. A plan, based on future needs, would provide the agency and the Legislature a better, more informed means to allocate current resources and plan the need for future appropriations.

1.1 Require the SAPB to conduct long-range planning for its aircraft usage and needs.

Recommendation

Change in Statute

This recommendation would require the SAPB to develop long-range planning for its fleet of aircraft. The plan should be presented biennially to the Legislature and the LBB, as a part of the agency's strategic plan; and in the agency's Legislative Appropriations Request when appropriate. The plan should project estimates of future aircraft replacement and fleet management including reduction or expansion if warranted. In developing this plan, the SAPB should consider, at a minimum, the usage for each aircraft in its fleet, the cost of operations compared to revenue of each aircraft, and the demand for each aircraft or type of aircraft.

Impact

The recommended change would help ensure that the Legislature will be better able to make informed decisions about the State's aircraft needs. By developing a long-range plan, the agency can identify inefficient aircraft and have a planned approach to work with the Legislature on the size and composition of the State's aircraft fleet.

Fiscal Implication

This recommendation will not have a fiscal impact to the State. The agency is currently compiling

most of the information in some form, using current resources. This recommendation would require the agency to organize the information into a single report, provide analysis of the results, and develop a fleet management approach based on the information.

¹ Information supplied by agency in its "Summary of Maintenance Cost by Aircraft" report. Value is based on 1999 Bluebook estimated retail cost.

² The cost of operations can exceed revenues for several reasons. First, major engine repairs or replacements are charged against the current years operations, however, the funds to pay the cost are derived from the engine reserve fund that is created from previous years' deposits. Second, SAPB includes employee benefits in its costs of operations, but does not receive a direct appropriation for these benefits.

³ SAPB's Aircraft Cost Analysis Fiscal Year 1999 report.

Issue 2

The State Aircraft Pooling Board is not Providing State Agencies with Current and Easily Accessible Air Travel Information.

Summary

Key Recommendations

- Require the State Aircraft Pooling Board to maintain an electronic Web site that provides current travel-related information.
- The State Aircraft Pooling Board should provide ride share information through an electronic medium.

Key Findings

- Outdated airfare information on the SAPB Web site inhibits accurate travel cost comparisons.
- SAPB does not provide agencies with a convenient method of coordinating shared flights.
- SAPB could more effectively coordinate Web resources related to air travel.

Conclusion

The SAPB is not presently providing timely and useful information for its customer agencies. Certain information is outdated and other potentially useful information, such as flight ride sharing information, is not available. Regular updating of its Web site and providing ride share information will assist its customers to make best use of the SAPB travel program.

Support

Current Situation: SAPB provides information to assist agencies in determining the cost effectiveness of using its services.

- Depending on the purpose, destination, and time of travel, SAPB may provide transportation at a savings over commercial air travel or travel by private automobile. SAPB provides transportation services to destinations not served by commercial air services and provides service much faster than private automobile. Also, the agency flies on the schedule determined by the customer, which can save on time and expenses such as overnight stays. State officials or agencies must determine whether their needs are best served by SAPB or some other form of transportation.
- To assist customers in deciding whether to use its services, SAPB maintains a Web site that agencies can use to determine whether using an SAPB flight is more cost effective than using commercial air transportation or traveling by automobile. The Web site has information such as a list of all available SAPB aircraft with seating capacity, hourly rates, and the cost for flying to various statewide locations. Also, the site provides the State contracted airfares to destinations served through the State Contract and provides a passenger break-even chart for agencies to use as an aid for determining whether to choose SAPB services.
- The General Services Commission (GSC) establishes state contracts with airlines to provide state employees, traveling on official state business, with discounted air travel to selected destinations. GSC also has a Web site that provides a listing of the available destinations and commercial rates available to agencies, as well as other travel-related information.

SAPB's Web site provides information on aircraft seating capacity, hourly rates, and cost of flying.

Problem: Outdated airfare information on the SAPB Web site inhibits accurate travel cost comparisons.

- Without the most current information, agencies cannot accurately determine whether SAPB services are the most cost-effective option. In June 1999, SAPB posted Web page information for agencies to use to compare travel costs that was at least two years out of date. For example, the Web site listed the 1997 GSC State Travel Management Program (STMP) contract prices and commercial flights availability. The FY 2000 contract differed significantly from the 1997 contract in several areas (see table *Discrepancies in Web Page Information* for examples of some of the differences). The agency has recently updated the information.

Discrepancies in Web Page Information		
Destination	Listed Information	Correct 2000
Dallas Love Field	Cost \$141	\$55
Houston Hobby	Cost \$161	\$56
San Angelo	Cost \$249	STMP flight unavailable
Harlingen	Cost \$161	\$90
Laredo	1,306	STMP flight unavailable

- Depending on the size of the group traveling and the final destination, travel may be more cost effective for an agency to fly on a commercial airline under the STMP rates. However, the SAPB Web site does not provide agencies with the necessary information to make the most informed decision.

Problem: SAPB does not provide agencies with a convenient method of coordinating shared flights.

- SAPB does not have an active ride share information system. A survey conducted by Sunset staff of several agencies that frequently use SAPB services found that these agencies would often be willing to offer vacant seats to interested agencies. The agencies listed reduced travel costs as the main reason for offering seats. Less frequent users of SAPB responded that they would participate in a ride share program if offered because of reduced travel costs. The agencies surveyed indicated that a ride share system that was available in an electronic form, such as through email or on the Web, would be most useful.

State agencies are often willing to offer vacant seats to other agencies.

Opportunity: SAPB could more effectively coordinate Web resources.

- The SAPB and GSC travel management program Web sites are not linked. Agencies doing travel cost comparisons indicated that links between the sites would be useful. Such links would provide easy access to travel information such as state contracted airfare costs or even state contracted vehicle rental prices.

Recommendation

Change in Statute

2.1 Require the State Aircraft Pooling Board to maintain an electronic Web site that provides current travel-related information.

This recommendation ensures that SAPB maximizes accessibility to current travel-related information.

Management Action

2.2 The State Aircraft Pooling Board should provide ride share information through an electronic medium.

The agency would provide ride share information through its Web site or similar electronic service to interested agencies. This recommendation would not require agencies to offer available seats; instead, agencies will be offered that option when reserving services through SAPB. SAPB could then publicize the flight so other agencies will be aware of the availability of seats.

2.3 The State Aircraft Pooling Board and the General Services Commission should link their travel Web sites.

Linking GSC's travel management site and the SAPB site would provide SAPB additional exposure and assist agencies in their ability to make cost-effective travel decisions.

Impact

Although the SAPB is currently providing travel-related information on its Web site to assist agencies in determining whether to use its services, the information is only useful if it is current and accurate. These recommendations will help ensure that SAPB provides appropriate, timely, and easily accessible information.

Fiscal Implication

These recommendations will have no significant fiscal impact to the State. While the recommendations to ensure timely cost comparison data and to provide ride share information should save state funds, the amounts cannot be estimated.

Issue 3

The State Has a Continuing Need for the Services Provided by the State Aircraft Pooling Board.

Summary

Key Recommendation

- Continue the State Aircraft Pooling Board for 12 years.

Key Findings

- The State Aircraft Pooling Board provides necessary and cost-effective travel services to state officials and employees.
- SAPB provides a flexible schedule of air transportation service to remote locations of the state.
- SAPB provides more cost-effective air transportation services than the private sector.

Conclusion

State officials and employees have a continuing need for cost-effective air transportation throughout the state. The State Aircraft Pooling Board provides such a service. Commercial air transportation is only available in 17 Texas cities, while many agencies must provide services to citizens throughout Texas' 254 counties. In fact, SAPB provided flights to 382 airports in Texas in fiscal year 1999. While charter companies offer similar services, comparative information shows that SAPB provides flight services less expensively and with a more flexible schedule.

The Sunset review evaluated the continuing need for a single independent agency to maintain a pool of aircraft for providing cost-effective air transportation for state officials and employees. The review assessed whether the agency's functions could be better provided if transferred to another agency or provided through some other source.

Support

Only 17 Texas cities have commercial air transportation services available.

Current Situation: The State Aircraft Pooling Board provides necessary and cost-effective travel services to state officials and employees.

- In area, the State of Texas is the second largest state in the union. State officials, agencies, and the university and junior college systems have legitimate needs to conduct business in most cities and regions of the State. However, only 17 Texas cities have commercial air transportation services available. Agencies like the Office of Attorney General and Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (PRS) must access all areas of the state. For example, Office of Attorney General staff may need to appear in court in any of Texas' 254 counties, and PRS must manage child abuse staff in 421 field and regional offices across Texas. Many other agencies have similar responsibilities. However, cities such as Alpine, Nacogdoches, Longview, and San Angelo are in areas that do not have commercial air transportation facilities, and are several hours driving distance from Austin.
- The State of Texas has one of the fastest growing populations in the country. As it increases, state agencies and universities must increase their services to provide for this expanding population. To help pay for this increased demand for services, the Legislature has directed state agencies to economize on their administrative expenditures. One particular area the Legislature identified during the past two legislative sessions is agency travel. The Legislature has capped agencies' travel budgets requiring the agencies to maximize their expenditures by choosing travel options that meet the demands of the agency while making the most of a limited travel budget.

During FY 1999, SAPB provided air transportation services for more than 50 state agencies.

Need for Agency Function: The SAPB provides a flexible schedule of air transportation service to remote locations of the state.

- During fiscal year 1999, SAPB provided air transportation services for more than 50 state agencies. SAPB planes flew into 382 different airports in Texas. By contrast, the State Travel Management Program (STMP) contract serves only 17 cities through its commercial contracts. To reach destinations not served by commercial contracts, employees must fly into the nearest destination, often including connecting flights, rent a car, and drive to their destination. Using SAPB services allow the user to fly directly into the closest destination. In a survey of SAPB user agencies and universities, convenience, service to remote locations and cost savings were listed as key benefits from using SAPB services.¹

- Using SAPB services allows for complete work days and a reduction in overnight stays, at a savings to the user agency. Groups of employees can fly into a distant location, complete their work in a single day, and avoid the expense of overnight stays.
- SAPB flights allow agencies to maintain flexible schedules. Flights with SAPB may be arranged for any day of the week, 24 hours a day with as little as 20-30 minutes notice when necessary, if an aircraft is available. Private charter companies often require several days advance notice to provide service without added cost. SAPB reports that about 15 to 20 percent of its flights are “pop-up flights,” those flights with less than 48 hours notice.
- SAPB provides access to more airports in the state during certain weather conditions than commercial charter services. Under FAA rules, during certain inclement weather conditions, private companies cannot make instrument landings at an airport unless that airport has a weather reporting station. On the other hand, SAPB pilots are able to perform instrument landings at any airport that has a published instrument approach. Of the 519 airports in Texas, only 79 have an approved weather reporting station. That means that 440 airports are not available to private charter flights during inclement weather, but are available to SAPB flights.

Flights with SAPB can be arranged for any day of the week, 24 hours a day.

Need for Agency Structure: SAPB provides more cost-effective air transportation services than the private sector.

- As part of its performance measures, SAPB must report on its cost for services versus the private sector. In its most recent report to the Legislative Budget Board, the agency demonstrated that it provides services in a more cost-effective manner than private charter services. The most recent SAPB report shows that agency fees for air transportation services are 60-65 percent of the cost for private charter service. Independent Sunset staff research verified this cost comparison, with SAPB’s rate at \$650 and private charter rates ranging from \$785 per hour to \$1300 per hour for services comparable to the King Air 200. (See chart *FY 1999 Charter Rate Comparisons - State Aircraft Pooling Board vs. Private Sector* for a list of providers and cost.) Comparisons for other types of aircraft show similar results. Additionally, a private company’s rates are usually based on the aircraft only, and do not include other fees such as pilots’ fees, extra charges for short flights or fees for

Charter Rate Comparisons (FY 1999) State Aircraft Pooling Board vs. Private Sector		
Hourly Rates	King Air 200	Cessna 425
Aircraft Pooling Board - Austin	\$600	\$470
Kansas City Aviation Center	843	726
Capitol Wings - Austin	1,048	-----
Jet Aviation - Dallas	785	-----
Alliance Executive Charter - AR	1,306	-----
Average - Private Corp	995.50	726

pilots' lay-over time. SAPB's fees are inclusive, except for extra pilots or overnight expenses.

- SAPB provides ground services for their aircraft and aircraft under the control of other state agencies. Ground services include aircraft maintenance, repair, fuel, oil, and hangar space. Providing such services on-site ensures that maintenance is cost effective, performed rapidly, and allows for spontaneous repairs. SAPB also provides maintenance services more cost effectively than private sector suppliers. Staff analysis shows that SAPB avionics is 68 percent of the cost of average private sector shops (see chart *FY 1999 Maintenance Cost Comparison* for side by side comparison of SAPB and private sector cost), and SAPB mechanics' costs are 65 percent of fees charged by private sector shops. SAPB's fuel rate is 75 percent of the rate charged by the private sector.²

SAPB's costs are 20 percent less than those of the private sector.

FY 1999 Maintenance Cost Comparison				
	SAPB Actual Cost	Cost Private Sector	Savings	SAPB as % Private Sector
Labor				
Mechanics	\$305,995.00	\$469,058.13	\$163,063.13	65.2%
Avionics	26,345.00	38,769.06	12,424.06	67.9%
Fuel	349,605.76	466,367.98	116,762.22	75.9%
Parts	580,223.31	666,924.50	86,702.19	87.0%
In/Out Repairs	421,072.78	450,125.84	29,053.06	93.5%
TOTAL	\$1,683,240.85	\$2,091,245.51	\$408,004.66	80.5%

Need for Agency Structure: Transfer of SAPB functions to another agency shows no significant advantages.

- While other agencies could perform the functions of SAPB, no financial or service advantages were identified to justify transfer of these functions to another state agency. For example, the General Services Commission enters into contracts for state employees to receive commercial air, car rental and hotel services at set rates, but does not directly provide travel services. The Texas Department of Transportation builds highways and provides funding for public transit and non-commercial airports, but does not directly provide travel services (with the exception of two car ferry operations on the Texas coast).

Recommendation

Change in Statute

3.1 Continue the State Aircraft Pooling Board for 12 Years.

Impact

This recommendation would continue the State Aircraft Pooling Board as an independent agency responsible for operating a pool of state-owned aircraft, and providing air transportation services to Texas officials and employees traveling on official state business. The agency would also be required to continue maintaining all aircraft owned by the State.

Fiscal Implication

If the Legislature continues the functions of the State Aircraft Pooling Board as set out in this report, an annual appropriation of approximately \$3.4 million would continue to be required for the operation of the agency.

¹ Sunset staff conducted a mail-out survey of agencies that have used the SAPB's services over the past two years.

² Numbers were supplied by State Aircraft Pooling Board through research conducted in August 1999. Independent research by Sunset staff during the review verified the cost and percentages.

ACROSS-THE-BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

State Aircraft Pooling Board	
Recommendations	Across-the-Board Provisions
	A. GENERAL
Already in Statute	1. Require at least one-third public membership on state agency policymaking bodies.
Already in Statute	2. Require specific provisions relating to conflicts of interest.
Already in Statute	3. Require that appointment to the policymaking body be made without regard to the appointee's race, color, disability, sex, religion, age, or national origin.
Do Not Apply	4. Provide for the Governor to designate the presiding officer of a state agency's policymaking body.
Already in Statute	5. Specify grounds for removal of a member of the policymaking body.
Already in Statute	6. Require that information on standards of conduct be provided to members of policymaking bodies and agency employees.
Already in Statute	7. Require training for members of policymaking bodies.
Already in Statute	8. Require the agency's policymaking body to develop and implement policies that clearly separate the functions of the policymaking body and the agency staff.
Already in Statute	9. Provide for public testimony at meetings of the policymaking body.
Apply	10. Require information to be maintained on complaints.
Already in Statute	11. Require development of an equal employment opportunity policy.

AGENCY INFORMATION

Agency Information

AGENCY AT A GLANCE

The State Aircraft Pooling Board (SAPB) is responsible for establishing and operating a pool of aircraft owned or leased by the State. SAPB has two primary missions:

- Provide air transportation services to state officials and employees traveling on official state business, and
- Provide ground services (such as maintenance, repairs, fuel, oil and hangar space) for aircraft owned by the State.

In 1999 the SAPB
flew 8,966 passengers
572,539 miles.

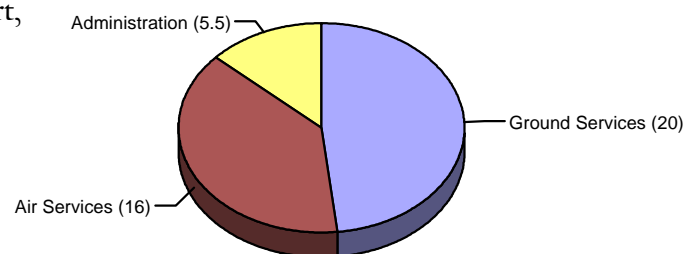
Key Facts

- **Funding.** The SAPB budget for FY 2000 is slightly more than \$2.7 million. Estimated revenues are about equally split between appropriated receipts (\$1.4 million) and interagency contracts (\$1.3 million). SAPB generates sufficient revenues through its appropriated receipts and interagency contracts to cover cost of operations.
- **Staffing.** SAPB is authorized to employ 41.5 FTEs, all at its Austin headquarters. See chart, *State Aircraft Pooling Board Employees by Program*.
- **Other Key Facts**

For FY 1999 SAPB flew:

- 11 passenger aircraft;
- 2,767 flights;
- 8,966 passengers;
- an average speed, for all flights, of 227 miles per hour; and
- 572,539 miles.

State Aircraft Pooling Board
Employees by Program



Total Full-Time Employees by Program: 41.5

MAJOR EVENTS IN AGENCY HISTORY

- 1979 The 66th Legislature created the State Aircraft Pooling Board and charged the agency with operating a pool for the custody, control, operation and maintenance of aircraft owned or leased by the state. Most of the state-owned aircraft were transferred to control of the SAPB at that time.
- 1983 In 1983, the Legislature gave SAPB authority to acquire additional space and construct additional aircraft storage, a maintenance facility, a passenger lounge area, and office space.
- 1985 The Legislature instructed SAPB to ensure the rates set for interagency aircraft services were sufficient to recover the direct costs of the services provided.
- 1989 The 71st Legislature required SAPB to develop standardized forms and procedures with regard to aircraft travel logs, utilization reports, and billing for passenger travel; and required all persons operating state planes to be pilots approved or exempted by the SAPB. These changes essentially completed the transfer of all state aircraft to the authority of SAPB.
- 1991 The original SAPB legislation exempted Texas A&M University from its oversight. However, in 1991, the Legislature adopted a Sunset recommendation to include the University in the state pool.
- 1995 The Legislature appropriated \$300,000 to the General Services Commission for project analysis, planning and design of a new facility for the relocation of the Aircraft Pooling Board to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport.
- 1997 The Legislature authorized the issuance of approximately \$7 million in bond proceeds for the relocation of the Aircraft Pooling Board to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport. An estimated amount of \$5 million in property sale proceeds was also appropriated for the same purpose.
- 1999 SAPB moved to its facilities at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport.

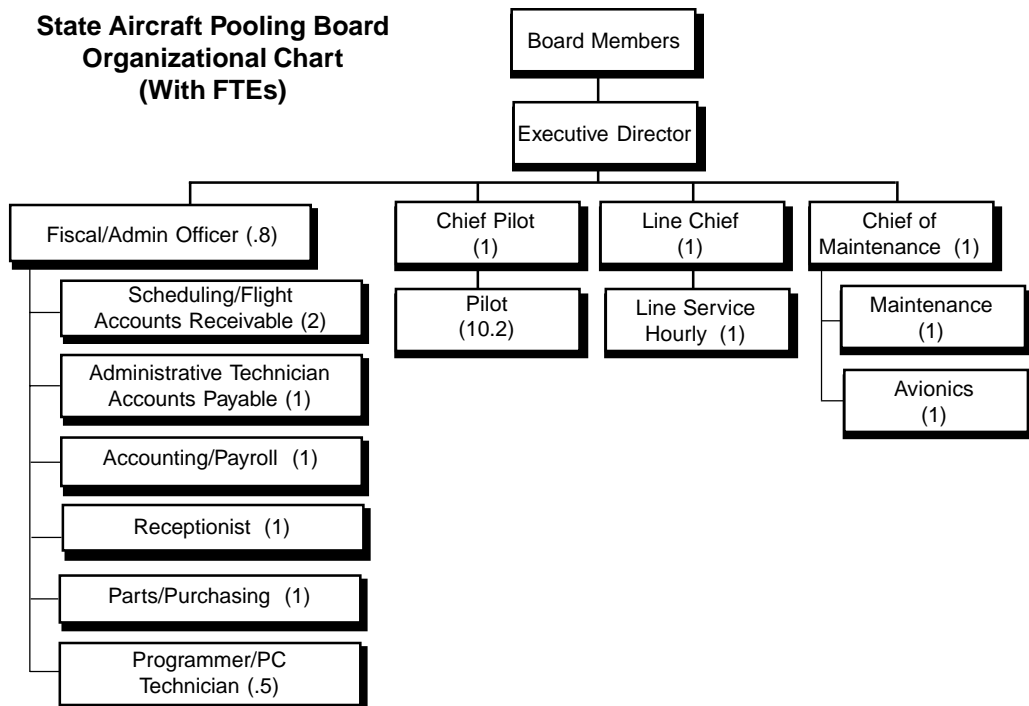
ORGANIZATION

Policy Body

The SAPB is composed of three appointed and two ex officio members. The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Speaker of the House each appoint a member to serve staggered six-year terms. Representatives from the State Auditor’s Office and the General Services Commission serve ex officio as non-voting advisory members. The primary responsibilities of the board include establishing policy, selecting an Executive Director, approving the agency budget, and overseeing the agency’s administration. The voting members of the Board biennially elect a voting member as presiding officer. The Board generally meets two to four times a year.

Board Members		
Board Member	Appointment	Residence
Bill Clayton, Chair	Appointed by Speaker	Springlake
Roy Q. Minton	Appointed by Lt. Governor	Austin
Scott E. Rozzell	Appointed by Governor	Houston

SAPB’s Executive Director oversees the operations of the agency as shown in *State Aircraft Pooling Board Organizational Chart*. The agency reported employing 35.0 FTEs in FY 1999 and has a budgeted cap of 41.5 FTEs for FY 2000. A comparison of the agency’s workforce composition to the minority civilian labor force is provided in Appendix A.



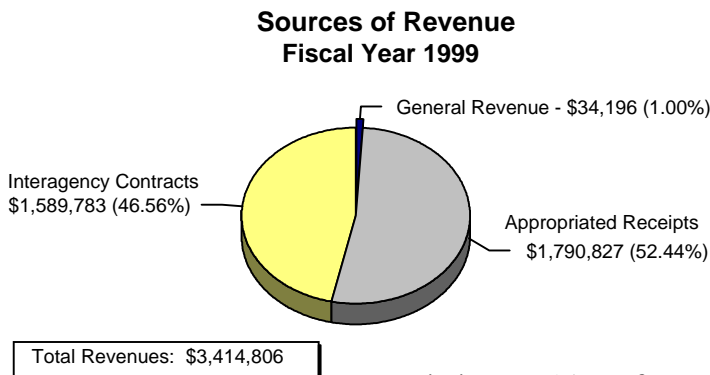
FUNDING

Revenues

SAPB has two main sources of revenue, appropriated receipts and interagency contracts. Appropriated receipts come from the fees charged other agencies for flight services. Flight services include basic aircraft time and any travel cost of an SAPB pilot as well as any additional cost

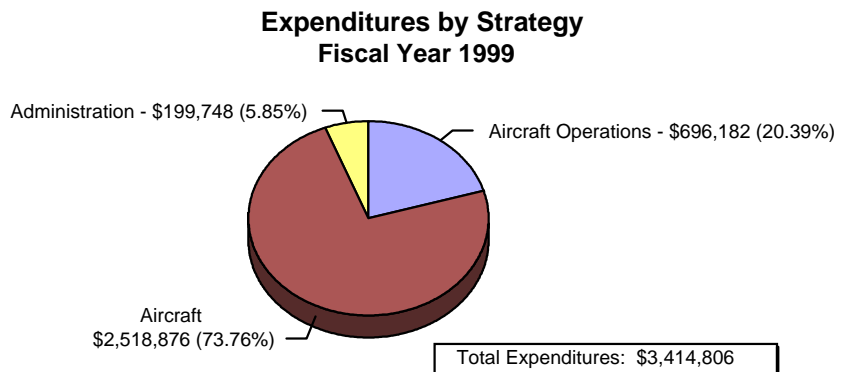
such as furnishing a co-pilot. Interagency contracts include contracts for aircraft maintenance services and aircraft hangar rentals provided to state agencies operating their own aircraft. As shown in the chart, *Sources of Revenue — Fiscal Year 1999*, revenues are about equal for Appropriated Receipts and Interagency Contracts. In 1999, the Legislature made a one-time

appropriation to SAPB from general revenue to pay the expenses of moving aircraft and equipment from the Robert Mueller Airport to Austin-Bergstrom International Airport.



Expenditures

The agency's expenditures are divided among three strategies, Aircraft Operations, Aircraft Maintenance and Ground Services, and Indirect Administration. As shown in the chart, *Expenditures by Strategy — Fiscal Year 1999*, Aircraft Maintenance represents the most significant expenditure for SAPB, accounting for nearly 75 percent of SAPB's expenditures. SAPB's use of Historically Underutilized Business (HUBs) in purchasing goods and services can be seen in Appendix B. The agency fell short in all applicable areas in fiscal year 1999.



AGENCY OPERATIONS

SAPB has three areas of operations: aircraft operations, aircraft maintenance, and administration. Through these programs, the agency provides its key services, providing safe, efficient air transportation and maintaining state-owned aircraft.

Aircraft Operations

One of the major functions of the SAPB is providing cost effective air transportation to state officials and employees. In FY 1999, SAPB operated 13 aircraft with 16 FTEs and expended approximately \$700,000. Of the 13 aircraft in its centralized pool, two are special purpose aircraft not used for passenger transport. The remaining 11 aircraft provide the majority of the transportation services. (See *Aircraft Usage* table for facts on Aircraft Operations.)

The State provides flight services to all state officials and employees traveling on official state business. Besides SAPB services, agencies have other air transportation services available. The State contracts with commercial servers for air service to selected locations in the state. Also, private charter services are available to and from certain locations throughout the state.

A participating agency must determine if SAPB is the most economical and efficient form of transportation for the agency. SAPB's Web page (www.sapb.state.tx.us) provides a cost comparison of commercial and SAPB flights for assisting agencies in deciding whether SAPB services are cost effective (see *Example of Passenger Break-Even Chart* for explanation of how cost effectiveness may be determined). SAPB relies on each agency to ensure that each trip is cost effective and the purpose of the travel is official state business.

Aircraft Usage	
SAPB Aircraft	FY 1999
Number of Flights	2,767
Number of Passenger Flights	2,558
Revenue Hours	2,651.5
Non-Revenue Hours	148.3
Taxi Time	276.7
Total Revenue	\$1,289,656
Miles Flown	572,539
Number of Passengers Flown	8,966
Average Passenger Load	3.51
Average Cost per Mile	\$2.25
Average Cost per Passenger Mile	\$0.64
Average Speed	227
Average Passenger Seats	5.82
Percent Average Passenger Seats Filled	60%

Example of Passenger Break-Even Chart

NS = Non-Stop flight
CF = Connecting flight to final destination

Commercial Rate + Parking fees + Two hours saved at an average of \$40 per hour.
(\$326.00 + \$7.00 + \$80.00 = \$413.00)

Number of passengers needed to break-even (\$1,137.00 / \$413.00 = 2.75 rounded to 3)

Destination	Flight	Commercial			King Air 200		
		Miles	Rate	Cost	Time	Cost	PAX
Abilene	NS	187	\$326.00	\$413.00	(1.75)	\$1,137.50	3
Alpine	NA	357	NA	NA	(3.03)	\$1,969.50	
Amarillo	CF	412	\$214.00	\$301.00	(3.46)	\$2,249.00	8

One way mileage flying directly from Austin to Amarillo. Highway miles = 478 miles.

Round trip flight time 3.46 hours = 3 hours and 28 minutes

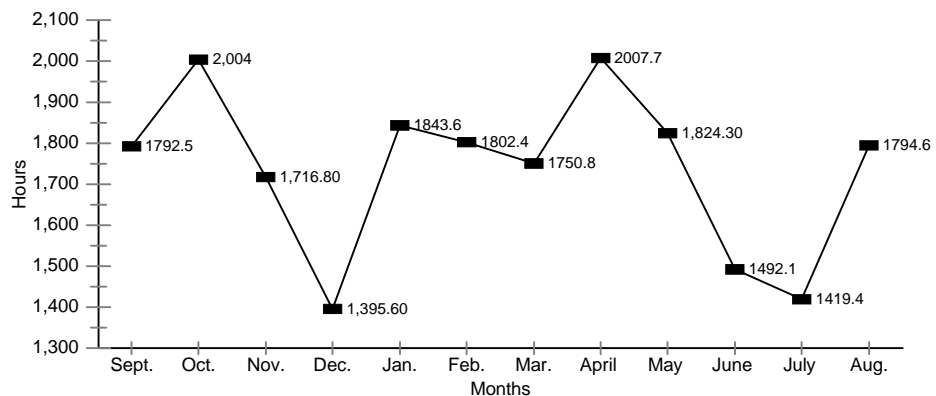
Total round trip flight cost regardless of the number of passengers on board.
3.03 hours x \$650.00 = \$1,969.50

Based on the State of Texas contract airline fares for FY 2000. (Does not include any local, state, or federal taxes or fees.)

Total round trip flight cost regardless of the number of passengers on board.
3.03 hours x \$650.00 = \$1,969.50

Flight services personnel attempt to schedule flights to meet the needs of each user agency while maximizing the use of each of the State's aircraft. (See chart *Summary of Hours Flown by Month — Fiscal Year 1992 - Fiscal Year 1999* for information on aircraft usage by month.) SAPB can provide flights 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In emergency situations, air transportation is available with as little as 30 minutes notice. SAPB forwards requests for flights that it cannot handle to other agencies owning passenger aircraft for possible accommodation. Besides the 11 SAPB aircraft, state agencies and universities operate an additional five aircraft available for passenger transportation.

**Summary of Hours Flown by Month
Fiscal Year 1992 - Fiscal Year 1999**



Operations staff also schedule flights, provide cost estimates for flights, coordinate ride shares between agencies, and maintain the data used for statistical and billing purposes.

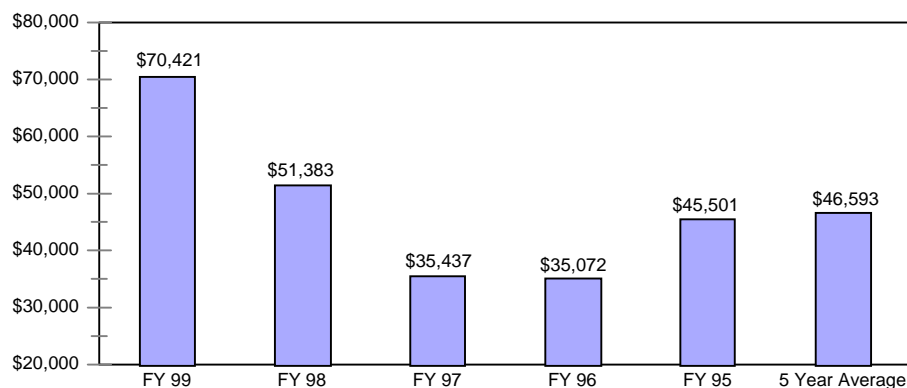
The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) licenses all pilots employed by SAPB for the type of aircraft flown, including commercial, multi-engines, and instrument ratings. Pilots receive flight safety training on a scheduled, recurring basis. Currently, SAPB employs 11 full-time pilots. Besides these full-time pilots, the agency contracts with outside pilots as necessary to provide pilots or co-pilots for flights. Contract pilots must meet the same licensing standards as those set for full-time employees.

Maintenance

The maintenance program provides all the services necessary to maintain the State's aircraft in good working order (See chart *Average Yearly Aircraft Maintenance Cost* for a yearly average; table, *Summary of Maintenance Cost by Aircraft*, for a list of all SAPB aircraft and maintenance expenses over the last five-year period). In fiscal year 1999, Maintenance employed 16 staff and had expenditures of about \$2.5 million. Activities performed include scheduled maintenance and repairs, avionics and line services. Maintenance schedules are set by the FAA and manufacturer recommendations. SAPB does the majority of the inspections and repairs in house. However, SAPB does outsource repairs depending on technical difficulties or lack of staff. Licensed FAA mechanics perform all maintenance and repairs according to manufacturer's specifications and service bulletins, and FAA mandated directives. SAPB maintains an inventory of the most commonly used parts and supplies and purchases major parts on an as-needed basis. At any given time, the value of the inventory on hand is in excess of \$400,000.

In 1999, SAPB
expended \$2.5 million
for aircraft
maintenance.

**Average Yearly Aircraft
Maintenance Cost**



Summary of Maintenance Costs by Aircraft							
Description	Years Old	FY 00 (6 months)	FY 99	FY 98	FY 97	FY 96	FY95
1981 King Air 200	19	\$55,903 ¹	\$55,383	\$33,045	\$87,504	\$36,402	\$38,544
1978 King Air 200	22	\$61,248	\$32,580	\$50,478	\$25,843	\$44,400	\$173,241
1982 King Air B200	18	\$6,753	\$23,323	\$96,166	\$31,194	\$28,791	\$29,631
1982 King Air B200	18	\$24,440	\$42,050	\$52,311	\$42,134	\$27,415	\$60,475
1975 King Air E90	25	\$21,284	\$130,583 ²	\$9,374	\$12,536	\$40,535	\$9,708
1983 Cessna 425	17	\$31,320	\$52,718	\$61,721	\$18,049	\$58,482	\$23,350
1983 Cessna 425	17	\$20,529	\$52,114	\$43,175	\$55,914	\$31,635	\$34,100
1983 Cessna 425	17	\$10,237	\$39,900	\$64,829	\$33,225	\$34,564	\$10,523
1983 Cessna 425	17	\$14,657	\$225,967 ³	\$51,681	\$21,628	\$13,777	\$46,147
1980 Cessna 402C	20	\$9,488	\$23,372	\$78,791	\$15,077	\$48,697	\$20,755
1981 Cessna 402C	19	\$14,151	\$96,641 ⁴	\$23,642	\$46,698	\$21,098	\$54,032
Average	19	\$24,546	\$70,421	\$51,383	\$35,437	\$35,072	\$45,501

¹ Props overhauled \$15,000

² Compressor Failure R/H Engine \$110,000

³ Overhaul both engines \$185,000

⁴ Both engines replaced \$65,000

SAPB also employs an avionics specialist and has the equipment necessary to maintain the aircrafts' electronics systems such as communications, navigation, transponder, radar and auto-pilot. As with other maintenance items, SAPB outsources some repairs if staff is not available, or if the aircraft is away from the Austin headquarters when repairs are needed.

Finally, this program is responsible for the line service aspects of aircraft operations. Line service personnel are responsible for towing, fueling, and cleaning the aircraft. They also maintain the hangars, vehicles, and equipment and assist passengers with luggage and boarding. The line service employees are available for flights whenever needed.

Administration

This program area provides support to the other programs operated by the agency. Support consists of executive administration, planning and budgeting, accounting, personnel, payroll, data processing, and records management. Administrative staff also maintains reports on aircraft use and operating costs, and maintains files of all aircraft logs. Additionally, the program processes and monitors the leasing and rental of aircraft to other state agencies, develops rate schedules for agency services, and purchases liability insurance for all state-owned aircraft (see Appendix C, *State Operated Aircraft*, for listing and description of all State owned aircraft).

APPENDICES

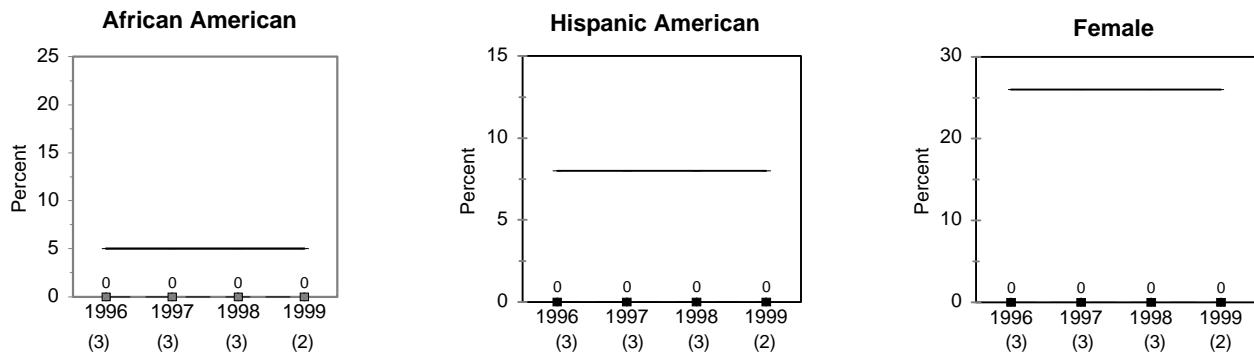
Appendix A

Equal Employment Opportunity Statistics

1996 to 1999

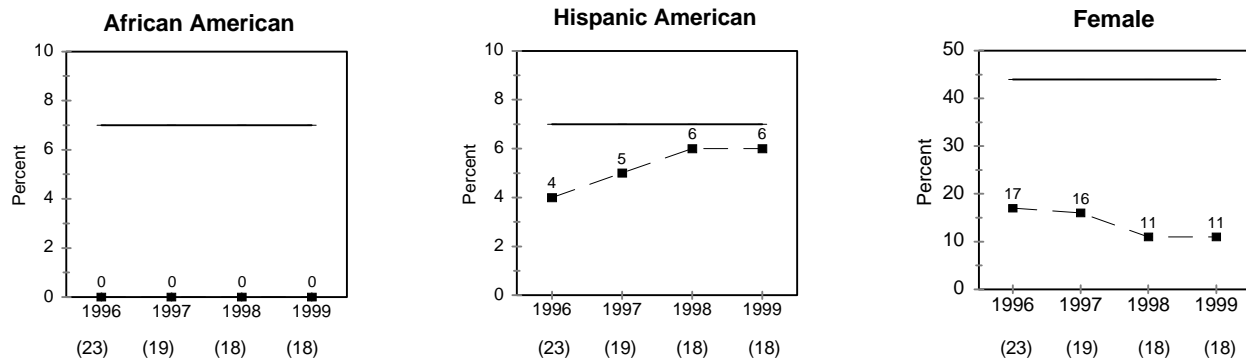
The following material shows trend information for the agency's employment of minorities and females in accordance with the requirements of the Sunset Act.¹ The agency maintains and reports this information under guidelines established by the Texas Commission on Human Rights.² In the charts, the flat lines represent the percentages of the statewide civilian labor force that African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and females comprise in each job category. These percentages provide a yardstick for measuring agencies' performance in employing persons in each of these groups. The dashed lines represent the agency's actual employment percentages in each job category from 1996 to 1999. Finally, the number in parentheses under each year shows the total number of positions in that year for each job category.

State Agency Administration



The agency falls below the civilian labor force percentages for each category.

Professional



The agency falls below the civilian labor force percentages for each category.

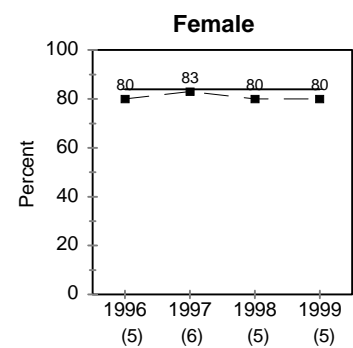
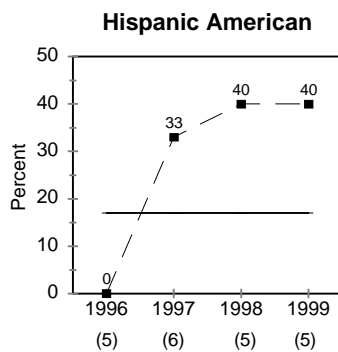
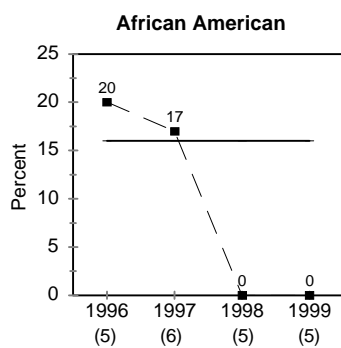
Technical

The agency does not provide job opportunities in the Technical category.

Paraprofessional

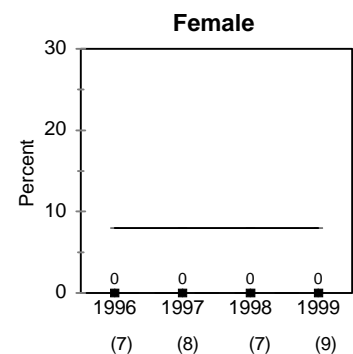
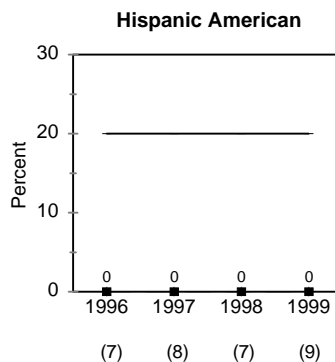
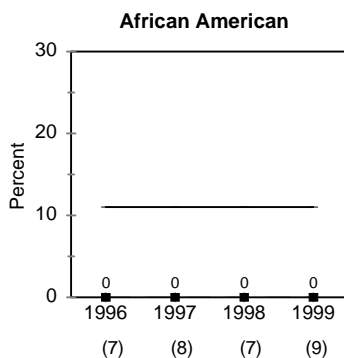
The agency does not provide job opportunities in the Paraprofessional category.

Administrative Support



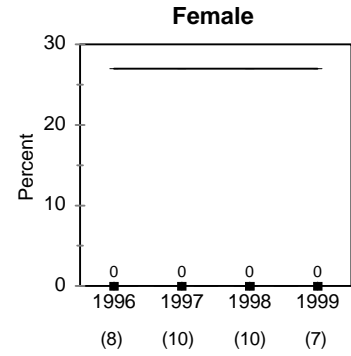
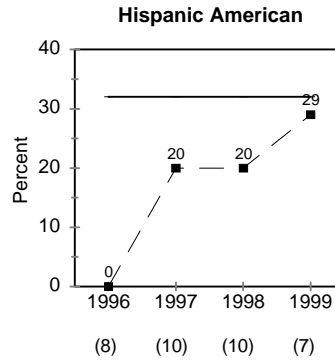
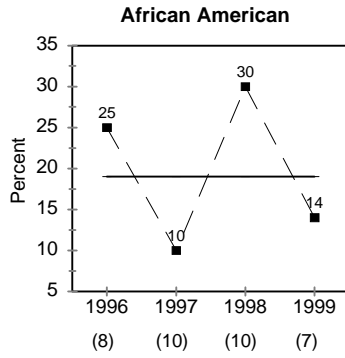
In this category, the agency has reached the civilian labor force percentages for females, exceeds the percentages for Hispanics, and in the last two years, has fallen below the percentages for African Americans.

Skilled Craft



The agency falls below the civilian labor force percentages for each category.

Service Maintenance



In this category, the agency falls below the civilian labor workforce percentages for Hispanic American's and females and has both exceeded and fallen below the percentage for African Americans.

¹ Tex. Gov't. Code ch. 325, sec. 325.011(9)(A) (Vernon 1999).

² Tex. Labor Code ch. 21, sec. 21.501 (formally required by rider in the General Appropriations Act).

Appendix B

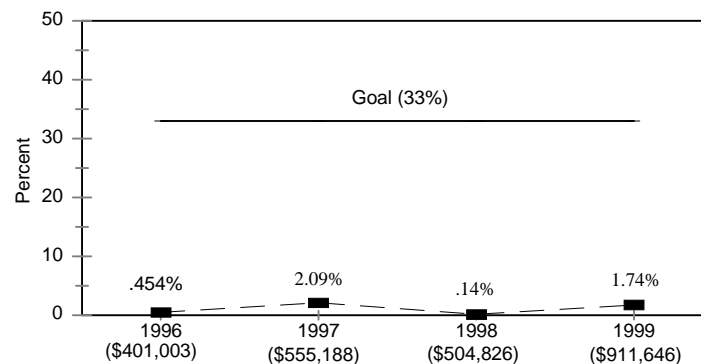
Historically Underutilized Businesses Statistics 1996 to 1999

The Legislature has encouraged state agencies to use Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) to promote full and equal opportunities for all businesses in state procurement. In accordance with the requirements of the Sunset Act,¹ the following material shows trend information for the agency's use of HUBs in purchasing goods and services. The agency maintains and reports this information under guidelines in the General Services Commission's enabling statute.² In the charts, the flat lines represent the goal for each purchasing category, as established by the General Services Commission. The dashed lines represent the agency actual spending percentages in each purchasing category from 1996 to 1999. Finally, the number in parentheses under each year shows the total amount the agency spent in each purchasing category.

Special Trade

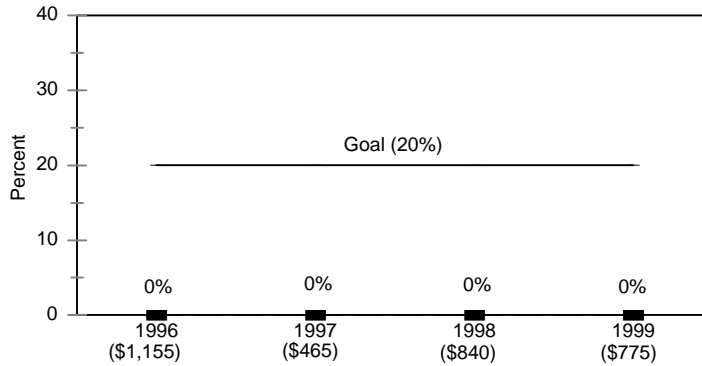
State Aircraft Pooling Board had no expenditures in the Special Trade category.

Other Services



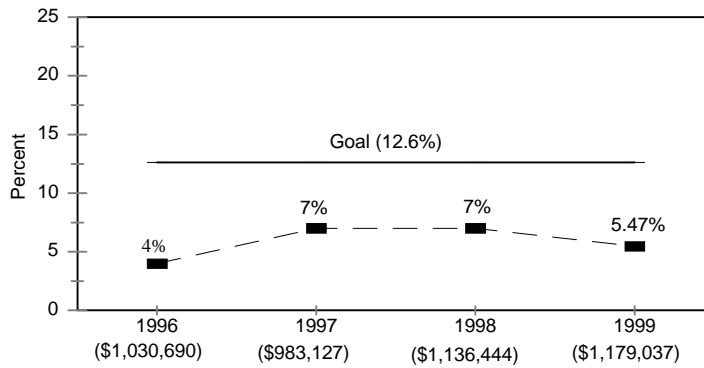
State Aircraft Pooling Board has fallen below the statewide HUB goal for each year shown.

Professional Services



State Aircraft Pooling Board has fallen below the statewide HUB goal for each year shown.

Commodities



State Aircraft Pooling Board has fallen below the statewide HUB goal for each year shown.

¹ Tex. Gov't. Code ch. 325, sec. 325.011(9)(B) (Vernon 1999).

² Tex. Gov't. Code ch. 2161, (Vernon 1999). Some provisions were formerly required by rider in the General Appropriations Act.

Appendix C

State Operated Aircraft				
Agency	Year	Scheduling Capacity	Type/Model	Location
Aircraft Pooling Board	1982	9-11	King Air B200	Austin
	1982	9	King Air B200	Austin
	1981	9-11	King Air 200	Austin
	1976	9-10	King Air 200	Austin
	1975	6	King Air E90	Austin
	1983	7	Cessna 425	Austin
	1983	6	Cessna 425	Austin
	1983	7	Cessna 425	Austin
	1983	6	Cessna 425	Austin
	1981	6	Cessna 402C	Austin
	1980	6	Cessna 402C	Austin
	1979	4*	Cessna TU206	Austin
	1980	3*	Cessna 182 Q	Austin
Texas A&M University System	1989	8	King Air B200	College Station
	1973	6	King Air A100	College Station
Texas Department of Criminal Justice	1987	8	King Air B200	Huntsville
	1974	4	Piper Navjo	Huntsville
Texas Forest Service	1979	*	Cessna 207	College Station
Parks and Wildlife Department	1975	5*	Cessna TU206	Austin
	1984	5*	Cessna U206G	Victoria
	1984	5*	Partansvia P-68	Austin
	1972	4*	Beli OH-58	Austin
Department of Public Safety	1985	7*	Gulfstream 695A	Austin
	1981	*	Cessna T210N	Houston
	1981	*	Cessna 210N	McAllen
	1980	*	Cessna 210N	Austin
	1980	*	Cessna 210N	Dallas
	1977	*	Cessna 210M	Lubbock
	1998	*	Cessna T206H	San Antonio
	1978	*	Cessna TU206	Austin
	1980	4*	Bell 206Bill	Waco
	1982	4*	Bell 206Bill	Midland
	1986	4*	Bell 206B	Corpus Christi
	1987	5*	ASTAR 350B	Houston
	1987	5*	ASTAR 350B	Dallas
1990	5*	ASTAR 350B	Austin	
University of Texas	1982	8	King Air B200	Austin
Texas State Technical College**	1972	6	Piper PA34-200	Waco
	1979	4	Cessna 172N	Waco
	1981	4	Cessna 172RG	Waco
	1967	4	Cessna R172E	Waco
	1981	4	Cessna 172RG	Waco
	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco
	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco
	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco
	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco

* Special Purpose Aircraft

** All TSTC Aircraft Used for Pilot Training

State Operated Aircraft				
Agency	Year	Scheduling Capacity	Type/Model	Location
Texas State Technical College**	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco
	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco
	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco
	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco
	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco
	1984	2	Cessna 152	Waco

* Special Purpose Aircraft

** All TSTC Aircraft Used for Pilot Training

Appendix D

Staff Review Activities

The Sunset staff engaged in the following activities during the review of the State Aircraft Pooling Board:

- Worked with executive management and staff from the agency's major program areas;
- Attended public meetings of SAPB Governing Board and met with Board members;
- Interviewed staff with State Auditor's Office, Legislative Budget Board, legislative committees, and key legislators' offices;
- Interviewed State officials and employees from 27 state agencies and higher education institutions;
- Solicited written comments from 59 state agencies and higher education institutions regarding their ideas and opinions about the SAPB and its functions;
- Reviewed reports by the State Comptroller, Office of the Attorney General, State Auditor's Office, and Legislative Budget Board;
- Conducted telephone interviews and researched the structure and functions of agencies in other states with similar functions to the SAPB; and
- Reviewed agency documents and reports, state statutes, legislative reports, Attorney General opinions, previous legislation, literature on aircraft maintenance and operations, other states' information, and information available on the Internet.

**STATE AIRCRAFT POOLING
BOARD**

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