

Planning, resources aid equipment-buying process

Purchasing equipment for your airport can be an easy process with the help of your Mn/DOT Aeronautics regional engineer and other resources such as the AirTAP *Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Guide* and Mn/DOT's Web site.

Start your equipment purchasing process by planning ahead. Assess your present and future needs, research equipment types and manufacturers, get several price estimates, justify the need for the equipment, provide background information to your airport sponsor, and verify that the costs are included in your airport's CIP.

During the assessment process, do your homework! Research the types and sizes of the equipment and check that adequate storage facilities are available for the new equipment. Also, consider that much new equipment offers greater performance and can serve several functions—for example, a tractor can be set up to accommodate a loader and snowblower.

State Process

To purchase equipment, it must be listed in your airport's CIP. Contact your Mn/DOT Airport Development Section's regional engineer for questions regarding the CIP.

There are three ways airport personnel may purchase equipment:

- 1. Obtain quotes.** If the equipment is valued at less than \$35,000 for municipalities with a population of less than 2,500 or less than \$50,000 for all other municipalities, the airport sponsor can seek quotes and chose from the quotes received. Two or more quotes are required for equipment.
- 2. Solicit competitive bids.** If the value of the equipment is expected to be over \$35,000 for municipalities with a popu-

lation less than 2,500 or over \$50,000 for all other municipalities, the airport manager or consultant must develop specifications that are approved by Mn/DOT and then solicit bids.

Mn/DOT must be assured that competitive bids were used in determining the appropriate vendor. [The Mn/DOT contact is Steve Burgstahler at 612-725-2341.]

3. Use Mn/DOT's Equipment Section.

The airport sponsor may also purchase equipment through the Mn/DOT equipment contract. Contact Mn/DOT's Equipment Section directly at 612-725-2351 or 612-725-2355 or visit the following Web site for more information about the types of equipment available (new or used), equipment specifications, costs, and other information: www.dot.state.mn.us/equipment/.

With any of the above methods, Mn/DOT's concurrence is required before an actual purchase is made.

Bid specifications are a legal document and are bound by state and federal bidding laws to ensure an ethical and fair public

bidding process. You may find it helpful to have legal counsel review your bid document. Information in your bid specifications can include the following minimum requirements:

- an established dealer for warranty and parts support and factory-trained technicians
- a minimum of \$5 million in manufacturers' product liability insurance
- a mandatory pre-bid conference
- a performance bond for the bid amount
- the specifics of horsepower, torque, casting distance, plowing speeds, etc.

In addition, no bids will be accepted unless the bidder/manufacturer furnishes engineering data specific to the model offered.

Disposal of state-purchased equipment

If a piece of equipment purchased with state funds is going to be traded in, the salvage value (trade-in or sale) of the equipment must be returned to the state at the rate of participation in the original agreement. The salvage value may be used to reduce the amount of the replacement grant. The current state participation rate will be applied to the new agreement. That current rate is 70 percent state, 30 percent local for airports eligible for federal funding, and 80 percent state, 20 percent local for airports ineligible for federal funding.

Federal Process

Federal eligible equipment at general aviation airports is limited to snow removal equipment. The airport manager or consultant must solicit competitive bids and know the amount of the bid at the time the grant is applied for. The grant must be executed before the purchase order is issued. Primary airports may purchase and take delivery of the equip-



Photo courtesy of Mn/DOT

When assessing your needs, make sure adequate storage facilities are available for any new equipment.



Consider purchasing equipment that is multifunctional, such as this maintenance truck with detachable plow.

Types of Airport Equipment

Snow removal equipment (SRE). SRE is essential for keeping airport runways, taxiways, and aprons open during the winter months. The type of equipment used depends on the type of operations conducted at the airport. Larger airports—those serving air carriers—need multiple types of equipment. A smaller general aviation airport needs this

equipment before processing the grant if using entitlement funds.

Disposal of federally funded equipment

If equipment that was bought with federal funds is being replaced, the current fair market value (FMV) must be established. To dispose of replaced or unneeded equipment, follow one of these two methods:

1. Equipment with an FMV of less than \$5,000 may be disposed of at the sponsor's option with no reimbursement to the FAA.
2. Equipment with an FMV of \$5,000 or more may be:
 - retained by the sponsor and used for airport purposes
 - sold for salvage value
 - traded in for replacement
 - transferred to another eligible airport

If the equipment is removed from airport use, sold, or traded in, the value is applied against the grant for the replacement equipment.

equipment, but not to the same degree as a larger facility. New SRE for airports in the federal system is eligible for federal participation. It is the responsibility of the sponsor or its consultant to prepare specifications for this type of equipment and advertise for bids.

Used equipment is also eligible for federal funding if the sponsor can show that the equipment is mechanically sound, is in good working order, and has a useful life of 20 years. The FAA will not issue federal grants for less than \$25,000. State funding is available for this low-cost equipment and for equipment at airports ineligible for federal funding.

Pavement sweepers. The process for purchasing sweepers, if justified, must follow the same requirements as for SRE in order to receive federal or state funding. Except in the case of a large airport serving an air carrier, sweepers are not eligible for federal funds.

Mowers. Plans and specifications need

to be prepared similar to those for SRE. Used equipment is an eligible item for state funding only, and federal funding is unavailable for mowers.

Aircraft rescue and fire fighting (ARFF) equipment. ARFF vehicles and equipment are used primarily at airports that serve air carriers. Plans and specifications must be prepared and bids solicited. Federal funds can be used to purchase ARFF equipment. ✈

Resources:

- * Mn/DOT's Web site:
www.dot.state.mn.us/equipment
- * AirTAP's *Capital Improvement Program Guide*
- * AC 105/5220-20, *Airport Snow and Ice Control Equipment*
- * AC 150/5220-10C, *Guide Specification for Water/Foam Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Vehicles*
- * AC 150/5220-19, *Guide Specification for Small Agent Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Vehicles*
- * PPM 5220.2—Great Lakes Region, Eligibility of Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Vehicles

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Mark your calendars!

The inaugural AirTAP Fall Forum will be held November 3-4, 2004, in St. Cloud, Minn.

If you're someone who operates, maintains, or administers one of Minnesota's public-use airports, you won't want to miss this first of what will be an annual event.

Learn about runway safety initiatives, wildlife control, FAA minimum standards, setting rates and charges, attracting businesses to your airport, CIP development, and other timely and relevant topics.

The Fall Forum is sponsored by Minnesota AirTAP, the Mn/DOT Office of Aeronautics, and the Federal Aviation Administration.

The event will be held at the Radisson Hotel, 404 W. St. Germain Street, St. Cloud. A brochure listing more details, including registration information, will be mailed in August. You can also check the AirTAP Web site at www.airtap.umn.edu for updates.