

October 1997

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AIRCRAFT - EVALUATION

Section 4 of Senate Bill No. 2012, approved by the 1997 Legislative Assembly, provides that the Department of Transportation evaluate the continued use of its 1978 model Cessna airplane. The evaluation is to include an analysis of the cost of continued maintenance and repair of the airplane and options for replacement of the airplane which may include selling or trading the airplane and leasing or purchasing a new or used airplane. The department shall present a report on its evaluation to the Budget Section by November 1998.

The department currently operates three aircraft, a 1975 Cessna 337 Skymaster purchased in October 1975 at a cost of \$99,283, which is used for aerial photography; a 1978 Cessna 421 purchased in September 1977 at a cost of \$386,278, which is used

to transport officials; and a 1977 Piper Cheyenne II purchased in July 1995 at a cost of \$308,819, which is the airplane used to transport the Governor and other public officials.

The department has begun its cost study of the 1978 Cessna 421. The department has projected that the two engines on the airplane will need to be replaced in three to four years at an estimated cost of \$126,000. The department is currently not planning to purchase a different airplane during this biennium, but consideration may be given to leasing a different airplane. The department plans to further evaluate the cost/benefits of continuing to operate this airplane and the cost/benefits of purchasing or leasing a different airplane. The department will be developing a recommendation in the next few months to be presented to the Budget Section.