‘ON SCHEDULE, UNDER BUDGET’

Jet repair hub at Rockford airport to be done in June; workers on the job in September

By George Braum | Staff writer

Construction of a $43 million jet repair hub at Chicago Rockford International Airport is “on schedule and under budget.” That’s what Mike Dunn, executive director of the airport, said Tuesday when he led a tour of the property for members of the Register Star’s Editorial Board. The facility is expected to create 500 jobs within a year and another 500 jobs within two or three years—that pay an average of $55,000 annually.

Dunn said the 200,000-square-foot facility is expected to be complete by late June. And Wood Dale-based AAR Corp., which will lease the facility, hopes to begin operations by September, he said.

Some key numbers, provided by Dunn, help tell the story of the maintenance, repair and overhaul facility, commonly called an MRO.

By the numbers

2 Number of 90,000-square-foot hangars, separated by 20,000 square feet of office and warehouse space.

32 Height in feet that firefighting foam must reach if fire breaks out in the MRO.

33 Percentage of jobs that will be available to Rock Valley College students who complete an aviation maintenance program. One-third of employees will already have been working for AAR. A third will be experienced technicians hired from the Chicago area.

45 Typical maximum number of days a jet would be in for a comprehensive check, though some jets could be “in and out” for service and others could take four to six days to repair.

100 Age, in years, of a sycamore tree adjacent to the MRO that was spared from demolition.

400,000 Amount, in dollars, that AAR will pay the airport each year to rent the facility.

Construction workers install and sand drywall Tuesday inside the jet repair hub. Mike Dunn, left, said the 200-square-foot facility is expected to be completed by late June.