

considerable acceptance. This area includes: the petroleum and petrochemical industry (although sophisticated programs are already in use); the steel and aluminum industries; environmental studies; manufacturing industries; power and electricity. Also of importance (but not in falling into the category of high technology), software systems to modernize banking procedures; air transportation systems; programs applicable to the postal system, public water works etc. These are some of the important areas in which opportunities exist.

### **2.3. AEROSPACE TECHNOLOGIES**

The Aerospace Technologies Industry depends mainly on the Ministry of Transport and Communications (MTC). The MTC, through its Directions of Civil Aeronautics and Engineering, selects and buys the necessary equipment for control tower systems for all airports in Venezuela. The MTC is also responsible for the personnel in charge of this equipment. Since March 1992, the MTC started a process of decentralization of the airports, transferring their control to the States, while Control equipment and personnel stays with the MTC. Once the airports have been transferred, each State can create an autonomous institute in charge of supervising the facilities or it can privatize. In the second alternative, the chances for foreign companies offering management expertise will be excellent.

Up to now, responsibility for the airports of Carabobo, Zulia, Nueva Esparta, Apure, Merida and Trujillo has been transferred to their respective State authorities. Among those airports, two International Airports have been decentralized: La Chinita Airport (Zulia) and the Santiago Marino Airport (Nueva Esparta). In the past, these International Airports, which also handle domestic flights, were under the control of the Instituto Autónomo de Aeropuertos Internacionales de Maiquetía (IAAIM) as well as under the MTC. Venezuela has ten International Airports but only 6 have significant traffic: Simon Bolivar (Maiquetía/Caracas), La Chinita (Zulia), Santiago Marino (Nueva Esparta), Barcelona Airport (Anzoátegui), Valencia Airport (Carabobo) and Barquisimeto Airport (Lara). In addition, the majority of these airports will soon require new radar approach systems, control tower equipment and telecommunications systems. In most cases they are antiquated and unreliable. All these airports have been in existence over 50 years.

The infrastructure and the services of Santiago Marino Airport have been given to a private consortium called Grupo Amazona. La Chinita has also been through a process of privatization but for the moment, this process is stalled.

Beside the International Airports, there are approximately 30 airports which deal only with domestic flights.

Presently, the MTC is in negotiation with the Governments of Anzoátegui,