



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

intercom:

Office of Public Affairs
Alaskan Region
701 C Street, Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513
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February 14, 1986

86-04



Around the region

The Ketchikan Flight Service Station air traffic manager administered 50 airmen written exams in 1985 versus 15 in 1984.

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Congratulations to Earl Erickson, Kenai FSS, who quit smoking on December 13. As of January 10 he was still kicking the habit. Good luck, Earl.

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Preparations have begun for the 1986 FAA exhibit which will be on display at the Egan Convention Center, Anchorage, during Fur Rendezvous, February 14 - 23, 1986.

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If you have questions, suggestions, or complaints, please call the Editor at 271-5293.

Larry Rodger, transportation manager, AAL-52E, extends his appreciation to all those who called and sent cards to him while he was in the hospital. He went into the hospital on December 24 after suffering a heart attack. He was released from the hospital on January 4 and returned to work on January 27. Glad all turned out well, Larry.

* * * * *

Another FAA employee, George Foster, AAL-422, suffered a mild heart attack on January 1. From the latest word received, he is recovering well and should be back to work by the time you read this. George, we wish you a full recovery.

* * * * *

Yakutat High School had its first father/daughter basketball game on January 10, 1986. ATCS Howard Mickles played against his daughter and air traffic manager Mick Batt was talked into playing since they were short of fathers who could run more than one length of the court (Mickles and Batt could run two lengths). The fathers actually stayed even for the first half and then ran out of gas. The final score was daughters 43, fathers 32. It has been said that the best part of the game was watching the cheerleaders for the fathers (the wives, including Princella Mickles, cheered the fathers on). The fathers hope to do better next year (maybe they will do something about getting into shape before the game and not wait until the game).

* * * * *

News from Cordova - for more than two weeks it has rained and/or snowed, and snowed and/or rained (sounds like the weather has gotten to them). The weather has been so weird that two grizzlies (bears) have been spotted roaming around trying to figure out what time of year it is.

* * * * *

Office etiquette - good manners

Good manners are good business and improve relations with visitors and coworkers. Although much of our job is working with the public, we are not given guidelines as to what is expected of us in dealing with the public. However, there are some essential yet basic elements in developing good office etiquette.

Since FAA is a service organization to the public, qualities essential for success, along with good manners, are: adapting to social needs, using good judgment and exercising tact.

Whoever meets the visitors first serves as a representative of FAA and is highly important to good public relations. If you happen to be this person, your duties toward callers are to give them prompt attention, to greet them graciously, to show an interest in them, and to make them comfortable while waiting to meet with appropriate personnel.

Assist callers by showing them where to leave hats, coats and other articles. If there is a long wait, offer callers reading material and/or something to drink, if appropriate. Casual conversation is okay only if callers indicate they are interested.

When making the introduction of a caller to the manager or appropriate personnel, the name of the person visiting is always mentioned first, except when the manager's position is considered more important than the caller's. When older persons, women or dignitaries are announced, they are customarily mentioned first.

If there is a telephone call for visitors, gather all the information and put your name at the bottom of the note in case they have questions.

Proper office etiquette begins in the office by being courteous to coworkers. It is always courteous to greet coworkers whether or not you know them personally.

Give newcomers a friendly reception, introduce them to other coworkers and offer a helping hand with their work. Also, greetings to coworkers can be extended to the hallways and other areas as this reiterates unity within FAA and reflects the "One FAA" concept.

Be prompt not only to work but also to meetings or other situations. Similarly, it is rude to leave a meeting abruptly or before the meeting has adjourned. Adjust your travel arrangements according to the schedule of the meeting. Also, it is considered rude to make a wild exit from your office at the end of the day. Extend the common courtesy of announcing that you are departing in case your assistance is needed for newly developed problems.

Gossip is to be avoided at all times. It can be serious and harmful and is always a breach of good etiquette. Personnel problems should be dealt with as discreetly and carefully as possible. One can practice camaraderie without being expected to solve the personal problems of others.

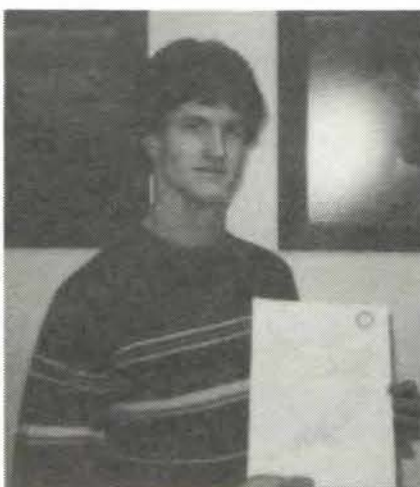
Be supportive and responsive to career advancement of coworkers whenever possible. Jealousy and sabotage create conflict and endanger a productive work environment. A strong support system improves human relations and provides an open/close working relationship with those around us.

Remember the "Golden Rule" in office etiquette - "Do to others as you wish them to do to you." There is no excuse for rudeness to coworkers or to the public. Each of us has the responsibility to be responsive, helpful and courteous to others - inside and outside the FAA.

Editor's note: This article was adapted from an article written by Dell Powell, Equal Employment Specialist in the Office of Civil Rights, FAA Washington headquarters.



Bill Ipock (left), Data Unit, ZAN-AF, receives a Quality Within Grade Increase for an outstanding performance from Dennis Warth, sector manager.



Kevin D. Cain, air traffic control specialist, Bethel Tower, received a Letter of Commendation for compiling and typing a Pilot Bulletin for all Southwest Alaska. Input was provided from Bethel Tower and FSS; King Salmon Tower and FSS; and Dillingham, Iliamna and Cold Bay FSSs. The award was presented by Ray Ballantyne, manager, Bethel Tower.



Al Crook (left), manager, FSDO-61, Fairbanks, presents Hugh Younkins, principal maintenance inspector, with his retirement plaque on January 21. He retires with 26 1/2 years of service and headed for Oregon on February 1. Good luck, Hugh.



Ed Billiet (right), manager, Anchorage International Sector Field Office, presents Carl Fundeen, electronics technician, with a Quality Within Grade Increase for outstanding performance during the past year.



Don Halloway holds the print he received from coworkers upon his retirement from the FAA after 20 plus years in the federal government.



Doyle Bruner (right), programmer, AAL-67, receives a Special Achievement Award for sustained superior performance from manager Dick Brindley, AAL-60.

Safety and efficiency

With public attention focused almost exclusively on air carrier accidents in 1985, the fact that general aviation was quietly putting together the best safety year in its history almost escaped unnoticed.

That oversight now has been corrected with the release of preliminary National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) safety statistics for 1985, showing new GA lows with 2,742 total accidents, 490 of them fatal, and 937 fatalities. The accident rate per 100,000 flight hours was down 10.5 percent from the previous year and the fatal accident rate was down 11.6 percent.

Commuters also showed improvement last year when compared with 1984. Accidents dropped from 21 to 17, fatal accidents from seven to six, and fatalities from 48 to 35.

The airline safety record in 1985 was marred by four fatal accidents in scheduled service and three in non-scheduled operations with a total of 526 fatalities. However, the accident rates were not out of line with those for other recent years.

- - -

The FAA also made significant gains in 1985 in improving the efficiency of the air traffic control system surveillance activities.

Administrator Donald Engen recently noted that the ATC system handled three percent more operations last year than in 1984, but operational errors were down by 26 percent and delays by 18 percent.

The FAA also suspended or revoked the certificates of 63 Part 121 and Part 135 air carriers in 1985 and imposed more than \$2 million in civil penalties. Both figures represent new yearly highs.

Washington Report

Problems? Questions about drugs? Under the agency's Employee Assistance Program help is just a phone call away.

Human Affairs, Inc.
562-0794

Parents beware - and be alert

According to police authorities, a form of tattoo called "Blue Star" is readily available in some areas of the United States.

It is a small sheet of white paper containing blue stars the size of a pencil eraser. Each "Star" is impregnated with LSD and can be removed from the paper to be placed in the mouth. Absorption can also occur through the skin by simply handling the paper tattoo.

There are also brightly-colored paper pictures of Superman, Mickey Mouse and other Disney characters, butterflies, clowns, etc. The stamps are packed in a red cardboard box with a picture of Mickey Mouse wrapped in foil, in a clear, lock-type bag. They come in five one-inch square stamps. This is a new way of selling ACID.

It is feared that little children could be given a free "tattoo" by older children who want to have some fun. It is important that all parents be alerted in case their child is involved, even innocently.

Anyone having information on such items should contact their local enforcement agency.

Pinkerton's Inc.
Drug Awareness Programs

Editor's note: The above article was contributed by Martin Marietta, in its January 1986 newsletter, ATC Division Flyer.

Medical notes - death

by: Mary Grindrod
AAL-300

Death: The termination of life.

We are born, we live, we die.

We spend most of our time, and rightly so, in trying to promote good health. Most of us do not have the desire to speak of death. To do so often makes members of the medical profession feel they have failed in some way to save everyone.

When we become more comfortable in communicating to friends, family and coworkers about the loss of a loved one through death, we may be able to emerge from the experience with fewer anxieties about our own existence and finality.

The grief, shame and guilt we feel about a person's death are associated with anger and rage. For example, a couple may have fought for years and when the partner dies, the survivor will pull his/her hair, cry loudly in regret, and feel angry. The survivor will then begin to fear his/her own death even more.

Thankfully we have changed our ways of coping and dealing with death over the years.

Many people who are chronically ill express the desire to die at home. Children should be allowed to be a part of the feelings generated by a chronically ill person. During the crucial days or weeks of a terminal illness, or when death occurs, a great deal depends on the structure or unity of the family group. The ability to communicate is very important.

Sometimes a neutral outsider, who is not emotionally overinvolved, can be of great assistance in listening to the family's concerns, their wishes and needs.

In traumatic or sudden death the family does not have much time to prepare for the beginning stages of the grief process.

Grief is probably the most painful companion of death. The people left behind feel guilty that maybe they did not do everything possible to save the loved one. Sometimes, before the person dies, you have been angry at him/her and may have wished that person would disappear or go away. Have you ever used or heard the expression "drop dead?" This often comes back to the survivor and the guilt and ongoing grief is very hard to bear. Sometimes the surviving person becomes physically ill.

In our work relationships it is hard for us to talk freely about death and dying, especially if death suddenly becomes a personal thing that affects us. The few people who have experienced the crisis of impending death have found that communication is only difficult the first time and becomes simpler with gained experience. It is hard to believe, but sometimes having gone through an experience makes one have a better understanding for self and for others who are suffering.

We should end this death article with life - the interval between the birth or inception of an organism and its death.

We should all appreciate our own life, take care of it and live each day to its fullest. But we need to take time along the way to be a good listener and friend to those around us who may need our help.

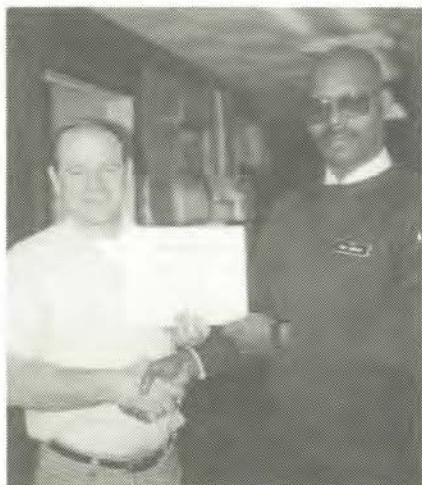
A VALENTINE FOR YOUR HEALTHY HEART
COMING JUST FOR YOU

February 26, 10 a.m.
MIC Room

Guest Speaker

A tasty treat for your heart of hearts
With love from AAL-300

More information about this
event coming soon



Kotzebue area supervisor Bill Penland (left) was presented with a Special Achievement Award for sustained superior performance from air traffic manager Tony Johnson.



Jeffry Wheeler (left), air traffic control specialist, Cold Bay FSS, recently received a Letter of Commendation for his performance as OJT instructor from July through December 1985. Jim Yakal, manager, presented the letter.



Jack Twiggs (left), operations planner, AAL-460, receives an Award of Appreciation from Jim Michelangelo, National Transportation Safety Board, for his outstanding performance, support and assistance provided to NTSB on accident investigations.



Don Huitt (right), electronics technician, receives a Letter of Appreciation from Al George, assistant sector manager, ZAN-AF for his efforts at the Deadhorse facility.



Herb Shannon (left), operations unit supervisor, FSDO-61, Fairbanks, presents Gary Childers, principal operations inspector, with a Quality Within Grade Increase for his outstanding performance in the enforcement program.



Sherrill Czarnecki (left), program specialist, AAL-422, receives a Quality Within Grade Increase for an outstanding performance from manager John Williford.

New GPAD ratings

Now you and your boss will have more flexibility in discussing and appraising your performance. The old three-level General Performance Appraisal Document (GPAD) system has been replaced by a five-level rating system. The two new ratings, "Exceptional" and "Partially Successful," will keep the performance appraisal process in line with anticipated Office of Personnel Management requirements.

Action Notice A 3400.1, dated January 15, outlines the changes and explains when the new ratings should be used. Additional information on the new system may be obtained from your servicing Human Resources Management Division or from the Career Management Division, AOE-200, in Washington, or FTS 426-8550.

Washington Report

Excellent response to option program

by: John Schommer
AAL-511

Air Traffic is reporting an excellent response to its Cross Option Program that solicited controllers from terminal facilities and flight service station specialists with previous FAA radar experience to transfer to the enroute center option. In addition, controllers at lower density enroute facilities can participate in the program. In all, 410 applications for the program were received.

Final selections will be made upon successful completion of a two phase screening process. The first phase consists of a two week initial screen where the applicant and receiving facility can assess each other. Upon successful completion of the initial phase the applicant will then undergo an intensive 90-day assessment. This

will consist of intensive on-site training with radar traffic simulators.

Upon successful completion of this temporary assignment, they will be permanently assigned to the center where they completed the program. Those centers currently in the program are New York, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Chicago, Minneapolis, Los Angeles and Oakland.

There are 21 controllers from Alaska being considered; 16 from Anchorage Center, three from Anchorage Tower and two from Fairbanks Tower.



Insurance rebate vetoed by President

The bill which would have authorized health insurance carriers to give rebates, ranging from \$20 to \$400, to more than two million government workers and retirees has been vetoed by President Reagan and temporarily shelved. Although the President said he fully supported giving the refunds, he could not sign the legislation because it also would have increased government premium costs and, thus, conflicted with the budget cuts mandated by the Gramm-Rudman law.

As approved by Congress in mid-December, the bill provided for an increase in the government's share of health premiums up to 100 percent. At present, the government pays about 61 percent although it can legally pay up to 75 percent, depending on the insurance carrier and option chosen by the employee.

Washington Report



Wayne Goldsberry (right), electronics technician, South Alaska AF Sector, Juneau Sector Field Office, receives his 30-year service pin from Dwight Meeks, assistant sector manager. Wayne also received a Special Achievement Award for outstanding performance (second year in a row). Congratulations, Wayne.



In the December 6 issue of Intercom there was a picture of Nancy Tinney (left in the above picture), general supply specialist, ZAN-AFS, being presented a Letter of Congratulations from Director Frank Cunningham on receiving the DOT Secretary's Award for Excellence based on job performance. Here she is shown with Secretary Elizabeth Hanford Dole who presented the award to Nancy in Washington, D.C. Congratulations the second time around, Nancy.



Bert Salzman (right), supervisory electronics technician, South Alaska AF Sector, Juneau Field Office, receives his 30-year service pin from Dwight Meeks, assistant sector manager.



Jane Soper (left), program assistant, AAL-422, receives a Special Achievement Award for sustained superior performance from manager John Williford.



Mary Jokela, air traffic control specialist, Cold Bay FSS, is shown here holding a picture presented to her at her going away party. She has been reassigned to the Anchorage Center.

EEO update

by: Ken Smith, AAL-9
Civil Rights Officer

Equal Opportunity or Affirmative Action? This office frequently gets feedback, some of it pretty heated, regarding the difference between equal opportunity and affirmative action. Specifically, some employees ask, "If everyone is supposed to be treated equally, why do we have special programs for women and minorities?" "Why can we not just treat everyone equally?" What do you think about those questions?

First, we recognize the anguish our country has faced to achieve the strides we have made thus far. However, even though discrimination may be outlawed legally, individuals still communicate discriminatory attitudes and behave in ways that show bias and partiality. Having a legal system which emphasizes equality is just, right, and what most of us have come to expect. However, why do we need to have programs which emphasize the needs of special groups? The answer is because some groups in our society have suffered and continue to suffer the effects of past discriminatory practices. Yes, that is tough talk, but it is accurate.

To evaluate the accuracy of the above, consider the statistical representation of the work place compared with the available labor market. In the State of Alaska, the female labor market is approximately 42 percent and the minority labor market is about 17 percent. Thus, if there had never been any discriminatory effects upon these groups, one might reasonably conclude that the representative percentages would be similar in our work force. However, we fall far short of those levels. So, while you or I may not have discriminated personally, we all have a responsibility to be sensitive to the needs of those groups.

We can help by encouraging and recruiting qualified applicants. We can be understanding and supportive. Above all, we should realize that those individuals still compete on the basis of merit, but that is another topic we will talk about later.

But still, someone says we do not need to make any efforts in behalf of these groups. All we need to do is eliminate present discrimination and treat everyone equally now. On the surface, this is an understandable sentiment. However, it bears further evaluation. To start where we are now without making any efforts to rectify the past is similar to the position the leaders in the U.S.S.R. take on arms control: let us each agree to maintain what we have. The only problem is they have far superior arms.

In a similar vein, to "just stay equal" without making any efforts to overcome the past is not ethically proper. We must emphasize quality and quantity. We must insist upon job performance. But we can also recognize that we have some "catching up" to do.

Well, this area touches some sensitive areas for everyone, so next time we will talk about some EEO myths.

Peace.

"We are not primarily
put on this earth to see
through one another,
but to see
one another through."

Peter de Vries

Functions studied under A-76 program

With the increased emphasis on government efficiency these days, FAA has identified 24 candidate activities to study for possible contracting to private firms under the program known as "A-76." The list of studies that will begin this month was forwarded to Secretary Elizabeth Hanford Dole's office for review on January 15.

Although the activities to be studied are being performed throughout the agency, the major impact is being felt at the Aeronautical and Technical Centers. Activities include payroll operations, R&D facility maintenance, and automatic data processing, to name a few.

Contractors will compete directly with the government in 17 of the 24 activity areas. In the other seven areas, the agency will conduct reviews of its methods and staffing to determine ways to improve efficiency.

The "A-76" tag comes from the Office of Management and Budget program's circular number. The circular details a process whereby an agency must bid on its own functions in competition with the private sector when it is found that the function is not of an inherently governmental nature.

Washington Report

Keep up with issues

Information on such programs as:

- new RIF rules,
- health benefit,
- retirement system changes, and
- flat rate per diem changes for travel

could have been found the past month on the FAA Personnel Hotline. To keep updated on FAA issues you may call FTS 426-3934.

Recipe corner

from: Sis Williams
AAL-58

Applesauce Jumbles

- Combine 1 cup sugar and 1/2 cup margarine until creamy.
- Add 3 eggs, one at a time.
- Stir in 2 1/2 cups flour, 2 tsps cinnamon, 1/2 tsp nutmeg, 1/8 tsp cloves and 2 tsps baking soda until thoroughly mixed.
- Add and mix 1 6-oz package chocolate chips, 1 6-oz package butterscotch chips, 1 cup raisins, 3/4 cup applesauce and 1/2 cup chopped nuts.
- Drop by tablespoon on greased and floured cookie sheets. Bake 12 minutes at 375 degrees.

Engen announces spending restraints

In his recent message to all employees, Administrator Donald Engen announced spending restraints he was imposing as a result of the 1986 budget and noted that further reductions would be forthcoming as a result of the Gramm-Rudman legislation. At that time he did not know what the results of this law would be, but the Office of Budget has since learned the extent of these cuts.

For instance, in the Operations Appropriation, the reduction will be \$115 million. This is on top of \$55 million that resulted from the FY 86 congressional budget figures. In addition to the spending restrictions already imposed, the agency is considering several other options for absorbing the reductions. One of the Administrator's objectives in considering alternatives is to minimize any adverse impact on employees. He has stated that RIFs are unlikely in any large numbers this year; however, furloughs remain a possibility.

Washington Report



Robert Cowgill (center) was appointed a pilot examiner on January 16 by the Fairbanks Flight Standards District Office. He is the coordinator of aviation technology for the Tanana Valley Community College. Shown here with him are Murray Shain (left), inspector, and Al Crook, manager, Fairbanks FSDO.



Phyllis Taylor (left), realty specialist, AAL-58A, receives her 15-year service pin from Dave Elliston, manager (at the time), AAL-50. She recently underwent surgery and is recovering quite well. May you be "up and at 'em" soon, Phyllis.



Bob Cushman (left), airport certification inspector, AAL-620, receives his 25-year service pin from Don Keil, deputy director.



Jim Walton (left), recently retired from FAA, and Dave Elliston, who has moved on, say farewell at their last staff meeting (see the tears running down their cheeks). Jim retired after 32 plus years with the federal government (became an FAAer in 1958); Dave recently became the manager of the Supply Management Branch at the FAA Depot in Oklahoma City. Good luck to both of you.



Dottye Muhs (left), management analyst, AAL-62, receives a Letter of Appreciation from Air Traffic Division for her valuable assistance during the recent Air Traffic Managers' Conference in Anchorage. She also received a Letter of Commendation from Director Frank Cunningham as "conference manager" for the Alaskan Managers' Conference. Dick Brindley, manager, AAL-60, presented the awards.



Jim Titus (right), planning specialist, AAL-518, receives his 30-year service pin from Don Keil, deputy director.

Career opportunities available in ATC

by: John Schommer
AAL-511

A special program is available to current and former career or career-conditional employees with competitive status and individuals with non-competitive placement at the GS-5 level here in Alaska to become air traffic controllers.

The program is designed for women and minorities, although handicapped individuals and veterans who qualify under the Veterans Readjustment Act may be considered.

The program is 52 weeks in length and is designed to provide the necessary skills and knowledges to enter the air traffic control developmental mainstream. In short, applicants are given academic instruction, laboratory exercise, and on-the-job familiarization to properly prepare them to enter the normal developmental program.

The first two weeks and the last 33 weeks are spent in training at various facility locations in Anchorage. The remaining 17 weeks are spent at Oklahoma City.

At the end of the first 30 weeks an option determination is made. That is, whether the incumbent will be assigned to an en route/terminal or flight service station. After successful completion of the 52 week program the incumbent will again be returning to the FAA academy at Oklahoma City under the developmental program. This schooling lasts anywhere from two and one-half to three and one-half months depending on option assignment. Upon successful completion of this training the incumbent will be assigned to a facility somewhere in the State of Alaska.

To meet the qualification requirements applicants must have three years of progressively responsible experience in administrative, technical, or other work which demonstrated the potential for learning and performing air traffic control work or successful completion of a four-year college program leading to a bachelor's degree. For the first two years of required experience, study completed in an educational institution above the high school level may be substituted on the basis of one year of study for one year of work experience. Applicants will also be required to pass the written air traffic control specialist examination. Applicants who have not taken the test during normal testing periods will be given the test non-competitively.

This is an excellent program for those individuals who desire challenging work as well as an opportunity to advance. Promotion potential to GS-9, 10, 11, or 12 is available here in Alaska, depending on which option and facility one is assigned to.

Interested candidates should write to:

Federal Aviation Administration
ATTN: John Schommer, AAL-511
701 C Street, Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-0087

or call (907) 271-5887.



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"Peanuts" pushes Aviation Education



Charlie Brown, Lucy, Snoopy and all the rest of the "Peanuts" gang have gotten involved this year in FAA's third annual Aviation Awareness Contest for students in grades 4 through 12.

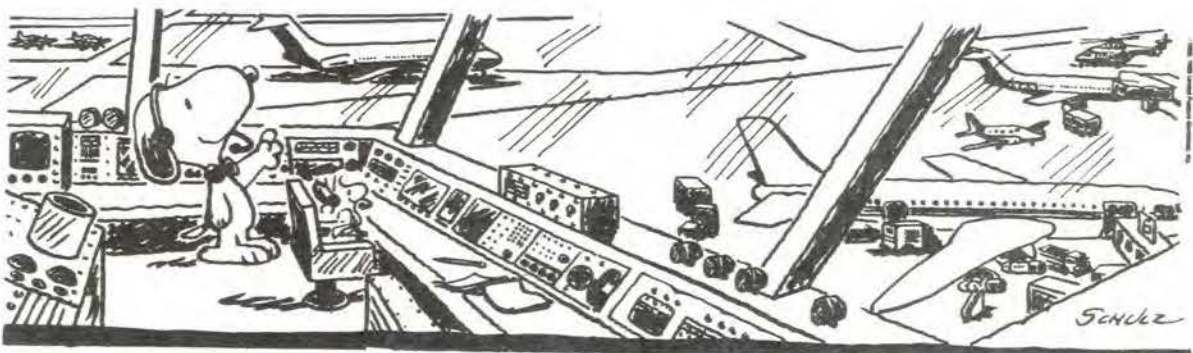
Thanks to the generosity of cartoonist Charles Schulz, who provided original drawings, the popular "Peanuts" characters are being used to enliven

mailing materials that have been sent to all school systems, announcing this year's contest and its theme, "Aviation in My Community."



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Contest entries must be submitted by March 1 to have a shot at the state, regional and national prizes which will be donated by various aviation organizations. The three national winners will collect a total of \$3,000.



News about Gramm-Rudman and the budget

FY 87 budget news mixed

The good news in FAA's Fiscal Year 1987 budget submission is that "Operations" funding is up from previous years. On the other hand, major cuts are proposed for Research and Development (R&D), Facilities and Equipment (F&E) and the Airport Improvement Program (AIP).

The Operations request, which includes Washington Headquarters, is \$2.799 billion as compared to a total of \$2.759 billion approved by the Congress for FY 1986. The FY 1986 level, in all probability, will be reduced to \$2.640 billion under the Gramm-Rudman budget-balancing law. Approximately 70 percent of the Operations budget goes to pay employee salaries.

The total number of full-time positions is projected to decline in FY 1987, dropping from the FY 1986 level of 47,831 to 47,045. However, the agency plans to hire an additional 500 air traffic controllers and 138 air carrier and general aviation safety inspectors.

Although R&D funding would drop in FY 1987 to \$134.5 million from the FY 1986 level of \$190 million (\$181.8 million after the Gramm-Rudman cuts), the agency will be able to continue work on major programs such as the development of the Advanced Automation System, modernized communications systems and improved weather information systems.

A number of major contracts also are scheduled to be awarded during FY 1987, despite lower F&E funding levels. These include FSS modernization, the next generation of weather radar (NEXRAD), terminal Doppler and remote maintenance monitoring. The FY 1987 F&E level is \$825 million as compared to the FY 1986 figure of \$993 million (\$950 million after Gramm-Rudman).

The largest single cut in the FAA FY 1987 budget would be in the AIP obligation limitation. It would drop to \$712.5 million from the FY 1986 figure of \$925 million (\$885.2 million after Gramm-Rudman).

However, the generally favorable budget figures do not necessarily mean that FAA is home free as far as FY 87 is concerned. First, Congress has to pass the budget. Furthermore, additional spending cuts could be ordered in late summer if the FY 87 budget deficit is projected to be higher than the \$144 billion allowed under the Gramm-Rudman law.

Budget cuts may affect cash awards

As part of the effort to meet budget reductions, the agency is considering a proposal to reduce award payments to individuals and groups by one-half. While the details of the proposal, which is expected to save about \$2 million this fiscal year, are being worked out, no new awards will be initiated. However, monetary awards are not being eliminated. The Office of Organizational Effectiveness is preparing procedures which are designed to encourage supervisors to recognize good performance while reducing the dollar amounts of cash awards.

National unions with exclusive recognition and selected employee groups will have a chance to react to specific proposals before the new guidelines are implemented.

Engen tells Congress that agency needs all FAAers

Administrator Donald Engen has told Congress that it will be "virtually impossible" to avoid furloughing FAA employees during the remainder of FY 1986 unless the agency gets authority to reprogram funds.

Testifying February 3 before a Senate subcommittee, Engen pointed out that FAA already has taken a \$55 million cut in its FY 1986 operations fund, which is the money used to pay most employee salaries, and now faces an additional 4.3 percent reduction as a result of the Gramm-Rudman Law. Consequently, he said it will be difficult to avoid furloughs unless Congress gives DOT authority to make "some adjustments" in DOT appropriations.

The Administrator also cautioned against the idea that support and staff functions could be cut back without affecting the agency's overall safety mission. For example, he noted that it does little good for an aviation safety inspector to observe a regulatory violation if the agency lacks the support structure to take enforcement action. "In short," he added, "an entire system must be in place to successfully accomplish our objectives."

Looking beyond FY 1986, the Administrator said he could visualize no reasonable way in which FAA could absorb budget cuts in the 15 to 20 percent range without "serious deterioration of the current levels of safety services we provide." In this regard, he said he was pleased to report that the FAA's FY 1987 budget actually called for an increase in operations funding.

Gramm-Rudman loses court test

The Gramm-Rudman-Hollings balanced budget law has failed its first court test. On February 7, a Federal District Court three-judge panel in Washington, D.C., ruled unanimously that the automatic deficit reduction process in the law is unconstitutional because it vests executive power in the Comptroller General. A quick appeal directly to the Supreme Court is expected. The decision does not block implementation of the law while the case is on appeal.