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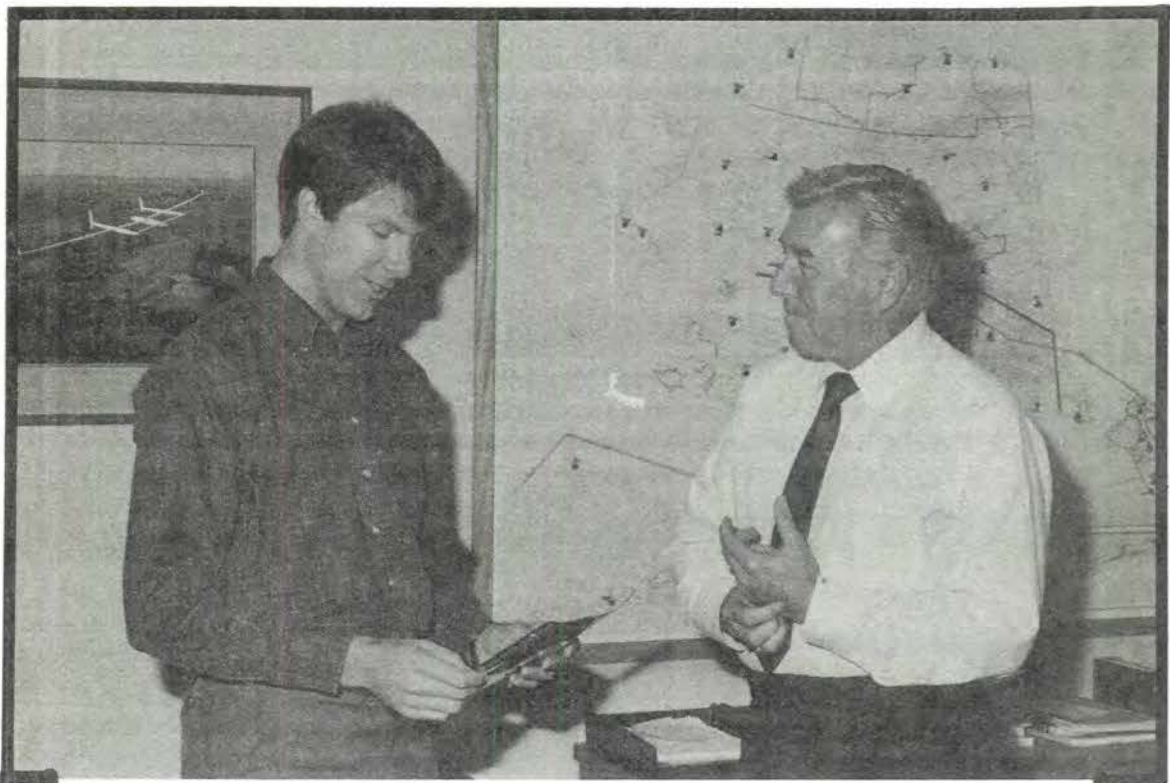
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article*

September 1986

86-15

Controller Receives National Award



Steve Creamer (left), air traffic controller, Anchorage Air Route Traffic Control Center, receives the FAA's National Outstanding Flight Assist Award from Director Frank Cunningham. He assisted a C-172 en route from Merrill Field to Fairbanks with three people on board. The aircraft, requested assistance to proceed to Talkeetna after it encountered icing and developed an engine problem. The Talkeetna direction finding equipment was out of service and the aircraft was not in radar contact. With Creamer's quick and calm responses, the aircraft was kept clear of the higher terrain and was successfully guided to Talkeetna. Thomas Meyer and Michael Tallman, ARTCC employees, were also involved in the assist and will receive the FSS's Regional Outstanding Flight Assist Award.

People and awards

** SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD **

Ron Glonek, formerly area supervisor, Sitka FSS, now the air traffic manager at Northway FSS

** 35-YEAR SERVICE PIN **

Tom Flynn, maintenance foreman, King Salmon Sector Field Office

** 30-YEAR SERVICE PIN **

Dwight Meeks, assistant sector manager, South Alaska Airway Facilities Sector

** 25-YEAR SERVICE PIN **

Margaret P. Brown, air traffic control specialist (ATCS), Anchorage FSS

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

** 3-YEAR SERVICE PIN **

Doris McIntosh, staff assistant, NA-AFS, Fairbanks

** TRANSFERS/PROMOTIONS **

Sylvia Caldwell, area supervisor, Bethel FSS, has resigned to return to school to seek a second career

Don Hall, ATCS, Bethel Tower, selected for Anchorage Tower; pickup date October 12

Alta Kowalke, secretary, Cordova SFO, transferred to the U.S. Forest Service

Carter Ross, ZAN-AF, transferred to the Southern Region Virgin Island area

George Hosford, ATCS, Merrill Tower, transferred to Centennial Tower in Denver, Colorado

Douglas Coats, ATCS, Merrill Tower, transferred to Fairbanks Tower

Joe Drennan, developmental ATCS, Fairbanks FSS, transferred to Tanana FSS

** LETTERS OF CONGRATULATIONS **

Kaye McLeod, area supervisor, Anchorage FSS, on obtaining Associate Degree in ATC

Clara Steiner, ATCS, Anchorage FSS, on obtaining Associate Degree in ATC

** WEDDINGS **

Sherry McBarnes, radar unit, Fairbanks Tower, married Maurice Schulman on August 9

Bruce Kihle, maintenance mechanic, and Dianne Wright, electronics technician, both of the North Alaska Sector, were married on September 2.

End of summer

from: AAL-16

As summer memories fade and winter begins, we all will experience a certain amount of longing for the carefree summer days. Some will take it in stride and plan for a full and exciting winter season. They will focus on skiing, sledding, warm cozy fireside times and the coming holiday season. For others, the long Alaska winter may be something that they can not accept and consequently, they become a target for "cabin fever."

The term "cabin fever" is often heard during the long Alaska winters. Short days, long nights and cold weather all lead one towards limited activity. Thus, feelings that you are in a rut, bored or not getting the most out of life, surface. For some this may be a passing phase that lasts only a short time. Becoming involved in activities that get you mixing with people, a short vacation, a new hobby or just a reemphasis of the positive things in your life through positive self-talk, helps to get you through the climbing-the-wall phase of cabin fever.

For others, short-term cabin fever turns into long-term depression. Cabin fever and depression share common traits. Both are marked by a blue feeling or mood. Both can affect your sleeping and eating patterns. Both leave you feeling tired and short-tempered.

Depression, however, can become chronic and require professional help. With depression, the burden of life hits you like a ton of bricks. At times, every action requires much more energy than you have. At other times, you are up one minute and down the next and you tend to blow things out of proportion. When you suffer from depression, it is difficult for you to concentrate and your self-esteem is at an all time low. Chronic depression also leaves one particularly vulnerable to drugs and/or alcohol.

Both provide a temporary escape; however, the come-down effect further contributes to the depression.

It is not unusual for people to experience some degree of cabin fever and most can handle the temporary "blahs" on their own. However, if what you are feeling intensifies and you find yourself experiencing many of the symptoms associated with chronic depression, what you may need is professional help.

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is there to help you when you need it. The Agency's EAP contractor, Human Affairs of Alaska (HAA), has a staff of professional counselors who can help you identify what the problem is and what can be done.

Because problems do not always occur between 9 and 5, HAA has a counselor available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Employees and/or dependents need only pick up the phone and call 562-0794.

There is no charge for HAA services; however, should there be a need for long-term or specialized counseling, HAA ensures the service is within the financial means of the employee. HAA has helped many employees and their families deal with problems covering drug and alcohol abuse, marital difficulties, parent-child problems, depression, stress, and many others. Assistance is always as close as your telephone.

If you have any questions about "cabin fever" or EAP services, you may want to discuss them with an EAP counselor from HAA. Simply call 562-0794.

Ernie Fleece, agency EAP coordinator, AAL-16, is also available to answer any questions. She can be reached at 271-5367.

EAP

Employee Assistance Program

News in brief

It now looks like federal workers will get a two percent pay raise in January. President Ronald Reagan recommended the pay hike on August 28, noting that any larger increase would have an "adverse effect" on the economy. The raise, the first in two years, will go into effect automatically in January unless rejected by the Congress.

* * *

A pilot's pilot, who was a founding director and president of the Society of Experimental Test Pilots, has been named the agency's new Associate Administrator for Policy and International Aviation. Albert W. Blackburn steps into the job, vacated recently by Donald Segner, with responsibility for formulating FAA policies and goals on both the national and international levels.

* * *

Contrary to rumors you may have heard, FAA plans to continue flight service station (FSS) consolidations in FY 1987. These consolidations will be associated primarily with the commissioning of nine new automated FSS's, which will be added to existing flight service automation system "families."

* * *

The agency now has commissioned two second generation Doppler VOR systems, one at Riverside, Missouri, and the other at New York's LaGuardia Airport. Over the next nine months, FAA plans to convert all 43 Doppler VORs currently in operation to solid-state second generation equipment. The agency has purchased a total of 90 Doppler VOR modification kits from Northrop/Wilcox and the remaining kits will be used for training and converting selected conventional VORs to Doppler in the future.

* * *

The major reason air traffic delays have increased 29 percent this year over 1985 is the severe weather experienced over much of the country.

* * *

AT&T has won a \$65.7 million FAA contract for new radio control equipment (RCE) that will improve voice communications between pilots and controllers. The contract calls for replacing the present radio signaling and tone control equipment with the new solid-state AT&T gear at more than 2,000 remote communications sites, beginning in mid-1988. Contract options eventually could push the number of sites to over 4,000.

* * *

National Air and Space Museum (NASM) author Deborah G. Douglas is looking for individual stories of women aviators for the third volume in the series of "Women in Aviation," 1939 to the present. She is looking for stories about women who have made contributions to aviation through their flying, either for the FAA or otherwise. Write to her at the Aeronautics Department, Room 3309, NASM, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560 or call her at (202) 357-2314.

* * *

The Administrator's Hotline, which celebrated its second anniversary on August 20, continues to provide employees with an effective medium for reaching top management with their suggestions, concerns and complaints. The Great Lakes Region generated the most calls, accounting for 378 of the total 1,778 calls or 21 percent; the Southern Region was next with 14 percent, followed closely by the Eastern Region with 13.8 percent. The hotline number is FTS or (202) 267-9532.

* * *



Sayoko Mimoto (left), engineering technician, AAL-453, receives a Letter of Commendation from Dave Morse, manager, AAL-400.



Jeanette Samples (left), budget and fiscal assistant, AAL-421, receives a Sustained Superior Performance from Dave Morse, manager, AAL-400.



Sharon Dallas (left), supply clerk, International Sector Field Office, South Alaska Sector, receives a Letter of Commendation from Edgar Billiet, manager.



Director Frank Cunningham is viewing the FAA's historical art exhibit held at the Anchorage Community College Aviation complex hangar on August 9, 1986. The exhibit was in conjunction with the sixth annual Merrill Field Air Show and the Anchorage Flight Service Station open house in honor of the 50th celebration for ATC.



Pat Lehnerz (right), budget and fiscal assistant, AAL-420, receives a Special Achievement Award from Dave Morse, manager, AAL-400.

The way it was

by: John Bassler
Retired from ATC

The following is a commentary from John Bassler on the September 13, 1985, Intercom story on Middleton Island.

"The story was of special interest to me, probably because Middleton was my home from November 1947 to January 1949.

One striking contrast from the past was the tours listed as 'one week on, one week off the Island.' I remained on the Island during my entire tour, but then we took this as a matter of course.

One of my associates, Francis L. Chance, was there about 18 months. The Regional Office became concerned, and began addressing private messages to him offering him reassignment to various locations. He would politely decline, and say that he would consider Homer or Kenai. Well, wasn't too long before he got Homer.

We averaged an FAA plane about every month to six weeks, and this was our mail and supplies source. I remember MTIC (maintenance technician in charge) Alver Johnson answering various messages asking where this or that report or reply was by saying 'no FAA mail plane for six weeks!'

Wilfred C. Trew was my first chief, and he later transferred to the same position at Sheep Mountain. He was replaced by Edwin C. Klopp who is now retired at Homer. Joseph Frydlo, another 'aircraft communicator,' transferred to Cordova, and died there a few years later in an automobile accident.

We did not rotate shifts then. I was first assigned the day shift, and after developing seniority acquired the midshift which gave daylight time to explore the island, plus the increase of night-differential pay.

One of my predecessors, Felton E. Jackson, arrived at Middleton on a boat and departed about six months later - with no mail or supplies delivery for his entire tour! He mentioned something about eating a lot of beans and hotcakes. Jackson later became chief of the Anchorage International Flight Service Station, then to the Regional Office and finally to Washington Headquarters.

People seem to adjust to the needs or standards of the times. For example, when Deadhorse was commissioned, we staffed it out of the Anchorage FSS of which I was chief at the time. Our rotating tours were six weeks on and two weeks off. A few years later when Merrill Tower staffed it, the tours had shrunk to two weeks and the local benefits had increased."

Bassler said it was "fun lapsing into some nostalgia," and the readers are happy you did. Thank you for sharing.



Tax Reform Act

That tax-free recovery period that federal employees have always counted on in planning for retirement may already be history. One of the provisions of the much-heralded Tax Reform Act, which House and Senate conferees agreed to in mid-August, would abolish the recovery period retroactive to July 1, 1986.

Federal employee unions have strongly criticized the action, but no one is expressing optimism over the possibility of a change when the Tax Reform Act comes up for a final vote in the House and Senate sometime this fall.

Federal employees' retirement system

from: AAL- 10

The PL99-335 signed June 6, 1986, effective January 1, 1987, establishes a retirement system for all employees hired after December 31, 1983. These employees have been under an interim retirement system pending establishment of a new system. We have not received any implementation instructions as of this date. However, we do have a copy of the law, and a summary of the major points for your information.

The Federal Employees' Retirement System is a three tiered system. Benefits are derived from the Federal Employees' Retirement fund, Social Security and a Thrift Savings Fund. Employees are required to contribute 1.3 percent of base pay for 1986 and less in succeeding years. They continue to pay full Social Security taxes, and at age 62 are entitled to full Social Security benefits.

A supplement equal to the Social Security entitlement, based on federal service, is payable from the date of federal retirement to age 62. Employees may elect to contribute up to 10 percent of salary, tax deferred until retirement, to the Thrift Savings Plan. The government matches 1 percent of the initial contribution and up to 4 percent of the contribution to the Thrift Savings Plan.

We will be running a regular column in the Intercom to answer general questions and to keep you abreast of developing information.

We realize you have many questions concerning the new system. Please put your general questions in writing to AAL-14D. We ask you defer specific questions until we receive implementing instructions since we will probably be unable to answer them at this time.



Sign up now!

The FAA national golf championship sponsored by the 7500 Club of the Miami ARTCC will be held October 30 and 31 and November 1, 1986 at the Rolling Hills Country Club in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Cost for the tournament package is \$112.00, tax and gratuity included; the tournament entry is \$85.00, which includes the banquet.

No entry will be accepted after October 1, 1986.

For further information contact Dean Stromwall at the Miami Center, (305) 592-9770 or at home (305) 382-2571.

Where are they?

from: AAL-34

The Internal Accounts Branch, AAL-34, is in receipt of former employees' retroactive COLA checks for the below named individuals but is unable to forward the checks due to unavailable current mailing addresses. Please contact Ann Roberts, FTS (907) 271-5247 if you have a current address for any of these individuals. Thank you.

Debra Buchanan, William E. Burgan, William H. Dossett, Larry W. Gibson, Mark Godwin, Max Hughes, Jr., Randy J. Kassa, Richard I. Kruwell, Leonard Mack, Jean E. Maldon and William A. Westura.

Around the region

Pilot Dave Childs of North Pole, Alaska, set out Saturday, August 2, to break the world's record for consecutive loops. The world record stood at 2,315 consecutive loops. The event was part of the Lions Club North Pole Airshow held at Bradley Field, North Pole. Childs, flying a Decathlon aircraft, began the event at 4:15 a.m. and ended at 10:00 p.m. When the event was over he had completed 2,368 consecutive loops. Even though the loops are stated as being consecutive, there were breaks for refueling and rest. The event was monitored by Inspectors Gary Childers and Larry Dalrymple of Fairbanks FSDO. They were assisted by Dr. Steven Schwendeman, an aviation medical examiner at Fairbanks. They all agreed Childs was in good condition when the event was over.

* * * * *

More 50th celebrations were held at various facilities throughout the Alaskan Region.

The Fairbanks FSS and air traffic control tower held a joint open house on August 7; tours of both facilities were provided to all visiting guests. "Employees of both facilities are to be commended for their extra effort in this combined endeavor," said the air traffic manager of the Fairbanks FSS.

The Kotzebue FSS held an open house from July 28 - August 1. Two groups from out of town and about five local people visited the facility including three local miners.

The Kodiak Tower and the National Weather Service celebrated the 50th with a potluck on August 3. They all enjoyed "the good food, the good weather and the good company."

* * * * *



Sports update

The 1986 American Cancer Society golf tournament held at Settler's Bay Golf Course on Saturday, August 16, 1986, was represented by an FAA team sponsored by the Civilair Club.

Team members were John Scukanec, Richard Ericson, David West and Charles Muhs. The team entered in and won Division 2 of the tournament.

They then vied for the Alaska Division 2 Champion on August 20. They came close, but no cigar. They tied for 1st with a team from Fairbanks through the first 18 holes. But then they lost on the 5th hole in sudden death. Congratulations to all four of you - you did good!

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Mike Tarr, air traffic manager, Sitka FSS, was a member of the softball team that won the state class C softball tournament held in August. The team, House of Liquor, beat the defending state C champions, Super Bear from Juneau for the title. Congratulations!

Thanks for sharing

Thanks to Jim Schmidt, retiree, who identified the lady on the cover of the August issue of Intercom. Her name is Clare Frost. Schmidt worked in the Anchorage Overseas Communication Station from 1949 to 1950. He now lives in Santa Barbara, California.

Medical notes - fitness program

by: Pat Sanders
AAL-300

The month of September seems to be a time of new beginnings and renewal as our offspring and teaching spouses start a new year of school. And the changing season offers us beautiful new color schemes and activities with a certain briskness.

If your summer efforts for physical fitness and nutritional awareness have fallen short of your expectations and hopes, we would like to suggest and promote a program that is available to all members of the Anchorage community.

We are suggesting the Permanent Fitness Dividend Program offered by Carrs, Anchorage Times and supported by several community health agencies. It is designed as an eleven week program with structured activities and nutrition plans that you can easily adjust to your own or family routines. Each week you can pick up new pamphlets describing activities available in and around Anchorage that satisfy the mild, moderate, and strenuous exercise requirement.

Examples would be a walk through Elderberry Park and visit the historic Oscar Anderson House. Then enjoy yourself on the swing set that overlooks Cook Inlet and Sleeping Lady Mountain. As a mild exercise you would expend 110-160 calories per hour.

Or rediscover your community by enjoying the downtown area. Pick up a copy of the 1986 Visitors' Guide of Anchorage from the Anchorage Convention and Visitors Bureau's Log Cabin at 4th and F for more detailed touring information of local interest points. In this moderate exercise 120-240 calories per hour would be expended. Pedaling the bike trails around Anchorage is considered a strenuous exercise and 250-350 calories may be expended.

When you expend more energy (calories) than is provided by the foods you consume, your body draws on its fat reserves to meet the extra demand. When the energy deficit (the amount of calories used minus the amount consumed) reaches 3,500 calories, you will have lost a pound of stored fat. Since the average person uses between 1,500 and 2,700 calories per day, even a 24 hour fast would not result in the loss of a pound of fat. (Your scale might show a drop of several pounds, but this is water, not fat, and is immediately regained when you eat again.)

The nutritional awareness portion of the program is also updated weekly with information on fighting fat, as well as menu suggestions that are nutritionally sound, including a variety of foods from all food groups.

Information includes fat content of dairy foods, calcium content and ways for decreasing fat in our diets without compromising other essential nutrients.

In weeks to come information on sugar and salt limits in our diets will be included in the pamphlet, with alternatives suggested. The pamphlets will help you make wise food selections while doing the grocery shopping.

The benefits of participation in such a program are weight control, increased energy, and simply feeling good. Stress reduction is also a result of a good exercise program and eating nutritionally sound foods.

The program is free and self-directed, and can be developed into group participation or be individualized. A point system is available for incentives and to give you an evaluation of how well you are doing. The goal is a healthier and higher wellness level for our Anchorage population.

10 Oops!

The following is a correction to the story, "Did you know," on page 8 of the August issue of Intercom. The number of fatal accidents was up 15 percent in 1985 over 1980 and the number of fatalities was up 8 percent in 1985 over 1980. Someone's calculator had a hard day!



New steps urged

A Department of Transportation task force studying security at domestic U.S. airports has recommended that FAA take additional steps to restrict access to airport "sterile" areas and aircraft operational areas.

In a preliminary report to Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Hanford Dole, the task force urged that airports be required to establish procedures that would further limit the number of persons allowed to bypass screening points and prohibit anyone, including airline and airport employees, from taking unscreened baggage or other items into sterile areas.

Additionally, the report recommends agency action to require that airport operators tighten controls over vehicles allowed into aircraft operational areas and strengthen procedures for insuring separation of screened passengers from airline flights and unscreened passengers arriving on commuter and business aircraft.

The task force was organized by Secretary Dole last February and expects to complete its review by the end of the year. The study teams include FAA security specialists along with other DOT personnel.

FAA gearing up for drug testing program

The agency expects to begin its previously announced drug testing program for FAA employees in certain safety related positions in December or early January.

This target date was set following the award of a \$756,177 contract to Compu-Chem Laboratories of Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, which will assist the agency in establishing and implementing the program as well as performing the urinalysis function.

Approximately 24,000 of FAA's 47,000 employees who presently are required to take an annual physical as a condition of employment will be included in the program. Covered are air traffic controllers, flight service station specialists, pilots, safety inspectors and federal air marshals. Also included are operations officers, police officers, fire fighters and mobile lounge operators at Washington National and Dulles Airports.

Administrator Engen emphasized that the new program is not intended to be punitive in nature. "Our goal is to identify employees who may have a drug or alcohol problem, get them off the firing line, and provide them with an opportunity to enter a treatment program," he said.

Urine samples will be collected during annual physicals and sent to the contractor using procedures designed to insure the "chain of custody." Specimens will be screened for alcohol and a variety of drugs and those that produce a positive reading will be subjected to a more comprehensive confirmation test.

FAA employees who enter and successfully complete a treatment program may be returned to their original positions but will be subject to random drug testing for a period of one year. Refusal to enter a drug program will result in dismissal, as will a second offense.

Gun of the future

You will not find light guns listed anywhere in the National Airspace System Plan, but this venerable tool for controlling airport traffic is nevertheless part of the ATC future.

In fact, FAA's Program Engineering and Maintenance Service currently is developing a new lightweight, rechargeable model that it expects to have ready by June 1987.

The new light gun/reel will weigh almost one-third less than the present equipment, which should make it easier for controllers to handle and use. However, the agency plans to field test the new signal gun at six towers before going forward with procurement.

Light guns are used to communicate with aircraft and ground vehicles with no radio or a non-operating radio. For example, a steady green signal tells a pilot he is cleared to land, and a steady red tells him to yield to other traffic.

Midland controller pleads guilty

An air traffic controller at the Midland, Texas Airport has pleaded guilty in federal court to a charge of lying to FAA investigators about the cover up of a possible operational error and been sentenced to two years of supervised probation.

Following his guilty plea, the court dismissed a second charge that the controller erased 54 minutes of a voice data tape covering the time of the error. The 23-year old controller who could have been sentenced to five years has been assigned to noncontrol duties at the Midland ATCT since the January 20 incident.



Work force increases

The controller work force increased by 126 in the month of July, pushing the overall total to 14,388. That is only 92 below FAA's end-of-the-fiscal-year goal of 14,480 with two months still to go (according to data from D.C., the 14,480 number was exceeded by 4 as of August 31, 1986).

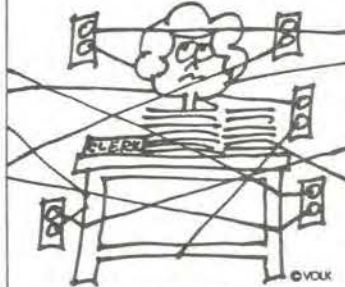
Despite the continued growth of the controller work force, Congressional and public interest in the subject remains high and Associate Administrator Charles E. Weithoner along with Norbert Owens, Deputy Associate Administrator for Air Traffic, appeared August 14 before a House of Representatives subcommittee to explain the agency's system for counting and reporting controller numbers.

They noted that the 14,388 figure included full-performance-level controllers (FPL), which numbered 9,255 at the end of July, and 3,653 developmental controllers, including these who are undergoing training at the academy.

Also included in the controllers work force are 1,480 air traffic assistants, who do not control traffic but work in direct support of the controllers.

Not included in the 14,388 figure are traffic management coordinators, area supervisors, and certain staff specialists who are certified to work traffic and do on a part-time basis. As of July 31, total staffing in the centers and towers was 18,924.

SAFETY



Don't string electric
cords carelessly!

SAFETY



Report sharp points and
splinters on equipment!

SAFETY



Use handles to
close drawers!



"One thing you have to
admit about Simpkins,
He really reads those
safety posters."