NOVEMBER 1974

FAA WORLD

Service to Man in Flight

Federal Notebook

YOUR BUSINESS IS YOUR BUSINESS

The opportunity to know what's in your personnel file may be coming down the pike. The House Government Operations Committee has unanimously cleared a bill (HR 1281) requiring Federal agencies to show employees most of what's in their own files. The Right to Privacy Act would exclude from your eyes only confidential medical data, classified material, law enforcement information and Secret Service protection information. If it becomes law, the provision would go into effect in 6 months, giving agencies a chance to clean out possibly objectionable material. The full House is expected to pass the bill; the Senate has already passed a similar bill.

INFLATION LEADER

A report on the Federal Employee Insurance Program by the House Employees Benefit Subcommittee states that the average annual health insurance premium climbed from $180 in 1960 to $446 in 1971, with the Civil Service Commission estimating that it may reach $850 to $900 by 1975! The report asked CSC to take a firm stand on stopping the increases or consider the government going into self-insuring the program, as earlier suggested by the General Accounting Office. The subcommittee asked CSC to take action to get the carriers to control health care costs, to continue trying to reduce the profit portion of its contracts, to set the insurers' special reserve at zero and the contingency reserve at one month's premium at the most, to continue auditing carriers, to be the voice of employees and annuitants and to provide better information on the different plans.

ON THE ROAD

The Senate has passed and sent to the House a bill to raise per diem and mileage rates. It provides a minimum per diem of $35, with the General Services Administration empowered to boost it to $50 in high-cost areas. Mileage would be boosted to a flat 16 cents. The House's version would set a maximum per diem of $35 and a mileage allowance of from 12 to 18 cents. The Senate version would also require twice yearly reviews by GSA, GAO and unions to adjust rates upward if justified. Enactment of a bill is expected this session.

RETIREMENT BALM

The House Ways and Means Committee has adopted a proposal by Rep. Joel Broyhill (Va) for its tax reform bill that will reduce taxes for employees who go on optional or disability retirement before age 65. The 15 percent tax credit would apply to an income of $3,750 instead of $2,200 for married employees filing joint returns and to $2,500 instead of $1,529 for single persons. The same credit would apply to all over the age of 65, whether retired or not. ■ The optional retirement bill that is resurrected each year is expected to have to rise once again. No action was anticipated this session to put over the Magic 80 formula or 30 years-at-any-age legislation.

OVERTIME IS NOT OVERTIME

The Civil Service Commission has clarified one point in the new Fair Labor Standards Act: Federal employees in a training status are not entitled to overtime pay for work in excess of 40 hours a week, based on an earlier law forbidding such pay.

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The cover: *The image of Alaska is spectacular scenery and aviation, with oil and minerals creating a boom in business and aviation. At Merrill Field in Anchorage, a pair of light planes mount the still relatively uncrowded skies.*

A Unique Land

I recently visited our 49th state—that young, rugged land that for over a century has been, and still is, a frontier for America.

All across its pristine wilderness, Alaska is on the move. The increase in tourism, the stepped-up exploration for its abundant mineral resources and the development of the oil pipeline have spurred an explosive new growth from Ketchikan to Barrow. And along with this, the unmistakable signs of a momentous boom in aviation are evident everywhere.

In a real sense, aviation and the FAA have grown up with Alaska over the last half-century—from the time when adventurous bush pilots first probed its almost inaccessible interior to today, when even such remote towns as Nome, Kotzebue and Deadhorse enjoy commercial jet service. Now that the herculean task of spanning the state with an 800-mile service road and 48-inch oil pipeline is well underway, aviation has an even greater role to play, and so does the FAA.

Alaska is a unique environment—towering mountains, an enormous coastline and vast stretches of dense forests and tundra. Under these circumstances, it has become apparent to me that Alaska also presents some rather unique challenges for aviation and our agency. Upon my return from this trip, I assembled a headquarters task force and instructed them to go to Alaska to talk with state officials, pilots and representatives of the aviation industry to get their views on the special problems expected to result from expanded aeronautical activity. By the time you read this, the task force will have submitted its report, and its recommendations will be rapidly considered and acted upon.

As I see it, the FARs in Alaska may well have to be re-evaluated in light of the findings of the task force. Where the regulations are inadequate from a safety standpoint, they will be strengthened; where they are too stringent for the relatively uncrowded environment and unusual operating requirements, it may be necessary to consider modifying them. We must be prepared to adapt to the changing needs of the aviation system in that part of the world.

The compass has swung. Lower 48ers are hearing an enchanting paraphrase of Greeley's call: Go north, young man. FAA hears it, too, and stands ready to serve.

Alexander P. Butterfield

ALEXANDER P. BUTTERFIELD
Administrator

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The workhorse of Alaska—a Hercules C-130 cargo plane—lands pipeline materials on a frozen airfield in the Brooks Range north of the Arctic Circle.

ALASKA—The Last Frontier Is Booming

Stories by John G. Leyden

Boom times have come to Alaska once again, and, in many ways, it's the Gold Rush days all over again.

This time oil—Black Gold, if you will—is the catalyst. The potential riches of Alaska's North Slope area have spawned one of history's most controversial and expensive construction projects—a multi-billion-dollar pipeline stretching the entire length of the state from the Beaufort Sea to the Gulf of Alaska.

But the trans-Alaska pipeline project—exciting as it is—is not the only thing going on in Alaska these days, according to Lyle Brown, Director of FAA's Alaskan Region.

"The pipeline project is only one aspect of Alaska's expanding economic base," he said. "The whole state is moving."

"Sometimes I think our people in those areas not directly affected by the pipeline must be getting tired of reading about it," Brown said. "Their workload is up also, and they're not getting any recognition."

One of the reasons for the state-wide boom is the renewed interest in Alaska's mineral wealth, Brown notes. The state is said to have 32 of the world's 34 basic minerals, and these are present in commercially marketable quality and volumes. They're even dredging for gold again in Nome.

Moreover, geologists are convinced that the rich Prudhoe Bay field on the North Slope that has sparked the current oil boom represents only a fraction of the state's petroleum reserves. Exploration for new oil and associated gas pools have accelerated now that the pipeline project is under way.

"And make no mistake about it," Brown says. "Transportation is what's going to open all this up and permit development of these resources."

In Alaska, transportation long has been synonymous with aviation. This is true because of the state's large geographic area, widely dispersed population and lack of other transportation modes. Although Alaska is more than twice the size of Texas, it has fewer roads than Rhode Island and only two railroad lines, which together have less than 1,000 miles of track.

Consequently, Alaska ranks as the "flyingest" state in the Union, with six times as many pilots and 13 times as many airplanes on a per capita basis as the national average. In addition, 84 percent of commercial intercity passengers in Alaska are moved by air, compared with 31 percent in the United States as a whole.

Today virtually every community of more than a few hundred people has regular air service, and such small and remote cities as Nome (2,750 population), Kotzebue (1,860) and Barrow (2,300) boast daily commercial jet service. From outside the state, there is jet service to Alaska on a daily basis by four airlines. In addition, three intra-state carriers are operating, and connections to even the most remote communities are readily available with local feeder airlines. Finally, because of Alaska's position as the hub of the transcontinental polar routes, the state is also served by many international airlines, representing nations of Europe and Asia.

Still, air traffic activity continues on the increase in Alaska due at least in part to the pipeline project and associated operations. The Fairbanks Flight Service Station, for example, has been setting new records with each passing month.

"For the 12 months ending July 31, we ran 26 percent above the traffic volume of the preceding 12 months," says FSS chief David Gray, "but that figure doesn't even begin to tell the story. Traffic has been especially heavy this summer. We've been running over 30,000 flight services a month and should hit close to 40,000 in August."

The story is the same in the rest of the pipeline corridor. The Cordova FSS reports a 44 percent gain in the same 12-month period. Gulkana is up 33 percent, Northway 20 percent, Bettles 30 percent and Deadhorse on the North Slope, 84 percent.

Similar increases are reported elsewhere in Alaska, emphasizing the state-wide nature of the boom now underway. The Ketchikan FSS at the southern end of the Alaska panhandle registered a 60 percent gain in traffic during the 12-month period ending July 31. Nome and Kotzebue on the Bering Sea shows gains of better than 20 percent and Dillingham in southwestern Alaska had a 27 percent increase.

But flying in Alaska can still be a risky business for the uninitiated and uninformed, according to Mel Derry, chief of the Region's Flight Standards Division.

"The country is inherently hostile to aviation," Derry noted. "The environment really is not conducive to flying. The weather, terrain and the long winter nights all combine with other factors to make flying more hazardous than it is in the Lower 48."

Supporting Derry's statement are statistics that show the accident rate in Alaska during fiscal year 1974 was 78 per 1,000 aircraft, more than double the national average. For this reason, the region gives very high priority to its aviation-education and accident-prevention programs.

During August, for example, the region initiated a special three-week pilot-counseling program aimed

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1. Alaska has mineral riches as evidenced by this gold-mining dredge operating on the Nome airport.
2. The Kotzebue FSS sits at the tip of a peninsula on the northwest coast just above the arctic circle.
3. Specialist Shari Stanfield mans the console at the Yakutat FSS in the Alaskan panhandle.
4 & 5. This spring, Deputy Administrator James Dow (right) reviewed the proposed pipeline route with Alaskan Region Director Lyle Brown. This summer, after construction on the service road got underway, Administrator Butterfield and service directors visited Alaska to view its impact.

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specifically at reducing the number of light-plane accidents during the moose/caribou hunting season. This traditionally is a bad period for air safety in Alaska because of the large number of off-airport operations from beaches, roads, open fields and so on. Moreover sometimes successful hunters try to take off with their newly-acquired passenger not realizing what a moose stuffed into the back of an airplane can do to runway requirements or the airplane's center of gravity.

A similar effort—dubbed Operation Contact—has been initiated to cope with the increased air activity in the pipeline corridor. Flight Standards inspectors from the Anchorage and Fairbanks field offices are working with Bud Seltenreich—FAA's safety coordinator for the pipeline—to contact every pilot involved in the project. Their aim is to make sure each pilot flying the pipeline is thoroughly familiar with the Alaska environment and geography.

To oversee aviation in the nation's 49th state, FAA employs some 1,600 people with approximately 80 percent of these assigned to the field. The list of field facilities includes 27 flight service stations, eight airport control towers, two radar approach control facilities (RAPCONs) and two air route traffic control centers, although the Fairbanks Center is being phased out and its functions remoted to Anchorage. In addition, the agency expects to commission a new combined station/tower at Deadhorse on the North Slope before the end of the year and to erect another at Valdez at the southern terminus of the pipeline.

"Most of the FAA people here came from the Lower 48 originally but consider themselves Alaskans now," observes Regional Director Lyle Brown. "Most have been up here six, eight, 10 years. They came up with the idea of staying two or four years and never left."

Brown himself is serving his second term as Regional Director. He was there from August 1967 to September 1970, went to Chicago and then returned in September 1973 because he "likes the place and the people." He also confesses, somewhat reluctantly, to an abiding interest in the pipeline project.

In addition to recruiting people from the Lower 48, the region also is making a concerted effort to increase its employment of Alaskan natives, according to Quentin Taylor, who is Brown's deputy and formerly Director of the Office of Civil Rights in Washington. The native population includes some 30,000 Eskimos, 20,000 Indians and 5,000 Aleuts. Together, they comprise about 17 percent of the state's total population of 320,000.

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1. Mountains herald the state's capital at Juneau.
2 & 3. North of Anchorage, the ground visitor to Talkeetna is greeted by this rustic sign, while the flier sees an FSS.
4. Anchorage—Alaska's metropolis.
5. Trailers and GI-sheet buildings in Atwood Camp, where FAAers live and eat at Deadhorse Airport on Prudhoe Bay.

The present FAA workforce in Alaska includes about 13 percent minorities, and our goal this year is to increase that to over 15 percent, Taylor says. "Similarly, we are trying to increase the percentage of female employees from 16 to 18."

But FAA is more than just an employer in Alaska, Brown points out. There is a big difference in the kind of services the agency must provide employees. These include housing, commissaries, fire protection and even sewer service in many locations where they are not otherwise available. "FAA is not just part of the community in Alaska," Brown observes. "In many places, we are the community."

At one time, FAA operated more than 500 housing units in Alaska, says Art Schwenkl, chief of the Logistics Division. But that number has dropped to just over 300 as commercial units have become available in certain locations, and various facilities have been consolidated. "We're continually evaluating our facility locations to see where we can get out of the housing business," Schwenkl adds. "After all, this is only incidental to the aviation business."

The pipeline project has complicated Schwenkl's job as it has those of many other FAA employees, however. Among other things, his office is responsible for finding housing at places like Valdez, which was completely destroyed in the 1964 earthquake and only now is beginning to expand to meet the pipeline challenge.

"Everything we do up here is packed with some kind of problem peculiar to Alaska," Schwenkl says. "At Valdez, we asked for bids on five trailers for our people and then found that none of the commercially available units could meet the Valdez building codes for roof loads. The Coast Guard ran into the same problem."

"Snow is a real problem in Valdez," he adds. "It gets as high as the tops of telephone poles. There's no way you can just go out and sweep it off the roof."

"One possible solution is to require that the trailer roofs be heavily reinforced at the factory. Or we could erect a shelter over the trailers, which is what the Coast Guard is thinking about. I'm sure we'll work out something."

This "can do" attitude expressed by Schwenkl is what makes Lyle Brown so proud of the people who work for FAA in Alaska and confident they can overcome the various problems and situations created by the pipeline project.

"The FAA people up here are just different," Brown says. "There's a sense of community among them and a strong personal bond between families. It's something I like to see very much, and it's one of the reasons I came back to Alaska."

THE SPUR:

Black Gold

Sometime before the end of 1977, if all goes well, the first oil will begin flowing from Prudhoe Bay on Alaska's North Slope down a 48-inch pipeline to the ice-free port of Valdez 798 miles away.

Moving at speeds of up to seven miles an hour, the thick black liquid will take between four and five days to complete the journey on a route that will carry it through some of the most hostile and fragile country known to man.

From Prudhoe Bay, it will move south over the Arctic tundra through the massive, snow-capped Brooks Range by way of the 4,800-foot-high Dietrich Pass, then veer southeasterly on a course that will carry it across the Yukon and through the rolling hills 10 miles east of Fairbanks, then due south again crossing the Alaska Range through the 3,500-foot high Isabel Pass and the Chugach Range through the 2,500-foot high Thompson Pass and finally down through the Keystone Canyon to Valdez on the Gulf of Alaska.

At Valdez, the oil will enter huge storage tanks, standing six stories high and measuring 250 feet in diameter. From there, it will flow into waiting tankers which will carry it down the West Coast to Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Initially, the pipeline will deliver 1.2 million barrels of crude oil a day to Valdez. Later this will be expanded, with the addition of pumping stations and storage facilities, to 2 million barrels a day, which is the rated capacity of the line.

The first movement of oil down the trans-Alaska pipeline will culminate a nine-year effort that began with the discovery and confirmation of the Prudhoe Bay field by Atlantic Richfield (ARCO) and Exxon in 1968. Plans for the pipeline were announced the following year by ARCO, Exxon, and British Petroleum (BP). Later, in conjunction with five other leaseholders at Prudhoe Bay, they organized the Alyeska Pipeline Service Co. to build and operate the pipeline. The other consortium members are Standard Oil of Ohio (Sohio), Mobil, Phillips, Union Oil of California and Amerada Hess.

A truck supply train wends its way toward Anaktuvuk Pass at the Continental Divide in the Brooks Range last winter. The new road will eliminate such trailblazing.

But before serious construction work could get underway, Congress passed the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 which placed stringent new requirements on the pipeline builders. It also sparked a long series of court actions by environmental groups which helped to stall the project.

There is general agreement that the delay will result in a better-designed and better-built pipeline. However, the cost also has risen sharply since the venture was first announced from $900 million to a figure ranging between $4.5 and $5 billion.

The green light for the project finally was given in January 1974 when the Department of Interior issued the Federal right-of-way permit. This was followed by the state right-of-way permit in April. In all, more than 1,100 permits had to be obtained from Federal and state agencies. These included such things as Corps of Engineer approval of every river crossing and Bureau of Land Management approval on caribou crossings.

Construction work began on April 29 on the 360-mile, two-lane gravel road, which will run from Prudhoe Bay to the Yukon, where it will link up with existing roads leading south to Valdez. The road is expected to be virtually completed by the end of the current construction season.

Work also began on a 2,300-foot bridge across the Yukon and is scheduled to be finished by the end of 1975. All told, some 20 permanent bridges will be built along the pipeline road.

Actual pipe laying will begin in the spring of 1975 and will be concentrated south of the Yukon. The pipeline will be installed north of the Yukon beginning in the spring of 1976.

Concurrent with these efforts, one of the world's largest oil terminals will be built at Valdez at a cost of over $1 billion. Its facilities ultimately will include 32 storage tanks capable of holding over 16 million barrels of crude oil. Five tanker berthing areas also are planned.

Twelve pumping stations also must be built along the right-of-way to move the oil when the line reaches full capacity. However, only eight will be required initially, when the line volume will be 1.2 million barrels daily.

Some 30 construction camps also must be established up and down the line, although not all of them will be operating at the same time. The pipeline workforce is estimated to be 9,100 during the 1974 construction season, 14,200 during the 1975 season and 10,600 during 1976.

The pipe being used in the project was purchased from a Japanese concern at a cost of over $100 million when no American company bid on the job.

Acres of 48-inch pipe lie waiting near Fairbanks for construction to begin, as well as at Prudhoe Bay and Valdez.

Deliveries were completed in October 1971 and the pipe has been stacked at three points—Prudhoe Bay, Fairbanks and Valdez.

The problem of laying pipe in Alaska is compounded by the fact that much of the land is underlaid with permafrost, which in some areas is little more than muddy ice. For this reason, approximately 382 miles of the pipeline will be built above ground on pipe supports to prevent the hot oil—line friction and the pumping action will keep it at about 130 degrees—from thawing the permafrost in unstable soil and creating a destructive erosion pattern.

The remaining 416 miles of pipe will be buried in the conventional manner, except for seven miles which will be refrigerated in the ground. The refrigeration method will be used in unstable soil where the line must be buried such as at important caribou crossings.

The Prudhoe Bay field is estimated to contain some 9.6 billion barrels of crude oil, making it the largest yet discovered in North America. However, geologists believe this is only a fraction of the oil hidden beneath the North Slope. Estimates of its potential range upward to 50 billion barrels.

Equally impressive are the natural gas reserves of the North Slope. These are estimated at 26 billion cubic feet at Prudhoe Bay alone, and plans are already underway for a gas pipeline that would parallel the oil pipeline or strike off on its own through Canada.

And some say this is only the beginning.

"By the time all this construction is done," a Fairbanks newspaper noted recently, "we'll probably wind up with three oil and one gas pipeline through Alaska to Valdez, and one oil and one gas line through Alaska and Canada to the Continental United States. After that the United States will never have to kowtow to a Mideastern, oil-rich nation that wants to dictate foreign policy to us."

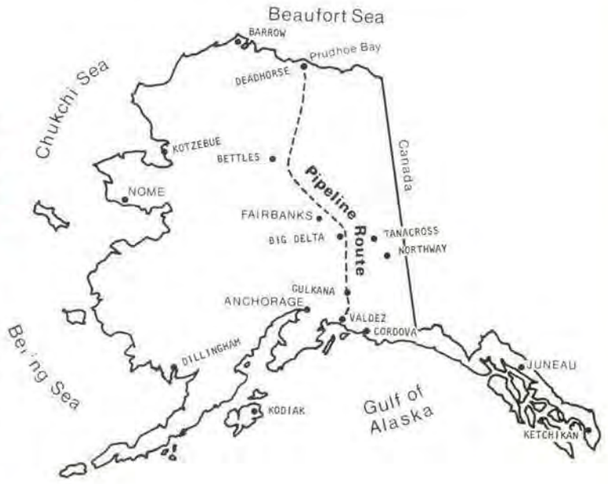
A northern section of the 360-mile pipeline service road takes shape. It will link up with existing roads south of the Yukon.

This sight will be common in the future: An oil tanker moves through Prince William Sound toward the ice-free port of Valdez, the southern terminus of the oil pipeline.

FLYING THE PIPELINE

From Prudhoe Bay to Valdez, the trans-Alaska pipeline will follow a route familiar to all Alaskans—especially those who fly—for the pipeline corridor also is one of Alaska's major north/south flyways. Along the right-of-way, FAA facilities are spaced like aerial milestones.

Many of these FAA facilities were established during World War II to provide weather and other critical flight information to the ferry pilots flying airplanes from the Lower 48 to the Soviet Union. Now they are involved in an equally vital activity in support of the pipeline project. This is their story:



VALDEZ

You sweep into Valdez just after noon in late summer, flying a light twin down a long narrow fjord, hanging between gray sky and green water. To the left is the collection of trailers and modular units that passes for the town of Valdez and to the right the scarred earth that is the beginning of the billion-dollar-plus terminal for the tankers that will carry the oil from Alaska's North Slope down the West Coast to a fuel-hungry America.

Then the water ends abruptly and you fly over acres of 48-inch pipe stacked like cordwood in long neat rows. Your pilot ducks below low-hanging clouds scudding past the high green hills and brings the airplane in for a perfect landing on a brand-new blacktop runway, its bright yellow markings looking like they had been painted fresh that morning.

On the ground, there is a sweep of activity. Earth movers and scrapers scurry around like giant yellow bugs working on the taxiway and apron, and preliminary work on a new airport terminal building is underway. Beyond the runway, housing units for construction workers are shooting up like mushrooms after the spring rains.

Currently, the FAA presence at Valdez is limited to an airport information desk, which has a direct line to the agency's flight service station at Cordova. However, a combined station/tower will be built at the airport in conjunction with the new terminal building. It will be designed to handle the great increase in traffic expected in the spring when actual pipeline installation starts south of the Yukon and construction of the tanker terminal begins.

FAA also shouldered most of the cost of building the new 5,000-foot hard-surface runway and other airfield improvements, such as converting the old runway into a taxiway. In addition, the agency also plans to install a visual approach slope indicator (VASI) and runway end identification lights (REIL) at the airport.

Veteran FAA pilot Emitt Soldin notes that the Valdez Airport can use all the help it can get because of its well-deserved reputation for bad weather. "If there's a cloud anywhere in the sky in Alaska, chances are it's right over the runway at Valdez."

But if Valdez is not ideally suited for aviation, it does boast an ice-free, deep-water port, which many believe to be the best in Alaska. It was this consideration that led the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company in 1969 to designate the town as the southern terminus of the trans-Alaska pipeline and site of a huge tanker terminal and oil storage facility.

Valdez, which was completely destroyed in the Good Friday earthquake of 1964, had gotten a new lease on life from the pipeline project, and sometime in the not-too-distant future, it will rank as one of the most important cities in Alaska.

GULKANA

For Phil Ahlstedt, one day out of a hunting camp in the Wrangell Mountains and sporting a week-old beard, the trans-Alaska pipeline means "we're going to get civilization," and he doesn't like it one bit.

"You already can see the difference," says the 11-year FAA veteran, who is supervisory electronics technician at Gulkana. "Drugs, prostitution, crime, vandalism. We're getting all the problems of civilization."

"People here are a special breed," he adds. "They've always trusted each other and helped each other, but some of that is being lost. People are more suspicious now of those they don't know."

Part of the reason for the change, according to Ahlstedt, is the "rough element" that has been attracted to Alaska by the pipeline. "You always get two camp followers for every worker . . . someone who will help them spend their money."

Ahlstedt notes that there will be three construction camps within a 50-mile radius of Gulkana, and together they will hold some 3,700 workers. The biggest and closest will hold 1,800 and be just eight miles away.

However, Ahlstedt thinks the gas pipeline could be a real boon to Alaska residents if they are allowed to siphon off supplies to heat their homes. "It certainly would be a lot cheaper than the oil and propane gas we're using now." Ahlstedt tends to be philosophical about the changes taking place in Alaska in the wake of the pipeline project. "It's going to get worse before it gets better," he notes, "and it's never going to be as good as it was."

NORTHWAY

A red-and-white jet-powered helicopter is lifting off from Northway on a salvage mission, and FSS specialist Bill Nelson is giving it a DF (direction finding equipment) steer to the spot where a light aircraft had crashed the week before.

Nelson had been working the communications console at the Northway FSS on the day of the accident, but the pilot suddenly broke off communications, saying, "Hold it. I've got all kinds of engine problems."

The next word he had came from another aircraft that had taken off at about the same time and was part of the same hunting party. "He reported the plane was down on its back and nobody was moving," Nelson recalls.

His first thought was to get help to the wreckage site, but all three helicopters normally based at Gulkana were flying. So, he called the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) at Tanacross, about 60 miles up the line, and they promised to send one as soon as possible.

In the meantime, the airplane circling the crash site reported that the pilot and passenger in the downed ship—an Anchorage schoolteacher and his six-year old son—were out and on their feet and

Phil Ahlstedt, SET, Gulkana

apparently unhurt. The BLM helicopter arrived soon afterward, and the crash survivors were ferried back to Northway.

Hunters account for a significant number of flights at Northway during the summer months and help keep the local air-taxi operator in business. But the largest share of flight activity at the Northway FSS is related to its position as the "Gateway to Alaska." Located just seven miles from the Alaska Highway, it is the first stop in Alaska for pilots using that route and the last stop going out.

Nelson, who has been with FAA for 11 years and is doing his second tour in Alaska, says he's not sure just what impact the pipeline project has had on the Northway operation. But he has noticed a significant increase in helicopter traffic this summer and assumes it's pipeline related.

But in the office of FSS chief Harold "Popo" Richardson, who is down in the McGrath area hunting caribou, are charts which are a bit more precise in measuring the increased flight activity at Northway. They show the number of flight services in July—traditionally the peak month at Northway—were up almost 30 percent from 1973 and nearly 40 percent from 1972.

Northway, like all facilities in the pipeline corridor, is feeling the effects of the project. Next year,

Supervisory electronic technician Al Eggebroten checks a low-frequency transmitter at the Northway FSS, east of the pipeline route near Canada and the Alaskan Highway. The LFR, the last one in the U.S., is now decommissioned.

the impact will be even more dramatic as pipe laying begins between Valdez and the Yukon.

BIG DELTA

A 60-knot wind banging down the dried-up bed of the Delta River and associated streams is kicking up white clouds of silt and ash reaching several hundred feet in the air, and even the petroleum company helicopters are standing down.

"Had a helicopter go out just a while ago, but he called in and said he couldn't make any headway at all and was coming back," says Carl Bandy, the flight service specialist on duty at the Big Delta station. "When the wind kicks up like that, things can get pretty slow around here." But Bandy, who is a 17-year veteran with the agency, is the first to admit that slow days are coming farther and farther apart as construction of the Alaska pipeline accelerates.

The Big Delta FSS is located within the boundaries of the Ft. Greely Army Base, and military traffic always has been an important component of its total workload.

"We never know what to expect from them," Bandy says. "Last summer, for example, they held maneuvers here, and it was like a small war going on. It kept us pretty busy."

But civilian traffic is now outpacing military flights at the joint-use airport, and it is increasingly pipeline related. "Most of the pipeline activity has been north of the Yukon up to now," Bandy observes. "Now it's beginning to pick up down here as well, but it's really only started. It's not anywhere near what it will be later on."

Still the major impact of the Alaska pipeline at Big Delta will not be in the air but on the ground. The pipeline will pass just a few hundred yards from the FSS.

"It's actually going to cut off the FSS from the FAA housing complex," says Dave Long, the supervisory electronics technician at Big Delta. "Although the line will be buried about eight feet deep in this area, we're going to have our share of problems when the actual construction is underway—probably next spring."

Right now, the pipeline company is concentrating its efforts south of the Yukon in establishing construction camps, Long notes. In fact, there is one going in just eight miles from Big Delta. One of the pumping stations will be built just three miles away.

"When the pipeline starts going in here," he adds, "we'll probably be cut off from direct access to the housing area, and I'm not sure just how we are going to handle it."

The Big Delta FSS sits next to the pipeline right-of-way where it jogs northwestward toward Fairbanks.

FAIRBANKS

The terminal building at Fairbanks International Airport at mid-day is filled with construction workers with a few Episcopal priests thrown in for contrast.

The Episcopalians are in Fairbanks to attend the consecration of the new Bishop for Alaska. The construction workers are headed for the camps north of the Yukon—places like Five Mile, Prospect Creek, Coldfoot, Dietrich, Galbraith, Toolik and Happy Valley.

"We get them in here by the hundreds some days," says Tom Hartliep, chief of the Fairbanks Tower. "You see them lined up at the Wien Airlines counter with their duffle bags, waiting for a flight north. Most are old-line construction workers—guys who have spent most of their lives in one camp or other. The young fellows go up there and stay a week or two, but they don't last."

Fairbanks has become the transportation hub for the Alaska pipeline project, and nowhere is it more apparent than at the Fairbanks Airport.

"There's a hell of a lot of men and a hell of a lot of equipment that has to be moved, and most of it has to go through here," Hartliep notes. "We have the facilities and services here to do the job."

He points to the nine air carrier aircraft lined up in front of the terminal building and, beyond, to the big, lumbering Hercules cargo planes operated by Alaska International that are taking off and landing with such monotonous regularity that it looks like one airplane practicing touch and go's. "It's fantastic," Hartliep says of the activity, noting that Fairbanks is a city of only 30,000 people. "I've never seen anything like it."

Hartliep says FAA and the airport operator have initiated a great many projects in recent years to upgrade the airport to handle the pipeline traffic.

David Gray, Fairbanks FSS chief

Jerry Garrison, FSS specialist, Deadhorse

These have included expansion of aircraft parking aprons, construction of new ramps, dredging of the float-plane channel and numerous improvements to the general aviation facilities. In addition, a new ILS is scheduled for installation, and a request has been submitted for a new tower.

"We had to start planning all of this four or five years ago when the pipeline project first materialized," Hartliep says. "It's encouraging now to see we weren't wrong."

DEADHORSE

Wien Airlines Flight 23 from Fairbanks, a Boeing 727 tri-jet, turns off the gravel runway at the Deadhorse Airport on Alaska's North Slope and pulls to a stop in front of the make-shift terminal.

A pretty blonde stewardess in the rear of the airplane takes the microphone and recites the familiar: "Welcome to Deadhorse. We hope you have a pleasant stay." But Deadhorse, which serves the busy Prudhoe Bay oil field at the northern terminus of the trans-Alaska pipeline, is not a spot one would normally pick for pleasant times. Perched on the shores of the Arctic Ocean, where wind-chill factors drop temperatures to minus 140 degrees in winter, it is strictly a place of business, with the smell of crude oil heavy in the air.

North of the Yukon River, the last outpost along the pipeline before Prudhoe Bay is the FSS at Bettles.

Deadhorse formerly was the base camp and airfield of the Shell Oil Company. It was acquired by the State of Alaska and converted to a public facility following the discovery of oil at Prudhoe Bay in 1968. At present, there are three base camps at Deadhorse-Prudhoe Bay. One houses the workers from British Petroleum, which is serving as the operator of the west field at Prudhoe Bay. The second belongs to Atlantic Richfield, which is operating the east field. The third is a commercial establishment, which catches the overflow from the other two and houses miscellaneous personnel like those from FAA.

"Everyone gets along here real well," says Jim Carew, the supervisory electronics technician for FAA at Deadhorse. "One outfit burns our disposables for us. Another lets us wash our vehicles there. You don't find any crime or vandalism because all you have here are workers."

FAA currently operates a flight service station at Deadhorse, but this is scheduled for conversion to a combined station/tower in December. A secondary radar installation is slated to go on line at about the same time.

"Once we get the radar operational," Carew says, "this airport will be as well equipped as any in Alaska." Other facilities, he notes, include an instrument landing system, an approach lighting system, two visual-approach systems, a VOR/DME and a non-directional beacon.

The new station/tower will have a staff of three controllers, permitting 24-hours-a-day operation, with personnel rotating from the Merrill Field Tower at Anchorage. The radar room also will be run around-the-clock by a staff of three controllers, who will rotate to Deadhorse from the Anchorage Center. Airway Facilities personnel will be drawn on a rotating basis from the Fairbanks Center Sector.

One of the attractions of the Deadhorse assignment is the 16 hours of overtime recorded each week, since FAA employees work a seven-day week. "It adds up," says FSS specialist Jim Garrison, who has been working regular or relief at Deadhorse almost since the operation began. "This isn't a bad job," he notes. "And I guess you could say it serves a useful purpose: I'm putting away a lot of money."

Jim Carew, who has 14 years with the agency, all in Alaska, is a bit more positive on his reasons for being at Deadhorse. 'I really enjoy this job," he says. "A lot of people thought I was crazy when I bid on it. But this pipeline project really fascinates me. I'm just glad to be a part of it."

Bud Seltenreich (left), pipeline safety coordinator, talks pipeline air corridor safety at Five Mile Camp with Charles Meggitt, chief pilot of Tanana Air of Fairbanks.

SPREADING THE WORD ON SAFETY

There had been five helicopter accidents in as many weeks at a place called Umiat on the north slope of the Brooks Range, about a hundred miles from the big Prudhoe Bay oil field. Two of them had been fatal and one had claimed four lives.

So, Bud Seltenreich—a short, energetic man who began flying in Alaska almost 40 years ago—packed his tent and sleeping bag in his single-engine airplane and flew up to have a look.

"There were three geophysical outfits up there operating eight or nine helicopters," he says. "I found they were pushing their pilots pretty hard trying to finish up before winter set in. There was nothing illegal in what they were doing, but they weren't following sound operating practices. I made some recommendations that I hope will solve the problem."

Seltenreich is FAA's Pipeline Safety Coordinator: It's his job to prevent and/or correct situations like the one at Umiat. Based in Anchorage, he spends at least one week in every two along the pipeline. To cope with the increased air traffic generated by the pipeline project, Seltenreich is working with other FAA inspectors from Anchorage and Fairbanks to contact every pilot involved in the project to brief them on the Alaskan environment and terrain. Appropriately enough, the program is called "Operation Contact."

"We're especially anxious to reach the new pilots who have come up from the Lower 48 to work on the pipeline," he says. "Many of them are not familiar with Alaska's hostile weather and nonforgiving terrain, and we want to give them the benefit of our years of flying experience up here."

Seltenreich estimates that there are 120 pilots working the pipeline, not counting the Hercules crews who fly cargo to the camps. He puts the number of aircraft directly involved at about 65, half of which are helicopters. "We have a list of every pilot on the pipeline, and we check his name off after we've talked with him," he says. "But the list keeps changing, so it's a never-ending job."

The safety coordinator also makes regular inspection of pipeline aviation facilities to see that aircraft are properly maintained and not overloaded, that passengers are not carried with explosives and that pilots are not bucking weather minimums, among other things.

In addition, he represents the agency on the Alyeska Pipeline Service Company's Safety Committee, which meets at least once a month to discuss safety problems along the pipeline route. One of their top priorities in the coming months is to improve winter flying techniques and, thus, reduce accidents.

"Winter flying can be hazardous if you're not properly equipped and don't know what you're doing," he says. "But in another way, it's probably the safest flying in the world. Because of the cold air, you have good density altitude, good airplane and engine performance. You only have to consider some precautions for the snow and icing conditions and starting engines in cold weather when the oil is congealed."

Then, too, there's the dreaded "whiteout" which Seltenreich compares to "flying inside a milk bottle. You can have 50 miles visibility and a 2,000-foot ceiling, but you can't tell where the ground is because you have no point of reference," he explains. "There's no contrast especially after a new snow. It's especially critical north of the Brooks Range where you don't have any trees or bushes sticking out of the snow. You can't tell a fifty-foot bank from level ground, even on foot. So you have to be sure you have some kind of contrast or actually fly instruments."

Few pilots know more about flying in Alaska than Seltenreich, and that's one of the reasons he was picked for the pipeline job last May after serving as chief of the Anchorage General Aviation District Office. Born in McCarthy in the southeastern part of the state, he began flying in the 1930s at the age of 16 and even made a few air mail flights. Later, he was chief mechanic for Pan American in Alaska and owned and operated Fairbanks Air Service, which is still in buisness under different management. He has been with FAA for 26 years and hopes to continue as the pipeline coordinator until he retires in a few years.

-ALASKA-

"Roll it!" Gypsy controller Terry Hartley, Moline, Ill., Tower, gives pointed departure instructions to a P-51 Mustang at Wittman Field in Oshkosh, Wis.

Reunion At Oshkosh

22ND EAA CONVENTION

Where else but Oshkosh would you hear a controller say, "Blue and white Piper: There are about 122 aircraft in the area; find the last one and get behind him!"?

It's not surprising when you consider that the temporary flight service station set up for the 22nd International Experimental Aircraft Association Convention briefed 6,700 pilots in one week. Thousands traveled from all over the world to watch daily air shows and look at static displays of homebuilt conventional aircraft, rebuilt and modified military and antique aircraft and strange homemade concoctions that fly.

The weather favored the meeting and its volume, too. While thunderstorms circled within sight of, but never descended upon, Oshkosh, Wis., FAA controllers were thinking about them. Asked one, "If it rains, can we give open cockpit aircraft priority for departures and arrivals?" As a result, the Green Bay FSS with its on-the-scene satellite averaged 2,546 services daily, with a one-day peak of 4,070. One of those was the arrival of the flying girder, Breezy, from Appleton, Wis., carrying in Administrator Butterfield.

Other than those pictured, FAAers who participated included:

Milwaukee GADO inspectors Bill Ryther, Will Dodd and Del Shanks, and Chicago GADO inspectors Theo Moore and Roy Wieden.

Oshkosh Airway Facilities Sector chief Doug McKay, Larry Cassidy, Wayne Stah and George Smith.

FSS specialists Mel Miller, South Bend, Ind., Louie Demers, Quincy, Ill.; Jim McCollom, Detroit; Seldon Armbruster, Cleveland; and Ed Slaga, Green Bay chief.

Minneapolis Flight Inspection Field Office inspectors Mac Karnowski, Bill Howell and Roger Johnson, along with a DC-3 on static display.

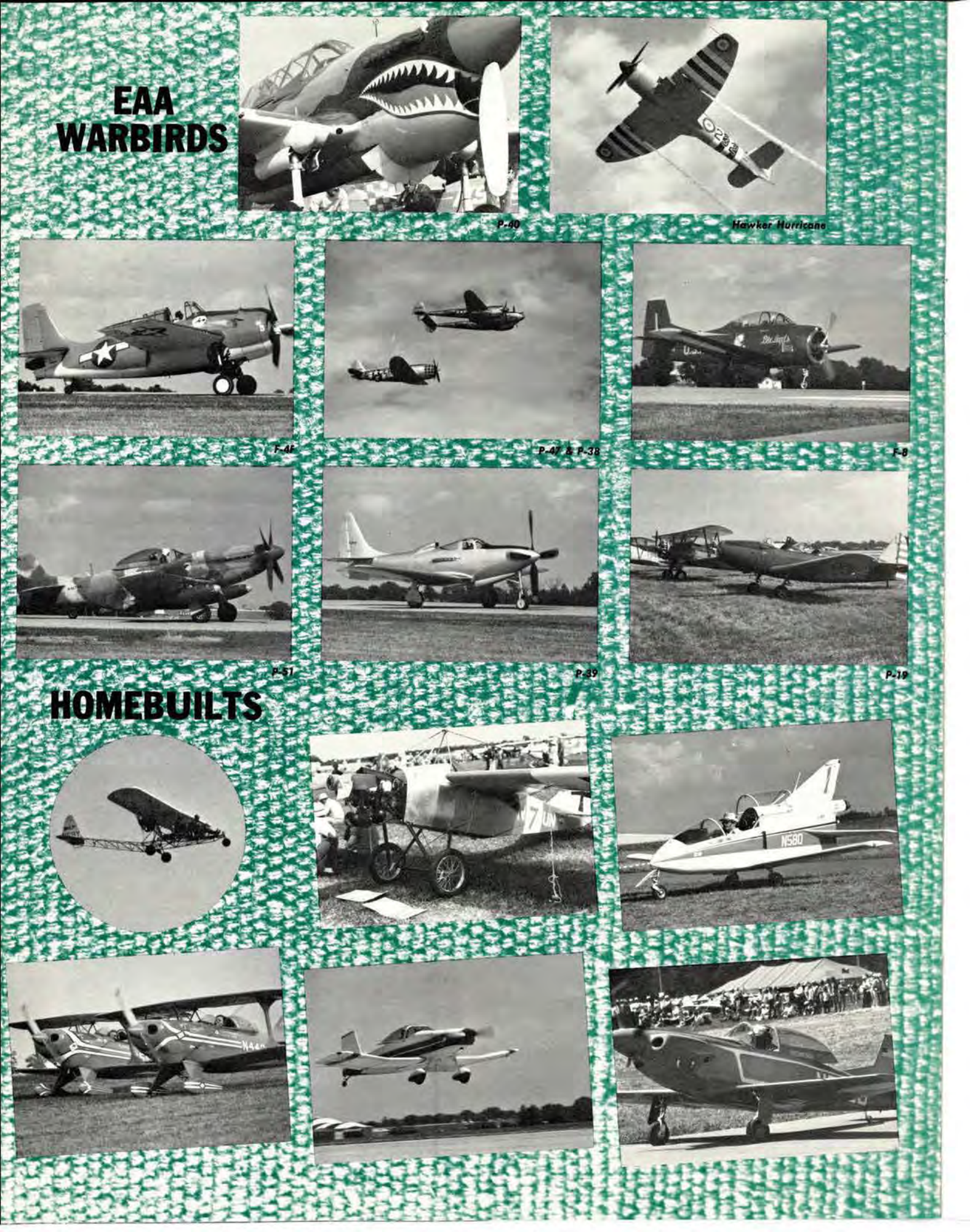
Controllers Terry Dougherty and Dave Shepherd, Minneapolis; Ryan Gove and Gary Simpson, Madison, Wis.; Lee Arneson, Janesville, Wis.; Mike Krutschevski, Indianapolis; John DeJonge, Evansville, Ill.; Bill Olson, chief, Alton, Ill.; Gene Simmons, Flint, Mich.; Rodger Brode, Chicago O'Hare; Jim Carter, Flying Cloud, Minn.; Ramon Fancher, Lunken, Ohio; Joe Matukaitis, Ohio State University; John Strauser, DuPage, Ill.; Terry Hartley, Moline, Ill.; and chief Larry Davis, Al Sabin, John Gulig, Bob Junger, Cheri Crowley, Gordon Hayman, Jim Stanton, Ollie Oliver and Verne Wepner of Oshkosh.

Story and photos by Ett Foster

Other gypsies work out of a mobile unit set up by Airway Facilities personnel to communicate with the tower. From the left are George Darward, Cleveland Tower; Bob Margala, Detroit Tower; and Doug Radtke, Chicago-Midway Tower.

Will Showers (left), Decatur, Ill., FSS, goes over the Oshkosh area weather with Tom Cummings, chief of the Fort Wayne, Ind., FSS, in their temporary station at Wittman.

GADO inspectors Joe Siemer (standing) and Dorvin Hagen from Milwaukee were kept hopping by U.S. and foreign pilots.



GOOD SHOW!

Photos courtesy of The Union Democrat, Sonora, Calif.

Butch Pfeiffer, in an anachronistic shirt, climbs into his English Sopwith Pup for a mock dog fight with another replica — a French Neiuport—at a Columbia, Calif., fly-in.

Columbia Airport in northern California had its own x-rated fly-in, which temporary tower personnel termed "the safest, best-run fly-in and show we've seen yet."

Highlights of the show included a mock dog fight between a homebuilt Sopwith Pup and a Neiuport of World War I vintage; aerobatics by a homebuilt Myers biplane, a Cessna Aerobat, a clipped-wing Taylorcraft and a Citabria Decathalon; parachute jumping; flying competitions; radio-controlled model contests; and rides at three cents a pound. Visiting aircraft included an Aercoupe, a 1936 Piper J2 Cub, World War II Stearman bi-planes, a Midget Mustang and a Fournier power-glider.

FAA's tower was a flat-bed mounted cab constructed by and borrowed from the Airway Facilities Sector at Fresno. It was manned by Joe Cadero, chief of the Stockton Tower; Leo Rivard, Jr., of the Stockton Tower; and Bill Dixon and George Kirk of the Modesto Tower. Maintaining the gear were H. R. King and Ed Valentyne of the Stockton AF Sector Field Office.

Joe Cadero, chief of the Stockton, Calif., Tower (holding light gun), and assistant chief Leo Rivard, Jr., man the portable tower used for the fly-in.

HEADS UP

CENTRAL

The new chief of the Emporia, Kan., FSS is *Orval Aakus* . . . *Jackie West* has become the deputy chief of the Wichita, Kan., Tower . . . A new assistant chief at the Sioux City, Iowa, Tower is *Donald Hensley* . . . *William Hood* got the nod as assistant chief at the Burlington, Iowa, FSS . . . The new chief of the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Tower is *Dale Lehmann* . . . Promoted to chief of the Columbia, Mo., Tower was *Lawrence Goff* . . . Taking the slot as assistant chief of the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, FSS was *Dale Carnine*.

SOUTHERN

When the Nashville, Tenn., GADO and ACDO combined to form a FSDO, *Harvey Gassaway* was named to head the new facility.

SOUTHWESTERN

Marcus Wright is the new chief of the Air Security Branch . . . Selected as chief of Ryan Tower in Baton Rouge, La., was *David Gonzales* . . . *Francis Davis* has taken over as chief of the El Paso, Tex., Tower.

WESTERN

Richard Ellis is a new assistant chief at the Lindbergh Tower at San Diego.

Aviation News Contest

The annual agency-wide contest for safety cartoon suggestions for *FAA Aviation News* is under way.

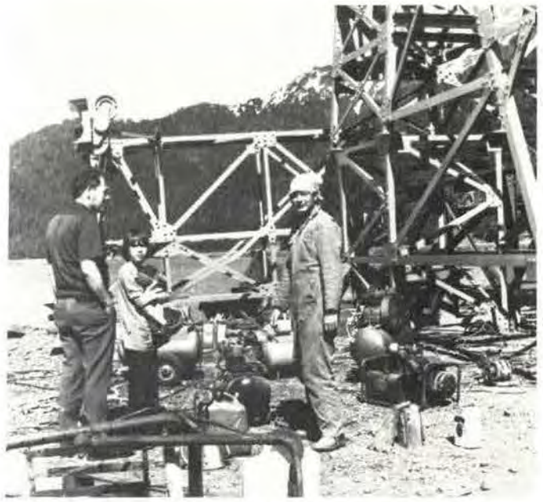
Drawn by noted artist Robert Osborn, the cartoons are used monthly on the back cover of the magazine and on safety posters for airports and flying clubs.

Twelve $25 cash awards and a credit line in the magazine will be given for the dozen best entries, which should describe in a paragraph or two the most unusual incident or accident affecting general aviation safety in your area. Summarize the lesson to be learned in one sentence or a two-line rhymed couplet, expressing a warning with wry wit.

Mail entries to *FAA Aviation News*, AFS-18, postmarked by November 15. Include your name, address, phone number and social security number.

FACES and PLACES

WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT—*Shimmering plastic protects his furniture as Southwestern Region Plans and Programs Branch chief Glenn Compton tries to get some work done. Just when the roof was off during reroofing, Fort Worth got two inches of rain in an hour. It didn't bother Compton much, though; it was his last week before retirement.*



WEEKEND PAINTER—*On his time off, Sid Nally (left), Cordova, Alaska, GFET, is helping to paint 17 ski towers as part of a community project, abetted by his daughter, Beth Anne. At right is another volunteer, Dr. Art Tilgner.*

Photo courtesy of the *Cordova Times*

MAN IN THE RIGHT SEAT—*James Dow took the oath of office as FAA's Deputy Administrator from DOT Secretary Claude Brinegar recently, as Mrs. Dow held the Bible.*

AERIAL CRANE—*Quicker and cheaper than a crane, a helicopter, picked up the 2,000-pound ground control antenna from the old nine-story Logan International Airport Tower and set it atop Boston's new 22-story tower, which is scheduled to be commissioned next month.*

SOME PRELIMS!—*Nancy Lynn Small won the title of Miss NAFEC 1975, a preliminary to the Miss America Pageant. Electronics technician and NAFEC Association president Benjamin Sooy presented the awards to Miss Small, second runner-up Melinda Susan Cobb (left) and first runner-up Mary Carol McGinnis. All three are local residents; Miss Small is the niece of a NAFEC employee.*

QUEEN FOR A YEAR—*Cincinnati GADO secretary Marian Koehler (left) was named Federal Employee of the Year by the Federal Executive Board and Federal Business Assn. Jayne Baker Spain (right), vice chairman of the Civil Service Commission, made the presentation.*

WORLD SAFETY—*The Transportation Safety Institute at the Aeronautical Center recently hosted foreign security personnel for its aviation security course. Course manager Richard Millan describes an airport model to (left to right) a representative from Swaziland and two from the Khmer Republic. In the background is State Department French translator René Delacain.*

HER HERO—*Controller Bob Mulligan of the Washington Center visits Tracy Yukovich, who is recovering from injuries from a plane crash that killed her grandfather and the pilot. A member of the Leesburg, Va., rescue squad in his off-duty hours, Mulligan pulled her from the wreck and rushed her to a hospital for emergency treatment.*

WHICH IS WHICH?—*Annabel Fera is the certified flight instructor watching Churley Jones, headquarters Communication Division of Research & Development, preflight his plane. The occasion was a three-day clinic for the Maryland Civil Air Patrol at the Frederick, Md., Airport.*

PULLING TOGETHER FOR THE AIRPORT

It was the kind of a day you'd have to place a special order for—a summer Sunday, temperature in the 80s and just a hint of a breeze. The folks in southern Wisconsin decided the day was right to congregate at the Rock County Airport in Janesville—10,000 of them, that is.

"Isn't it great that people are finally coming to appreciate the benefits that an airport has for the community," said tower chief Ray Harder. "This open house was designed to give local residents a chance to see their airport, but we've had visitors from a 50-mile radius by car and even from Illinois by air."

Throngs of visitors sought controller's-eye views during FAA-conducted tower tours for Airport Appreciation Day.

This second annual Airport Appreciation Day didn't disappoint the visitors, thanks to the cooperation of many organizations and hundreds of volunteers. The day started with the fire and rescue equipment garage being cleared out for the Civil Air Patrol to flip flapjacks and broil sausage in the makeshift breakfast house, before turning loose the fat and happy crowd.

Farm wagons pulled by tractors on loan from local farm machinery firms shuttled groups between the hangars and the tower for a tour of the facility by FAA. The tower proved to be such an attraction that the local sheriff had to post a man at the door and one at the cab to control the throngs. The sheriff's men and the controllers quickly lost count of the visitors.

At the Blackhawk Technical Institute hangar, Harder showed two FAA films and the Great Lakes Region slide show, "Airports Mean Business," to nearly 1,000 visitors. Sharing the hangar was the Experimental Aircraft Association, which showed films, too. EAA's local chapter had five planes on exhibit.

A local parachute club displayed its precision jumping skills; the air national guard sent helicopters for a static display; the Air Force Reserve showed off a C-130 Hercules; and the airport's fixed-base operators displayed their new aircraft. Helicopter and glider rides were provided. The Optimist Club broiled hamburgers and bratwurst for lunch.

The variety of simultaneous activities precluded any dull moments for the airport's guests. It was at no cost to them, except for the food. Because of all these community elements pulling together to show off their airport and the excitement it holds, the promotion succeeded. Officials feel that they had no difficulty in convincing a few thousand southern Wisconsin residents that Rock County Airport is a valuable part of the community. —By Warren Holtsberg, Jr.

It ain't hay, but hayrides and airplane rides were provided in addition to this shuttle that carried visitors between the tower and film shows at the hangars.

With thousands of visitors pouring into the Janesville, Wis., airport, lunch break came none too soon for Milwaukee GADO maintenance inspector Joseph Siemer (left) and Johnny Perkins of GADO operations.

CREATING IMAGE-BUILDERS

The New England Region's fourth and fifth Airport Safety Committees have been organized at the Fitchburg, Mass., and Danbury, Conn., airports, respectively, to improve their safety, efficiency and image with the community. Above, accident prevention coordinator Allan Hunting tells a Fitchburg group composed of the airport manager, corporate operators, flying club members and members of the airport commission that the committee can be of immense value to the community because accident prevention and airport growth are integral parts of the airport's business. Below, Hunting squats with John Graham (right), accident prevention specialist at the Westfield, Mass., GADO, in front of members of the newly organized Danbury committee.

DIRECT LINE

Q. I am a field logistics specialist in a super sector. As a supply specialist, I am responsible for the technical direction of the logistics program within sector boundaries, performing the most complex and highly technical functions. When the sector manager was a GS-11, most of those in my specialty (about 20 per region) were GS-7s and 8s. Now he is a GS-15 and we are still 7s or 8s. Our technicians are GS-12s, but running a logistics section, I believe, is as responsible and complex as a technician's job, with at least as big a workload. Why are we forgotten where grades are concerned?

A. It's natural to compare one's job and grade with others in the same organization, but it's difficult to make meaningful comparisons, since different jobs require different skills, knowledge and training and contain different duties and responsibilities. It's like comparing apples and oranges—there are many similarities but also a great many differences. Grades are determined by comparing jobs to classification standards for specific types of occupations. The grade of your job was determined by comparing your position to standards for the Supply Technician Series, GS-2005. This same standard is used for thousands of positions similar to yours throughout the government. The grades of sector managers and many electronics technicians have risen over recent years because the positions are more demanding. The number of sectors have become fewer, but they are larger, and the introduction of new technology and equipment requires new skills, knowledge and training. The classification system contains an appeal procedure that may be used when an employee feels that his job is incorrectly classified. Employees occupying positions similar to yours in other sectors have already appealed their job classification to the Civil Service Commission, but CSC, which has final authority in such matters, has ruled that the positions were properly classified at GS-7 and GS-8.

Q. When changing locations due to a hardship transfer, is there any way in which the employee can be reimbursed either fully or partially for moving expenses? Also regarding a hardship transfer, should the employee not be able to sell his house due to the economy, is there an order that allows the FAA to serve as buyer?

A. An employee may be reimbursed with the normal permanent change-of-station allowances for any relocation that is determined to be in the interest of the government. Such allowances are not payable when the move is requested by the employee for his own benefit (DOT Order 1500.6, paragraph 321). The current laws and regulations do not permit the FAA to purchase an employee's real property in connection with a permanent change of station in any case.

Q. I am a journeyman electronics technician with three years in FAA. I learned that I now have high blood pressure, which is being controlled by medication, but I personally believe that the tensions of the job may contribute to it. When I joined the agency, I didn't have high blood pressure, nor was it present during a checkup four months after I became a journeyman. However, one year after becoming a journeyman, the condition was discovered. My doctor will not attribute the condition to any specific thing like tension, due to the lack of knowledge of the causes of high blood pressure. If I leave the agency now, and at some future date seek reemployment with FAA, will my high blood pressure keep me from being rehired?

A. You've provided insufficient medical evidence to make a decision in your case via this medium. Each case must be judged on an individual basis. We would need to know your age, general physical condition and any complications, family history, previous occupational exposures and your response to medication. In general, however, an individual with controlled hypertension, without complications such as dizziness, headaches, visual disturbances—to mention a few—would be employable. In regard to the matter of tension, the incidence of essential hypertension has never been noted to be higher in electronics technicians than in the general population.

Q. In the July 1974 issue of FAA World (editorial), the Administrator gave a glowing report of systems, equipment and new, modernized facilities for centers and terminals. I was happy to read that efforts to implement the FSS modernization would be intensified. However, efforts toward modernizing FSSs have been going on for years, and each subsequent Administrator intends to do something about the plan. How about some positive action? An excellent start would be to replace our consoles with low-profile transistorized units in lieu of the monsters that date somewhere between World Wars I and II.

A. While awaiting completion of contractual design and testing of the prototype equipment to drive the automated FSS system, the modernization/rehabilitation of stations is continuing through the budget cycles. The requested dollar amounts for FSS programs alone that were sent to Congress included $6.5 million in Fiscal Year 1973, $14.2 million in FY 1974 and close to $21 million in FY 1975 for the Facilities and Equipment portion. The priorities for locations to receive the new low-profile consoles in conjunction with modernization projects are set through coordination with the regions. These priorities take into consideration many factors, a major one being each station's destiny in the overall plan for the automated FSS system.

Q. By what methods may an electronics technician, GS-856 Series, convert to the electronics engineer, GS-855 Series?

A. Agency policy generally permits the acceptance of in-service technician experience for engineering positions on an equivalent-grade basis if the following conditions are met: (1) The technician meets the basic qualification requirement of four years or more of education and/or experience specified for all positions in the professional engineering series, as demonstrated by satisfactory completion of the requirements for an appropriate bachelor's or higher degree, or satisfactory completion of 60 semester hours in engineering sciences, or passing the written Engineer-in-Training or professional registration examination administered by state boards of engineering examiners. (2) The professional position being considered for this technician is at the same or a lower grade, entails similar work and is in the same specialty area. (3) The technician experience accepted in lieu of professional experience is quasi-professional in character and is at the GS-7 or higher level. (4) The duties, degree of responsibility and subject matter of the professional and technician positions are sufficiently similar to demonstrate clearly that the employee has the necessary background to perform satisfactorily.

Q. The present Airway Facilities structure indicates the sector manager is a GS-301 Series. Is it possible to obtain the GS-301 classification in FAA at a level below GS-13?

A. The use of the 301 classification series for other than sector manager and assistant sector manager at the GS-13 level and above within Airway Facilities is confined primarily to clerical/administrative positions at the GS-4 to GS-7 grade level.

Q. I have been attending college and have had for the past year a special work schedule. This permission has now been rescinded by my second-level supervisor. My location doesn't have any engineering schools, and I became a Business Administration major. What avenues are there that can afford further schooling? Is it possible to seek relocation for this purpose?

A. Where manpower and workload considerations permit, FAA has always pursued a policy of adjusting work schedules to permit attendance at local schools and colleges. However, the agency's mission and responsibility to the public must remain paramount, which sometimes makes it necessary to cancel special work schedules. Generally, it is not possible to obtain relocation for this purpose. For information on further schooling, we suggest you contact your regional personnel officer for assistance.

SMALL WORLD

DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL . . . Everybody knows that the best way to fix a balky radio or TV in the home or office is to give it a good shot with the side of the fist. Well, maybe something like that works in airplanes, too, although we're not recommending it. Anyway controllers at Hawkins Field Tower down in Jackson, Miss., recently observed a Piper Commanche approaching the landing pattern with its gear up. After trying unsuccesfully to reach the pilot by radio, they resorted to the light gun and managed to convey to him the idea that something was wrong. The aircraft made four "go arounds" and on the last one actually touched down on the runway with its tail wheel. The impact knocked the electrical system back on, radio communications was established, the pilot lowered his gear and brought the plane (with his family on board) in for a safe landing. Another happy ending for which controllers John Coursey, Alec King and David Jones at Hawkins Field share the credit.

DON'T TRUST ANYONE UNDER 30 . . . Most people view a 30th birthday with about as much enthusiasm as a hippie does a trip to the barber shop. But out in Honolulu, the Pacific-Asia Region went all out to make its 30th Anniversary a festive event, holding a special cake-cutting ceremony and publishing a special issue of the regional *Intercom*. Highlight of the celebration was the presentation to Regional Director Jack Webb of a "30 Year Service Pin" for the entire region which was so big that it could only be worn in the buttonhole of the Jolly Green Giant.

CHIVALRY IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN MIAMI . . . If air traffic controllers are male chauvinists, then we know at least one woman who is happy about it. A newly-certificated private pilot recently wrote to the Miami Tower thanking them and the Miami Center for helping her through thunderstorm activity on her first flight through the busy Miami terminal control area. "My husband and flight instructors say you men are nicer when you hear a woman's voice on the radio," she said. "If there's any truth in it, it was certainly in evidence that day." However, she felt compelled to note "in fairness" that the Miami controllers "were helpful to other pilots as well." She concluded by saying, "People like you deserve my thanks for making flying all the more enjoyable."

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It takes all kinds of planes to make an EAA fly-in—antique, homebuilt and military. This "two-dimensional" craft taxiing onto the Oshkosh runway is a 1912 Bellanca.
For story and additional photos, see pages 15 and 16.