REMARKS BY

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AWARDS CEREMONY

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For the past several years, the Air Traffic Control Association has asked me to be a part of its "Awards Luncheon." It's always been an honor to oblige ATCA, but I can honestly say that I've never felt more a part of this organization than I do today.

I've stood before you in the past as head of FAA's system development organization...the supplier, whose job it is to ensure that the right technology for future air traffic management arrives in time to handle the demand for more capacity that's on the horizon.

Accomplishing this will require teambuilding on all fronts...between those that do the research and development and system design and those dependent on their products.....between the architects of our national airspace system and its builders.

This emphasis on teamwork is not just internal. We endeavored to foster government to government partnerships between the FAA and DOD...between FAA and NASA. We encouraged government/industry alliances to coordinate our research and development and share key

technologies for mutual benefit.

That FAA/industry partnership has certainly been evident in the development of the advanced automation system. At times it's been impossible to tell the FAA program managers from their IBM counterparts-- their attitudes and enthusiasm for accomplishing the AAS mission have been so similar.

We dared to be a risk-taking organization. But the one risk we refused to take was the risk of building our future air traffic control system in isolation.

Yesterday's organizational reshuffle placed me in charge of the operational end of the FAA. Often realignments in an agency mean a temporary loss of productivity. However, I am convinced my previous role as systems developer will provide a vantage point that will enhance my new organization's role as customer. I don't think the FAA will "miss a beat" in accommodating the changes announced yesterday. And in the long run, it will profit from them.

I expect the air traffic organization, as well as airway facilities, aviation standards, training, and the system capacity office, to

act as partners in defining system requirements....in guaranteeing that it is involved from beginning to end in the development of new technologies. I am speaking of a continuous involvement in specifying future requirements, not just sporadic communication.

We're going to make sure that the controller stays in the loop. We've learned that the most successful automation tools are those offering assistance and information to the controller for evaluation. The ultimate decision...whether to accept or reject this advice...will remain with the controller.

Our Operations Organization will be a very vocal customer. As a provider of air traffic control services to the user community, it will establish an unprecedented dialogue with its own customers....the airlines and general aviation community...corporate aviation and the vertical flight/helicopter operators.

And I'm forewarning those critics who are used to taking cheap shots at the ATC system. It's no longer open season, and the system is no longer fair game. Don't tell us about the system's problems unless you are prepared to help us solve them.

We're aware of the problems; it's the answers that sometime escape us. Let's change the name of the game. I'd like to play, "Here's the problem, what's the answer?"

Don't grouse about the cost of equipping your planes with avionics that will make our skies safer, unless you can show us how we can accomplish the same thing without compromising safety or sacrificing capacity and efficiency.

If you can think of a way to improve the

system, speak up. But if you're not willing to do your part to cure the system of what ails it, don't bother to complain about its shortcomings.

It's been said that, without commitment from the top down, the best idea in the world can never be implemented. It's also been pointed out that with commitment from the upper-echelons of an organization, some of the worst ideas in the world have.

I see many industry officials and top-ranking military officers in the audience. I am going to be looking to you for top-down

commitment to help develop and harness the new technologies needed to build an air navigation system for the 21st century.

I intend to encourage innovation by taking Air Traffic's technological needs to senior levels of corporations that manufacture air traffic control equipment. And I won't be shy about saying, "we need this on the operations side...Help us find a way to do it."

If we pool our technical knowledge, if we focus our investment dollars on the areas with the highest payoff, if we are willing to

use technology differently, we will have a NAS that meets user requirements for increased system capacity, safety, and productivity.

Operation Desert Storm brilliantly illustrated how American technology and expertise can change the world. We can ensure that the same technological prowess that made our military successes in the Gulf possible will be applied to commercial priorities, such as air traffic control. We'll be honoring the military personnel who provided the superior air traffic control and airspace management support during Desert Storm and Desert

Shield later in this ceremony.

Just two years into the decade, the nineties have already been tagged, "The Decade of Change." From the aviation perspective, it could not be more aptly named.

The modernization of our National Airspace System, already well under way, will be accomplished, to a large extent, over the next 10 years. Its centerpiece, the Advanced Automation System, will be the largest real-time computer system ever developed. Replacing the existing en route systems, it will also provide automation to air

traffic control towers, which now lack this kind of support.

Just about every other improvement to the system is contingent on the AAS framework--communications, weather, surveillance, navigation and traffic management.

Air traffic controllers, airway facilities engineers and technicians, are a cadre of dedicated men and women. Their dedication has only been equalled by their patience, which is considerable. They've waited a long time for promised automation and state-of-the-art technology that will make their

jobs easier...for the new technologies that will increase that margin of air safety so important to us all.

Media reports, citing "well-informed" sources, who claim the delivery date for AAS's Initial Sector Suite System is slipping well into the next century, disturb me.

Those so-called "well-informed" sources should be interested in two things I have to say today.

First, I'm pleased to report that the first PAMRI (Peripheral Adaptor Module

Replacement Item) went operational in Seattle today. PAMRI will provide sufficient redundancy to support ISSS transition, while simultaneously supporting full ATC operations.

Number Two: I want to add another promise to the assurances controllers have been given in the past...A promise I intend to keep with the help of FAA's system development component. The first Initial Sector Suite System will be delivered in Seattle, February, 1994 as scheduled. <u>This is one problem we're not going to "work around."</u>

Neither are we going to subscribe to the conventional wisdom" "If it ain't broke, don't fix it. That kind of cautious "don't rock the boat" attitude has no place in an organization striving to find a better way to do the job.

If the $15 billion we're investing gains us nothing more than bigger, better, faster, more reliable computers to help air traffic do things in the same old way, then we've wasted the money. If all we've bought is an MLS that is more accurate, stable, reliable, and easier to maintain....then we've been cheated....no, we've cheated ourselves.

We've got to change the way we do business to get the maximum out of the new technology we've ordered. We must look for more capacity in new places and find better methods of selecting and training controllers and flight standards inspectors.

While the controller work force has awaited promised technological advancements, our ATC system has been held together by its people, like the folks we're honoring today.

When the system was on the verge of obsolescence 10 years ago, it was the controllers and airway facilities technicians

that stretched the life cycle of their aging equipment, making it last until replacements arrived.

Credit should go to our men and women in the towers, in the tracons and enroute centers--not the hardware or the software--for today's air traffic control system, envied by many but equalled by none.

Most of the people receiving awards today are just ordinary people...who coincidentally do extraordinary things on a daily basis. They've been singled out for remarkable individual achievements. Yet if asked, they

would probably tell you they were just doing their job.

Probably they would remind you that even though they have been chosen for special recognition, hundreds of their fellow workers have performed heroic acts this year.

I look forward to ATCA's Award Ceremony each year, because it provides an opportunity to focus some positive publicity on the people of our ATC system. Unfortunately, attention is most often paid when things go wrong, not right.

Most of the time, our aviation infrastructure is invisible to its users. The behind-the-scenes efforts that make our system safe and efficient....**that make our system work**...go virtually unnoticed. Today we can recognize the system's unsung heroes, those that are with us today and their coworkers who could not be here.

If you want to know what an organization values, look at its heroes. It's time for this year's heroes, the Air Traffic Control Association Award winners, to step into the limelight.