

FAA NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 1, 1995

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TELEPHONE LINE PROBLEM DISRUPTS DENVER WEATHER RADAR

The Terminal Doppler Weather Radar at Denver International Airport was taken out of service at 7:15 PM today when a telecommunications problem interrupted signals to the air traffic control tower at DIA. FAA technicians expect to return the Doppler weather radar to service tonight. Controllers continue to receive wind data from a second advanced system that uses 29 sensors, the Low Level Wind Shear Alert System.

"Because of falling snow, there is virtually no chance of a microburst, the hazard that Doppler radar detects," said FAA Regional Administrator Fred Isaac. "Despite the snow and equipment problem, controllers have maintained an airport acceptance rate at 72 airplanes per hour. The Air traffic watch supervisor said that operating without Doppler in a snowstorm has no impact on air traffic."

The Doppler radar was taken off line by technicians at 5:45 PM for maintenance. 90 minutes later technicians were unable to bring the system back on line when signals from the radar were interrupted by the problem with communication lines. The Doppler site is approximately 11 miles from the control tower and data is relayed using leased communication lines. Weather conditions during the outage were reported as overcast skies with light snow and fog, temperature 17 degrees, wind out of the northeast at 11 miles, and visibility of 2 miles.

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FAA News



Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 1, 1995

APA 161-95

Contact: Jeffrey Thal

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**FAA COMMISSIONS 100TH SMALL TOWER
COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM AT SAN CARLOS AIRPORT TOWER**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced that the landmark 100th Small Tower Voice Switch (STVS) will be commissioned today at the San Carlos, Calif., air traffic control (ATC) tower.

This is the 205th major new system --including radars, navigation and communication systems -- to be installed this year. The FAA has now commissioned more than 2,700 new air traffic systems as part of the modernization program.

"This new, modern equipment will enable the FAA to meet the increasing demands of air traffic well into the 21st century," said FAA administrator David R. Hinson. "The STVS system brings to control towers at smaller airports the capability to select radio frequencies quickly with automated switches similar to those being installed at the major airport towers under the Enhanced Terminal Voice Switch (ETVS) program. These improvements are essential to maintaining the world's safest and busiest air traffic control system."

STVS incorporates state-of-the-art switching and fiber optics to provide clear and precise radio communication between controllers and pilots. This will increase the availability of radio frequencies, which will reduce the time it takes for pilots and controllers to exchange information. It also will permit controllers at many smaller towers to adapt their communication equipment to meet the changing conditions of traffic volume, weather conditions and controller workload.

"The implementation of STVS is a vital step in upgrading the ATC system. However, meaningful progress toward completion of the entire airspace modernization program depends on the kind of reform introduced by Senators McCain, Ford and Hollings and Representative Clement," said Hinson. "This legislation will allow FAA to take advantage of new technologies, better meet the capacity demands of the aviation industry and provide the necessary resources to complete the FAA modernization plan."

STVS was developed and is being installed by the Denro Corp., of Gaithersburg, Md.

FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, November 2, 1995

APA 162-95

Contact: Liz Neblett

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**FAA ANNOUNCES ASSESSMENTS OF FOREIGN
COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL SAFETY STANDARDS**

As part of an effort to provide the public with more information about aviation safety in international travel, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today announced the results of the agency's assessment of ten countries' capability to provide safety oversight of their air carriers that operate in the United States. They are: Australia, Hungary, New Zealand, Romania, Western Samoa; all of whom comply with international safety standards; and Ecuador, Israel, Jordan, Peru, Venezuela; all rated as conditional.

The assessments are not an indication of whether an individual foreign carrier is safe or unsafe, rather they determine whether or not the country has a civil aviation authority in place and the extent to which that authority ensures that operational and safety procedures are maintained by its air carriers.

The focus of the FAA's foreign assessment program is on countries, not individual carriers from that country. And these countries are assessed for their adherence to ICAO's aviation safety standards, not FAA regulations. ICAO is the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Travelers may call 1-800-FAA-SURE (1-800-322-7873) to obtain a summary statement about whether a foreign country has been assessed and the results, if available.

Countries whose air carriers fly to the United States must adhere to the safety guidelines of ICAO, the United Nation's technical agency for aviation which establishes international standards and recommended practices for aircraft operations and maintenance.

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The FAA, with the cooperation of the host country, only assesses countries whose airlines have operating rights to or from the United States, or have requested such rights.

Specifically, the FAA determines whether a country has an adequate infrastructure for international aviation safety oversight as defined by the ICAO standards. The basic elements that the FAA considers necessary include: 1) laws enabling the appropriate government office to adopt regulations necessary to meet the minimum requirements of ICAO; 2) current regulations that meet those requirements; 3) procedures to carry out the regulatory requirements; 4) air carrier certification, routine inspection, and surveillance programs, and 5) organizational and personnel resources to implement and enforce the above.

The FAA has established three ratings for the status of these countries at the time of the assessment: does comply with ICAO standards, conditional, and does not comply with ICAO standards.

- **Category I, Does Comply with ICAO Standards:** A country's civil aviation authority has been assessed by FAA inspectors and has been found to license and oversee air carriers in accordance with ICAO aviation safety standards.
- **Category II, Conditional:** A country's civil aviation authority in which FAA inspectors found areas that did not meet ICAO aviation safety standards and the FAA is negotiating actively with the authority to implement corrective measures. During these negotiations, limited operations by this country's air carriers to the U.S. are permitted under heightened FAA operations inspections and surveillance.
- **Category III, Does Not Comply with ICAO Standards:** A country's civil aviation authority found not to meet ICAO standards for aviation oversight. Unacceptable ratings apply if the civil aviation authority has not developed or implemented laws or regulations in accordance with ICAO standards; if it lacks the technical expertise or resources to license or oversee civil aviation; if it lacks the flight operations capability to certify, oversee and enforce air carrier operations requirements; if it lacks the aircraft maintenance capability to certify, oversee and enforce air carrier maintenance requirements; or if it lacks appropriately trained inspector personnel required by ICAO standards. Operations to the U.S. by a carrier from a country that has received a Category III rating are not permitted unless they arrange to have their flights conducted with a duly authorized and properly supervised foreign air carrier appropriately certified from a country meeting international aviation safety standards.

The FAA has assisted countries with less than acceptable ratings by providing technical expertise, assistance with inspections, and training courses. The FAA hopes to work with other countries through ICAO to address non-compliance with international aviation safety oversight standards.

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The FAA will continue to release the results of safety assessments to the public as they are completed. First announced in September 1994, the ratings are part of an ongoing FAA program to complete initial assessments, by the end of 1996, of all countries with air carriers that operate to the United States by the end of 1996.

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FAA News



Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, November 2, 1995

APA 166-95

Contact: Don Zochert

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FAA ADMINISTRATOR CALLS FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON CRITICAL AVIATION ISSUES

Federal Aviation Administrator David R. Hinson today told an international group of aviation representatives that unprecedented growth in air travel over the next two decades will make it essential for nations to cooperate on critical issues, such as aviation safety and efficiency, airport capacity, and opening international markets to a new era of competition.

Hinson made his remarks at the Welch Pogue Annual Awards Banquet, part of the Chicago '95 Conference and Exhibition, which was sponsored by the McGraw Hill Aviation Week Group and the Chicago Department of Aviation. In his speech, Hinson credited President Clinton's sound economic policies, and his "vigorous and far-sighted" commitment to aviation, with helping the U.S. airline industry go from near-bankruptcy to record profits in just two years.

Clinton's leadership also was instrumental in securing "open skies" agreements with Canada and nine European countries, Hinson said, as well as the historic trilateral agreement among the United States, Canada and Mexico, which will allow a seamless flow of air traffic "from the Arctic Circle to the Yucatan Peninsula."

Hinson said the number of airline passengers worldwide is expected to double in the next 15-20 years — from 1.25 billion last year to more than 2.5 billion — an expansion that may require 8,000-10,000 new aircraft and a 40 percent increase in direct flights. While the projected growth in aviation is good news economically, Hinson said, it also has serious implications for safety.

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"More flights mean more accidents, unless safety grows at a rate that matches or exceeds the growth in air traffic," said Hinson, who noted that a recent Boeing study showed that projected growth in air travel would cause the number of airline accidents worldwide to double within 20 years at today's accident rate. "We must constantly rethink our approach to accident prevention. The only acceptable goal for aviation safety is zero accidents — 100 percent safety."

Much of the future growth in air travel will be international, Hinson said, noting that travel between the United States and the rest of the world last year grew by 5 percent. Travel between the United States and Latin America increased 9 percent, much faster than the 5.5 percent that had been predicted, while travel to and from Asia grew 7 percent, also well above the forecast. He said the FAA is working closely with 97 other civil aviation authorities around the world to achieve uniform standards of safety.

"There is very little the FAA does any more that does not have some international involvement," Hinson said. "For commercial aviation, the distinctions between local and global priorities are becoming increasingly blurred. No country, no national carrier, can risk being isolated."

Hinson said one of the most promising new initiatives for air safety is an agreement reached at last January's Aviation Safety Conference, which will allow the FAA to analyze a wide spectrum of data collected by the airlines as part of their new Flight Operations Quality Assurance programs. He said that agreement eventually may lead to a comprehensive international data exchange, which would make safety data instantly available, on-line, to aviation professionals anywhere in the world.

For these and other critical initiatives to succeed, Hinson said, the FAA must have the resources and flexibility to plan and carry out long-term strategies. The realities of the federal budget process leave no question that fundamental changes in FAA financing, personnel and procurement are essential for the agency to meet its future responsibilities to the American people, whether they are traveling domestically or abroad.

"Unless we can close the gap between the what we need to do our job and what Congress seems ready to provide, the cost of flying will continue to go up, the quality of service will decline, and the United States' long-standing role as the world leader in aviation may be undermined."

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NOTE: An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: <http://www.faa.gov/apa/apahome.htm>

FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 1, 1995

APA 167-95

CONTACT: Les Dorr, Jr.

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HINSON REPORTS GOOD PROGRESS ON STRATEGIC GOALS

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator David R. Hinson today told an elite group of aviation industry executives that the agency is making excellent progress in meeting its strategic goals and preparing to implement whatever reform legislation is enacted by Congress.

In a speech at the FAA's "Challenger Session" with industry, Hinson said that the agency achieved 80 percent of its strategic milestones in FY95, compared to 70 percent in FY94. He told the group that the FAA has refocused its Strategic Plan to be more responsive to current conditions, and asked for industry's help in shaping agency goals for 1996 and beyond.

"As we all realize, the fates of the aviation industry and the FAA are interdependent," said Hinson. "One cannot thrive unless the other succeeds."

Hinson also said that the FAA already has done substantial planning for dealing with FAA reform legislation anticipated from Congress. He said that the FAA recently formalized the planning process by creating a team, led by Monte Belger, Associate Administrator for Air Traffic Services, and George Donohue, Associate Administrator for Research and Acquisitions. Just as with the Strategic Plan, Hinson remarked, industry input will be vital.

"We want the opinions of our customers to make sure the 'reformed' FAA will be responsive to your needs. We seek, and welcome, your help," said Hinson.

Hinson told the group that the FAA will face serious budget challenges in FY 1996, but more severe problems in FY 1997-2002 if Congress adopts the funding levels outlined in July's Joint Budget Resolution. He said that the proposed 14 percent decrease

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from last year's funding levels could require the agency to reduce its level of service significantly. Hinson expressed hope that proposed reforms will include funding mechanisms that would give the FAA the financial flexibility it needs.

Hinson also reiterated the agency's commitment to the goal of "zero accidents" that resulted from an unprecedented safety summit the FAA held with more than 1,000 representatives from the aviation industry last January.

"This won't be an easy task," Hinson said. "Achieving zero defects in an environment dominated by limited resources, increased competition and globalization, steadily evolving technology, and a virtual doubling in the demand for air services within the next 20 years will be a challenge all of us will be hard-pressed to meet."

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 7, 1995

APA 168-95

Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.

Tel: (202) 267-3461

HINSON STRESSES NEED FOR NEW SAFETY DATA-SHARING NETWORK

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator David R. Hinson today told an international meeting of flight safety experts that creating an electronic network for sharing aviation safety data will be crucial to achieving the goal of 100 percent safety, or "zero accidents."

Speaking in Seattle to a seminar sponsored by the Flight Safety Foundation, Hinson proposed that all air carriers continuously collect and report operational data, which would then be analyzed at designated centers. Airlines, aircraft manufacturers and other aviation professionals trying to improve safety would tap into the data base via an electronic International Data Exchange network.

"The intent is to produce an early warning system sensitive enough to spotlight problems before they become accidents," said Hinson. "A large, constantly expanding data base, combined with sophisticated analysis, will let us switch from being reactive to preemptive, with a specific emphasis on prevention."

Hinson said that much of what we know about aviation safety has come from accident investigations, but that the resulting reports, by design, only identify the causes of catastrophic occurrences. Accident reports, he said, do not provide information about the same hazards encountered on flights that safely reach their destinations, nor do they identify the parameters of safe performance and normal operation.

The FAA Administrator noted that the agency already receives daily reports about various aircraft incidents, parts breakage or malfunctions. But, he said, these reports also give an incomplete picture because they focus only on problems. Hinson argued that reaching the zero accidents goal requires a standardized, worldwide system for collecting feedback on routine operations tied to an aggressive approach to data analysis.

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“With enough data on routine operations, we could establish statistically valid norms of safe performance and quantify the risk associated with ordinary flights,” Hinson said. “We could pinpoint those circumstances that place a plane and its passengers in jeopardy.”

Although Hinson did not give a timetable for implementing the International Data Exchange, he said the FAA is taking the lead in planning the basic design of the network. He asserted that the venture will require very broad participation at the international level, because 50 percent of flights worldwide are in countries other than the United States.

“This isn’t something the FAA can or should do on its own,” Hinson said. “In fact, we may even find this is a task better suited to the private sector.”

Hinson told the safety group he believes two major issues must be resolved before an operational feedback process can succeed. Companies and individuals must be confident that their reports will not be used as the basis for adverse FAA action against them. There also must be a guarantee of confidentiality that cannot be breached.

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NOTE: An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at:
<http://www.faa.gov/apa/apahome.htm>

FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 7, 1995

APA 169-95

Contact: Alison Duquette
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**FAA ESTABLISHES NEW OFFICE TO
ADDRESS AVIATION WEATHER ISSUES**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has established an Aviation Weather Division designed to enhance the agency's ability to prevent accidents and reduce delays attributable to weather. The new office, which was established on October 1, is part of FAA's Air Traffic Services organization. It brings together agency weather experts from the offices of Regulation and Certification and Air Traffic Services to form a single point of contact for all aviation weather policy and requirements.

"The report released today by the National Research Council, entitled 'Aviation Weather Services: A Call for Federal Leadership and Action,' validates our decision to appoint Associate Administrator for Air Traffic Services Monte R. Belger to lead the FAA's weather initiatives," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "This move forward accomplishes a major goal outlined in the Department of Transportation's Aviation Safety Action Plan for *"zero accidents."*

The FAA's weather program impacts a broad range of issues, including:

- Interagency coordination with the Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service, Department of Defense and the Office of the Federal Coordinator for Meteorology.
- Certification of aircraft and the training of airmen.
- The operation of aircraft in certain weather conditions.
- Airport operations and the impact of braking aircraft on runways due to weather and the clearance of snow from runways.

- Impact of weather on air traffic flow/route management, including arrival/departure programs, ground/airborne holding, route flows, and severe weather avoidance programs.
- Collection of weather information and the impact on air traffic control operations, procedures, controllers and pilots.
- Scientific methods of collecting aviation weather information.
- Weather planning and policy related to the maintenance of FAA-owned weather equipment.
- Acquisition of weather equipment.
- Aviation weather research and development programs to improve the performance of the National Airspace System.

“We’ve worked aggressively with industry to review FAA weather programs,” said Associate Administrator for Air Traffic Services Monte R. Belger. “This new organization represents a giant step forward toward improving safety and reducing delays.”

Comparing fiscal year 1995 to 1994, air traffic operations in the United States were up 3.3 percent while delays were down 9.5 percent. Seventy-three percent of all delays are attributable to weather.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 8, 1995

APA 170-95

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STATEMENT

NTSB RECOMMENDATIONS ON PILOT TRAINING RECORDKEEPING REQUIREMENTS

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said it would undertake an immediate review of four recommendations released today by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) on pilot training recordkeeping.

The FAA continues to recognize the importance of pilot training records. The FAA also acknowledges that there are privacy issues that must be addressed. As has been previously stated, the FAA is prepared to work with Congress, the NTSB and the aviation industry to resolve these issues.

A new dimension to the board's recommendations is the addition of a larger governmental function to serve as a clearinghouse for pilot records. The FAA will analyze all of the board's recommendations to determine if they are feasible or if there is an equivalent way to meet the NTSB's intent.

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FAA News



Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, November 9, 1995

APA 171-95

Contact: Liz Neblett

Tel.: (202) 267-3479

**FAA ANNOUNCES ASSESSMENTS OF FOREIGN
COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL SAFETY STANDARDS**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today announced that it has reassessed the capability of Israel and Netherlands Antilles to provide safety oversight of air carriers from those countries that operate to the United States. Both countries were found to comply with international safety standards.

The assessments are not an indication of whether an individual foreign carrier is safe or unsafe, rather they determine whether or not the country has a civil aviation authority in place and the extent to which that authority ensures that operational and safety procedures are maintained by its air carriers.

The focus of the FAA's foreign assessment program is on countries, not individual carriers from that country. And these countries are assessed for their adherence to ICAO's aviation safety standards, not FAA regulations. ICAO is the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Travelers may call 1-800-FAA-SURE (1-800-322-7873) to obtain a summary statement about whether a foreign country has been assessed and the results, if available.

Countries whose air carriers fly to the United States must adhere to the safety guidelines of ICAO, the United Nation's technical agency for aviation which establishes international standards and recommended practices for aircraft operations and maintenance.

The FAA, with the cooperation of the host country, only assesses countries whose airlines have operating rights to or from the United States, or have requested such rights.

Specifically, the FAA determines whether a country has an adequate infrastructure for international aviation safety oversight as defined by the ICAO standards. The basic elements that the FAA considers necessary include: 1) laws enabling the appropriate government office to adopt regulations necessary to meet the minimum requirements of ICAO; 2) current regulations that meet those requirements; 3) procedures to carry out the regulatory requirements; 4) air carrier certification, routine inspection, and surveillance programs, and 5) organizational and personnel resources to implement and enforce the above.

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The FAA has established three ratings for the status of these countries at the time of the assessment: does comply with ICAO standards, conditional, and does not comply with ICAO standards.

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The FAA has assisted countries with less than acceptable ratings by providing technical expertise, assistance with inspections, and training courses. The FAA hopes to work with other countries through ICAO to address non-compliance with international aviation safety oversight standards.

The FAA will continue to release the results of safety assessments to the public as they are completed. First announced in September 1994, the ratings are part of an ongoing FAA program to complete initial assessments, by the end of 1996, of all countries with air carriers that operate to the United States by the end of 1996.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, November 9, 1995

APA-172-95

Contact: Larry West

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STATEMENT

FAA APPLAUDS SENATE ACTION ON FAA REFORM

Federal Aviation Administrator David R. Hinson and Deputy Administrator Linda Hall Daschle said today that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is very encouraged by the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee's passage of the McCain/Ford/Hollings FAA Reform Bill (S. 1239).

"By its decisive action today, the Committee has endorsed legislation that will help to ensure the future safety and efficiency of U.S. aviation," Hinson said. "In an extraordinary bipartisan effort, Senators John McCain, Wendell Ford and Ernest Hollings and their staffs have crafted comprehensive legislation that will provide the FAA with fundamental changes in three critical areas: financing, procurement and personnel."

"It's a great day for the men and women of the FAA and a tremendous show of support for the outstanding job they do 24 hours per day, 365 days per year," Daschle said.

U.S. aviation is growing at an unprecedented rate. By 2002, more than 800 million passengers per year will be flying on U.S. air carriers, a 35 percent increase over 1995. Meanwhile, current congressional budget projections show the FAA's budget decreasing during the same six years to 14 percent below last year's level. For the FAA to continue to fulfill its mission and meet its responsibilities, the agency must have the resources and flexibility necessary to do the job.

"We need predictable financing that increases as the work load grows; streamlined procurement processes that allow us to keep pace with rapidly changing technology; and more flexible personnel rules to help us manage a highly skilled work force, and to hire and place people when and where we need them most," Hinson said.

Hinson and Daschle said the McCain/Ford/Hollings bill is the only proposal currently being considered by Congress that adequately addresses all three of the FAA's critical needs.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 15, 1995

APA 173-95

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**STATEMENT BY DAVID R. HINSON, ADMINISTRATOR,
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION,
IN CONNECTION WITH
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD HEARING
ON USAIR ACCIDENT NEAR PITTSBURGH, PA,
SEPTEMBER 8, 1994**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will continue its efforts, in working with all elements of the aviation industry, to determine why USAir flight #427 crashed in Aliquippa, Pa., near Pittsburgh, on September 8, 1994.

Shortly after the accident occurred, the FAA launched one of the most thorough investigations ever undertaken of an aircraft flight control system. It was an extraordinary effort to determine if there were any design flaws in the Boeing 737 that may have contributed to the accident. An objective team of experts, supported by a National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) aviation safety investigator, worked for five months to review the flight control design and service history of all models of the B737 aircraft.

While no design flaws were found, the nine-member team produced new recommendations, many of which concern safety enhancements to design features and procedures, although none require immediate corrective action.

As safety is the FAA's first priority, the agency will continue to contribute to the USAir #427 accident investigation process. The FAA will also participate in the NTSB's additional hearings, beginning today.

Meanwhile, the FAA is conducting an indepth rulemaking effort on equipping all 737s with enhanced flight data recorders (FDRs), in response to a recommendation from the NTSB. The FAA agrees with the board that aircraft should be equipped with the upgraded FDRs and is now engaged in determining how this can be done without substantial airplane groundings and extraordinarily high costs.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 15, 1995

APA 174-95

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FACT SHEET

737 FLIGHT CONTROL SYSTEM REVIEW

In October 1994, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) launched one of the most thorough investigations ever undertaken of an aircraft flight control system in an effort to determine if there were any design flaws in the Boeing 737 that may have contributed to the September 8, 1994 crash of USAir Boeing 737-300, Flight 427 near Aliquippa, Pa., or the March 31, 1991 crash of a United Airlines Boeing 737-200 in Colorado Springs, Colo. The following is an overview of what prompted the FAA review, and a highlight of some of the review team's findings.

Within two weeks of the Aliquippa accident, an FAA pilot having access to data about the crash, used a simulator to recreate the scenario. His re-creation prompted questions about the aileron authority of the 737. This specifically launched efforts to start the critical design review of the 737. However, the FAA already had begun -- and has never stopped -- initiatives to shed further light on the two 737 accidents.

The report found no design flaws in the 737 flight control system that could have caused either of the two 737 accidents that prompted the review. A nine-member team composed of engineers and airworthiness inspectors from the FAA and other government agencies, including the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) worked for more than five months on the review and submitted a report containing 27 recommendations to improve the aircraft's margin of safety. The FAA now has ongoing action to address the recommendations.

The study, entitled "B737 Flight Control Critical Design Review," was a comprehensive review of the aircraft's flight control system. To ensure that every aspect of the flight control system was considered, the FAA looked both within and outside the agency in assembling the team. Team members included FAA officials, a member of the U.S. Air Force and a representative from Transport Canada.

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In addition, the agency stipulated that no one who was involved in the 737 certification process could be a member of the review team. This was done to ensure that no aspect was overlooked. Someone familiar with the aircraft, FAA officials reasoned, might dismiss reviewing certain aspects of the aircraft, based on prior knowledge of the aircraft and reasonable certainty that some particular aspect of the aircraft presented no problems.

The review team was given a complete introduction and review of the 737. They met with Boeing design staff; observed the aircraft being assembled on the production line; traced components used in maintenance and repair; and talked with component manufacturers, suppliers, Boeing design and maintenance officials, and airline representatives.

During the five-month investigation, the FAA team examined every accident and incident report available on all models of the 737. The review team was tasked with examining every possible aspect of the flight control system that could have contributed to the two accidents -- even if some possibilities seemed unlikely.

The study concludes that the Boeing 737 is in compliance with FAA airworthiness requirements.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 15, 1995

APA 175-95

Contact: Curtis Austin

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STATEMENT ON FLIGHT DATA RECORDERS

The FAA already has called on industry to begin retrofitting Boeing 737 aircraft with upgraded FDRs on a voluntary basis to improve safety and minimize costs at the same time. The FAA is conducting an in-depth rulemaking effort in response to the NTSB's recommendations. We have developed an aggressive campaign -- working vigorously with the NTSB and the aviation community -- to address FDR-related matters. Listed below is a thumbnail sketch of our agency's FDR-related efforts to date.

- **April 19, 1995:** Anthony J. Broderick, the FAA's Associate Administrator for Regulation and Administration, endorses the NTSB call for improved flight data recorders on commercial planes and urges airlines to start upgrading their equipment without waiting for new government regulations. Broderick, however, termed the NTSB's request that the new recorders be installed in all Boeing 737's by the end of the year an "aggressive schedule" and suggested that more flexibility might be needed on timing. He noted that the FAA is bound by federal law to consider the concerns of those in the commercial airlines industry about shouldering additional costs. Broderick said the cost per passenger for putting the recorders in existing planes would only amount to 7 cents to 15 cents per ticket, depending on the final cost and how many years it takes to upgrade all of the nation's 4,500 commercial airplanes.
- **April 20, 1995:** The FAA holds a public meeting to hear comments on the NTSB recommendations to increase parameters on FDRs.
- **June 15, 1995:** First meeting of the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee working group that the FAA had developed with the objective of developing the best possible solutions to the need for upgraded FDR systems. The committee includes industry representatives, as well as the NTSB's technical staff, who are trying collectively to expedite an appropriate FDR program for effective and timely implementation.

The FAA has reviewed public comments and is currently considering whether a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking is appropriate.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, Nov. 15, 1995

APA 176-95

Contact: Curtis Austin

Tel.: (202) 267-3479

**STATEMENT
AVIATION RULEMAKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING ON NOVEMBER 15, 1995
REGARDING RECOMMENDATIONS ON FLIGHT DATA RECORDERS**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) wishes to thank the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) for its diligent efforts in preparing recommendations to revise and update our regulations on flight data recorders.

It is this agency's belief that the quest for zero accidents is a shared responsibility with the entire aviation community. We welcome and appreciate ARAC's input as we consider revising our regulations to provide for the collection of additional information by requiring the upgrading of recorder capabilities in most transport aircraft.

As we stated April 20, 1995 in our flight data recorder public meeting, airplanes have become more sophisticated and as our level of safety has improved, the cause of accidents has often become more and more elusive. We need as many pieces of information as possible, not only to help us better understand the cause of accidents, but to use data from incidents to help us better understand how to prevent accidents. Enhanced flight data recorders -- with additional parameters -- provide us with the tools to do just that.

We are aware that the National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) recommendation that the FAA require operators to retrofit certain airplanes currently in operation, or to outfit newly manufactured aircraft, with enhanced FDRs will likely increase airlines' costs.

We will carefully consider ARAC's recommendations as we explore how -- without placing an unreasonable financial burden on the airlines -- we can move expeditiously to act upon NTSB's recommendations.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, Nov. 20, 1995

APA 177-95

Contact: Henry J. Price

Telephone: (202) 267-8521



FAA ISSUES DIRECTIVE ON GE TURBO-FAN JET ENGINE

The Federal Aviation Administration today issued an Airworthiness Directive (AD) to increase the reliability and safety of the General Electric (GE) CF6 turbo-fan jet engine. The directive will affect 825 engines in service with U.S. operators, including the Airbus A300 and A310, Boeing 747 and 767, as well as the McDonnell Douglas DC-10 and MD11 aircraft.

Today's AD expands the scope of a previous directive by increasing the number of High Pressure Compressor Rotor Stage 3-9 (HPCR Stage 3-9) spools to be inspected in GE CF6-45, -50, -80A and -80C2 engines. The spools are a titanium, one-piece component that integrates disks and supports blades that compress air as it goes through the engine.

The AD requires initial and repetitive ultrasonic and electro-magnetic testing -- non-destructive inspection techniques -- to inspect for cracks in the spools. It also calls for removal from service prior to further flight spools that equal or exceed GE service criteria.

A National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation of an incident in April involving a DC-10 found that cracking in the HPCR Stage 3-9 spool caused an uncontained failure of one of the aircraft's GE CF6 engines.

In August, the NTSB issued two recommendations relating to inspection of the engines. The FAA responded to the board's first recommendation in September through a directive to operators that requires a more detailed fluorescent penetrant inspection process for the nine spools. Today's AD addresses the recommendation by the NTSB to require repeated inspections of the spools.

FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 28, 1995

APA 178-95

Contact: Kay Templeton Garvey

Tel.: (202) 267-3883

STATEMENT

**NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
MEETING ON NOVEMBER 28, 1995
REGARDING A SPECIAL STUDY OF AVIATION SAFETY IN ALASKA**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) said it would begin an immediate review of safety recommendations made today by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) in connection with its special study of aviation safety in Alaska during the winter of 1994-95.

Reiterating that safety is its first priority, the FAA said it will review fully the NTSB recommendations. The FAA will provide responses to the NTSB in a timely fashion.

According to the board, the FAA has responded acceptably to 84 percent of the NTSB recommendations.

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FAA News



Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 28, 1995

APA 179-95

Contact: Liz Neblett

Tel.: (202) 267-8521

**FAA ANNOUNCES ASSESSMENT OF FOREIGN
COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL SAFETY STANDARDS**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has reassessed Colombia's civil aviation authority, giving it a conditional rating after finding areas which do not meet international safety standards.

The assessment is not an indication of whether an individual foreign carrier is safe or unsafe, rather it determines whether or not the country has a civil aviation authority in place and the extent to which that authority ensures that operational and safety procedures are maintained by its air carriers.

The focus of the FAA's foreign assessment program is on countries, not individual carriers from that country. And these countries are assessed for their adherence to ICAO's aviation safety standards, not FAA regulations. ICAO is the International Civil Aviation Organization.

Travelers may call 1-800-FAA-SURE (1-800-322-7873) to obtain a summary statement about whether a foreign country has been assessed and the results, if available.

Countries whose air carriers fly to the United States must adhere to the safety guidelines of ICAO, the United Nation's technical agency for aviation which establishes international standards and recommended practices for aircraft operations and maintenance.

The FAA, with the cooperation of the host country, only assesses countries whose airlines have operating rights to or from the United States, or have requested such rights.

Specifically, the FAA determines whether a country has an adequate infrastructure for international aviation safety oversight as defined by the ICAO standards. The basic elements that the FAA considers necessary include: 1) laws enabling the appropriate government office to adopt regulations necessary to meet the minimum requirements of ICAO; 2) current regulations that meet those requirements; 3) procedures to carry out the regulatory requirements; 4) air carrier certification, routine inspection, and surveillance programs, and 5) organizational and personnel resources to implement and enforce the above.

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The FAA has established three ratings for the status of these countries at the time of the assessment: does comply with ICAO standards, conditional, and does not comply with ICAO standards.

- **Category I, Does Comply with ICAO Standards:** A country's civil aviation authority has been assessed by FAA inspectors and has been found to license and oversee air carriers in accordance with ICAO aviation safety standards.
- **Category II, Conditional:** A country's civil aviation authority in which FAA inspectors found areas that did not meet ICAO aviation safety standards and the FAA is negotiating actively with the authority to implement corrective measures. During these negotiations, limited operations by this country's air carriers to the U.S. are permitted under heightened FAA operations inspections and surveillance.
- **Category III, Does Not Comply with ICAO Standards:** A country's civil aviation authority found not to meet ICAO standards for aviation oversight. Unacceptable ratings apply if the civil aviation authority has not developed or implemented laws or regulations in accordance with ICAO standards; if it lacks the technical expertise or resources to license or oversee civil aviation; if it lacks the flight operations capability to certify, oversee and enforce air carrier operations requirements; if it lacks the aircraft maintenance capability to certify, oversee and enforce air carrier maintenance requirements; or if it lacks appropriately trained inspector personnel required by ICAO standards. Operations to the U.S. by a carrier from a country that has received a Category III rating are not permitted unless they arrange to have their flights conducted with a duly authorized and properly supervised foreign air carrier appropriately certified from a country meeting international aviation safety standards.

The FAA has assisted countries with less than acceptable ratings by providing technical expertise, assistance with inspections, and training courses. The FAA hopes to work with other countries through ICAO to address non-compliance with international aviation safety oversight standards.

The FAA will continue to release the results of safety assessments to the public as they are completed. First announced in September 1994, the ratings are part of an ongoing FAA program to complete initial assessments, by the end of 1996, of all countries with air carriers that operate to the United States by the end of 1996.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 28, 1995

APA 180-95

Contact: Jeffrey Thal

Tel.: (202) 267-7344

**FAA DISCONTINUES FUNDING OF AIR TRAFFIC
CONTROL SERVICES AT SEVEN LOW ACTIVITY AIRPORTS**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today announced that it will discontinue funding for air traffic control services at seven low-activity control towers after December 31. The decision was made after exhaustive benefit/cost evaluations determined that air traffic activity levels fall below the FAA's criteria for continued funding.

"This was a difficult decision, but a necessary one. In a time of declining budgets, the FAA must spend its money wisely," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "We can't afford to operate control towers where there isn't enough air traffic to justify it.

"We will, however, continue to work with the municipalities should they decide to operate control towers themselves," said Hinson. "Currently, about 35 cities throughout the United States operate their own non-federal towers, because communities find it in their local interest to provide air traffic control services."

The action will affect towers at: Wheeling-Ohio County (W. Va.); Shreveport (La.) Downtown; Monroe County (Bloomington, Ind.); Delaware County (Muncie, Ind.); Lake Tahoe (Cal.); Greenbriar Valley (Lewisburg, W. Va); and Cape Girardeau (Mo.) Municipal.

The decision to end funding for the seven control towers was made only after extensive studies of air traffic activity over the last 20 months and forecasts of future activity. Since 1992, the FAA has conducted annual benefit/cost studies of every control tower. The latest evaluation indicates that these seven airports do not meet the FAA's minimum benefit/cost requirements.

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Approximately 30 FAA air traffic controllers and managers will be reassigned to meet the increasing demands at towers that need more controllers. Additionally, the FAA will work with any of the municipalities in order to help them maintain local air traffic control service should they choose to continue to operate their tower.

The benefit/cost analysis compares the present dollar value of tower benefits at an airport with the present dollar value of operating costs, computed over a 15-year time frame. Budget permitting, a location is eligible for federal funding when the benefit/cost ratio meets or exceeds established FAA criteria. The ratio of each of the seven towers fell at least 20 percent below the FAA's criteria for continued funding.

There are approximately 35 privately funded and operated air traffic control towers in the United States. Air traffic services provided by these towers are similar to those provided by FAA-staffed towers, and the FAA certifies the controllers at these locations. Privately-operated towers at low-activity locations have been providing safe and effective visual flight rules (VFR) service for more than 50 years.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, November 30, 1995

APA 181-95

Contact: Alison Duquette

Tele.: (202) 267-8521

MEDIA ADVISORY

INDUSTRY, LABOR AND GOVERNMENT TO HOLD AVIATION SAFETY INITIATIVE REVIEW

WHO: U.S. Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña and Federal Aviation Administration Administrator David R. Hinson

WHAT: **Aviation Safety Initiative Review:** a two-day meeting of 300 aviation safety experts to review the safety action plan adopted at last January's nationwide Aviation Safety Summit, evaluate the safety accomplishments of the past year, and set the aviation safety agenda for 1996. Secretary Peña will take part in safety workshops on the first day of the conference; Administrator Hinson will join the working groups on the second day.

WHEN: **December 6-7, 1995**

WHERE: Hyatt Regency Hotel
500 Poydras at Loyola Avenue
New Orleans, LA
Phone: 504/561-1234

WHAT: **Events open to media:**

Secretary Peña's speech: **9:00 a.m., December 6**

Media availability immediately follows with Secretary Peña, FAA Assistant Administrator for System Safety Christopher Hart, and representatives of the Air Transport Association, the Regional Airlines Association and the Air Line Pilots Association.

**Report and recommendations
from safety workshops:** **1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m., December 7**

Administrator Hinson's remarks: **4:00 p.m., December 7**

Media Availability: **5:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m., December 7**

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