FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, Sept. 6, 1995

APA 121-95
Contact: Liz Neblett
Hank Price
Phone: (202) 267-8521

ADVANCE

FAA TO HOLD MEDIA BRIEFING
12:30 P.M., THURSDAY, SEPT. 7
TO
UNVEIL NEW ANALYSIS SYSTEM TO
MAKE SURVEILLANCE MORE EFFECTIVE

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will hold a briefing to unveil its new Safety Reporting Analysis System (SPAS) at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 7 in Room 9 ABC at the agency's headquarters, 800 Independence Ave., S.W., in Washington, D.C.

The new system to be unveiled is part of the FAA's "Zero Accidents" initiative to enhance air safety, and has been developed to better and more cost effectively translate and compare information from the nearly 365,000 airline surveillance/inspection activities done each year.

Only credentialed members of the media will be permitted to attend the briefing. Electronic media may want to bring a separate video recorder with video input to obtain visuals from the computer material presented at the event. A mult box will also be available.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, Sept. 7, 1995

APA 122-95
Contact: Liz Neblett
Hank Price
Tele.: (202) 267-8521

FAA'S NEW SAFETY ANALYSIS SYSTEM MAKES SURVEILLANCE MORE EFFECTIVE

To support the "Zero Accidents" initiative to enhance air safety, the Federal Aviation Administration will use the newly developed Safety Performance Analysis System (SPAS) to better and more cost effectively translate and compare information from the nearly 365,000 airline surveillance/inspection activities done each year.

The new system is now operational at three sites -- FAA headquarters, Eastern Region headquarters in New York, and at the FAA Technical Center in New Jersey. SPAS training will begin next week for the first inspectors assigned to the larger carriers. The agency expects to have more than 2,500 aviation safety inspectors on line by 1998.

SPAS allows inspectors to do in hours what once took several days by comparing an air carrier's own current-to-past performance or comparing the records of similar-sized carriers. Inspectors will be able to identify potential concerns in the aviation industry and take swift action to gain compliance with the rules when necessary. This new state-of-the-art system uses Microsoft "Windows 95" and was developed within budget and on time. It is being considered for use by other countries and agencies.

"Large air carriers are inspected many times every day, across the country," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "Findings can range from 'satisfactory' to 'unfavorable.' Using FAA data sources, the new system will flag variations from the norm and speed up any appropriate corrective action if required."

- more -

The first of the SPAS software will be installed in the field on Monday, Sept. 25, and will be available to more than 180 inspectors at 56 FAA offices throughout the nation by February 1996.

Translated into performances measures, SPAS information is displayed in user-friendly graphs or tables that indicate trends and point to potential areas of concern. The initial system examines repair stations, schools and all air carriers. In the next several months the ability to evaluate and compare aircraft types and air personnel will be added.

"SPAS is a dynamic system that will constantly change to meet the inspectors' needs," said Hinson. "Inspectors are field experts and their knowledge went into the definition and design of the system. Through their contributions, the new system is revolutionary and evolutionary, and will continue to be refined."

In addition to the FAA, other organizations involved in the development of SPAS include the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center, Department of Defense, Rutgers -- The State University of New Jersey, Wichita State University, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Sandia National Laboratories.

Copies of FAA press releases are on-line via the Headquarters News and Public Affairs Home Page on the World Wide Web at: **http://www.faa.gov/apa/apahome.htm**

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 7, 1995

APA 123-95
Contact: Anthony Willett
Tele.: (202) 267-3883

FAA STATEMENT REGARDING GAO REPORT ON AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTER OUTAGES

"This Administration has worked aggressively to address issues related to the modernization of the nation's air traffic control system," said agency Administrator David R. Hinson. "Equipment reliability is our major goal, and Sen. Simon's work has validated that the FAA's focus and attention are where they should be. We have worked long and hard to address the air traffic equipment modernization program."

In its investigation, GAO found that the FAA project plan to deliver new computer equipment to the field was realistic. The GAO said the "[p]roject requirement [is] defined and understood" and the"[p]roject milestones [are] achievable with minimum technical risk."

The agency has initiated action to address power outages throughout the country.

- On August 1, Hinson announced an interim replacement that will accelerate the deployment of new computers in the nation's five busiest air traffic control facilities. As a result, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas-Fort Worth, New York and Washington will receive new equipment by mid-1997.

- Hinson is sending seven teams of engineering and air traffic control experts, each headed by a senior executive, to America's 21 major centers. The visits, which will be complete by September 15, are designed to ensure that the agency's plans and contingencies for handling power outages are appropriate, effective and in place.

-- more --

- The agency is reviewing local facility procedures and back-up capabilities, and it has instituted refresher training in its 21 major traffic centers. The agency furnished a 27-minute video training tape for controllers on August 28.

- The agency commissioned on August 30 a blue-ribbon panel of technical experts in power systems and back-up procedures to review FAA operations. The team includes top-level representatives from AT&T, Florida Power & Light, Science Application International Corp., Lockheed Martin, Sverdup Corp. and the departments of Defense and Energy. Their report will be complete by mid-November.

- In October, the agency will reinitiate courses specially geared to training technicians on maintenance procedures for older equipment.

- By September 30, the agency will hire 116 technicians throughout the country to complement existing staff. In addition, the agency will reassign technicians as necessary to meet staffing standards in Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas-Fort Worth, New York and Washington.

"The conclusions drawn by GAO and NTSB validate our findings on this issue," Hinson said. "We continue to share their very real concerns about the agency's ability to staff where and when it needs to. This underscores the urgent need to free the FAA from the government's cumbersome rules, regulations and red tape regarding procurement, hiring and funding."

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, September 8, 1995

APA 131-95
Contact: Sandra Campbell
(816) 426-5449

KANSAS CITY CENTER EXPERIENCES BRIEF POWER OUTAGE

The FAA's traffic control center in Kansas City experienced a power outage last night from 9:50-9:56 p.m. (CDT). The immediate cause of the outage remains under investigation. As a result of this outage, airplanes in the vicinity encountered 33 delays, and other aircraft were diverted around the air space.

"This agency is working aggressively to minimize the impact of power outages on the system," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "The safety of the flying public is our number one priority, and in every instance, we will institute delays to ensure that safety is not compromised. The first rule of our operational procedures is to sacrifice efficiency for safety."

Preliminary reports indicate that the outage occurred as technicians were working to upgrade power-conditioning equipment, which is used to modulate commercial electricity before it reaches sensitive machinery. During the outage, Kansas City controllers did not have radio or radar contact with aircraft. As a matter of course, responsibility for these aircraft was transferred immediately to adjacent air traffic control facilities. Preliminary reports also indicate that no controller or pilot errors were recorded as a result of the outage.

Overall system availability, the yardstick that measures operational performance of the agency's 30,000 facilities, exceeds 99.4 percent. The average system availability of the control center in Kansas City is 99.9 percent.

-30-

FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, September 11, 1995

APA 124-95
Contact: Alison Duquette
Tele: (202) 267-8521

FAA AND NASA FORM PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE AIR TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY

FAA Administrator David R. Hinson and NASA Administrator Daniel Goldin today signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that initiates joint research and development activities to improve the efficiency of the nation's airspace system. Using the latest aerospace technology, FAA/NASA initiatives will ultimately improve service to the flying public by decreasing delays through increased airspace user flexibility while maintaining the highest level of safety.

"NASA is proud to support the FAA in their effort to improve the airspace system," said Goldin. "Consumers, aircraft operators and the FAA are on the threshold of the next epoch in air traffic management. I believe our contribution to this national challenge will bring the dream to reality."

"The combination of NASA's aeronautics and FAA's air traffic management expertise will help lead the nation toward our long-term goal of Free Flight," said Hinson. "Free Flight will allow pilots, whenever practical, to choose their own route and file a flight plan that follows the most efficient and economical trajectories. I'm confident that this MOU will help bring us into the 21st century toward, building on the success we've had with the National Route Program which is already making great strides toward our Free Flight goal."

The initiative will be managed by a NASA/FAA Integrated Product Team. The team will address both near and long-term requirements, with initial emphasis on improvements that can be implemented within the next 10 years.

- more -

Specific areas for joint NASA/FAA activities may include:

- **Roles of flight crews and air traffic controllers.** More flexible flight operations may involve new roles for flight crews and air traffic controllers.

- **Integration of air traffic management, cockpit and fleet management**. Emerging technologies may permit closer integration of air traffic management, cockpit flight management, and operational control centers.

- **Cockpit situation awareness.** Technologies developed for the Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System and Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast offer new opportunities to improve cockpit situational awareness both on the airport surface and throughout the airspace. Further development will increase flight crew participation in air traffic management decision-making.

- **Conflict detection and resolution**. Development of automation technologies and pilot/controller roles will enable users to accurately predict and resolve conflicts in an efficient and safe manner.

- **Flight restrictions.** Development of concepts, technologies, responsibilities, and procedures will minimize flight restrictions and maximize aircraft operations.

- **Safety analysis.** The highest level of safety will be maintained. This will require analyses and simulations of system safety and development of tools for proactive detection and resolution of any hazardous situations.

- **All vehicle classes.** Flight operations will accommodate all users including: transport, general aviation, rotorcraft and military aircraft. The system will accommodate each aircraft class while assuring that avionics requirements are cost effective and affordable.

- **Cost-benefit assessments**. Each step in the transition to more flexible flight operations will be substantiated by cost-benefit estimates. Projections will include impacts on both airspace users and air traffic management service providers.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 12, 1995

APA 125-95
Contact: Larry West
Tele: (202) 267-8521

STATEMENT ON SENATE FAA REFORM BILL
BY FAA ADMINISTRATOR DAVID R. HINSON

As administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration, I welcome this legislative proposal to reform the FAA, and I want to compliment Senators McCain and Ford, Congressman Clement, and their staffs for the hard work they have put into this bill.

Simply put, the FAA must have meaningful reform and greater flexibility in personnel, procurement and financing if we are going to continue to provide the same high level of safety and service that the American people depend on every day.

Those are the reasons the Administration proposed the United States Air Traffic Services Corporation more than 18 months ago, and those are the same reasons we are here today to offer our strong support for this FAA reform bill.

This bill proposes fundamental changes to our system — precisely the kind of changes we need to ensure that the United States will continue to have the safest, most efficient aviation system in the world.

What the FAA needs — and what this bill proposes — are personnel, procurement and financing processes flexible enough:

- to take advantage of new technologies;
- to match resources with real personnel needs, allowing us to place skilled people where we need them, reward good work and deal with poor performance;
- to respond quickly and effectively to unexpected changes;
- and to provide the resources necessary for the FAA to plan, implement and complete long-term strategies in a timely and efficient manner.

-- more --

The FAA has a unique mission in government. It is one of the few non-defense government services that operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The agency operates and maintains the air traffic control system for both civil and military users, handling an average of two flights every second, and moving approximately 1.5 million passengers safely to their destinations every day.

Today, the FAA is facing the dual challenge of keeping pace with unprecedented growth in aviation while trying to manage a steadily declining budget. By 2002, more than 800 million passengers will be flying the nation's skies every year — a 35 percent increase over 1995. Commercial operations are expected to increase by 18 percent — to approximately 28 million annually.

Over the past two years, the FAA has reduced its work force by 5,000 employees and cut its annual budget by $600 million — and even more cuts may be necessary as America moves toward a balanced federal budget.

The FAA is prepared to meet the challenges — and the responsibilities — of the future, but we cannot fulfill that mission if our personnel, procurement and financing processes are mired in the past. We can only ensure public safety and system efficiency if we have the tools we need to do the job right.

This legislation will give us the resources and the flexibility we need to continue the United States' unparalleled record of aviation safety, efficiency and security.

Thank you.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 12, 1995

APA 126-95
Contact: Don Zochert
(708) 294-7427

**CHICAGO CENTER EXPERIENCES
OFF-LINE EQUIPMENT MALFUNCTION**

While routine scheduled maintenance was being performed on the primary computer system last night at 10 p.m. (CDT), Chicago Center technicians uncovered an equipment malfunction that necessitated controllers there to continue using back-up equipment through today.

"We have dispatched an acknowledged expert in air traffic control computer systems to Chicago," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "I'm confident that this situation will be resolved. Because the malfunctions occurred during routine maintenance, controllers already were using the back-up system. The system is designed with several layers of safeguards for this very reason."

The malfunction occurred in the display computer complex, which transmits information to radar scopes. The malfunction did not affect information supplied to the back-up system. Controllers using the back-up system, called DARC/HOST, retain capability to control aircraft, including communication, aircraft position, flight identification, altitude and airspeed.

Overall equipment availability at the Chicago Center is 99.6 percent.

Preliminary reports indicate the following approximate chronology:

- *10 p.m., CDT, Monday, September 11* Technicians encounter equipment malfunction in primary system while performing routine maintenance. Controllers already were using back-up system during maintenance procedures.

(more)

CHICAGO CENTER EXPERIENCES OFF-LINE MALFUNCTION (2 of 2)

- *3:08: a.m., Tuesday, September 12* Technicians isolate problem and attempt to reactivate primary system.
- *3:18 a.m.* Technicians receive multiple error messages; decision made to leave operations in back-up mode.
- *8:22 a.m.* Preliminary report of operational error by controller, involving a commuter aircraft and a general aviation aircraft. An investigation is under way.
- *9:15 a.m.* Technicians attempt to reactivate primary system to ensure maximum redundancy. Resulting malfunctions necessitate switching from DARC/HOST to DARC, which requires controllers to write flight data information strips by hand. A national ground stop was initiated, which holds on the ground flights with Chicago as destination.
- *9:40 a.m.* HOST/DARC operations restored. Controllers no longer need to hand write flight data information strips. Decision made to maintain operations in this mode until off-peak hours.
- *Noon* Computer expert arrives from FAA Technical Center in Atlantic City, N.J.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, September 13, 1995

APA 127-95
Contact: Liz Neblett
(202) 267-8521

UNITED STATES AND NETHERLANDS SIGN FIRST BILATERAL AVIATION SAFETY AGREEMENT

In a move designed to increase international cooperation in aviation safety, U.S. Ambassador K. Terry Dornbush and Dutch Minister of Transport Annemarie Jorritsma signed the world's first bilateral aviation safety agreement (BASA) today in The Hague.

The agreement is designed to promote the highest standards of aviation safety by increasing cooperation in such safety regulatory areas as aircraft certification, approval and monitoring of maintenance facilities, and flight simulator evaluations. It forms a regulatory partnership between the two countries, improving efficiency and expanding each nation's ability to respond to changes in the international aviation industry. The BASA could also encompass the approval and monitoring of airmen, aviation training establishments, and flight operations.

During ground-laying meetings on the BASA with Dutch Director General of Civil Aviation Jan Weck in Amsterdam last June, Federal Aviation Administrator David R. Hinson said, "We are looking forward to this opportunity to work closely with the Netherlands to further enhance safety and meet the challenges posed by the globalization of aviation."

The agreement will go into effect when ratified by the Dutch Parliament. Representatives of the two governments had initialed the text of the agreement on June 6 in Washington, D.C.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Wednesday, Sept. 13, 1995

APA 128-95
Contact: Sandra Allen
Tele.: (202) 267-3883

Don Zochert
Tele.: (708) 294-7430

BOMB THREAT IS HOAX; HINSON PRAISES EMPLOYEES

Wednesday, Sept. 13, 1995 -- The bomb threats received today at approximately 4:30 p.m. CDT at the Federal Aviation Administration air traffic center in Indianapolis were determined to be hoaxes, following searches of the building by security personnel and law enforcement agencies.

"The FAA takes these threats very seriously," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "The Agency deeply appreciates the employees who remained on duty while the searches were being conducted. Their dedication is without question. They are among the finest and most committed employees in federal service."

During the incident, there was no impact on air traffic services.

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OFFICIAL

NEWS:

U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration

PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
P.O. Box 20636, Atlanta, GA 30320
(404) 305-5100
(404) 305-5107 FAX

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 13, 1995

CONTACT: Kathleen B. Bergen
404-305-5100
after 5 p.m. 404-305-5180

TALLAHASSEE TOWER EXPERIENCES POWER OUTAGE

The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) air traffic control tower at Tallahassee Municipal Airport experienced a power outage from 7:55 to 8:20 p.m yesterday when an auxiliary generator malfunctioned.

In anticipation of bad weather, air traffic controllers had switched to the engine generator from commercial power, which is standard operating procedure. The engine generator ran for two minutes, then failed. Controllers attempted to switch back to commercial power, but were unable to do so. After 25 minutes, they reset the power system, and commercial power was restored. The outage is believed to have been caused by a failure in the fuel transfer pump in the engine generator.

"This agency is working aggressively to minimize the impact of power outages on the system," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "The safety of the flying public is our number one priority, and in every instance, we will ensure that safety is not compromised. The first rule of our operational procedures is to sacrifice efficiency for safety."

During the 25-minute outage, eight aircraft were flying in the tower's airspace, five were on instrument flight plans and under air traffic control. During the brief outage, aircraft in Tallahassee airspace above 6,000 feet were handled by controllers at the Jacksonville Air Route Traffic Control Center in Hilliard, FL. Tallahassee controllers continued to handle aircraft flying below 6,000 feet using non-radar procedures.

Overall system availability, the yardstick that measures operational performance of the agency's 30,000 facilities, exceeds 99.4 percent. The average system availability of Tallahassee facilities is 99.6 percent.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 14, 1995

APA 129-95
Contact: Hank Verbais
(310) 725-3500

FAA IS INVESTIGATING
OAKLAND RADAR PROBLEMS

FAA technicians are investigating the cause of a malfunction that affected radar at the Oakland traffic control center. Because the Oakland radar is designed with a dual sensor located at nearby Moffett Field, controllers were able to switch radar coverage to that site immediately. There were no delays or loss of service as a result of this malfunction.

"We were able to restore the system and minimize impact on air traffic control because of the hard work and dedication of our technicians," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "We share their concerns in dealing with these equipment problems. The equipment problems at Oakland and throughout the system underscore the agency's need for reform. The Administration supports the FAA reform bill recently sponsored by Senators McCain and Ford, which will provide the agency with fundamental change in procurement, personnel and financing. This bill offers meaningful reform and greater flexibility the FAA needs if we are going to continue to provide the same high level of safety and service that the American people depend on every day."

Controllers switched their scopes to receive coverage from Moffett radar at 1:34 p.m. Technicians restored the Oakland radar at 2:06 p.m., and controllers returned to Oakland radar.

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At 4:11 p.m., a second incident occurred, when technicians discovered a microwave link problem in the Oakland radar. Controllers were using the Oakland radar at the time and switched to Moffett coverage without interruption. Technicians restored the link after 1 hour and 21 minutes.

At 6:20 p.m., technicians encountered further problems with the Oakland radar. Technicians replaced circuit boards and restored the Oakland radar to service at 3:30 a.m. today.

The equipment availability at Oakland is 99.79 percent. In 1994, the equipment availability was 99.61 percent. The foundations for the agency's radar equipment are consistent with California building codes.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 14, 1995

APA 129-95
Contact: Hank Verbais
(310) 725-3500

EARTHQUAKE MAY HAVE TRIGGERED OAKLAND RADAR PROBLEMS

FAA technicians are investigating whether a 4.2 earthquake yesterday may have triggered malfunctions in a radar that services the Oakland traffic control center. Because the Oakland radar is designed with a dual sensor located at nearby Moffett Field, controllers were able to switch radar coverage to that site immediately. Preliminary reports indicate that airports in the Oakland area experienced no delays as a result of this malfunction.

"We were able to restore the system and minimize impact on air traffic control because of the hard work and dedication of our technicians," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "We share their concerns in dealing with these equipment problems. The equipment problems at Oakland and throughout the system underscore the agency's need for reform. The Administration supports the FAA reform bill recently sponsored by Senators McCain and Ford, which will provide the agency with fundamental change in procurement, personnel and financing. This bill offers meaningful reform and greater flexibility the FAA needs if we are going to continue to provide the same high level of safety and service that the American people depend on every day."

With the earthquake, controllers switched their scopes to receive coverage from Moffett radar at 1:34 p.m. Technicians restored the Oakland radar at 2:06 p.m., and controllers returned to Oakland radar.

-- more --

At 4:11 p.m., a second incident occurred, when technicians discovered a microwave link problem in the Oakland radar. Controllers were using the Oakland radar at the time and switched to Moffett coverage without interruption. Technicians restored the link after 1 hour and 21 minutes.

At 6:20 p.m., technicians encountered further problems with the Oakland radar that may be related to vibrations from the earthquake. Technicians replaced circuit boards and restored the Oakland radar to service at 3:30 a.m. today.

The equipment availability at Oakland is 99.79 percent. In 1994, the equipment availability was 99.61 percent. The foundations for the agency's radar equipment are consistent with California building codes.

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U.S. Department of Transportation

News:

Federal Aviation Administration
Office of Public Affairs
Great Lakes Region
2300 E. Devon Avenue
Des Plaines, Illinois 60018

For Immediate Release:
Thursday, Sept. 14, 1995

Contact:
Sandra Allen
202/267-3333

Don Zochert
708/294/8400

BOMB THREATS AT FAA FACILITY DETERMINED TO BE A HOAX

Two bomb threats received at the Federal Aviation Agency's air traffic center in Indianapolis on Sept. 13 were determined to be a hoax after a thorough security review by FAA and law enforcement authorities.

The FAA followed precise, proven procedures in evaluating the threat and in determine an appropriate course of actions.

"The FAA takes such threats very seriously," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "The safety of our employees is of paramount importance to us, and we proceeded with the utmost care for their well-being."

Telephoned threats were received on an unpublished number at the Air Route Traffic Control Center at 4:10 p.m. and 5:22 p.m. Wednesday.

Emergency procedures were put into place by airport police and FAA Civil Aviation Security experts and employees were immediately advised of the situation. Contingency plans were coordinated in case they were necessary, and two thorough searches of the facility were conducted--one by a K-9 team. Non-FAA personnel, including cafeteria and janitorial staff, were dismissed from work shortly before their normal work shifts ended, in order to facilitate the search of the building. Some FAA employees not essential to the operation of the facility also were released from duty for the same reason.

Said Hinson: "FAA handled this situation with extreme caution and proven security procedures designed to safeguard the lives of employees. The Agency deeply appreciates those employees who remained on duty while the searches were being conducted."

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FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

For immediate release
September 16, 1995

Contact: Don Zochert
(708) 294-8484

COMPUTER OUTAGE AT INDIANAPOLIS CONTROL CENTER;
NO AIR TRAFFIC DELAYS OR INCIDENTS REPORTED

Technicians at FAA's Indianapolis Air Route Traffic Control Center switched to a backup computer system for 1 hour 10 minutes early today when problems were encountered with part of the main system.

No air traffic delays or incidents occurred during the outage, which began at 2:08 a.m. CST and ended at 3:18 a.m. when the main system was returned to service.

Preliminary indications were that a problem occurred with a buffer memory module of the Computer Display Channel, the computer which processes radar information and displays it on controllers' screens. This caused targets on the display screens to lock in place. Technicians successfully transitioned to the main backup computer system, which provides full radar and flight data information to controllers.

As a traffic management initiative, distances between planes were increased during the outage for aircraft flying the neighboring airspace controlled by Memphis Center and for aircraft flying approaches within Indianapolis Center's airspace.

"We were able to restore the system and minimize impact on air traffic control because of the hard work and dedication of our technicians," said Administrator David R. Hinson.

"The equipment problem at Indianapolis and throughout the system underscore the agency's need for reform," Hinson said. "The Administration supports the FAA Reform Bill recently sponsored by Sens. McCain and Ford which will provde the agency fundamental change in procurement, personnel and financing. This bill offers meaningful reform and greater flexibility that FAA needs if we are going to continue to provide the same high level of safety and service that the American people depend on every day."

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

For Immediate Release
September 16, 1995

Contact: Kathleen Bergen
Tel.: (404) 305-5180

OUTAGE OCCURS AT MOBILE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER; RADAR RESTORED AFTER TEN MINUTES

The Federal Aviation Administration Air Traffic Control Tower in Mobile, Ala., experienced a ten-minute power outage today. The outage, which occurred at 2:52 p.m. CDT resulted in a loss of radar coverage in the Mobile area. Only one aircraft was in Mobile airspace at the time of the outage. It was subsequently handed off to Gulfport, Miss.

The cause of the outage was a faulty transfer switch that enables an air traffic supervisor to switch between an engine generator and commercial power. The facilities had been operating on an engine generator as the result of a failure in an Alabama Power substation in Mobile that occurred at 1:24 p.m. CDT.

During the ten-minute outage, the FAA Air Traffic Control Center in Houston, Texas, assumed responsibility for the airspace at 5,000 feet and above over Mobile. Air Traffic controllers at Mobile used non-radar separation procedures to handle aircraft flying below 5,000 feet.

"We were able to restore the system at Mobile and minimize impact on air traffic control because of the hard work and dedication of our technicians," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson.

"The equipment problem at Mobile and throughout the system underscores the agency's need for reform," Hinson said. "The Administration supports the FAA Reform Bill recently sponsored by Senators McCain and Ford, which will provide the agency fundamental change in procurement, personnel and financing. This bill offers meaningful reform and greater flexibility that the FAA needs if we are going to continue to provide the same high level of safety and service that the American people depend on every day."

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, September 18, 1995

APA 129-95
Contact: Arlene Salac
(718) 553-3010

PITTSBURGH RADAR EXPERIENCES COMMERCIAL POWER INTERRUPTION

The airport surveillance radar at Pittsburgh International Airport tower experienced a commercial power interruption last night from 6:45-7:51 p.m. The cause of the interruption remains under investigation. As a result of this interruption, airplanes in the vicinity encountered 36 delays.

"The agency is working aggressively to minimize the impact of power interruptions on the system," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "We share the concerns of our controllers and technicians in dealing with commercial power problems. The problems throughout the system underscore the agency's need for reform. The Administration supports the FAA reform bill recently sponsored by Senators McCain and Ford, which will provide the agency with fundamental change in procurement, personnel and financing. These bill offers meaningful reform and greater flexibility the FAA need if we are going to continue to provide the same high level of safety and service that the American people depend on every day."

Preliminary reports indicate that the interruption occurred as a result of a commercial power interruption to a telephone communication line that feeds radar and radio data to the facility. The facility's backup radio communications were available immediately. The secondary radar for the facility was restored in one minute and used by controllers for approximately nine minutes. After that time, radar information was relayed to controller scopes from the long-range radar at Cleveland air route control center. This process was used until the Pittsburgh radar was back in service at 7:51 p.m.

Overall system availability, the yardstick that measures operational performance of the agency's 30,000 facilities, exceeds 99.4 percent. The average system availability of the Pittsburgh radar is 99.65 percent.

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Fact Sheet

Federal Aviation Administration **Washington, D.C.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 21, 1995

APA 130-95
Contact: Anthony Willett
(202) 267-3883

AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL

System Reviews

- The FAA sent seven teams of air traffic and engineering experts to the 21 major air traffic centers to review of back-up and emergency procedures. The review was completed ahead of schedule on September 15.

- The teams met with over 500 air traffic and airway facilities employees to review emergency and back-up procedures and discuss initiatives to ensure that the air traffic control system continues to operate. safely and efficiently.

- Preliminary findings indicate a need to focus on six areas: Staffing; Training; Improved testing of contingency plans; Evaluation of Emergency communication capabilities; Aging Equipment; and Improved information (lessons learned) exchanged among facilities. A final report will be prepared by the senior executives leading the teams and presented to the Secretary by October 6, 39 days ahead of schedule.

- The agency also has commissioned a team of power experts from outside the FAA to look at our systems. That group consists of officials from AT&T, Florida Power and Light, Lockheed-Martin, the departments of Defense and Energy, Science Application International Corp. and the Sverdup Corp. This team will issue a report in mid-November.

Training

- The agency has developed a 27-minute training video tape for center controllers on transition from primary to back-up computer systems. All controllers are scheduled to be trained by November 1. A similar video for terminal area traffic controllers was delivered to the field facilities on September 13. Training is scheduled to be complete by November 15.

- more -

- The agency is developing a computer-based training curriculum on transition to back-up systems. It will be used for recurrent proficiency training with all air traffic controllers. The developments scheduled to be complete by May 1.

- A new training course for technicians working on existing computer hardware will begin October 3. The class will take six-months to complete. Technicians completing the course will be certified to work on the equipment by June.

Hiring

- The agency will place up to 50 additional controllers in Chicago Center. Two recent bids for controllers attracted 53 air traffic controllers, of which 20 will be hired immediately. The bid will be expanded nationwide.

- Controllers headed for Chicago who have a background in en route operations can be trained to full performance level status in 12-18 months. Controllers who have terminal air traffic area backgrounds can be trained within 18 months-3 years, depending on the level of their previous facility.

- In addition to hiring, the agency is reassigning technicians to key facilities to balance staffing needs.

- The agency has hired 40 new technicians already and plans to hire an additional 76 before the end of the month.

Other initiatives

- On August 1, the Administrator announced an interim replacement to accelerate the deployment of new computers in five air traffic control centers.

    - The cost for acquiring and installing these five new systems is estimated at $65 million.
    - The first delivery of the new computer will be in Chicago in early 1997.
    - Following installation in Chicago, new computer systems will be placed at a rate of one per month in Dallas-Fort Worth, Washington, Cleveland and New York.

- On August 15-18, a working group comprised of agency and air traffic control union representatives me to draft "Air Traffic Control Operational Contingency Plans," an order that directs field facilities on the development and implementation of operational contingency plans. As a result of this order, air traffic contingency plans will be more realistic and the continuation of air traffic services following system outages will be ensured. A final draft is scheduled to be submitted for approval by October 13.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 21, 1995

APA 132-95
Contact: Theresa L. Kraus
Tel: (202) 267-3854

FAA IMPROVES COMMUNICATIONS WITH RUSSIAN FAR EAST

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has successfully tested a new digital satellite data link that will increase dramatically the safety, capacity, and efficiency of international routes over the Russian Far East.

Under an agreement signed with Russian civil aviation authorities, a FAA-led team recently installed prototype controller workstations at the control centers in Anchorage, Alaska, and Anadyr and Petropavlosk-Kamchatsky in the Russian Far East. The workstations allow controllers to compose and transmit flight planning and coordination data to other air traffic facilities. At the same time, FAA established digital communications links to a ground station at Petropavlosk-Kamchatsky, connecting it to the Anchorage center using the Russian GORIZANT satellite. A similar satellite linkage will be installed at Anadyr.

"As part of a project to provide automated transfer of air traffic control information, this new digital satellite data link provides better communication and coordination between controllers in Alaska and Russia," said FAA Administrator David Hinson. "This will increase safety by providing controllers a better way to manage flight plan data."

In recent years, new international air routes have been opened over the Russian Far East, providing shorter alternatives to the congested north Pacific airways for flights between North America and Asia. The use of these routes, however, has been limited because of the lack of a reliable communications infrastructure for transmission of flight plans and clearances to enter Russian airspace.

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Using the Russian airspace shortens travel times for passengers from North America to Asia by up to one and a half hours and decreases airline operating expenses. Russian air traffic officials estimate that, when fully implemented, the new data communications links will allow a doubling of international flights over the Russian Far East.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 21, 1995

APA 133-95
Contact: Anthony Willett
(202) 267-3883

FAA WORKER INADVERTENTLY DOWNS COMMUNICATIONS LINK

An FAA employee installing new equipment in a Salt Lake City radar facility inadvertently disconnected a microwave communications link today, disrupting some radio frequencies in the facility and in the airport tower for as long as 13 minutes. The incident began at 10:34 local mountain time.

"We take this situation very seriously," said FAA Administrator David R. Hinson. "Two agency experts in air traffic control and engineering will be sent to the facility in the morning to conduct a thorough investigation. Our goal is to eliminate these type of human errors."

Workers were installing a new fiber optics telecommunications system and apparently bumped an input connector to the microwave link. The link carries communications frequencies to the tower and the radar facility. Once the workers became aware of the problem, they reconnected the microwave link and restored frequencies within two minutes. Preliminary information indicates that 10 departure delays resulted from the incident. The air traffic control expert also will investigate preliminary reports of an operational error caused by the equipment problem.

"Incidents such as these continue to focus the need for modernization of the air traffic control system," Hinson said. "We share the concerns of our controllers and technicians in dealing with problems in the system. The problems underscore the agency's need for reform. The Administration supports the FAA reform bill recently sponsored by Senators McCain and Ford, which will provide the agency with fundamental change in procurement, personnel and financing. This bill offers meaningful reform and the greater flexibility the FAA needs if we are going to continue to provide the same high level of service that the American people depend on every day."

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"This new system will be the backbone of our nation's air traffic control in the next decade," said Secretary Peña. "But as existing equipment will only get older, it is vitally important that the FAA take every available measure to maintain a safe and reliable system."

Concerned about delays, increased costs and management of the Advance Automation System (AAS) project, Secretary Peña and FAA Administrator David Hinson ordered a comprehensive review in late 1993. In June, 1994, two parts of the program were cancelled and the rest restructured, and an independent audit of software was undertaken. In September, 1994, the audit determined that the system software was sound and that further contract modifications would cut two to three years off the installation of the system.

"When we came into office almost three years ago, we quickly realized this project was out of control," said Peña. "By taking the right steps in a timely manner, we managed to cut years off the project schedule and save more than a billion dollars in cost overruns."

Additionally, Peña reasserted his belief that legislation sponsored by Senators McCain (R-AZ) and Ford (D-KY) to give the FAA the power to fundamentally reform its personnel, procurement and financing functions represents a major step forward to reform the agency, and also stated support for appropriations language by Sen. Hatfield (R-OR) exempting the agency from federal hiring and purchasing rules.

However, Secretary Peña cautioned that unless Congress provided the full funding the President proposed for the FAA in the 1996 budget, some services would have to be curtailed. The administration has recommended $4.7 billion for FAA operations, but a Congressional conference committee is meeting this week to resolve the Senate's proposal to cut $160 million and the House mark of $110 million less.

"The FAA has already cut its annual budget by $600 million and downsized its workforce by 5,000 in the last two years," Deputy FAA Administrator Linda Daschle said. "We are urging Congress not to force us to make further cuts, including a five percent pay cut for controllers and technicians."

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An electronic version of this document can be obtained via the World Wide Web at: http://www.dot.gov/affairs/index.htm

FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday September 22, 1995

APA 134-95
Contact: Jeffrey Thal
Tel.: (202) 267-7344

FAA AWARDS CONTRACT FOR OCEANIC AIR TRAFFIC AUTOMATION SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Federal Aviation Administrator David R. Hinson today announced the awarding of a contract to upgrade and automate the FAA's oceanic air traffic control systems. The contract, to develop the Advanced Oceanic Automation System (AOAS), will provide significant benefits to oceanic airspace users, including improved fuel economy, increased capacity, and shorter transit times to Europe and Asia.

The Oceanic System Development and Support (OSDS) contract, for $140.8 million, was awarded to the Hughes Aircraft Company, of Fullerton, California. The contract schedule calls for initial capabilities to be ready for delivery by the summer of 1997.

"We are moving forward with the development of the next generation of air traffic control computers and equipment, beginning with the oceanic air traffic control environment," said Hinson. "This system will facilitate more direct routes and decreased separation standards. We expect that these enhancements will greatly improve air traffic flow across both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans."

Under this contract, Hughes will provide for the development, deployment, support and maintenance of the AOAS at the Oakland, New York and Anchorage air route traffic control centers and a supporting system at the FAA Technical Center. AOAS will be developed in stages to minimize interruptions to current operations. It will include a broad range of data link services and use Automatic Dependent Surveillance, a satellite-based tracking system that provides controllers with precise position information of each aircraft in the system.

- more -

"It has taken us more than a year to get the OSDS from the initial request-for-proposal to the award of the contract. This is one example of why we need the kind of reform described in S. 1239, the Air Traffic Management System Performance Improvement Act introduced by Senators John McCain (R-AZ), Wendell Ford (D-KY) and Ernest Hollings (D-SC) and Representative Bob Clement (D-TN)," Hinson continued. "With a streamlined procurement system as called for in the bill, we could have gotten it done in less than half the time. It is important for the FAA and for the users of the system that we more quickly be able to take advantage of new technologies, better meet the capacity demands of the aviation industry and provide the necessary resources to complete the entire FAA modernization plan."

An additional benefit of the AOAS is that it will feature air traffic controller work stations that take advantage of the highly-capable hardware system that was developed for use in domestic air traffic control modernization.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, September 22, 1995

APA 135-95
CONTACT: Larry West
Tel.: (202) 267-3883

INSPECTOR GENERAL'S INVESTIGATION CLEARS DASCHLE, OTHER FAA EMPLOYEES

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña and Federal Aviation Administrator David R. Hinson said today that an investigation by the Department of Transportation's independent inspector general has completely exonerated Deputy Administrator Linda Daschle and two other FAA employees of any possible wrongdoing concerning issues related to B&L Aviation, a South Dakota air charter company.

"Linda Daschle has the absolute highest standards of personal and professional ethics and integrity," Peña said. "This independent report underscores her unwavering commitment to those standards."

Hinson said that the inspector general found no evidence to substantiate any of the allegations against Daschle, Flight Standards Division Manager David Hanley and Flight Standards District Office Manager Cathy Jones. According to the report issued today:

"This investigation disclosed no evidence to substantiate that documents were destroyed as alleged. Nor did this investigation disclose evidence to substantiate that Deputy Administrator Daschle violated her recusal. Accordingly, it is recommended that this investigation be closed."

"Linda Daschle is an outstanding public servant who works tirelessly to ensure the safety of U.S. aviation and the American people," Hinson said. "I'm fortunate to have her as my deputy."

The probe by the inspector general, an independent investigatory authority within the Department of Transportation, looked into allegations that Daschle may have used her position at the FAA to favor B&L Aviation or to promote a legislative proposal by her husband, U.S. Senator Tom Daschle, which was intended to eliminate duplicate inspections for aircraft chartered by federal agencies. The report concluded that Daschle, who has officially recused herself from taking action on any South Dakota aviation issues relating to her husband's work, had never violated her recusal.

(more)

Hinson said he asked the inspector general at the Department of Transportation to investigate after allegations were made by another FAA employee earlier this year that Hanley and Jones had destroyed documents while processing a Freedom of Information Act request about B&L Aviation.

"I am pleased, but not surprised, by the inspector general's findings," Hinson said. "No documents were destroyed. No inappropriate actions were taken. Point-by-point, the inspector general's report dismisses every allegation, answers every question and concludes unmistakably that these three FAA employees performed their jobs according to the highest ethical and professional standards."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, September 22, 1995

CONTACT: Larry West
(202) 267-3883

STATEMENT OF FAA DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR
LINDA HALL DASCHLE

I am pleased that the independent inspector general's investigation has confirmed that my actions were proper and in keeping with the high ethical standard I have established for myself.

Throughout my tenure as Deputy Administrator and in prior positions, I have recognized the importance of taking extra precautions to avoid conflicts of interest in South Dakota aviation matters involving my husband. My recusal policy has served me well in the past and will do so in the future.

This investigation has been difficult for me and my family. I want to express my deep appreciation to our many friends and to the employees of the FAA for their continued support.

FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Saturday, September 23,1995

APA 139-95
CONTACT: Larry West
(202) 267-3883

FALLEN TREE CAUSES BRIEF LOSS OF COMMERCIAL POWER TO RADAR AT PITTSBURGH AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER

A tree being removed by workers from a local power company this morning fell across a commercial power line, causing a momentary loss of power to ASR-9 radar at the Pittsburgh air traffic control tower at 9:06 a.m. (EDT). There were no delays as a result of this incident.

Air traffic controllers in the Pittsburgh tower were directing only 11 aircraft when commercial power was interrupted. The temporary power interruption triggered a backup generator, and technicians were able to reset the radar and restore full radar data to air traffic controllers within two minutes. Meanwhile, the controllers had implemented routine safety procedures, such as limiting movement into and out of airspace controlled by the Pittsburgh tower. Commercial power was restored a few minutes later.

Federal Aviation Administrator David R. Hinson said that, as part of the FAA's current action plan to address some recent equipment problems, the agency has an expert team evaluating the way power is supplied to the nation's air traffic control system.

Hinson said that today's incident underscores the importance of legislation recently introduced in Congress, which would give the FAA greater flexibility in financing, personnel and procurement.

"We're installing hundreds of pieces of new state-of-the-art equipment every year, and we have the world's finest controllers and technicians to operate and maintain that technology," Hinson said. "To ensure that the United States will continue to have the world's safest and most efficient aviation system, however, we need more than consistent power for our equipment. We also need consistent, long-term financing, the flexibility to keep pace with rapidly changing technology, and the ability to hire skilled people when and where we need them most."

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, September 25, 1995

APA 136-95
Contact: Curtis Austin
Tel.:(202) 267-3479

**FAA APPOINTS MACLEOD,
BROWN TO TOP ARAC POSTS**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has announced the appointments of Sarah H. MacLeod and Steven J. Brown, as chair and vice chair, respectively, of the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC).

MacLeod is executive director of the Aeronautical Repair Station Association (ARSA). Brown is senior vice president, government and technical affairs for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA).

"Sarah's knowledge of FAA regulations through her work with the aviation maintenance industry and Steven's knowledge of legislation and regulations impacting aviation through his work with AOPA, will prove extremely helpful to us as we work with ARAC's 64 member organizations to develop rules to further enhance safety for the aviation community," FAA Administrator David R. Hinson said of MacLeod and Brown's appointments.

Hinson added that the concept of various aviation organizations working together with the FAA in the rulemaking process is in keeping with the agency's belief in a "shared responsibility between the FAA and the aviation community to further enhance safety."

Chartered by the FAA in February, 1991, ARAC is comprised of 64 aviation organizations representing the entire aviation community, including air carriers, airports, manufacturers, general aviation groups, labor groups, environmental groups, universities, corporations, associations and public interest groups.

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ARAC's goal is to provide advice and recommendations to the FAA Administrator, through the FAA's Associate Administrator for Regulation and Certification, concerning the full range of the FAA's rulemaking activity with respect to aviation-related issues, such as air carrier operations, airman certification, aircraft certification, airports, security and noise.

Since its inception, ARAC has submitted recommendations on such diverse issues as type certification procedures, structural load requirements for transport-category airplanes, design dive speed, and operational and structural difficulty reports.

MacLeod succeeds past ARAC Chair Walter S. Coleman, president of the Washington, D.C.-based Regional Airline Association. Under ARAC rules her appointment will be for one year.

MacLeod, in addition to her duties since 1989 as executive director of the Aeronautical Repair Station Association, is a member of the Virginia State Bar Association and the American Bar Association. She is a managing partner in the Alexandria, Va.-based law firm of Obadal and MacLeod.

Brown, senior vice president for the Frederick, Md.-based AOPA since 1991, also serves as secretary general of the International Council of Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. He is a commercial pilot and a flight instructor in both single- and multi-engine aircraft. In accordance with ARAC rules, following his one-year appointment as vice chair, he will succeed MacLeod, who served as vice chair during Coleman's tenure as chair of ARAC.

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FAA News

/ashington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 26, 1995

APA 137-95
Contacts: Bob Hawk
Tel. 202, 267-3476
Don Zochert
Tel.: 708, 294-7430

FAA AIR TRAFFIC SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS ADDRESS CHICAGO SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS

An aggressive action plan initiated by the Federal Aviation Administration to improve the nation's air traffic control system, including the Chicago Air Route Traffic Control Center, was outlined today by Monte Belger, associate administrator for air traffic services, before a House aviation subcommittee hearing in Aurora, Ill.

In describing the FAA's plan, adopted by the agency last month to address recent outages at the Chicago center, the nation's busiest, and at other centers, Belger emphasized that it provides a number of steps to minimize outages in the future, while maintaining the highest level of safety.

"We have equipped all of our centers with many layers of backup equipment and trained our controllers in operating procedures to ensure that all centers safely handle any interruptions that may occur," Belger told the subcommittee. "We are improving the equipment, training and contingency planning throughout our system to make sure that we maintain the highest level of safety under all operating conditions. If necessary, we will delay aircraft to maintain the same level of safety."

The FAA maintains over 30,000 pieces of equipment in the national airspace system and, despite the age of much of it, the FAA has steadily increased its operational availability rate -- the percent of time equipment is available for use. For 1995, the operational availability rate was 99.4 percent, up from 98.6 percent a decade ago.

Near-term system improvements are focused on a $65 million program to replace older computer equipment at the five ARTCCs where outages have been increasingly experienced -- Chicago, New York, Washington, Fort Worth and Cleveland. Other centers have different computer equipment not as prone to service interruptions, but they will be monitored carefully as well.

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First delivery of the new computer equipment will be in Chicago in April 1997; it is scheduled for operation by October 1997. The other four cities will receive installation at the rate of one per month thereafter. Known as the Display Channel Complex Rehost program (DCCR), the system can execute the older computer software on a new commercial off-the-shelf computer. It functions as an interim solution until the new, more comprehensive, Display System Replacement (DSR) is installed at the FAA centers, beginning in October 1998.

The FAA action plan will place up to 50 additional air traffic controllers at the Chicago center, 20 of whom will be hired immediately. The agency is hiring at least 116 new airway facilities technicians nationwide by the end of the month, with new training courses beginning next month for technicians on maintenance procedures for aging equipment. Controller refresher courses are also being conducted on transitioning to and from backup radar systems.

In addition, the FAA recently completed a system-wide review of all 21 of its major air traffic centers, utilizing seven teams of agency engineering and air traffic control experts to review plans and contingencies for handling equipment malfunctions. The teams met with over 500 air traffic and airway facilities employees to review emergency and backup procedures and discussed initiatives to ensure that the air traffic control system continues to operate safely and efficiently. Their report is due to Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña by November 1.

FAA's action plan also included commissioning of an independent team of experts to review the agency's power system designs and capability. Consisting of officials from five private corporations and the departments of Defense and Energy, the team's report will be issued in mid-November.

"The long-term solution to FAA's modernization needs is real reform in the areas of financing, procurement and personnel," Belger said at the hearing. "We must have a predictable and sufficient source of funds to meet the growing needs of not only the aviation industry but also the American traveling public. We must have the ability to bring on new technology at a faster pace, and the flexibility to hire and move personnel quickly to the facilities where they are most needed to serve industry's needs."

At his press conference in Washington last Thursday, Sept. 21, Secretary Peña reasserted his support of the FAA reform bill recently introduced in the Senate by Senators McCain, Ford, and Hollings and in the House by Congressman Bob Clement, to fundamentally reform the FAA's financing, procurement and personnel functions.

Joining Belger at the hearings in Aurora today were Denis Burke, air traffic manager for the Chicago center, and Gary Duffy, manager of the Chicago systems management office.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 26, 1995

APA 138-95
Contacts: Bob Hawk
Tel.: 202, 267-3476
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STATEMENT BY MONTE BELGER
ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR FOR AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
ON THE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM
SEPTEMBER 26, 1995

The United States operates the most complex and safest airspace in the world and the Federal Aviation Administration does not compromise safety. We are firmly committed to ensuring that the FAA continues to provide the safest and most efficient air traffic control system anywhere.

Recent outages at the Chicago Air Route Traffic Control Center, and at other centers, are of serious concern to the FAA. We initiated an Action Plan last month to address these problems. We are taking a number of steps to minimize outages in the future.

Four- Part Action Strategy

Today, I am pleased to report significant progress in implementing our Action Plan. As Secretary of Transportation Federico Peña noted in his press conference in Washington last Thursday, the FAA has a four-fold strategy to improve staffing, training and communications throughout the air traffic control system.

Technology

First, the FAA is installing the most technologically advanced system in the world, a bold, complex project that will cost some $5.4 billion.

-- It involves a massive modernization program for the installation of new, interim support computer software and hardware to replace today's old computers at five of the busiest centers (including Chicago) by early 1997. This $65 million program involves installation of new equipment at Chicago, Cleveland, Fort Worth, New York and Washington, D.C. -- 16 months earlier than planned.

-- Beginning in 1998, the FAA will start replacing automation equipment at all 21 centers throughout the country. We will replace the 30-year old display consoles, install modern controller workstations and allow for future additions of new technologies of the next century.

-- We will also automate our terminal radar control facilities -- TRACONS -- to allow us to use commercial off-the-shelf software and components, saving time and development money.

-- We are also replacing equipment in the top 70 airport towers, including new state-of-the-art computer displays and radars, starting in 1997.

-- In addition, we recently signed a $150 million contract for a system that will enable us to use satellite communications and the global positioning system to guide and communicate with aircraft as they fly internationally.

-- Twenty-nine state-of-the-art advanced radar systems (ASR-9s) have recently been deployed, thus helping busy airports to better track nearby aircraft.

-- Fourteen advanced ground radar systems are now online to help tower controllers track taxiing aircraft and service vehicles, helping to prevent collisions.

-- And, we've installed 27 Terminal Doppler Weather Radar systems to help controllers detect deadly windshears.

Immediate Measures

Second, we are taking immediate, short-term measures to address future interruptions.

-- We've hired more technicians nationwide -- 116 by October 1.

--We've beefed up training for technicians and controllers. This includes a new computer-based simulator to better train people in switching to backup systems when primary equipment goes down.

-- We're installing new, state-of-the-art equipment to stabilize electrical power at enroute air traffic facilities, helping prevent the kind of outages that have been giving us trouble. Ten systems have already been installed. A total of 27 will be installed at FAA facilities by early 1997.

-- Fifty more controllers will be working at the nation's busiest air traffic facililty -- the Chicago center.

--And, we have completed an on-site review at all 21 centers to develop improvements in staffing, training, contingency planning and emergency communications capabilities.

Adequate Funding

Third, FAA needs the funds to do its job in fiscal year 1996. While the FAA has downsized considerably, reducing our work force by 5,000 employees over the past two years and cutting our budget by $600 million, further budget cuts will affect the agency's ability to provide the vital services we must provide to ensure safety and efficiency in the nation's aviation system.

Reform Legislation

Fourth, the FAA needs the flexibility to operate more like a business. Secretary Peña has asked Congress to move ahead rapidly on the FAA reform bill introduced in the Senate by Senators McCain, Ford, and Hollings and in the House by Congressman Bob Clement, to give the agency the freedom it needs to continuously update its technology, to shift personnel more easily to where they are needed the most, and to have long-term financing to bring on new technologies of the future.

Summary

We are taking strong actions to prevent future interruptions and to minimize the inconvenience to passengers when these interruptions occur.

We want the American public to know that the U.S. air transportation system is safe. Safety is the FAA's highest piority.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, September 27, 1995

APA 140-95
Contact: Marcia Adams
Tel.: (202) 267-3488

AVA ROBINSON NAMED SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR AIRCRAFT CERTIFICATION SERVICE

The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) director of Aircraft Certification Service, Thomas McSweeny, today announced the selection of Ava Robinson as his special assistant. She replaces Dan Salvano who was recently named director of the Aircraft Certification Service, Rotorcraft Directorate, in FAA's Southwest Region.

The Aircraft Certification Service is responsible for the continued operational safety of aircraft, both domestic and international, flying into the United States. It administers safety standards governing the design, production quality, and airworthiness of civil aeronautical products.

Robinson will assist the director and deputy director in managing the service's research and development and Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) activities for programs such as aging aircraft, fire research, and the integrity of aircraft engines. She will also serve as the service's director and liaison for the aviation industry on all research and development initiatives.

"Ava brings over 15 years of experience to the job. Her diverse background as an aviation safety inspector, quality assurance specialist, and program manager makes her a valuable asset to the Aircraft Certification Service," said McSweeny.

For the past three years, Robinson has held several positions in Headquarters. Her most recent position was manager of the Policy and Procedures Branch, which is responsible for writing new policies based on technological advancements or public need. She also worked as the program manager for Production and Airworthiness Certification of Airborne Software where she wrote Advisory Circulars and compliance procedures for manufacturers developing software to be used in aircraft.

From 1990 to 1992, Robinson worked as an aviation safety inspector in Long Beach, CA. There she had oversight function for 23 manufacturers of aircraft parts and completed aircraft. She conducted routine surveillance and conformity inspections to determine if manufacturers met the FAA-approved design. Robinson was also responsible for 18 FAA-approved designees certified to conduct manufacturing-related functions. During this two-year period, she was promoted to the Assistant Principal Operations Inspector for McDonnell Douglas.

Prior to joining the FAA, she worked for the Department of Defense, supervising 18 quality assurance specialists who administered requirements for a variety of products including the MX Missile, Trident Submarine, F-16 and F-18 Aircraft, and commercial space launch vehicles.

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FAA News

Washington, D.C.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, September 28, 1995

APA 141-95
Contact: Liz Neblett
Tele.: (202) 267-8521

FAA TOUGHENS AIRPORT ACCESS BY REQUIRING EMPLOYMENT INVESTIGATIONS

The Federal Aviation Administration today announced a new regulation that will strengthen the security of U.S. civil aviation by requiring investigations of people who seek unescorted access to secure areas of airports. The new rule will take effect in 120 days. Meanwhile, the FAA is evaluating whether further changes may be warranted.

Under the new rule, applicants for positions that require unescorted access to secure areas must provide a 10-year employment history. If they have been convicted of certain crimes within the last 10 years, they will be denied unescorted access to secure areas. Employers must review the applicant's job history for unexplained gaps in employment or other information indicating a possible conviction.

When specific "triggers" are found during an investigation, a criminal history records check will be required. The FAA will serve as the central processor for these requests and will channel fingerprint cards to the Federal Bureau of Investigation when necessary. The FAA will forward the FBI record to the air carrier or airport operator, which will then determine whether it can grant unescorted access authority. The current rule, in effect since November 1985, requires a five-year employment history and less stringent employment verification.

As work on the new rule was in its final stages, this nation experienced two major acts of terrorism. The World Trade Center bombing and the recent bombing of a federal office building in Oklahoma City are evidence of the increased threat of terrorism within the United States.

-- more --

Neither incident was directed at an aviation target, nor does either appear to have involved anyone with a criminal record that would have been disclosed by an FBI fingerprint check. Nevertheless, the incidents do raise questions of whether broader security measures, more stringent than the rule announced today, should be considered in light of the general level of threat. Another important question is whether statutory authority for access investigations and criminal history records checks, contained in the Aviation Security Improvement Act of 1990, should be extended to other jobs with security responsibilities, which do not require unescorted access to air carrier aircraft or secure airport areas.

Due to the need for quick system improvements, the FAA has concluded that it is essential to move forward now with this final rule instead of delaying action until the agency completes its evaluation of other possible actions and further Rulemaking.

As part of its evaluation, the FAA will consult with airport operators and air carriers. The effect of this rule and its actual implementation by airports and air carriers will be monitored closely. In addition, the agency will seek advice from the Aviation Security Advisory Committee, and will review intelligence information in relation to possible impacts of a more extensive criminal history check requirement. Based on this comprehensive evaluation, the FAA will determine whether further actions may be necessary to maintain security.

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