FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 50-97
Tuesday, April 1, 1997
Contact: Henry J. Price
Phone: (202) 267-8521

Transportation Secretary Slater Unveils New, State-of-the-Art National Airport Tower

WASHINGTON -- "In a city known for its monuments -- we unveil today a new monument. It's a monument to aviation's future," Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater said today in a media tour of National Airport's new 201-foot air traffic control tower and facilities. The state-of-the-art air traffic control facility becomes operational Saturday, April 5, and is a key part of a nearly $1 billion Capital Development Program.

"What I see are the opportunities that this tower will provide," Slater said during the tour of the facility. "Our transportation investments are about creating economic opportunity for all Americans. ... And they are about giving those very dedicated employees of our department the tools to land the planes safely and efficiently. The new communications equipment, the new computers, the new radar systems that we've installed, will do just that."

The new air traffic control tower is 114 feet taller than the previous 87-foot tower, which has been in operation since 1941. The new facility is also a key part of the a 35-gate, three-level terminal building now under construction.

The sleek design of the tower is achieved through an intricate engineering design at its base and an 8.5 ton lead spring-held counter weight on its roof that limits swaying during high winds. The new tower's cab design was conceived by a team of air traffic and airway facilities employees to ensure it is aesthetically pleasing as well as extremely functional.

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In addition to the latest in architectural achievements, the new tower and Terminal Approach Control (TRACON) Facility contain some of the latest, most innovative air traffic communications, computer, and radar equipment. Its new Digital Voice Recorder System (DVRS) improves the recording of communications between controllers and pilots. The Rapid Deployment Voice Switch II (RDVS II) streamlines controller communications by putting intercom, telephone and radio communications under one system. In line with the FAA's efforts to increase ground safety, the Airport Surface Detection Equipment (ASDE III) can penetrate rain, snow, fog and darkness to provide controllers with a radar image of aircraft and vehicles on the airport surface. Throughout the facility, automated computer displays provide real-time weather, digitized airport approach charts, better windshear detection, and other information on crisp, color monitors. The facility has also been designed to better adapt to help the FAA move forward with its overall air traffic control improvement program .

Acting FAA Deputy Administrator Monte Belger also attended the tour of the facility with Secretary Slater. According to Belger, "Not only is the facility awesome in its look and design, it is one of the most technologically impressive aviation facilities in the world. I am pleased we were able to take in the concerns of all interested parties including labor, business, government and the local community to complete this project."

Over seven million passengers boarded aircraft at Washington National Airport in 1995, and that figure is expected to increase to nearly 10 million by 2010. With air traffic employees including 66 air traffic controllers, 10 supervisors, and 15 administrative air traffic personnel, the airport had 310,410 airport operations in 1996. The new tower also houses the FAA office responsible for installation and maintenance of aviation equipment in the Washington metropolitan area. Known as the Section Management Office, it has 15 air traffic system specialists, three air traffic system coordinators, one supervisor, and one secretary.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FACT SHEET

Washington National Airport Traffic Control Tower

COMMISSIONING DATE: Washington National's new Airport Traffic Control Tower will begin operations on April 5, 1997.

BACKGROUND: The new control tower replaces the original 87 ft. control tower, which has been in use since the opening of National Airport in 1941. At the time, the tower and its associated air traffic control office incorporated some of the newest technology in aircraft tracking -- a teletype system that relayed pilot position reports from their airlines to a bulletin board in the flight control room and from there to a status board in the tower.

DESIGN: The new air traffic control tower rises 114 feet above the old tower to a panoramic 201 feet above a new 35-gate three level terminal building -- the cornerstone of the latest National Airport Capital Improvement Project. Support for the tower is provided by an intricate steel design at its base that eliminates the need for the tower to be anchored with footings underground. To minimize the sensation of tower movement during high winds, the tower is equipped with a mass damper. The damper consists of an 8.5 ton lead weight situated above the tower cab. If the tower begins to sway in high wind, the damper, which is set on springs, will shift to counteract the swaying motion of the tower. This facility is part of a nearly $1 billion capital improvement project by the Metropolitan Airport Authority's Capital Development Program.

A new airport Terminal Radar Approach Control (TRACON) facility at the base of the new tower has 10 radar positions, a traffic management station and an area supervisor's desk. The new TRACON accommodation offers a considerable improvement over the existing facility near the old tower, and its design allows for expansion as air traffic increases.

The tower's cab design was formulated by a team of air traffic and airway facilities employees. Its unique design includes cutouts in the consoles that allow controllers to walk directly up to the window to view aircraft gates situated near the base of the tower.

EQUIPMENT: The facility has new communications, computer and radar systems for controllers and for administrative personnel including:

DIGITAL VOICE RECORDER SYSTEM (DVRS) - Provides the capability to record, reproduce, duplicate and erase the voice communications involving air traffic control operations.

RAPID DEPLOYMENT VOICE SWITCH II (RDVS II) - The RDVS II is being procured under a new contract for terminal voice communications equipment. The RDVS directly connects air traffic controllers via radio frequencies , interphone circuits and intercom circuits. The RDVS II also provides position signals to the facility's legal recorder system.

AIRPORT SURFACE DETECTION EQUIPMENT (ASDE III) - Radar that penetrates rain, snow, fog and darkness to give tower controllers a clear picture of all airplanes and vehicles moving on the airport's surface. This will be commissioned at Washington National within the next few months.

AUTOMATED COMPUTER EQUIPMENT - Provides real-time weather, digitized airport approach charts, live windshear and runway visibility readings from Washington National and other information on high resolution, color monitors at each TRACON controller position.

AIR TRAFFIC OPERATIONS - In 1996 Washington National had 310,410 airport operations.

STAFF - Washington National air traffic employees include 66 air traffic controllers, ten supervisors and 15 administrative air traffic personnel. The tower also houses the Section Management Office for FAA's Airway Facilities division which is responsible for the installation and maintenance of FAA equipment in the Washington metro area. The office has 15 air traffic system specialists, three air traffic system coordinators, one supervisor and one secretary.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 51-97
Wednesday, April 2, 1997
Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.
Phone: 202/267-8521

FAA Approves New Infrared Deicing Technology for Aircraft

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has approved use of an innovative deicing system for business and general aviation aircraft that mitigates the potentially harmful effects conventional chemical deicing can have on the environment.

Developed by Process Technologies, Inc. (PTI), Orchard Park, N.Y., and tested in cooperation with the FAA, the system operates like a carwash. A plane that has ice or snow adhering to it enters one end of a hangar-type structure, then is pushed or pulled through the building where it is deiced by infrared heat. The plane leaves the building "clean," or free of contamination. Anti-icing fluids are then applied as dictated by the existing weather conditions.

FAA approval means that the system, known as InfraTek™, may now be used as part of regular winter operations at airports. The first system has been installed at Greater Buffalo International Airport as part of a joint venture between PTI and Prior Aviation Services, Inc.

The system could significantly reduce the amount of deicing fluids used at airports. Using conventional means, it can take hundreds of gallons of glycol to deice an aircraft depending on the type of aircraft and the weather conditions. The rising financial and environmental costs associated with glycol are a concern at many airports.

InfraTek™ was developed under a cooperative research and development agreement (CRDA) awarded and administered by FAA's Office of Aviation Research. PTI funded development of the system; the FAA provided expertise, advice and instrumented test aircraft.

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CRDAs let the FAA share facilities, equipment, services and personnel in cooperation with private industry, academia, or state or local government agencies to develop an idea, prototype or product for direct application to the civil aviation community.

The FAA and PTI successfully demonstrated the InfraTek™ technology last March at Rochester International Airport, Rochester, N.Y., when the system effectively deiced a FAA Boeing 727 within six minutes.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 52-97
Wednesday, April 2, 1997
Contact: Alison Duquette
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA Orders Inspections of Boeing 767 Wing Flap Bolts

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today issued an emergency Airworthiness Directive (AD) ordering operators of Boeing 767 aircraft to inspect wing flap system bolts within the next 15 days. The AD is a precautionary measure following a recent incident in which bolts failed on a Boeing 767 resulting in the loss of a 20-foot section of the right outboard trailing edge flap during approach to landing. The incident is under investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board.

The AD requires a torque check of the hinge fitting bolts on the outboard trailing edge flaps. If any bolt is outside the specified torque range, the AD requires a dye penetrant inspection to detect cracking and replacement of any cracked or damaged bolt with a new or serviceable bolt. It also requires that operators report any discrepancies identified during the inspections to the FAA within 10 days so the agency can determine if further rulemaking is necessary.

"Although this recent incident is still under investigation, we are taking this precautionary measure to ensure that we continue to provide the highest level of safety to the traveling public," said Barry L. Valentine, FAA Acting Administrator.

The inspections are mandatory within the next 15 days for Boeing model 767 aircraft that have flown at least 25,000 hours or 10,000 flights. There are approximately 210 aircraft in the 767 worldwide fleet, including 107 U.S. registered aircraft, affected by this AD. The total estimated cost to U.S. operators for actions outlined in the AD is $44,940, or $420 per aircraft. Affected U.S. air carriers are: Delta Air Lines, American Airlines, United Airlines, Alaska Airlines and United Parcel Service.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 53-97
Tuesday, April 8, 1997
Contact: Henry J. Price
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA Proposes to Modify Licensing Rules
For Space Launches From Federal Ranges

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has issued commercial space licensing regulations, Docket Number 49815, that will provide commercial space launch operators with greater specificity and clarity regarding the scope of commercial rocket launch licenses as well as licensing requirements and criteria for launches from federal ranges.

Designed to update the original regulations dealing with the licensing of commercial space launches, the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) was published in the *Federal Register* on Wednesday, March 19. Public comments are due by May 19, 1997.

The FAA Office of Commercial Space Transportation licenses commercial launches and the commercial operation of launch sites carried out by U.S. citizens or within the United States in accordance with 49 United States Code (USC) cl. 701 and Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Chapter III. The office discharges this responsibility consistent with public health and safety, safety of property, and the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States.

This NPRM is the second of several rulemakings the office intends to undertake. The first NPRM published in July 1996, proposes to establish financial responsibility requirements for commercial space launch operators. The FAA is currently analyzing comments received on this NPRM.

The commercial space office has also begun drafting regulations regarding licensing the operation of commercial launch sites and licensing requirements for launches from these sites.

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Any person may obtain a copy of the latest NPRM by submitting a request to the FAA Office of Rulemaking, 800 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington D.C. 20591 or by calling (202) 267-9677. An electronic copy may be downloaded from the FAA regulations section of the Fedworld electronic bulletin board service at (703) 321-3339 or the *Federal Register* electronic bulletin board service at (202) 512-1661. Internet users may reach the *Federal Register's* web page at http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs for access to recently published rulemaking documents.

Those wishing to comment on the current NPRM should mail four copies of their comments to the FAA, Office of the Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket, Room 915G, 800 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 20591. Comments may also be sent electronically to the Rules Docket by using the following Internet address: nprmcmts@mail.hq.faa.gov. The comments should reference the docket number of the *Federal Register* notice and must be received on or before May 19, 1997.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 54-97
Tuesday, April 8, 1997
Contact: Mark Hess
Phone: (202) 267-8435

Lovinski Named to Head New Dangerous Goods and Cargo Security Division

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has named Charles N. Lovinski to head up its newly created Dangerous Goods and Cargo Security Division within the Office of Civil Aviation Security Operations. The division is charged with increasing awareness and compliance with federal regulations to ensure the safe transport of dangerous goods aboard aircraft and to ensure the security of cargo carried on passenger air carriers.

"I am pleased that Mr. Lovinski has accepted this new position," said FAA Associate Administrator for Civil Aviation Security Cathal Flynn. "His experience in the private sector, overseeing one of the largest safety and hazardous materials shippers in the world will be invaluable in the FAA's efforts to increase safety in the air cargo industry."

The new division will focus both on dangerous goods and air cargo security. The division will institute new policies and provide direction for the air cargo inspectors who will both educate and oversee carriers, repair stations and air shippers in the United States.

"Education is really the key," said Lovinski. "Most problems in the transportation of dangerous goods are a result of misunderstanding or ignorance of hazardous materials regulations."

Lovinski said the FAA will conduct an expanded public outreach effort to explain the proper procedures, and the dangers and possible penalties for failing to properly follow the dangerous goods regulations. "Education will be our primary tool for those trying to comply with federal regulations," he said. "But we will enforce too. For those who are sloppy, or worse negligent, we will take the stongest allowable civil, and if necessary, criminal enforcement actions."

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Under the new initiative, the FAA will, for the first time, carry out dangerous goods inspections at aircraft repair stations, air freight forwarder facilities and air shippers of dangerous goods. FAA inspectors also will work to verify that companies that handle and ship dangerous goods have properly trained employees, Lovinski said.

Another critical component of the new program is an automated inspection database, now under development, that will assist inspectors in tracking negative trends in dangerous goods transport and identifying shippers and others who are not in compliance with federal or international regulations. The database will rely on FAA inspections, reports of dangerous goods incidents and discrepancies which the air carriers are required to file with the FAA, and other data.

The FAA is adding 118 full-time dangerous goods and air cargo security inspectors, trained both in hazardous materials regulations and cargo security procedures, to ensure that air cargo facilities are applying proper security measures. "We are right on target with our hiring," said Lovinski. "Staffing of the headquarters organization is complete and we have about two-thirds of our field agents on board."

Twelve attorneys also will be hired to handle the anticipated increase in civil penalty actions against violators. Penalties for a single hazardous material violation can result in a maximum fine of $27,500.

Lovinski has over 22 years of experience in safety, hazardous materials and air cargo issues. Most recently, Lovinski worked as an independent safety, health and hazardous material consultant. Prior to that, he served as executive director for training and consulting services at the National Safety Council, where he was responsible for all aspects of training and consulting services provided to industry.

From 1981 to 1993, Lovinski served as the corporate senior manager of safety and dangerous goods administration for the Federal Express Corporation. At the corporation, he managed a staff of 29 safety professionals with a budget of $3.4 million. There, he developed and implemented comprehensive programs for worker and vehicle safety. Lovinski also was responsible for audits, Department of Transportation (DOT) programs, industrial hygiene, truck terminal safety and hazardous materials handling worldwide, most notably programs to interline dangerous goods packages with passenger airlines.

Lovinski has been certified by the DOT as a certified hazardous materials instructor. He is also a certified Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) instructor. Lovinski's education includes a bachelor's of science in education and a master's of science in safety management at West Virginia University.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Thursday, April 10 1997
Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.
Phone: 202/267-8521

FAA Names New Chief Scientist for Software Engineering

WASHINGTON -- Dr. George Donohue, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) associate administrator for research and acquisitions, has named Dr. Arthur B. Pyster as the agency's new chief scientist for software engineering.

In his new position, Pyster is responsible for strategic direction on software engineering for the National Airspace System and administrative computing, and for continuous improvement of the FAA's software life-cycle management practices and processes. He also will assess agency efforts to implement such improvements, including the agency's commitment to widely adopt open systems standards.

"Art Pyster has more than 20 years' experience creating, marketing and delivering advanced software and systems products and technology solutions," Donohue said. "That kind of expertise is going to be invaluable in helping the FAA respond to rapid changes in the information technology world."

From 1987 until he joined the FAA, Pyster was vice president, chief technical officer and chief technologist at the Software Productivity Consortium (SPC). There he led the development and deployment of technologies to develop distributed information systems and product-lines, to manage systems development, to specify and design real-time systems for implementation in C++ and Ada, and to improve software development.

As program manager for five years, Pyster managed more than $25 million from SPC's member companies. As chief technical officer, Pyster provided technical leadership on more than $20 million of successful research on processes for software-intensive systems funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).

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As chairperson of the Steering Group that manages the Enterprise Process Improvement Collaboration since early 1994, Pyster directed the creation of the Systems Engineering Capability Maturity Model and the Integrated Product Development Capability Maturity Model. These two models are used throughout industry and government to guide efforts to improve processes to build large complex systems.

Before joining SPC, Pyster was an engineering director for Digital Sound Corporation, a pioneering provider of commercial voice processing computers and systems for the telecommunications industry. He helped develop DSC's early products, including its earliest voice mail system.

Pyster previously served as chief architect and manager of system engineering at TRW, implementing advanced UNIX office automation and software engineering. His project introduced much of TRW to office automation and software productivity enhancements. Pyster built some of the earliest requirements management tools and "What-You-See-Is-What-You-Get" (WYSIWYG) editors.

Before joining TRW in 1981, Pyster was an assistant professor of computer science and electrical and computer engineering at the University of California at Santa Barbara. He was responsible for well-published research in software engineering and languages, and for designing much of the school's initial computer science curriculum.

As a consultant for General Research Corporation (GRC) during 1979-81, Pyster was the technical lead on a contract for the Electric Power Research Institute to analyze the use of software to control nuclear reactors. He also developed a new release of GRC's commercial structured FORTRAN preprocessor.

Pyster is a Senior Member of the Institute for Electrical and Electronic Engineering (IEEE). He has written two editions of *Compiler Design and Construction.* Pyster received a doctorate in computer and information sciences from Ohio State University, and is a distinguished alumnus of the university's Engineering College.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 56-97
Friday, April 11, 1997
Contact: Rebecca Trexler
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA Announces Taiwan Complies
With International Safety Standards

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- 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 Taiwan has been reassessed and now complies with international safety standards, which means it now has a Category I rating. Taiwan had been previously rated as conditional following its original assessment, which was conducted October 1996 and announced Jan. 14.

The assessments are not an indication of whether individual foreign carriers are safe or unsafe, rather they determine whether foreign civil aviation authorities are in place and the extent to which those authorities ensure that operational and safety procedures are maintained by their air carriers.

The focus of the FAA's foreign assessment program is on the civil aviation authority and not individual carriers. These civil authorities are assessed for their adherence to International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards, not FAA regulations.

Travelers may call 1-800-FAA-SURE (1-800-322-7873) to obtain a summary statement about whether a foreign civil aviation authority 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 Nations' technical agency for aviation which establishes international standards and recommended practices for aircraft operations and maintenance.

The FAA, with the cooperation of the host civil aviation authority, only makes assessments of those countries whose airlines have operating rights to or from the United States, or have requested such rights.

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Specifically, the FAA determines whether a foreign civil aviation authority 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 civil aviation authorities at the time of the assessment: (1) does comply with ICAO standards, (2) conditional and (3) does not comply with ICAO standards.

- **Category I, Does Comply with ICAO Standards:** A 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 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 the foreign air carriers to the U.S. are permitted under heightened FAA operations inspections and surveillance.

- **Category III, Does Not Comply with ICAO Standards:** A 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 the country arranges to have its flights conducted by a duly authorized and properly supervised air carrier appropriately certified from a country meeting international aviation safety standards.

The FAA has assisted civil aviation authorities 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 assess all countries with air carriers that operate to the United States.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sunday, April 13, 1997
Contact: Mitch Barker 206-227-1203 After hours: 206-227-1999/2000

FAA Revokes Great American Airways Certificate

/ RENO, Nev. -- The Federal Aviation Administration issued an emergency order revoking the air carrier certificate of Target Airways LTD of Reno, flying as Great American Airways.

The order, which is effective immediately, is based on numerous findings including:

- Falsification of flight and duty time records.
- Falsification of training records.
- Falsifying load manifest documents

The FAA findings followed a detailed Regional Airline Safety Inspection Program (RASIP) triggered by a whistleblower's complaints about the firm's operations. The investigation found, for example, that senior Great American pilots' flight and duty time records indicated they complied with regulations concerning limits on required flight time and rest periods. Other records indicated the pilots flew in excess of the limitations on flight time and did not receive adequate rest periods.

Investigators also found evidence indicating a falsification of pilot training records. Further, investigators found numerous instances indicating a falsification of aircraft loading records in order to avoid indicating overweight conditions on takeoff.

Great American Airways operated nine DC-9 aircraft under part 121 of the Federal Aviation Regulations. It may appeal the order to the National Transportation Safety Board, however, the revocation order remains in effect pending NTSB proceedings.

To The DOT Public Affairs Page || To The FAA Public Affairs Page

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 57-97
Monday, April 14, 1997
Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.
Phone: 202/267-8521

FAA Research Helps Airlines Standardize Instructor Pilot Training

WASHINGTON -- In line with the recommendation by the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security to emphasize human factors and training in aviation safety research, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is helping air carriers standardize the training and assessment of their instructor pilots. The effort focuses on how these pilots assess and rate airline crew performance -- a key practice in maintaining the safety of commercial flights.

At the request of the FAA's Flight Standards Service, the agency's Human Factors office developed a training course to show airlines how to create instructor pilot training tools, as well as computer software for the airlines to analyze the effectiveness of that training.

The FAA developed and validated six different measures of pilot evaluator standardization. Later, in cooperation with George Mason University, the agency hosted a workshop entitled "Improving Crew Assessments," to introduce air carriers to the new evaluator training tools. The participants, including most major U.S. airlines, received hands-on training, a user's manual and software for use at their home stations.

"Making instructor training more uniform is a significant safety milestone that the FAA has been concerned with for a long time" said George Donohue, FAA associate administrator for research and acquisitions. "The airlines that have been introduced to the new training tools have responded to them enthusiastically."

The FAA's research focused on developing quantitative measures of pilot evaluator standardization for use by air carriers participating in the agency's Advanced Qualification Program (AQP). AQP is a comprehensive crew training plan designed to ensure the seamless integration of crew resource management and technical skills with all other flight procedures required by specific flight situations. It not only provides systematic training, but also evaluates that training and addresses weaknesses.

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Under AQP, the traditional maneuver-oriented proficiency check is replaced with a scenario-based evaluation that tests both a crew's technical skills and how the crew members work together. For example, a training event might include working through procedures to deal with an engine loss or flight through adverse weather conditions.

More than 70 percent of air carrier accidents have been attributed to inadequate integration of crew resource management and technical skills. In scenario-based training, pilot evaluation can focus better on the true causes of accidents.

Because this type of evaluation places special demands on pilot evaluators, the FAA performed the research aimed at training and standardization of personnel and familiarized the airlines with the results. The workshop was well received by participating airline personnel, who recommended that the FAA offer another such workshop in the near future. Planning for the event is underway.

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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: www.faa.gov

4/16/97

MANHATTAN HELICOPTER OPERATIONS
TALKING POINTS

FAA air traffic control works closely with helicopter operators to maintain the safest operations in the NY metro area. In 1996, there were 155,000 helicopter operations in the NY metro area (or approximately 400 operations per day.) This includes operations at the four heliports in Manhattan, LaGuardia and JFK. The New York Metropolitan area is the busiest airspace in the country with over 5,000 aircraft operations daily. Prior to the accident on April 15th at the 59th Street Heliport, there has been only one helicopter accident in four years.

FAA also works with community groups and the helicopter operators to mitigate noise generated by helicopter operations when feasible. FAA has recently worked as a technical advisor to local communities and helicopter operators change procedures for helicopter operations in Manhattan in order to mitigate helicopter noise.

FAA air traffic controls helicopter traffic approaching the NY area on over 30 air routes at varying altitudes. Helicopter traffic that operates into the Manhattan heliports is controlled by air traffic until they reach what is referred to as "exclusion zones" which run along the Hudson and East River. These zones consist of routes along Manhattan on the east and west side following the rivers over the water with altitudes of 1,100 feet and below.

Traffic operating in these "zones" is not under FAA air traffic control. (However, because the aircraft must fly through positively controlled airspace they must have transponders.) They operate under Visual Flight Rules (VFR) which call for a 1,000 ft. ceiling and 3 miles of visibility at a minimum. The standard procedure is for a helicopters to announce their arrival into the airspace on a radio frequency which is published on the Helicopter Approach Chart for the NY area. This frequency is monitored by all traffic in the "zones".

Helicopters operating in these "zones" are not controlled by FAA air traffic control once they enter the zones, however, they must follow FAA regulations for minimum safe altitudes. These regulations call for:

(1) OVER CONGESTED AREAS - An altitude of 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a horizontal radius of 2,000 feet of the aircraft.

(2) OVER OTHER THAN CONGESTED AREAS - An altitude of 500 feet above the surface, except over open water or sparsely populated areas.

(3) HELICOPTER EXCEPTIONS - Due to the operational capabilities of the helicopter it may operate at less than the minimum prescribed above, but only if the operation is conducted without hazard to persons or property on the surface.

In addition to these regulations, the New York area has an excellent group, the Eastern Region Helicopter Council which meets on a quarterly basis and works very closely with FAA to maintain the safety level of helicopter operations in the New York area works with local helicopter operators and community representatives to mitigate noise when feasible operationally.

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 58-97
Thursday, April 17, 1997
Contact: Fraser Jones
Phone: (202) 267-3883

FAA to Fine ARCA Airlines

WASHINGTON -- The FAA is proposing a $79,000 fine against Aerovias Colombianas Ltda. (ARCA Airlines) for its alleged failure to adhere to required maintenance inspection schedules and for operating with incomplete maintenance records.

Although ARCA Airlines' activities are conducted under an operating certificate issued by the government of Colombia, the carrier operates U.S.-registered aircraft and is required to follow a U.S.-approved maintenance program.

The alleged violations occurred from December 1992 to June 1993 and were uncovered in the course of FAA inspections conducted during that period. The FAA alleges that the airline operated a DC-8F freighter on at least 79 flights when it was not maintained in accordance with its FAA-approved program.

Specifically it is alleged that period inspections were not conducted in accordance with specific time intervals established in the approved maintenance program. In addition, the FAA alleges the same aircraft was operated on two occasions in May 1993 without an airworthiness release having been signed for those flights.

ARCA Airlines has 14 days to respond to the civil penalty letter issued by the FAA before the agency takes any further action. In cases such as this where the FAA's proposed penalty exceeds $50,000, the FAA has authority to settle civil penalties proposed against air carriers and others in the aviation industry. If parties cannot amicably resolve the matter, the government must file a complaint in the appropriate U.S. District Court.

The announcement of the civil penalty proposed against ARCA is being made in accordance with the FAA's policy of releasing information the public on newly issued enforcement actions in cases that involve penalties of $50,000 or more.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Friday, April 18, 1997
Contact: Rebecca Trexler
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA Proposes $82,500 Fine Against Stark Sales
For Hazardous Materials Violation

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has proposed to fine Stark Sales of Bell Gardens, Calif., $82,500 for the alleged improper packaging, marking and labeling of five boxes containing plastic containers of flammable resin solution it offered for air shipment.

In FAA's notice of proposed penalty, Stark Sales is cited for knowingly offering a shipment containing hazardous material for transportation by air when the material was not properly classed, described, packaged, marked, labeled and in the condition for shipment required by FAA regulations. Stark also offered hazardous materials for transportation without the required shipper's certification.

Irregularities were discovered when one of the boxes in the shipment was found leaking by an employee at a cargo sort facility in Memphis, Tenn. Each box contained five 28-ounce plastic containers of resin solution, a flammable liquid. The plastic containers were found to have unsecured friction-type closures, one of which leaked and emitted an odor.

In addition, FAA inspectors found the absence of emergency response information which must accompany the hazardous materials shipment.

In its notice to Stark Sales, FAA stated that based on its overall investigative file, it is proposing a $82,500 fine where the maximum penalty per violation is $25,000. Stark Sales Inspection has 30 days from receipt of FAA's Note of Proposed Civil Penalty to respond to the notice.

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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: www.faa.gov

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 59-97
Friday, April 18, 1997
Contact: Rebecca Trexler
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA to Fine Company for Dangerous Air Cargo

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has proposed fining Longview Inspection of Sulphur, La., $62,500 for the alleged mislabeling and mishandling of acid-filled batteries it offered for air shipment.

In FAA's notice of proposed penalty, Longview Inspection is cited for knowingly offering a shipment containing hazardous material for transportation by air when the material was not properly classed, described, packaged, marked, labeled and in the condition for shipment required by FAA regulations. The sender also did not provide a declaration of dangerous goods which keeps such shipments off passenger-carrying flights.

Irregularities were discovered when hazardous material was found leaking by an employee at a cargo sort facility in Wilmington, Ohio. The box contained a 12 volt Delco Voyager acid filled battery that was leaking.

In addition, FAA inspectors found a lack of emergency response information which must accompany the hazardous materials shipment.

In its notice to Longview Inspection, FAA stated that based on its overall investigative file, it is proposing a $62,500 fine where the top penalty per violation is up to $25,000. Longview Inspection has 30 days from receipt of FAA's letter to respond informally to the assessment.

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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: www.faa.gov

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 60-97
Friday, April 18, 1997
Contact: Rebecca Trexler
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA Proposes $82,500 Fine Against Stark Sales
For Hazardous Materials Violation

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has proposed to fine Stark Sales of Bell Gardens, Calif., $82,500 for the alleged improper packaging, marking and labeling of five boxes containing plastic containers of flammable resin solution it offered for air shipment.

In FAA's notice of proposed penalty, Stark Sales is cited for knowingly offering a shipment containing hazardous material for transportation by air when the material was not properly classed, described, packaged, marked, labeled and in the condition for shipment required by FAA regulations. Stark also offered hazardous materials for transportation without the required shipper's certification.

Irregularities were discovered when one of the boxes in the shipment was found leaking by an employee at a cargo sort facility in Memphis, Tenn. Each box contained five 28-ounce plastic containers of resin solution, a flammable liquid. The plastic containers were found to have unsecured friction-type closures, one of which leaked and emitted an odor.

In addition, FAA inspectors found the absence of emergency response information which must accompany the hazardous materials shipment.

In its notice to Stark Sales, FAA stated that based on its overall investigative file, it is proposing a $82,500 fine where the maximum penalty per violation is $25,000. Stark Sales Inspection has 30 days from receipt of FAA's Note of Proposed Civil Penalty to respond to the notice.

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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: www.faa.gov

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 61-97
Monday, April 21, 1997
Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.
Phone: 202/267-8521

FAA Picks Hughes Information Technology Systems for National Airspace System Infrastructure Management System Contract

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today selected Hughes Information Technology Systems, Upper Marlboro, Md., to provide a new computerized monitoring and control system that will increase safety by helping to boost the reliability of the agency's 30,000-plus facilities and pieces of equipment from coast to coast.

Under the contract, which could be worth up to $100 million if all options are exercised, Hughes will provide technical integration of the National Airspace System Infrastructure Management System (NIMS). The system will help the FAA modernize its remote maintenance monitoring and control capability at FAA facilities.

The indefinite quantity-indefinite delivery contract includes a 3-year base period for $40 million and two 2-year options for $30 million each.

"NIMS will provide a greatly increased capability for our Airway Facilities organization to do its primary job -- ensuring a safe and efficient National Airspace System," said Stan Rivers, director of the FAA's Airway Facilities Service.

NIMS is the centralized management system for FAA equipment and facilities throughout the National Airspace System. NIMS will use operations control centers, maintenance automation and both portable and fixed-location computer terminals to help FAA technicians keep equipment up and running. The program will consolidate previously separate efforts, resulting in greater management efficiency and budget savings.

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The NIMS program will make use of the existing system while adding new capabilities through a series of planned, coordinated improvements over a 10-15-year period. The FAA will continue to prototype and evaluate commercial-off-the-shelf hardware and software for use in the system.

NIMS was the latest program to benefit from key elements of the FAA's highly successful new acquisition management system, which was effective April 1, 1996. The acquisition emphasizes management by an integrated product team whose members are drawn from various affected FAA offices. It also stresses procurement of commercial off-the-shelf systems augmented by minimal in-house development and use of state-of-the-art network systems.

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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: www.faa.gov

FAA NEWS

EASTERN REGION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, April 21, 1997

Contact: Arlene Salac
718-553-3010

NO IMPACT FROM WASHINGTON CENTER SERVICE INTERRUPTION

FAA's Washington Air Route Traffic Control Center at Leesburg, VA, experienced a 5-minute service interruption last night. No safety-related incidents or delays were reported during this event.

The service interruption occurred at 11:55 p.m. when the Display Channel Complex Rehost (DCCR) operation failed and the DCCR's backup system, Direct Access Radar Channel (DARC), was not immediately available. Although contact with aircraft was maintained via radio, air traffic controllers did not have radar data from 11:55 p.m. to midnight. During this time, air traffic controllers used non-radar procedures, which include radio communications.

At midnight, the FAA technicians established a transition to the DARC. By 3:50 a.m., FAA technicians reestablished the DCCR and air traffic resumed normal operations.

Initial reports indicate problems with DCCR equipment configuration. FAA is investigating the equipment configuration and why the DARC was not immediately available as a backup system for the DCCR.

The DCCR is the primary computer system that provides radar data for air traffic controllers. DARC serves as a backup to DCCR providing more basic data but an equally high level of safety..

Washington is the nation's fourth busiest air route traffic control center handling over 2.3 million operations a year. The Center manages high-altitude flights in 144,000 square miles of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, District of Columbia, Maryland and North Carolina.

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 62-97
Tuesday, April 22, 1997
Contact: Arlene Salac
Phone: 718-553-3010

FAA Proposes Fine For Grand Strand Aviation

NEW YORK -- The Federal Aviation Administration proposed a $90,000 civil penalty against Grand Strand Aviation, Inc., a Myrtle Beach, S.C., cargo operator for improper aircraft maintenance and operation of unairworthy aircraft.

The case involves 1996 maintenance work on aircraft landing gear, landing lights and a marker beacon and the subsequent operation of the same aircraft in an unairworthy condition. FAA alleges that (1) in February 1996, the airline operated an aircraft with knowledge of an improperly maintained landing gear for 29.4 flight hours; (2) the airline operated an aircraft in June 1996 with disconnected landing lights for 9.5 flight hours and (3) from April through August 1996, the airline operated an aircraft with an inoperative marker beacon system in excess of 205 flight hours and performed at least three instrument approach landings without the marker beacon. A marker beacon is a navigational aid used to indicate aircraft location as the pilot makes an instrument landing approach into an airport.

Grand Strand has 30 days to respond to the civil penalty letter before the FAA takes any further action. In cases where, as here, the FAA's proposed penalty exceeds $50,000, the FAA has the authority to settle these penalties. If parties cannot amicably resolve the matter, the government must file a complaint in the appropriate U.S. District Court.

The announcement of the civil penalty proposal today is being made in accordance with FAA's policy of releasing information to the public on newly issued enforcement actions in cases that involve penalties of $50,000 or more.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 63-97
Wednesday, April 23, 1997
Contact: Alison Duquette
Phone: 202-267-8521

FAA Orders Inspections of GE90 Engines Installed on Boeing 777 Aircraft

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today issued an emergency Airworthiness Directive (AD) requiring visual inspections to detect distress and replace any faulty ball bearings in GE90 engines on five Boeing 777 aircraft. The AD follows reported ball bearing failures on two British Airways aircraft. Neither failure resulted in an engine shutdown.

The ball bearings are installed in the gearbox which provides mechanical drive to the engine accessories which provide backup power for the Boeing 777. A bearing failure could result in an inflight engine shutdown. The aircraft is equipped with two engines.

While the FAA and General Electric continue to investigate the failures, evidence suggests that the bearings of a specific design and manufacturer affecting only five aircraft are experiencing premature distress and failure as a result of:

- operating with insufficient internal radial clearances that result in excessive ball to cage pocket forces; and/or
- improper cage rivet material.

"The FAA is working aggressively with General Electric and foreign air carriers to ensure the continued safe operation of Boeing 777 aircraft equipped with GE90 engines," said Guy S. Gardner, associate administrator for Regulation and Certification. "Today's interim action is aimed at preventing any future failures."

The FAA's AD requires all operators of Boeing 777/GE90 aircraft to:

- Perform an initial visual inspection of the engine debris monitoring system within 24 hours of receipt of the AD;
- Continue visual inspections every other day for each engine; and
- Remove and replace bearings that may contain improper rivet material.

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There are no U.S. operators of Boeing 777/GE90 aircraft. The 16 Boeing 777/GE90 aircraft in revenue service are operated by British Airways (10) and China Southern Airlines (6). There are currently five aircraft are affected by this AD, two operated by British Airways and three by China Southern Airlines. The FAA issues ADs on all aircraft manufactured and certified in the United States.

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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: www.faa.gov

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 64-97
Thursday, April 24, 1997
Contact: Alison Duquette
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA Unveils Inflight Aircraft Icing Plan

WASHINGTON -- Based on recommendations from more than 300 international aviation experts, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today unveiled its *Inflight Aircraft Icing Plan* designed to increase the safety of operations during icing conditions.

The plan calls for improvements in inflight icing detection and forecasting, flightcrew information and training, and certification regulations and procedures. The plan is the final of a three-phase FAA inflight icing program announced in 1994.

Representatives from 21 countries who attended the FAA International Conference on Aircraft Inflight Icing last May reviewed certification requirements, operating regulations and training, weather forecasting technologies for aircraft flying in varying icing conditions, characterization of icing, and ice detection and protection equipment. A major area of interest involved learning about the science of icing caused by freezing rain and drizzle.

"The FAA is working with industry experts worldwide to enhance aviation safety by improving the science of inflight icing," said Guy S. Gardner, associate administrator for Regulation and Certification.

The *Inflight Aircraft Icing Plan* outlines 13 major tasks. Highlights include:

- Standardizing icing terminology used by pilots, air traffic control, dispatchers, weather forecasters, and FAA flight standards and certification personnel.
- Improving icing forecasting and detection through development of ground-based and airborne equipment and eventually providing real-time weather information using advanced display systems.

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- Directing the Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee (ARAC) to recommend proposed Federal Aviation Regulations affecting operations in freezing rain and drizzle.
- Improving aircraft design by continuing research of icing physics, including freezing rain and drizzle, to better predict how icing affects aircraft.

The FAA is one of many nations addressing inflight icing. The *Inflight Aircraft Icing Plan* will contribute to numerous international efforts to improve the safety of aircraft operated in icing conditions. The FAA will coordinate the plan with other international icing initiatives to optimize the limited resources of nations worldwide. The agency will join in a global partnership with government agencies, airworthiness authorities, industry, and others in the aviation community to reach unified international positions on inflight icing initiatives.

Members of the news media may obtain a copy of the *Inflight Aircraft Icing Plan* by calling FAA Public Affairs at 202-267-8521.

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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: http://www.faa.gov

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 65-97
Friday, April 25, 1997
Contact: Henry J. Price
Phone: 202-267-8521

FAA Orders Inspection of MBB-BK-117 Tail Booms Before Flight

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is ordering operators of specific Eurocopter Deutschland GmbH (ECD) helicopters inspect the tail booms for cracks before the helicopters are permitted to fly. The Priority Letter Airworthiness Directive (AD) issued Friday affects 132 helicopters. It requires inspection of models MBB-BK117 A-1, A-3, A-4, B-1, B-2 and C-1 of these helicopters.

Specifically, today's AD requires inspection of the surfaces of the tail boom, (known as the vertical fin spar) for cracks, loose rivets, or other anomalies prior to further flight. If no cracks are found, the helicopter may be flown but must be reinspected every 100 hours of service. If cracks are found, the aircraft may not fly. No FAA-approved repair procedure is available at this time. It will be up to the manufacturer to develop a repair procedure to submit to the FAA for approval.

The AD is prompted by an accident last week involving a ECD Model MBB-BK117 series helicopter in New York City. The investigation of the accident revealed that the tail boom -- which holds the stabilizing rotor -- broke off. It was determined the failure was caused by fatigue cracking. Further inspection of three same design helicopters found similar cracks. When this was learned, the manufacturer and American distributor immediately sent out alert notices to all operators of these types of aircraft.

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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: www.faa.gov

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 66-97
Monday, April 28, 1997
Contact: Rebecca Trexler
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA Announces Thailand Complies
With International Safety Standards

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- As part of its ongoing initiative to provide the public with more information about aviation safety in international travel, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today announced Thailand has been reassessed and now complies with international safety standards. On Dec. 16, 1996, FAA announced Thailand had been rated "conditional," or Category II, following an August 1996 assessment. The new rating announced today, Category I, means the nation meets safety standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

The assessments are not an indication of whether individual foreign carriers are safe or unsafe, rather they determine whether foreign civil aviation authorities are in place and the extent to which those authorities ensure that operational and safety procedures are maintained by their air carriers.

The focus of the FAA's foreign assessment program is on the civil aviation authority and not individual carriers. These civil authorities are assessed for their adherence to International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) aviation safety standards, not FAA regulations.

Travelers may call 1-800-FAA-SURE (1-800-322-7873) to obtain a summary statement about whether a foreign civil aviation authority 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 Nations' technical agency for aviation which establishes international standards and recommended practices for aircraft operations and maintenance.

The FAA, with the cooperation of the host civil aviation authority, only makes assessments of those countries whose airlines have operating rights to or from the United States, or have requested such rights.

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Specifically, the FAA determines whether a foreign civil aviation authority 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 civil aviation authorities at the time of the assessment: (1) does comply with ICAO standards, (2) conditional and (3) does not comply with ICAO standards.

- **Category I, Does Comply with ICAO Standards:** A 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 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 the foreign air carriers to the U.S. are permitted under heightened FAA operations inspections and surveillance.

- **Category III, Does Not Comply with ICAO Standards:** A 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 the country arranges to have its flights conducted by a duly authorized and properly supervised air carrier appropriately certified from a country meeting international aviation safety standards.

The FAA has assisted civil aviation authorities with less than acceptable ratings by providing technical expertise, assistance with inspections, and training courses. The FAA will continue 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 assess all countries with air carriers that operate to the United States.

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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: http://www.faa.gov

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 67-97
Tuesday, April 29, 1997
Contact: Henry J. Price
Phone: 202-267-8521

Media Advisory
Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee to Meet

WASHINGTON -- The Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee (COMSTAC), the broad-based industry group which advises the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) administrator and the Department of Transportation, will meet Wednesday, May 14, in Room 9230 of the DOT Headquarters Building, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. The meeting will be from 8:00 A.M. to 1:15 P.M.

Attendees will hear reports from FAA Acting Associate Administrator for Commercial Space Transportation, Patricia G. Smith and COMSTAC Chairman Ron Grabe, Senior Vice President and Assistant General Manager of Orbital Sciences Corporation's Launch Systems Group.

Catherine Novelli, Deputy Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Eastern/Central Europe, will provide an update on Russian international launch trade issues. There will also be reports on current legislative issues affecting commercial space transportation and the Working Group activities for the Commercial Space Operator Support Agreement (by the Air Force).

The agenda will also include reports from several of the COMSTAC Working Groups including the Risk Management Working Group (insurance), the Launch Operations and Support Working Group (space launch infrastructure), and the Innovation and Technology Working Group, which is expected to ask the full body to approve updates to the GEO Mission Model Report (projecting space launch demand in future years).

The meeting is open to the public, but space may be limited.

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