FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 32-97
Monday, March 3, 1997
Contact: Marcia Adams
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA's Safety Information Website Goes On Line

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) upgraded its aviation safety information website with additional data to better inform the public about aviation safety.

The website, activated on Feb. 28, can be accessed by pressing an Aviation Safety Information button located on the FAA's internet homepage at address www.faa.gov. As of today, the website includes the following three databases:

- National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) accident database for civil aviation activities;
- FAA's incident database; and
- NTSB's recommendations to FAA on safety issues.

The agency will continue to add information to the website that it deems to be of interest to consumers. Several databases will be added to include the following information:

- By March 31, statistical data about airline activity, such as flight hours and departures, will be available;
- On March 31, a narrative will be available describing the roles and responsibilities of the FAA, airlines, manufacturers, and other aviation entities who work together to keep aviation in the United States the safest in the world;

- more -

- Beginning April 1, lists of all enforcement actions will be made available via a press release issued quarterly; and
- Near Midair Collisions statistics will be available on May 31.

As part of this effort, the FAA also now issues press releases when significant enforcement actions of $50,000 or more, and certificate revocations, are issued against an entity for safety or security infractions.

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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 33-97
Monday, March 3, 1997
Contact: Rebecca Trexler
Phone: (202) 267-8521

U.S.-China Report Says Additional Resources Required To Ensure Future Safety of Chinese Civil Aviation

WASHINGTON — A joint U.S.-China review team announced today that the General Administration of Civil Aviation of China (CAAC) meets requirements for international safety oversight standards. However, to keep pace with the rapid growth in China's civil aviation, the team cautioned that additional resources will be required for the CAAC to provide effective oversight of its air carriers in the future.

"I am pleased with the excellent working relationship developed between the United States and Chinese civil aviation authorities," said Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Acting Administrator Barry L. Valentine. "This report recognizes the important strides the CAAC has made to meet the growing demands on its aviation system. However, both nations agree more needs to be done, and the FAA is committed to helping China improve its safety oversight capabilities."

Today's report points out that CAAC is already undertaking many initiatives to improve its air carrier operations and maintenance oversight, but still has some areas which will require additional resources to ensure future safety. The team's findings were compiled and organized into 10 categories outlining recommendations in the areas of resources, aviation laws and regulations, certification, inspector qualifications and training, enforcement, structure, surveillance, guidance materials, records and document management, and technical documentation.

- more -

Since 1980, civil air transportation in China has grown annually by an average of 20 percent — a rate 4.3 times greater than the world average. The strain on China's aviation system became evident as its accident rate rose in the early 1990s. Prompted by the safety decline, the CAAC initiated a comprehensive program in 1993 to slow the growth, review its system and implement corrective measures. This joint U.S.-China review and report is part of China's ongoing effort to improve its safety oversight.

Prior to the report released today, the CAAC and FAA worked together on several cooperative efforts. In the mid 1980s, FAA worked with the CAAC to establish an aircraft certification program for China. In 1993, the two civil aviation authorities initiated cooperative efforts aimed at improving China's aviation regulations. Building on these accomplishments, the CAAC and FAA began formal arrangements in November 1994 to develop a joint program that would assist China in identifying improvements needed in its flight standards operations and maintenance oversight system. To guide this effort, the CAAC and FAA developed a three-phase cooperative program which included this review.

The joint review team was made up of members from the FAA and CAAC. Its findings and recommendations resulted from a cooperative safety review conducted in China between Oct. 23 and Nov. 3, 1995. This joint review was more extensive in scope and depth than the usual FAA assessments of foreign civil aviation authorities whose carriers operate or propose to operate to the United States.

The FAA said that it intends to work with the CAAC to implement recommended changes.

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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 34-97
Wednesday, March 5, 1997
Contact: Henry J. Price
Phone: (202) 267-8521

Commercial Aviation Forecast Reports
Three Straight Years of Strong Growth and Counting

WASHINGTON -- Citing President Clinton's policies and the third longest economic expansion since World War II, Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater announced today that U.S. airlines have recorded a third straight year of strong growth -- an encouraging sign that a continued upward trend is expected into the 21st Century.

Today's announcement came on the heels of the release of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) annual commercial aviation forecast, which revealed that an unprecedented 605 million people flew on the nation's air carriers in 1996 with enplanements expected to grow to nearly one billion by 2008.

"Together with the aviation community, this administration has diligently worked to maintain a safe, vibrant and competitive air transportation system," said Slater. "The 'one level of safety' rules, advanced air-traffic technologies, better safety reporting, enhanced oversight and maintenance methods, and improved satellite navigation, are just a few of the challenges successfully moving forward to advance aviation safety and efficiency. These successes and others, give me confidence that together we can meet future needs of a growing and dynamic aviation system of the 21st Century."

Slater's announcement came on the first day of FAA's two-day 22nd Annual Commercial Aviation Forecast Conference with airlines, airports, labor and other travel-related sectors in Washington, D.C. The event is focusing on "Growth Strategies for the 21st Century." The conference coincided with release of *FAA Aviation Forecasts -- Fiscal Years 1997-2008.* Speaking at the event was Acting FAA Administrator Barry L. Valentine.

Valentine said, "Working with the business, labor and entire aviation communities, over the last four years the Clinton administration has boldly moved forward with a number of comprehensive measures to improve aviation safety. Today's report demonstrates that we can, and will, make aviation even more safe while still maintaining a vibrant and competitive air-transportation industry."

- more -

According to the forecast report, domestic and international air traffic was stimulated by world-wide economic expansion as well as falling air fares. Domestic enplanements increased from 527.8 million in 1995 to 555.6 million in 1996, an increase of 5.3 percent. United States air carrier international enplanements also increased by 3.5 percent from 48.6 million to 50.3 million.

The figures in today's FAA forecast cover a wide range of areas, including large U.S. commercial air carriers (greater than 60 seats) and U.S. regional/commuter airlines (60 seats or less). For the first time ever, the forecast looks at total air traffic (including foreign flag carriers) between the United States and rest of the world. According to the figures, total traffic to and from the United States is expected to increase from 94.8 million in 1996 to 183.6 million in 2008, an annual increase of 5.7 percent.

FAA forecasts find that large domestic air carrier enplanements are expected to increase by 4.3 percent to 546.2 million next year. With an average 3.9 percent increase each year, enplanements on large aircraft are expected to grow to 827.1 million in 2008. United States international enplanements are forecast to increase to 53.1 million in 1997, and grow 5.8 percent a year over the 12-year forecast period to 98.5 million in 2008. Pacific routes are expected to have the greatest increase in enplanements, growing from 15.3 million in 1996 to 32.6 million in 2008 -- an average 6.5 percent increase per year.

In 1995, the Department of Transportation and FAA embarked on an aggressive "One Level of Safety" regulatory package to make small aircraft of 10 to 30 seats follow the same certification and regulation practices as large planes. Many critics felt the changes called for in the rules could be too costly. However, according to the forecast report, the smaller regional/commuter carrier enplanements are expected to increase to 62.5 million in 1997, and average a 5.3 percent increase per year reaching 106.9 million in 2008.

Aircraft manufacturers are also expected to continue to experience increases. In 1996, the U.S. large air carrier jet fleet was 4,775 aircraft. In 2008, it is expected to grow annually by 3.5 percent to 7,226 aircraft. The commuter passenger fleet is also expected to increase from 2,090 in 1996 to 2,909 in 2008, an average yearly increase of 2.8 percent.

Tomorrow, FAA will hold a number of breakout sessions exploring the implications of the FAA forecasts on airports, commercial aviation, and future National Airspace System (NAS) planning. On Thursday, March 20 to Friday, March 21, FAA and the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA) intend to hold a special general aviation forecast conference in Wichita, Kan.

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 35-97
Wednesday, March 5 1997
Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.
Phone: 202/267-8521

FAA Names New Chief Scientist for Human Factors

WASHINGTON -- Dr. George Donohue, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) associate administrator for research and acquisitions, has named Dr. Maureen A. Pettitt as the FAA's chief scientific and technical advisor for human factors.

In her new capacity, Pettitt serves as the principal advisor to the FAA administrator on the agency's human factors research. She also heads the FAA division that provides scientific and technical support for the civil aviation human factors research program and for human factors applications in acquisition, certification, regulation and standards.

"Human factors is one of the most important issues we have to deal with as we modernize the National Airspace System and make the transition to the 'free flight' environment," Donohue said. "Dr. Pettitt brings us the qualifications and leadership skills we need during this challenging period."

Pettitt replaces Mark Hofmann, who left the FAA at the end of September 1996. Dr. Jan Brecht-Clark, deputy director of the agency's office of aviation research, had filled in on an acting basis since then.

From 1993 until joining the FAA, Pettitt was an associate professor of aviation science at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Mich. There she served as co-director of two multi-year grants totaling $3.2 million to develop innovative flight education curricula and a comprehensive program to increase participation of women and minorities in aviation career fields.

Pettitt also was instrumental in establishing an international center for commercial pilot training program for the university's school of aviation sciences, which required building a consensus among private and government participants in the United States and as Europe. The program was designed to meet the requirements of the FAA and the United Kingdom's Civil Aviation Authority.

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From 1985 to 1993, Pettitt was a tenured associate professor at California State University in Los Angeles, serving as coordinator and primary instructor for the school's aviation administration degree program. She taught courses on subjects including general aviation operations and administration, airport administration, safety factors in aviation, aviation sales, air transportation, airline economics and administration, and space exploration issues and trends. She also was area coordinator for the aviation administration degree program.

Previously, Pettitt owned and managed a flight school and air charter business. She has written extensively on human factors and training issues, including co-authoring three articles in 1996 alone. One of them, "Cockpit Leadership and Followership Skills: Training and Evaluation Methodologies," was published in the proceedings of the ICAO Third Global Flight Safety and Human Factors Symposium.

Pettitt has served as a consultant to TWA, Continental Airlines and USAir on training and human factors issues, and she is a member of the Council on Aviation Accreditation and the University Aviation Association.

Pettitt holds a doctorate in education from Claremont Graduate School, a master of arts in vocational education from California State University in Los Angeles, and a bachelor of science in aviation technology management from California State University

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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
March 7, 1997
Contact: Kathleen B. Bergen
Phone: 404-305-5100 After Hours: 404-305-5180

FAA Issues Emergency Order Of Suspension To Av Atlantic

The Federal Aviation Administration today issued an emergency order suspending the air carrier certificate of HCL Aviation, Inc., which does business as Av Atlantic. The order is based on numerous findings including:

- Flight attendants improperly trained and lacking required competency checks and current manuals
- Improperly performed or deferred maintenance
- Inoperative minimum equipment list items
- Incomplete, outdated or missing maintenance and operations manuals
- Inadequate, inoperative, or missing safety devices
- Missing Placards
- Improperly

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Friday, March 7, 1997
Contact: Kathleen B. Bergen
Phone: 404-305-5100 After Hours: 404-305-5180

FAA ISSUES EMERGENCY ORDER OF SUSPENSION TO AV ATLANTIC

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today issued an emergency order suspending the air carrier certificate of HCL Aviation Inc., which does business as Av Atlantic. The order is based on numerous findings, including:

- Flight attendants improperly trained and lacking required competency checks and current manuals
- Improperly performed or deferred maintenance
- Maintenance discrepancies improperly logged
- Inoperative minimum equipment list items
- Incomplete, outdated or missing maintenance and operations manuals
- Inadequate, inoperative or missing safety devices
- Missing placards
- Improperly conducted passenger safety briefings; carry-on items stowed improperly

Based in Savannah, Ga., Av Atlantic operates seven Boeing 727 aircraft in passenger-carrying charter flights and sub-service to other carriers. The Emergency Order of Suspension will continue until Av Atlantic satisfactorily demonstrates that it can comply with the Federal Aviation Regulations.

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 36-97
Friday, March 10, 1997
Contact: Mark Hess
Phone: 202-267-8435

FAA Takes Enforcement Action Against Delta Airlines

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration announced today that it is seeking $52,000 in civil penalties from Delta Airlines for failure to maintain accurate and complete training records and to properly train, test and evaluate security personnel at their station in Lisbon, Portugal.

This violation of FAA security requirements was identified during an FAA inspection on July 26, 1995.

Upon notification, Delta Airlines took immediate corrective action. FAA then conducted an inspection of Delta Airlines' station in Lisbon, Portugal, and determined that the corrective action taken was effective and brought Delta into full compliance with FAA security requirements. Additional inspections of Delta Airlines' station in Lisbon have not been conducted because the airline discontinued service to Portugal in November 1996.

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

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

NEWS RELEASE
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
FAA TAKES ENFORCEMENT ACTION
AGAINST DELTA AIR LINES

1. **Is the failure to maintain accurate and complete training records of airline security employees a serious violation of federal security requirements?**

While any given record keeping violation may not in and of itself result in a serious breach of security, the effective functioning of FAA's security program is dependent upon strict adherence to the Federal Aviation Regulations, including record keeping requirements.

2. **Has Delta corrected the violation**?

Yes. When the FAA notified Delta Air Lines that they were not in compliance, Delta took immediate and appropriate corrective action. In addition, to prevent similar violations, Delta Air Lines has implemented a self-inspection program that includes auditing employee training records to ensure that records of all security personnel are accurate, complete, and in compliance with FAA security requirements.

3. **Should FAA's finding influence the public's confidence about Delta Air Lines' security posture and practices in Lisbon, Portugal?**

For reasons unrelated to this FAA finding, Delta Air Lines closed its Lisbon station in the winter of 1995.

4. **Is it safe to fly Delta Air Lines**?

Delta Air Lines security practices system-wide remain satisfactory.

5. **This violation occurred in July 1995, why has it taken the FAA eighteen months to release this finding to the public?**

In keeping with FAA's January 28, 1997 commitment to educate and inform the public about aviation safety and security issues the FAA believes that releasing this finding is in the public's interest. FAA's new policy to publicly release enforcement findings began for civil penalties issued after February 1, 1997, and this finding was in the time frame.

6. **Is the Portela International Airport in Lisbon safe?**

The last FAA assessment determined that it met ICAO standards.

7. **How often does FAA find US airlines not in compliance with security requirements at locations where the threat is high?**

As a rule, not very often. Compliance of FAA regulations by US airlines operating at high threat international locations is strong.

8. **What does FAA do to ensure that at high threat international locations, US airlines operations are protected?**

FAA security specialist conduct no-notice inspections to evaluate US airlines operations. In addition to the security specialists workforce, there are Civil Aviation Security Liaison Officers whose duties involve meeting with foreign airport officials to ensure that US airlines' security interests are served. In addition to the airline inspections, the FAA conducts assessments of the airport and its administration to determine its posture with ICAO rules.

9. Were these Delta employees or contract personnel?

Contract personnel.

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 37-97
Monday, March 10, 1997
Contact: Rebecca Trexler
Phone: 202-267-8521

Never Miss Another FAA News Release

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in January began distributing news releases to subscribers over Internet electronic mail. While some in the media have subscribed, many have not yet taken advantage of this free service. The agency strongly encourages all aviation reporters to send in their subscriptions to FAA news. Subscribers will receive FAA news releases almost immediately after publication.

Subscribing is a simple, one-step process. Once a subscription is entered, all FAA news releases, fact sheets and media advisories are automatically transmitted to the subscriber's e-mail address.

To subscribe to the FAA's news release service, address an e-mail to:

listserv@listserv.faa.gov

In the body of the message, type:

subscribe faa-newsrelease <Your Name>

Do not type anything else in the message. Send the message.

You may take your name off the list any time by sending another message to:

listserv@listserv.faa.gov

In the body of the message, type:

signoff faa-newsrelease

Do not type anything else in the message. Send the message.

Those who are unable to subscribe and are already on the agency's fax list will continue receiving faxed releases. Agency news releases are also available on the FAA's web site at http://www.faa.gov under "News & Information."

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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 38-97
Thursday, March 13, 1997
Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.
Phone: 202/267-8521

Oceanic Flyers Benefit from FAA Air Traffic Upgrades on Both Coasts

WASHINGTON — Air travelers flying over the Pacific and the Caribbean are benefiting from new equipment the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has installed at its air route traffic control centers in New York and Oakland, Calif.

Two new systems — the Telecommunications Processor (TP) at New York Center and the Interim Situation Display (ISD) in Oakland — replace 1960s-vintage equipment with modern hardware and software. They give air traffic controllers improved capabilities to manage aircraft flying in the Caribbean and over a vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean.

"This is a major step toward real-time oceanic air traffic management," said FAA's Air Traffic Service Director Ron Morgan in Washington.

The Interim Situation Display, now operational at Oakland Center, is the nation's first such installation. It will improve the ability of air traffic controllers to keep a safe distance between airplanes as they fly in areas without radar coverage over the Pacific.

The new system provides upgraded hardware and software that gives oceanic controllers improved displays of aircraft and better interaction with their computers. Oakland Center is responsible for separation of aircraft over much of the Pacific ocean, as well as most of northern California and the western third of Nevada.

"ISD modernizes oceanic air traffic control by replacing 20- to 30-year-old display channels, controllers' workstations and network infrastructure," said FAA Western-Pacific Region Air Traffic Division Manager George Williams. "It increases safety through a better display of information, increased reliability and ease of maintenance."

- more -

With ISD, controllers use a 20-inch square computer color monitor and graphic displays of information instead of the older round radar display.

ISD will ultimately use flight information sent to and from properly equipped aircraft over the ocean by satellite. Position reports will go to ARINC (Aeronautical Radio, Inc., an airline communication consortium) and on to Oakland Center for near real-time display at controller workstations. Currently, oceanic controllers estimate aircraft positions based on pilots' position reports sent by high frequency radio and calculations of future locations. The FAA's New York Center also will receive ISD.

Telecommunications Processor, an enhanced workstation for oceanic controllers, became operational in the four Caribbean sectors at New York Center on January 15. The highly acclaimed TP was developed as a replacement for the old 1960s-technology Flight Data Input/Output subsystem of the Oceanic Display and Planning System (ODAPS) that has been operational in New York oceanic sectors since March 1996.

TP is a major improvement to controllers' ability to manage flight plan data, aircraft position reports and flight service data. The TP workstation adds powerful message handling search-and-scroll capabilities, quick action function keys, and editing features to aid in entering, displaying or composing new messages.

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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 40-97
Friday, March 14, 1997
Contact: Tim Pile
Phone: 206-227-2004

FAA Proposes Fine for Alaska Airlines

SEATTLE — The FAA is proposing an $810,000 civil penalty against Alaska Airlines for improperly modifying the main landing gear system of a Boeing 737 and subsequently operating the aircraft.

The case involves work done on the airplane between 1992 and 1996, which was discovered during an FAA inspection on May 14, 1996. FAA alleges that the airline, on March 5, 1992, installed new wheels and brakes in a manner that did not fully comply with all of the requirements of the manufacturer's service bulletin. The airplane was placed in service in an improperly altered state and was operated on more than 9,000 passenger-carrying flights.

In response to FAA's investigation the carrier acknowledged its improper alterations and said it has adopted new procedures to prevent this type of violation in the future.

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

NEWS:

U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 17, 1997

CONTACT: Kathleen B. Bergen

**FAA SIGNS CONSENT ORDER WITH AVATLANTIC;
AIRLINE TO PAY $136,000 PENALTY, MAY RESUME LIMITED FLIGHTS**

The Federal Aviation Administration and HCL Aviation, Inc., d/b/a AvAtlantic have signed a Consent Order which will allow the charter airline to resume limited flights. AvAtlantic's operating certificate remains suspended until terms of the order are met.

AvAtlantic may resume flying two of its seven aircraft when it meets the initial terms of the Consent Order. The airline may fly without limits when all provisions of the Consent Order are fulfilled.

AvAtlantic also has agreed to pay a $136,000 civil penalty to settle outstanding violations.

A copy of the Consent Order is attached.

# # #

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

In the Matter of: HCL Aviation, Inc. d/b/a AvAtlantic

CONSENT ORDER

Considering Enforcement Investigative Report 97SO110040, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) concluded that a reasonable basis existed to question the qualifications of HCL Aviation, Inc d/b/a AvAtlantic ("HCL") to hold, and exercise the privileges of, an air carrier certificate. In accordance with its responsibility to promote and regulate the safety of air transportation and the public interest, on March 7, 1997, the FAA issued an Emergency Order of Suspension of HCL's air carrier operating certificate number UHVA753T until such time as it demonstrated its qualifications to hold, and exercise the privileges of, an air carrier operating certificate.

FAA acknowledges that HCL has made efforts to establish its qualifications to hold an air carrier operating certificate. Considering those efforts, the FAA and HCL have reached an agreement under which both are willing to accept the issuance of this consent Order to avoid potential litigation and to expedite the resumption of HCL's operations. HCL acknowledges that it must satisfactorily demonstrate to FAA its qualifications to hold, and exercise the privileges of, an air carrier certificate,in part by fulfilling the conditions set forth in Attachment 1.

Further, FAA and HCL agree to settle pending or potential civil penalty actions in the following FAA Enforcement Investigative Reports (EIRs): 97SO110005, 97SO110020, 97SO110024, 97SO110028, 97SO110030, 96SO110018, 97SO110040, 96SO110019, 96SO110020, 96SO110030, 96SO110035, 96SO110036, 96SO110095, 96SO110103, 96SO110151, 95SO110059, 95SO110106, 95SO110137 FAA acknowledges that HCL's execution of, and performance under, this Consent Order does not constitute or imply an admission by HCL of the facts, circumstances, and regulatory violations set forth in the cited EIRs or Notices of proposed Civil Penalty issued as a result of each. HCL acknowledges that FAA considers as findings the facts, circumstances, and violations set forth in the EIRs or Notices of Proposed Civil Penalty issued as a result of each.

This Consent Order is issued under the authority contained in 49 U.S.C. Sections 46105, 46301 and 44709, and 14 C.F.R. Section 13.13

ACCORDINGLY, it is hereby Ordered:

1. HCL will complete the corrective actions set forth in Attachment 1, to the satisfaction of the FAA. Upon satisfactory completion of the corrective actions set forth in Schedule A of Attachment 1, the FAA will abate the Emergency Order of Suspension issued on March 7, 1997, to permit HCL to resume operations limited to two aircraft. Upon satisfactory completion of the corrective actions set forth in Schedule B of Attachment 1, HCL will be permitted to resume exercising the full privileges of its operating certificate. FAA agrees

to provide best efforts to accomodate HCL's schedule for completing tasks to demonstrate its competency.

2. HCL agrees to pay $136,000 (one hundred thirty six thousand dollars) as a civil penalty to the Federal Aviation Administration by check or money order, delivered to the FAA Southern Region Office of Assistant Chief Counsel. It is acknowledged that HCL has filed for bankruptcy protection, and that this instrument is not a present attempt to receive payment. FAA acknowledges that payment may be subject to applicable bankruptcy law and procedure. HCL, or its trustee, shall make such payment as soon as permitted under applicable law.

3. HCL hereby waives any and all rights to appeal or otherwise seek judicial review of this consent Order.

4. Each party shall bear its own costs, expenses, and attorney fees associated with all matters subject herein.

EXECUTED AS FOLLOWS:

Cheryl Grue
President of HCL Aviation, Inc.

3.14.97
Date

Susan Jollie
Attorney for HCL Aviation, Inc.

March 14, 1997
Date

William G. Nelmes
Attorney, FAA Southern Region

03/14/97
Date

ATTACHMENT 1

Schedule A

1. Identify qualified flight attendant crewmembers to be used initially in limited operations. HCL will present a list of Flight Attendants proposed to be used, subject to review and acceptance by FAA. HCL shall submit the training records, including written verification and endorsement by the Chief Flight Attendant of the current proficiency and qualifications of those proposed flight attendants.

2. Appoint a new Chief Pilot acceptable to FAA.

3. Establish a written policy, subject to review and acceptance by FAA, concerning logbook entries. Such policy shall be distributed by bulletin to appropriate HCL employees.

4. Submit for FAA review and acceptance the procedure used by HCL to determine flight deck crewmember competency in the following areas: use of the logbook, use of the MEL, the deicing program, weight and balance to include passenger counts, redispatch procedures, and Ops Specs provisions.

5. Identify, and present for FAA review and acceptance, a list of qualified flight dispatchers to be used initially in limited operations.

6. Submit for FAA review and approval all passenger safety information cards to be used in Av Atlantic operations. HCL will permit occupation of exit row seats only by persons it has determined understand evacuation commands given in English, and who otherwise meet the qualifications specified in121.585.

7. HCL crew scheduling will only use crewmembers specified on a list of current and qualified crewmembers prepared by HCL.

8. Satisfactorily complete an in-flight proving run of at least four cycles, with enroute legs of 40 to 50 minutes.

9. Submit a list of mechanics, inspectors and flight engineer/mechanics intended to be used in initial operations,subject to review and acceptance by FAA. HCL shall submit the training records, including written verification and endorsement by the Director of Quality Control or Director of Maintenance confirming the competency of each person proposed to be used.

10. No "A" check or more substantial maintenance of HCL aircraft will be performed without HCL inspector oversight, in accordance with procedures developed in accordance with Schedule B, Item 9 below.

11. HCL will continue its past policy of using flight engineers holding Mechanic certificates to perform mechanic's functions only for those functions for which HCL has provided them mechanic training.

12. HCL will conduct audits, subject to FAA review and acceptance, of the Stores and Publications Departments.

13. HCL will ensure that each aircraft to be used in limited operations has on board a copy of the following manuals: Airframe/Powerplant, Structural Repair, Wiring.

14. HCL shall ensure that each aircraft used in service will be checked for conformity with FAR Part 121, subject to FAA review and acceptance.

15. HCL shall submit for review, or make available for inspection, the following manuals: Stations Operations, all maintenance technical manuals.

16. HCL shall satisfactorily complete FAA inspections of the Maintenance Bases in Fort Lauderdale and Miami.

SCHEDULE B

1. Develop a system, subject to review and acceptance by FAA, to ensure that flight attendant crewmembers are currently proficient, competent and qualified to fill required crewmember positions. The proposed system shall be submitted for FAA review and acceptance no later than May 1, 1997.

2. Retrain and recheck all line Check Airmen prior to conducting any line checks or initial operating experience (IOE). Submit, for FAA review and acceptance, a procedure for providing timely notice to FAA of checks and IOEs requiring FAA participation.

3. Publish all policies and manual provisions required in this Attachment 1, by bulletin and manual revision, no later than June 1, 1997.

4. Establish a bulletin system to timely disseminate GMM revisions to appropriate personnel.

5. Submit for FAA review and acceptance the procedure used by HCL to ensure competency of appropriate personnel in the following areas: use of the logbook, use of the MEL, the deicing program, weight and balance to include passenger counts, redispatch procedures, and Ops Specs provisions.

6. Submit for FAA review and acceptance a letter of compliance with FAR Part 119.

7. Submit for FAA review and approval a procedure that ensures that crew scheduling will only use current and qualified crewmembers.

8. Submit for FAA review and acceptance a system, and criteria, used to determine the qualification and competency of maintenance personnel.

9. Submit for FAA review and acceptance GMM procedures which provide for HCL inspectors to oversee each "A" or higher letter check at every location. The number of inspectors should depend upon the level of the inspection to be performed. This manual revision should include the inspector qualifications, duties and responsibilities which include quality control of all facets of letter checks, and reporting procedures. As one of these responsibilities, each letter check should be co-signed by the inspector certifying the quality of the work perform prior to return to service. Results of completed letter check inspections should be reported as part of the Av Atlantic CAS program and reviewed at least monthly by management. Problem areas, adverse trends, and corrective actions should be reported to the FAA PMI monthly.

10. For Flight Engineers HCL uses as mechanics, submit for FAA review and acceptance a GMM revision defining training, duties, responsibilities, and determining duty and rest times.

11. Av Atlantic will provide the FSDO with a complete set of current aircraft manuals for each aircraft, including Airframe/Powerplant, Structural Repair, Parts Catalog, Manufacturer's or Vendor's Manual, Wiring Manual, Overhaul Manual. HCL will provide appropiate means to access the media format of the materials provided.

12. Prior to beginning a "C" check, major alteration or major repair, HCL will notify the FSDO of each aircraft scheduled fro such maintenance, and the name and location where the work is to be performed.

Prior to use of contract maintenance vendors to perform "C" checks or other substantial maintenance, HCL shall conduct audits of each such vendor, providing a copy of each report to the FAA PMI, including highlights of significant problems identified, analysis, and corrective actions taken. HCL shall submit maintenance contracts for FAA approval (D-91) prior to conducting, any "C" or higher checks, and substantial maintenance.

13. Develop additional procedures to prevent recurrence of repetitive discrepancies.

14. Publish procedures which ensure that the regulatory compliance of each manual revision is checked prior to its submission to the FAA and publication, and the system to keep the manuals current.

15. HCL will provide a report to FAA no later than May 1, 1997, to demonstrate whether or not HCL should be subject to the Boeing Planning Document in its Time Limit Control.

16. No later than May 1, 1997, HCL shall develop, and submit to FAA for review and acceptance, maintenance inspection programs in the following areas: Windshear, Batteries on CVR and FDR, Testing for Strobe lights.

17. No later than May 1, 1997, HCL will provide to FAA a report of the status of its intended relocation to Fort Lauderdale.

18. HCL acknowledges that FAA review and acceptance of manuals will be conducted in accordance with applicable regualtions and policy guidance.

19. No later than June 1, 1997, the HCL Chief Flight Attendant will conduct a thorough review of the flight attendant manual, and submit to FAA revisions deemed appropriate or necessary.

20. No later than May 1, 1997, HCL shall report to FAA the results of an evaluation of its CAS program, and designate someone to accumulate, evaluate, and distribute information developed by the CAS program.

21. Prior to conducting any training, HCL shall appoint a new Director of Training.

22. Prior to conducting any training, HCL shall present for FAA inspection and approval, training facilities, training devices, courseware, and instructional aids.

23. HCL shall develop, and submit to FAA for review and acceptance, a system to ensure oversight of ATS, flight attendants, and flight attendant instructors.

24. Prior to conducting any flight training, HCL shall retrain flight instructors and resubmit for FAA approval.

25. Prior to conducting any training, HCL shall provide FAA at least 10 days notice of the training scheduled.

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 39-97
Tuesday, March 18, 1997
Contact: Bob Ropelewski
Phone: 202-267-9294

FAA Forecast Envisions Continued Growth in General Aviation

WASHINGTON -- The increase in general aviation activities in the U.S. following more than a decade of decline will be the focus of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and industry officials this week when they meet in Wichita, Kansas, for the 7th Annual FAA General Aviation Forecast Conference.

Spurred by the General Aviation Revitalization Act of 1994 and an overall improvement in the economy in recent years, general aviation aircraft deliveries increased last year for the second year in a row and total hours flown by the general aviation fleet were up 6.6 percent -- the first increase since 1989.

Likewise, shipments of new general aviation aircraft rose for the second straight year, increasing by 5.1 percent to 1,132 from 1,077 in 1995. Significantly, the renewed interest shown in piston powered aircraft in 1995 continued in 1996, with shipments totaling 577 planes last year. The active general aviation fleet is expected to continue growing at an average rate of almost 1,300 new aircraft a year over the 12-year period treated in the FAA's latest forecast.

At the same time that aircraft deliveries and flying hours were on the increase, the general aviation accident rate reached its lowest level in 15 years, according to the National Transportation Safety Board.

FAA and aircraft industry officials will review these results and explore the outlook for general aviation over the next 10 years at this week's forecast conference. The two-day conference, sponsored jointly by the FAA and the General Aviation Manufacturers Association (GAMA), will be held March 20-21 at the Broadview Hotel in Wichita.

- more -

FAA speakers at the conference will include Barry Valentine, acting Administrator of the FAA; George Donohue, the FAA's associate administrator for research and acquisition; Guy Gardner, associate administrator for regulation and certification; Louise Maillett, acting assistant administrator for policy, planning & international aviation; and Mike Gallagher, manager of the small airplane directorate in the FAA's Central Region Headquarters. These agency officials will discuss the overall outlook for general aviation as well as such issues as the certification of future pilots and aircraft and the architecture of the future national airspace system.

Other speakers at the conference will address business aviation, new technologies, the aviation infrastructure, increasing student pilot starts, and raising the awareness of the benefits of general aviation.

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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 41-97
Tuesday, March 18, 1997
Contact: Henry J. Price
Phone: (202) 267-8521

NOTE TO EDITORS: This is a corrected copy of a release issued earlier today. The data in the table on page 2 was reversed.

FAA to Charge User Fees
For Aircraft Flying Through U.S. Airspace

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has placed on public display an interim final rule requiring aircraft operators to pay fees for aviation services provided to aircraft which operate in U.S. airspace, but do not take off or land in the United States.

With an implementation date of Monday, May 19, the new rule regarding overflights is consistent with international practices and is expected to recover about $90 million in fee revenue for fiscal year 1998. Presently, overflights that do not land or take off in the United States make no payments for aviation services provided to them by the FAA.

The authority to charge fees to aircraft conducting U.S. overflights was contained in the Federal Aviation Reauthorization Act of 1996. The fees will go into effect in 60 days following the Thursday, March 20, publication of the interim final rule in the *Federal Register*. A meeting will be held on Thursday, May 1, to hear comments from any interested parties. Also, the FAA will accept comments over the next 120 days. A final rule will be issued after a thorough review of the comments and information obtained from the public meeting.

"This rule assesses a fair fee to aircraft operating in the safest air traffic control system in the world," said Acting FAA Administrator Barry L. Valentine. "The charging of overflight fees is consistent with most nations' practices, and will recover most of the cost of services from overflights."

The rule bases its overflight fees on distance flown through U.S.-controlled airspace. Fees are directly related to the cost of overflight services, and apply only to aircraft that neither take off from, nor land in, the United States. The rule does not apply to aircraft owned by the United States or foreign governments.

- more -

Fees are assessed for flights through U.S. airspace, as well as flights through international airspace that the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has given the United States air traffic control responsibility. The fees are applied in a "Tiered Charging System." General aviation piston-powered aircraft are charged no fees for overflight operations under 250 nautical miles (or 287.5 statute miles). In addition, Canada-to-Canada overflights of the United States have been granted deferral of the fees until Wednesday, Oct. 1. This is to provide time for Canada to institute its planned domestic enroute charge system, minimizing temporary disruption of air traffic due to the introduction of charges.

Tiered Charging System
(1997 Dollars Per 100 Nautical Miles)

Aircraft Operator	Flights In Airspace Over U.S. Territories	Flights In U.S. -Controlled Oceanic Airspace
Commercial	$78.90	$69.50
General Aviation Turbine-Powered Aircraft	$15.78	$13.90
General Aviation Piston-Powered Aircraft	$4.38	$3.86

The FAA will bill users by sending a monthly invoice. Affected air carriers are requested to designate and submit to the FAA the name and address of a U.S. agent for billing. All other users are requested to submit a billing address to the agency. Users not providing a billing address will be billed at the address of record of the aircraft owner as maintained in the country where the aircraft is registered.

To receive a copy of the interim rule, the public can contact FAA's Office of Rulemaking at (202) 267-9677. Members of the media should use the individual listed as the contact at the top of the press release. Interested parties can send comments about the rule to FAA's Office of the Chief Counsel, Attention: Rules Docket, AGC-200, 800 Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, D.C. 20591. Comments should reference Docket Number 28860.

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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 42-97
Tuesday, March 18, 1997
Contact: Alison Duquette
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA Proposes Retrofit of 737 Rudder Components

WASHINGTON -- Continuing President Clinton's commitment to improve aviation safety, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has proposed two Airworthiness Directives (ADs) to further minimize the already small risk of inadvertent 737 rudder movements.

The changes were developed voluntarily by The Boeing Company and announced by Vice President Al Gore in January. They require that 737s be retrofitted with three new rudder system components: the power control unit (PCU), yaw damper system and rudder hydraulic pressure reducer.

"These changes are a good example of how government and industry can work together to improve aviation safety for the American people," said Vice President Gore, who chaired the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security.

Issued as Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRMs), the ADs are part of the agency's continuing 737 flight control system review following two accidents involving 737 aircraft near Colorado Springs, Colo., and Pittsburgh. The FAA's actions do not represent any conclusions regarding the cause of the two unresolved 737 accidents.

"These improvements would build upon advances developed by Boeing for inclusion in new 737s and other aircraft models," said Barry L. Valentine, acting FAA administrator. "Working in partnership with the aviation industry, the agency is aggressively reviewing the Boeing 737's flight control system and will take action where appropriate."

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The two ADs would require:

1. Replacement of the main 737 rudder power control unit (PCU) and dual load fasteners (bolts) on rudder control rods with newly designed units.

- The new PCU will have a new servo valve similar to the one proposed by Boeing for its new 737-700 aircraft. The new PCU, which would undergo extensive testing to evaluate the effect of rudder control system jamming, would eliminate any possibility of uncommanded rudder motion, including rudder reversals. The AD would require repetitive leak tests every 6,000 flight hours for existing PCUs until they are replaced with new units.

- Redesigned fasteners (bolts) on the control rod that links a torque tube to the main rudder PCU input arm would be required. The new fasteners would reduce the likelihood of a load path failure on the control rod. The FAA received reports that the outer bolts for the rudder control rod fractured in two cases.

2. Installation of a newly designed rudder hydraulic pressure reducer and yaw damper system.

- Also known as a rudder limiter, the rudder hydraulic pressure reducer is designed to decrease rudder movements and improve ability of flight crews to control an aircraft in the unlikely event of a sharp movement known as a rudder hardover. The new design is being be incorporated by Boeing in new 737-600, -700 and -800 aircraft.

- The yaw damper system, now using mechanical rate gyros, would be removed and replaced with solid state rate gyros, to reduce the possibility of system faults. The new system would incorporate a dual configuration similar to the unit used in Boeing 747-400, 757 and 767 aircraft.

Compliance time for replacement of the PCU and dual load fasteners would be two years. Retrofit of the rudder hydraulic pressure reducer and yaw damper system would be required three years from the effective date of the final AD. The public comment period is 45 days from publication in the March 14 *Federal Register*.

Worldwide, there are approximately 2,900 aircraft in the 737 fleet, including 1,350 U.S. registered aircraft. Boeing estimates the cost of retrofitting the worldwide fleet at $126 million, including $50.4 million to retrofit the U.S. fleet.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 43-97
Tuesday, March 18, 1997
Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.
Phone: 202/267-8521

Media Advisory
FAA's William J. Hughes Technical Center Sponsors Aviation Education Program

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) William J. Hughes Technical Center, Pomona, N.J., and William Davies Middle School, Mays Landing, N.J., will sponsor the fifth annual Aviation Awareness Program on Wednesday, March 19, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. in the Center's aircraft hangar.

This year's program involves local junior and senior high schools. Each invited district will send five students and a technology teacher. The students will work in teams with scientists and engineers from the Center, who will participate as mentors. Each group will work to solve technical tasks dealing with aeronautics and flight.

The students also will have the opportunity to tour FAA aircraft and an F-16 fighter jet provided by the 177th Fighter Interceptor Group of the New Jersey Air National Guard. The day will conclude with a flight competition and an award ceremony.

The event is part of the Technology Aviation for Kids/Engineering Of Future Flights (TAKEOFF) program, a partnership between industry and educators.

Media representatives wishing to cover the event should present their media credentials at the Main Gate for admission and directions to the hangar.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 44-97
Friday, March 21, 1997
Contact: Alison Duquette/Rebecca Trexler
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA One Level of Safety Commuter Rule Deadline Marks Safety Improvements, Decline in Accident Rate

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today announced that the aviation industry has successfully implemented the Commuter Rule which set new safety standards for scheduled airlines operating aircraft with 10 passenger seats or more. The rule is the central element in the Clinton Administration's single level of safety program to hold all scheduled air carriers to the same high safety standards.

Thirty-three of 39 air carriers successfully transitioned their operations and are now operating under Part 121 of the Federal Aviation Regulations, as do the major carriers. The remaining six air carriers continue to work with the FAA to certify a total of 13 aircraft under the higher safety standards.

Accomplished in an unprecedented timeframe, the FAA worked in partnership with industry to enact this comprehensive change to airline operations. During this year of transition, commuter carriers posted an accident rate of 0.347 per 100,000 departures — the best performance ever by this category of operators.

"Americans deserve to know that whether flying on a jumbo jet or a small commuter, they are being covered by the same safety rules and enforcement by the FAA," said Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater. "This rule is part of the FAA's aggressive and continuing effort to ensure that our nation's skies are the safest in the world."

Announced as a final rule in December 1995, the Commuter Rule requires airlines that operate aircraft with 10 to 30 seats to meet the same or equivalent safety standards as the major air carriers. Previously, there was one set of rules for aircraft with 31 or more seats, and another for 10- to 30-seat commuters.

- more -

"I'm proud of the men and women in industry and government who have worked so diligently to fulfill our commitment to enhanced aviation safety," said Barry L. Valentine, acting FAA administrator. "This rule sets new standards that will help us keep pace with the rapidly growing commuter segment of the aviation industry. This industry's outstanding performance demonstrates its commitment to safety."

Walt Coleman, Regional Airline Association president, agreed with Valentine. "The recertification of these airlines, which are now operating under the same regulatory requirements as airlines flying the largest aircraft, is an achievement without precedent in commercial aviation," he said. "These regional airlines and the FAA staff of inspectors who worked with them can take great pride in this accomplishment to improve flight safety."

According to the FAA's recently published *Aviation Forecasts*, regional/commuter air carrier enplanements are expected to increase from 60.5 million in 1996 to 62.5 million in 1997, and average a 5.3 percent increase per year reaching 106.9 million in 2008. The commuter passenger fleet is expected to increase from 2,090 in 1996 to 2,909 in 2008, an average annual increase of 2.8 percent.

Specific safety requirements include:

- Revised manuals and training program.
- Implementation of a carry-on-baggage program.
- Introduction of a dispatch system and certificated dispatchers.
- Establishment of duty limits for aircraft maintenance workers.
- Additional passenger safety equipment, such as emergency medical and first aid kits.

Other previously announced safety initiatives in the Administration's program to set higher safety standards for scheduled carriers are:

- New Part 119 which requires a safety officer for all Part 121 air carriers.
- Final rule requiring new Crew Resource Management training for air carrier pilots, flight attendants and dispatchers.
- Final "Age 60" Rule which standardized the retirement age for pilots of all scheduled air carriers with a four-year implementation period for commuter pilots.
- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that would require air carriers to comply with proposed new flight/duty/rest standards for flight crews. The FAA is currently reviewing public comments on the NPRM.

The Commuter Rule is expected to cost air carriers $75 million over 15 years. The cost to the flying public is projected at 30 cents per passenger ticket on 20- to 30-seat aircraft, and 62 cents per passenger on aircraft with 10 to 19 seats.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

Friday, March 21, 1997
Contact: Alison Duquette/Rebecca Trexler
Phone: 202-267-8521

FACT SHEET

Commuter Rule

Once fully implemented, the Commuter Safety Initiative, which encompasses the Commuter Rule and several other complementary rules, will provide air travelers with one level of safety whether they are flying aboard a jumbo jet or a 10-seat aircraft. This initiative represents the most comprehensive set of changes ever in aviation rulemaking. With the exception of the Flight/Duty/Rest proposal, which is still under review, the initiative took effect March 20. Highlights are detailed below:

• **Commuter Rule.** Under the final Commuter Rule, turbojets and all scheduled airline passenger operations with aircraft having 10 seats or more will be operated under Part 121, the same set of safety rules that formerly applied only to larger aircraft. The rule requires certificated dispatchers and a dispatch system, a safety officer, a ground-deicing program, operations and flight attendant manuals, a carry-on baggage program, and virtually all other Part 121 operational requirements. When regulations between large and small aircraft could not be made uniform, a common-sense approach was used to achieve an equivalent standard of safety. For example, it does not make sense to require floor lighting when every seat on a small airplane is a few feet from an exit.

• **New Airplane Certifications.** Newly type-certificated airplanes are now required to meet all of the higher standards (Transport Category, Part 25). Airplanes currently in production and the existing fleet will have to meet certain upgraded performance requirements and equipment installations.

• **Age 60 Rule.** Based on scientific evidence, at some point all persons become unable to safely serve as pilots as they age. The age of 60 was chosen in 1960 as the mandatory retirement for Part 121 pilots, which has now expanded to include commuter pilots. To prevent undue hardship on commuter pilots, the Age 60 Rule is being phased in over four years from December 1995.

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• **Air Carrier Training Rule.** This rule required flight crew members on scheduled passenger operations of airplanes with 10 or more seats to receive training and qualifications comparable to crew members of the larger air carriers. Since human error plays a part in most of today's aviation accidents and incidents, this more comprehensive training could prove a critical factor in improving safety. The rule mandates Crew Resource Management (CRM) training for all crew members — from the captain to the flight attendants to the dispatchers. CRM gives the crew training and practice in sharing information needed to make critical decisions. Pilots must have completed CRM training by December 1998; flight dispatchers and flight attendants, by March 1999.

• **Flight/Duty/Rest Rule.** The FAA is currently evaluating public comments received from its Flight/Duty/Rest Notice of Proposed Rulemaking published December 1995. The proposed rule, which is based on the most recent research on fatigue, would bring all operations under one set of regulations. It will also address standby and reserve assignments. While the proposed rule is under evaluation, crew members of commuter aircraft will continue to be regulated under the flight and rest provisions in Part 135. After the rule's adoption, the crews of both commuter and larger aircraft will operate under the new Part 121 rule.

• **Part 119.** This new regulation consolidates Part 121 and 135 carrier certification requirements, and is applicable to all carriers. It increases the requirements for management experience and qualifications, mandates that all carriers now have safety officers, and provides a number of other operations requirements.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

GLOSSARY

Commuter Rule

Carrier Certification

Under the Commuter Rule, all aircraft with 10 seats or more and scheduled passenger service now will be operated under Part 121 operations. The new rule also provides for Part 119, which contains revised definitions and carrier certification requirements for all Part 121 and 135 operations.

Air carrier and commercial operator

An operator or company certificated under Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 121 or Part 135 to provide air transportation of passengers and/or cargo.

Air carrier certificate and operation specifications

Certificate and documents that describe the conditions, authorizations and limitations under which a Part 121 or Part 135 air carrier operates.

CFR Part 121

Regulations that govern operations for scheduled passenger service in airplanes with 10 or more passenger seats, or in planes that carry more than 7,500 pounds of payload.

Types of Part 121 operations (authorized by operations specifications)

Domestic– Scheduled passenger service, generally within the U.S., in airplanes with 10 or more passenger seats.

Flag– Scheduled international passenger service operations in airplanes with 10 or more passenger seats.

Supplemental– Charter service in airplanes with 30 or more passenger seats, or cargo operations in planes with a payload capacity of more than 7,500 pounds.

Carrier Certification, continued

CFR Part 135

Regulations that govern operations in rotorcraft, scheduled passenger operations in aircraft with nine passenger seats or less, charter operations in aircraft with 30 seats or less, or cargo operations in aircraft with a payload capacity of 7,500 pounds or less.

Types of Part 135 operations (authorized by operations specifications)

On-demand industry– All charter or cargo operations in aircraft with 30 passenger seats or less, and a payload capacity of 7,500 pounds or less.

Commuters– Scheduled passenger service operations in planes with nine passenger seats or less.

Crew Member Certification and Training

Under the new Commuter Rule, training for crew members of airplanes with scheduled passenger service and 10 seats or more must be performed under the provisions of Part 121. This facilitates the use of simulator technology for training and mandates Crew Resource Management (CRM) training for pilots, flight attendants and dispatchers. CRM is a new requirement for Part 121.

Conditions where two pilots are required

During all Part 121 operations.
During Part 135 operations if they conduct Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations (exceptions may be granted for the use of autopilots if aircraft have less than 10 passenger seats).
Aboard all turbojets.
Aboard large airplanes (airplanes weighing more than 12,500 pounds).
When two pilots are required by type certification.

Pilot certification requirements

(for Part 121 operations, Part 135 turbojets, commuters with nine seats or less, or multi-engine aircraft with 10 or more seats)

Pilot In Command– Airline transport pilot certificate.
Second In Command– Commercial pilot certification and instrument rating.
Type rating– Rating required for each large or turbojet plane.

Pilot qualification requirements

(in addition to certificate requirements)

Part 121	**Part 135**
Pilot In Command	Pilot In Command
6 months IFR proficiency	6 months IFR proficiency
12 months line check	12 months line check
Initial operating experience *	12 months competency check for each airplane type
	Initial operating experience

Part 121	**Part 135**
Second In Command	Second In Command
12 months proficiency	12 months competency
Initial operating experience	

* Initial operating experience includes an enroute check after completion of the qualification program.

Crew Member Certification, continued

Flight attendants

Under the Commuter Rule, an exception for the requirement to have a flight attendant on 10-to-19-seat airplanes is granted due to the small size of the airplane.

(Operations under Part 121 in larger airplanes require flight attendants if there are more than nine passengers; operations conducted under Part 135 require flight attendants if there are more than 19 passengers.)

Flight attendant certification requirements

- Must complete carrier's training and qualification program.
- Competency check.

Flight engineer

(Third crew member position in cockpit required by type certification of airplane)

Flight engineer certification requirements

- Flight engineer certification.

Dispatchers

Under the Commuter Rule, dispatchers will now be required for all carriers conducting scheduled passenger service operation in airplanes with 10 or more passenger seats.

Required for Part 121 domestic and flag operations.
Provides joint authority with Pilot In Command for release of a flight.
Provides operational control of each flight.

Dispatcher certification requirements

- FAA written and practical test.
- Dispatcher certifcate.
- Must complete carriers' training and qualification programs (training, competency checks, and initial operating experience).

Aircraft Certification

Engine type

Turbojet– Jet engine. Designed for greatest efficiencies at high altitudes and long routes.

Turboprop– Jet engine with propeller. Propeller provides greater efficiency at lower altitudes. Turboprop airplanes generally are used for short- to mid-range routes.

Turbine– Jet engine. May be turbojet or turboprop.

Reciprocating engine– Piston-engine. Includes single and multi-engine airplanes. These are generally small airplanes (under 12,500 pounds) or older large airplanes.

Aircraft certification basis

TRANSPORT CATEGORY

Certified under Part 25. These are mostly turbojets and turboprops that have 20 or more passenger seats; and, after March 20, 1995, any new airplane type design to be used in scheduled passenger service.

NON-TRANSPORT CATEGORY

Commuter category– Includes airplanes such as the BE-1900D, Jetstream 4100 (10- to 19-seat range).

SFAR 41– Airplanes over 12,500 pounds, including such airplanes as the BE-1900C, Fairchild Metro III, Jetstream 3100 (10- to 19-seat range).

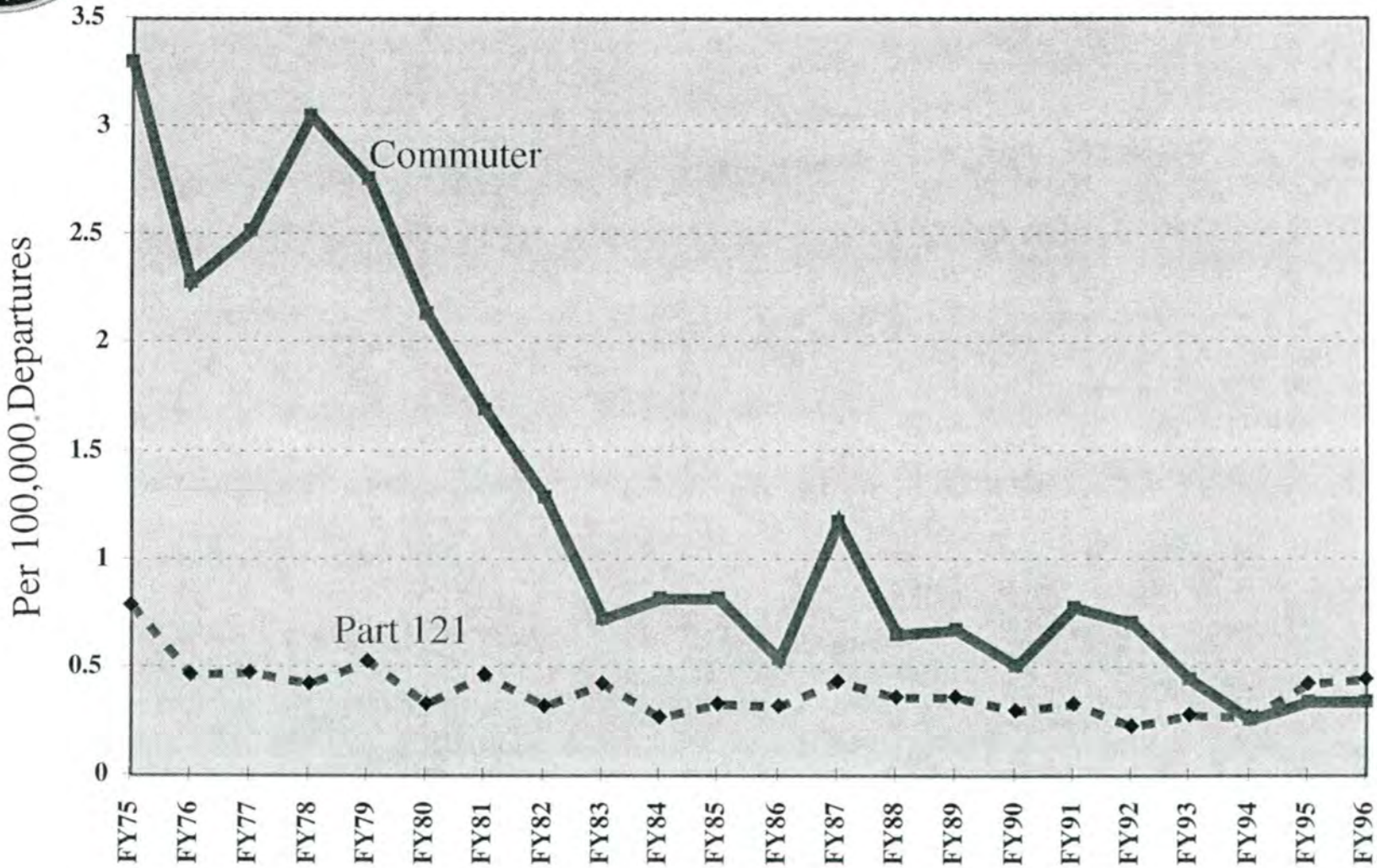
Part 23– Current certification basis for small airplanes weighing less than 12,500 pounds.

Part 23 with special conditions, Part 135 Appendix A, Part 23– Predecessor to the current Part 23 categories. Airplanes in commuter service, including the Twin Otter, Beech 99, Beech 200, Early Metro, Embraer-110 (10- to 19-seat range).

CAR– Predecessor standards to the Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR). Generally provided certification for reciprocating-engine-powered airplanes.

# # #

Accidents Per 100k Departures
Part 121 & Commuter Airlines Since 1975



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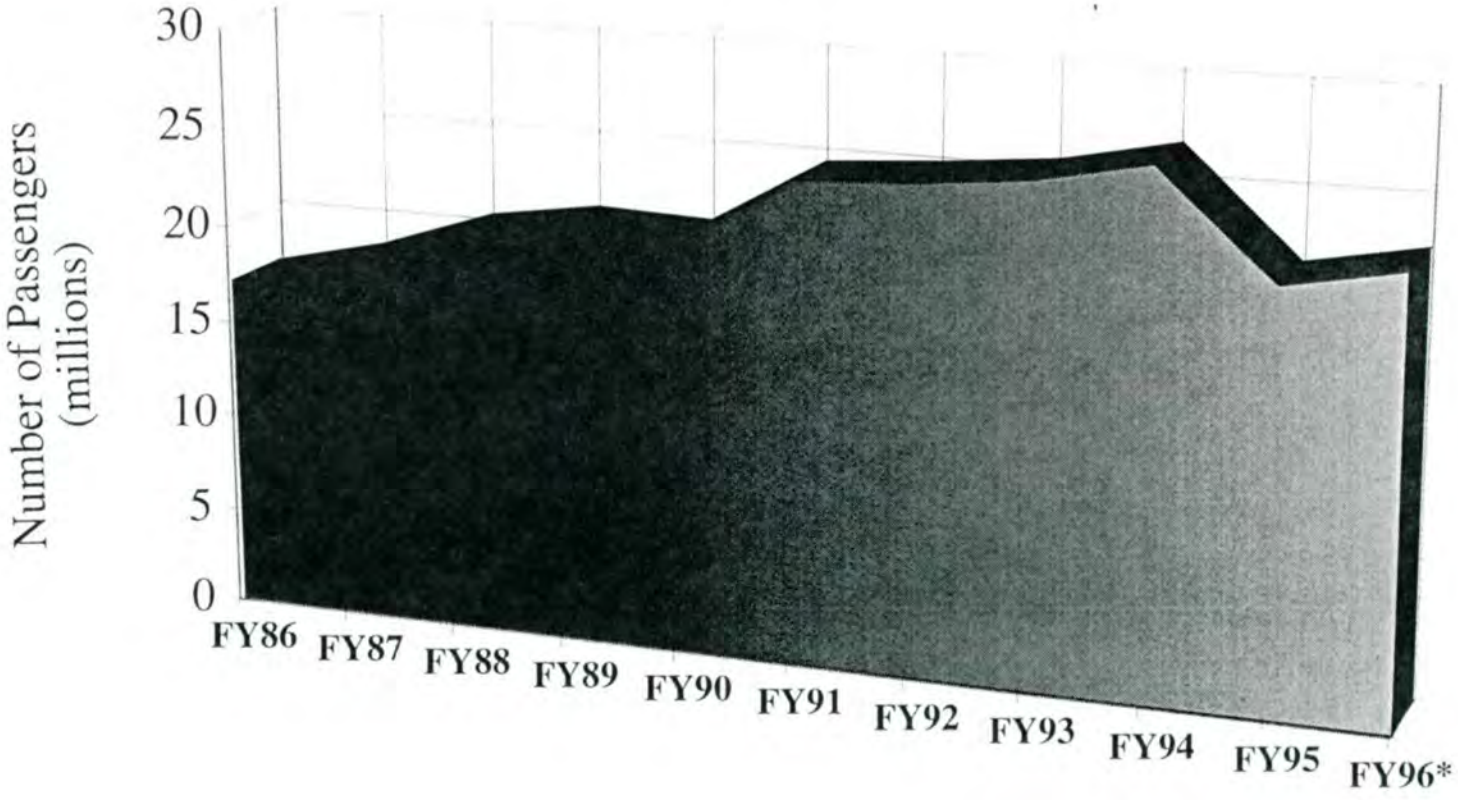
NUMBER OF COMMUTER PASSENGERS

1986 - 1996



**Preliminary Data*

READ Only

3/21/97 12:05 PM

Commuter Rule Transition

In general, use a universe of 39 total air carriers that will continue to operate with 10 or more seats. Of those 39, 33 have transitioned and 6 are continuing to work toward certification.

Overall:

48 Potential air carriers;
33 Transitioned;
6 Will continue to work toward certification. In the interim, will operate with nine or less seats for scheduled service, 30 or less on demand;
3 121/135 that phased out their smaller aircraft;
6 Either terminated operations or phased-out the affected aircraft.

Examples of air carriers that transitioned (success stories):

Mesa Air Group, Inc. (Southwest Region)
Continental Express, Inc. (Southwest Region)
Peninsula (Alaska Region)
West Air Commuter Airlines (Western Pacific Region)
Atlantic Coast (Eastern Region)
Trans States Airlines (Central Region)
Atlantic Southeast Airlines (Southern Region)
Chautauqua Airlines, Inc. (Great Lakes Region)
Skywest (Northwest Mountain Region)

6 air carriers continuing recertification:

1. Vieques Airlink (Southern Region)
2. Air Sunshine (Southern Region)
3. Lynx Air (Southern Region)
4. Aviation Services (Western pacific Region)
5. Frontier Flying Service (Alaska Region)
6. Cape Smythe Air Service (Alaska Region)

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 44-97
Friday, March 21, 1997
Contact: Alison Duquette/Rebecca Trexler
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA One Level of Safety Commuter Rule Deadline Marks Safety Improvements, Decline in Accident Rate

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- more -

"I'm proud of the men and women in industry and government who have worked so diligently to fulfill our commitment to enhanced aviation safety," said Barry L. Valentine, acting FAA administrator. "This rule sets new standards that will help us keep pace with the rapidly growing commuter segment of the aviation industry. This industry's outstanding performance demonstrates its commitment to safety."

Walt Coleman, Regional Airline Association president, agreed with Valentine. "The recertification of these airlines, which are now operating under the same regulatory requirements as airlines flying the largest aircraft, is an achievement without precedent in commercial aviation," he said. "These regional airlines and the FAA staff of inspectors who worked with them can take great pride in this accomplishment to improve flight safety."

According to the FAA's recently published *Aviation Forecasts*, regional/commuter air carrier enplanements are expected to increase from 60.5 million in 1996 to 62.5 million in 1997, and average a 5.3 percent increase per year reaching 106.9 million in 2008. The commuter passenger fleet is expected to increase from 2,090 in 1996 to 2,909 in 2008, an average annual increase of 2.8 percent.

Specific safety requirements include:

- Revised manuals and training program.
- Implementation of a carry-on-baggage program.
- Introduction of a dispatch system and certificated dispatchers.
- Establishment of duty limits for aircraft maintenance workers.
- Additional passenger safety equipment, such as emergency medical and first aid kits.

Other previously announced safety initiatives in the Administration's program to set higher safety standards for scheduled carriers are:

- New Part 119 which requires a safety officer for all Part 121 air carriers.
- Final rule requiring new Crew Resource Management training for air carrier pilots, flight attendants and dispatchers.
- Final "Age 60" Rule which standardized the retirement age for pilots of all scheduled air carriers with a four-year implementation period for commuter pilots.
- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that would require air carriers to comply with proposed new flight/duty/rest standards for flight crews. The FAA is currently reviewing public comments on the NPRM.

The Commuter Rule is expected to cost air carriers $75 million over 15 years. The cost to the flying public is projected at 30 cents per passenger ticket on 20- to 30-seat aircraft, and 62 cents per passenger on aircraft with 10 to 19 seats.

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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 45-97
Friday, March 21, 1997
Contact: Mitch Barker
Phone: 206-227-1203

FAA Proposes Civil Penalty Against McDonnell-Douglas

SEATTLE -- The Federal Aviation Administration is proposing a $229,000 civil penalty against the McDonnell-Douglas Corporation for allegedly failing to ensure the proper certification of persons performing manufacturing operations that require special skills.

Many of the most critical manufacturing operations require skills such as soldering and sealing procedures. All production certificate holders, such as McDonnell-Douglas, have procedures in place as part of their FAA-approved quality control system to ensure that these types of operations are performed by personnel who have been trained and periodically certified as qualified. FAA alleges McDonnell Douglas failed to maintain its quality control system and failed to follow these approved procedures.

The allegations involve work done between 1992 and 1994. The incorrect performance of certified operations by uncertified personnel could adversely affect safety; however, to date the FAA is unaware of any safety problems attributable to this matter.

In response to the allegations, McDonnell-Douglas completed FAA-approved corrective actions in February, 1994, which are working effectively. The company can request an informal conference with the FAA to discuss the allegations and has extensive formal appeal rights.

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

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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
Friday, March 21, 1997
Contact: Kathleen Bergen
Phone: 404-305-5100 After hours: 404-305-5180

FAA Revokes VIP Air Charter's Certificate

ATLANTA -- The Federal Aviation Administration issued an emergency order revoking the air carrier certificate of VIP Air Charter, Inc. of Alcoa, Tn.

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

- Falsification of pilot training records, pilot proficiency check forms, and flight and duty records.
- Use of unqualified pilots.
- Operating aircraft and offering to operate aircraft which are not authorized by the airline's operations specifications.
- Use of pilots without the required rest periods.
- Flying unairworthy aircraft.

VIP operated eight aircraft in charter service under Part 135 of the Federal Aviation Regulations. VIP may appeal the order to the National Transportation Safety Board, however, the revocation order remains in effect pending NTSB proceedings.

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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 47-96
Monday, March 24, 1997
Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.
Phone: 202/267-8521

FAA Boosts Small Business with New Program

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is starting a new pilot program designed to broaden the agency's contractor base by encouraging prime contractors to mentor socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses.

The three-year Mentor-Protege program, which will begin on or about April 7, will enhance the capabilities of these small businesses to work on high-tech FAA contracts and subcontracts. The program will invite FAA prime contractors to assist or partner with socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses, historically black colleges and universities, minority institutions and women-owned small businesses.

"We know from experience that these companies and institutions deliver quality goods and services to the FAA on time and on budget," said George Donohue, FAA associate administrator for research and acquisitions. "The Mentor-Protege effort will tap their entrepreneurial talent and give us new and different ways to serve the aviation community and the traveling public."

The goals for the new program also include fostering the establishment of long-term business relationships between the proteges and FAA prime contractors, and increasing the overall number of disadvantaged firms and organizations that receive FAA prime contracts and subcontracts.

To be a mentor, a contractor must be eligible to receive federal contracts. Mentors can be large or small businesses. To be a protege, a firm must be socially and economically disadvantaged, and be eligible to receive federal contracts. It also must be certified as "small" in the Standard Industrial Classification Code for the services or supplies provided under subcontract to the mentor.

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The FAA has an excellent record of contracting with highly qualified small and socially and economically disadvantaged small businesses. In fiscal year 1996, for example, 12 percent of the agency's $1.9 billion in procurement obligations went to 8(a)-certified firms. Another 12 percent went to Small Disadvantaged Businesses.

Details of the Mentor-Protege program are being finalized and will be published on or about April 7.

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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 46-97
Tuesday, March 25, 1997
Contact: Rebecca Trexler
Phone: (202) 267-8521

FAA Announces Assessments of Foreign Compliance 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 the results of the agency's assessments of five countries to provide safety oversight of their air carriers that operate in the United States. Saudi Arabia and Singapore comply with international safety standards, Nauru and Pakistan are rated as conditional, and Malta is rated as unacceptable.

The assessments are not an indication of whether individual foreign carriers are safe or unsafe, rather they determine whether or not 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's (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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An electronic version of this news release is available via the World Wide Web at: http://www.faa.gov

3/25/97

FAA Flight Standards Service
International Aviation Safety Assessment Program (IASA)

NUMBER	COUNTRY	CATEGORY	NUMBER	COUNTRY	CATEGORY
1	Argentina	1	39	Marshall Islands	1A
2	Aruba	1	40	Malta	3
3	Australia	1	41	Malaysia	1
4	Bahamas	1	42	Mexico	1
5	Bangladesh	1	43	Morocco	2
6	Belize	3	44	Nauru	2
7	Bolivia	2	45	Netherlands	1
8	Brazil	1	46	Netherlands Antilles: Curacau, St. Martin, Bonaire, Saba, St.Eustatius) -	1
9	Brunei Darussalam	1	47	New Zealand	1
10	Bulgaria	1	48	Nicaragua	3
11	Canada	1	49	Oman	1
12	Cayman Islands	1	50	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) covers: Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and The Grenadines, St. Kitts and Nevis	2
13	Chile	1	51	Pakistan	2
14	Colombia	2	52	Panama	1
15	Costa Rica	1	53	Paraguay	3
16	Cote D' Ivoire	2	54	Peru	2
17	Czech Republic	1	55	Phillipines	2
18	Dominican Republic	3	56	Poland	1
19	Ecuador	2	57	Republic of South Korea	1
20	El Salvador	1	58	Romania	1
21	France	1	59	Saudi Arabia	1
22	Fiji	1	60	Singapore	1
23	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro)	1	61	South Africa	1
24	Gambia	3	62	Suriname	3
25	Germany	1	63	Swaziland	3
26	Ghana	1	64	Taiwan	2
27	Guatemala	2	65	Thailand	2
28	Guyana	1A	66	Trinidad & Tobago	2
29	Haiti	3	67	Turkey	1
30	Honduras	3	68	Turks & Caicos	2
31	Hong Kong	1	69	Ukraine	1
32	Hungary	1	70	United Kingdom	1
33	Indonesia	2	71	Uruguay	3
34	Israel	1	72	Uzbekistan	1
35	Jamaica	2	73	Venezuela	2
36	Jordan	1	74	Western Samoa	1
37	Kiribati	3	75	Zaire	3
38	Kuwait	2	76	Zimbabwe	3

Category 1	Meets ICAO Standards
Category 2	Does Not Meet ICAO Standards (Conditional)
Category 3	Does Not Meet ICAO Standards

FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 48-97
Thursday, March 27, 1997
Contact: Les Dorr, Jr.
Phone: 202/267-8521

Media Advisory
FAA Groundbreaking Ceremony for National Pavement Test Facility

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will break ground for the world's first full-scale airport pavement test facility at 9:30 a.m. EST, April 1, at the FAA's William J. Hughes Technical Center, Pomona, N.J.

The groundbreaking ceremony will be held at the site of the National Airport Pavement Test Facility, a cooperative project between the FAA and the Boeing Company. In addition to FAA and Boeing officials, Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg, Rep. Frank A. LoBiondo and New Jersey state and local officials are scheduled to participate in the groundbreaking.

The new facility, expected to be operational in 1998, will provide full-scale testing information urgently needed to investigate the performance of airport pavement in handling the loads of the next generation of super-jumbo jets, some of which could weigh more than one million pounds.

Media representatives wishing to cover the groundbreaking should present their credentials at the Main Gate no later than 9:15 a.m. for admission and directions to the Pavement Test Facility site.

NOTE: An artist's concept and B-roll (including computer animation) of the National Airport Pavement Test Facility will be available at the groundbreaking, or by faxing a request to 202/267-5661.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

Fact Sheet
National Airport Pavement Test Facility

The Challenge

The major aircraft manufacturers are now developing new aircraft that will weigh significantly more than the current generation of aircraft and involve complex landing gear systems. Current airport pavement design standards may not accommodate the dramatic changes associated with these planes. To ensure that airports can meet pavement thickness such aircraft will need, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is doing the research necessary to create new pavement standards.

The Solution

Starting in 1998, the world's first full-scale airport pavement test facility, located at the FAA's William J. Hughes Technical Center in Atlantic City, N.J., will provide data that will help engineers design runways to handle the next generation of super-jumbo jets.

The FAA and the Boeing Company have combined resources to build the National Airport Pavement Test Facility. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District, FAA's prime contractor for the project, awarded a contract for the design and construction of the facility to DMJM/CORNELL Joint Venture in April 1996.

The new facility, expected to be operational in 1998, will provide full-scale testing information urgently needed to investigate the performance of airport pavement under the complex gear loads of future aircraft. The data will help validate new design standards, assure compatibility between aircraft and airports throughout the world and help refine International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) pavement loading standards.

The facility also will give the FAA the tools required to assure that federal funds are spent judiciously in protecting the billions of dollars in public investment in U.S. airport pavements.

The cost to design, construct and conduct the first series of tests is $21 million. Under a cooperative research and development agreement (CRDA), Boeing is providing $7 million, the FAA the remainder of the funding. The FAA and Boeing have established a management board to plan, review, select and prioritize the tests to be conducted at the facility.

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The Facility

The pavement test machine will be located in a fully enclosed building 1200 feet long, 100 feet wide and 30 feet high. The pavement test sections will be constructed using conventional equipment and techniques so they will represent actual runways. Testing will be done 24 hours a day, year round, in a fully automated mode.

The pavement test section is approximately 900 feet long and 60 feet wide. This size permits simultaneous testing of nine different pavement cross sections. An electrically driven vehicle operating on railroad rails will apply simulated aircraft loads. The vehicle is about 75 feet long and 80 feet wide, and weighs about 1.1 million pounds. The machine will be able to test landing gear loads up to 900,000 pounds.

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FAA News

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 84-97
Friday, May 30, 1997
Contact: Alison Duquette
Phone: 202-267-8521

FAA Orders Immediate Grounding of MD-900 Explorer Helicopters

WASHINGTON -- The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) today issued a Priority Letter Airworthiness Directive (AD) ordering operators of MD-900 Explorer helicopters to immediately cease flights and ground operations until further notice. The AD is prompted by the discovery of a broken adjustable collective drive link during a McDonnell Douglas post-flight inspection on May 8.

The drive link assembly is a component of the primary collective flight control system that controls the helicopter main rotor blades. Failure of the part could result in loss of control of the helicopter.

Immediate investigation and testing by McDonnell Douglas followed the May 8 incident and a notice was issued to operators on May 9 as well as replacement link assemblies with instructions to replace the part. Further testing by the manufacturer revealed that the drive link assembly requires redesign. McDonnell Douglas issued a Service Bulletin yesterday and requested emergency action by the FAA.

"The agency's Airworthiness Directive will prohibit operation of the MD-900 helicopter until the manufacturer formulates acceptable repair or replacement procedures," said Barry L. Valentine, FAA Acting Administrator.

Worldwide there are 49 MD-900 Explorer helicopters in service, 26 of which are U.S. registered. An additional 12 helicopters are owned by McDonnell Douglas.

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

FAA News Advance

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC 20591

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APA 49-97
Monday, March 31, 1997
Contact: Henry J. Price
Phone: 202-267-8521

Tour of New National Airport Tower

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater and Acting Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Deputy Administrator Monte Belger will lead a media tour of the new air traffic control tower at National Airport on Tuesday, April 1. Air traffic control operations from the new tower will begin Saturday, April 5.

The new tower is part of a nearly $1 billion Capital Investment Plan for the Washington Metropolitan area. The tour is also one of several events this week marking the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Department of Transportation (DOT) in 1967.

Secretary Slater will ride the Metrorail yellow line from L'Enfant Plaza and will be greeted at National Airport by Deputy Administrator Belger. They will then tour the new tower and deliver closing remarks.

WHO: Rodney Slater, U.S. Secretary of Transportation
Monte Belger, Acting FAA Deputy Administrator
James Wilding, National Airport Manager

WHAT: Tour of New Tower at National Airport

WHEN: Tuesday, April 1
Schedule:
11:30 a.m. Depart L'Enfant Plaza Metro Station
11:45 a.m. Arrive National Airport for tower tour
12 noon (approx.) Closing Remarks

NOTE: For media wishing to ride Metrorail with Secretary Slater to National Airport, parking will be provided at DOT Headquarters (400 7th St., S.W.). Please call (202) 366-5580 and provide the names, type of vehicle and license plate number. Free parking will be made available to organizations who call before 4:30 p.m., Monday, March 31. There will also be free parking for media at National Airport (see attached map).

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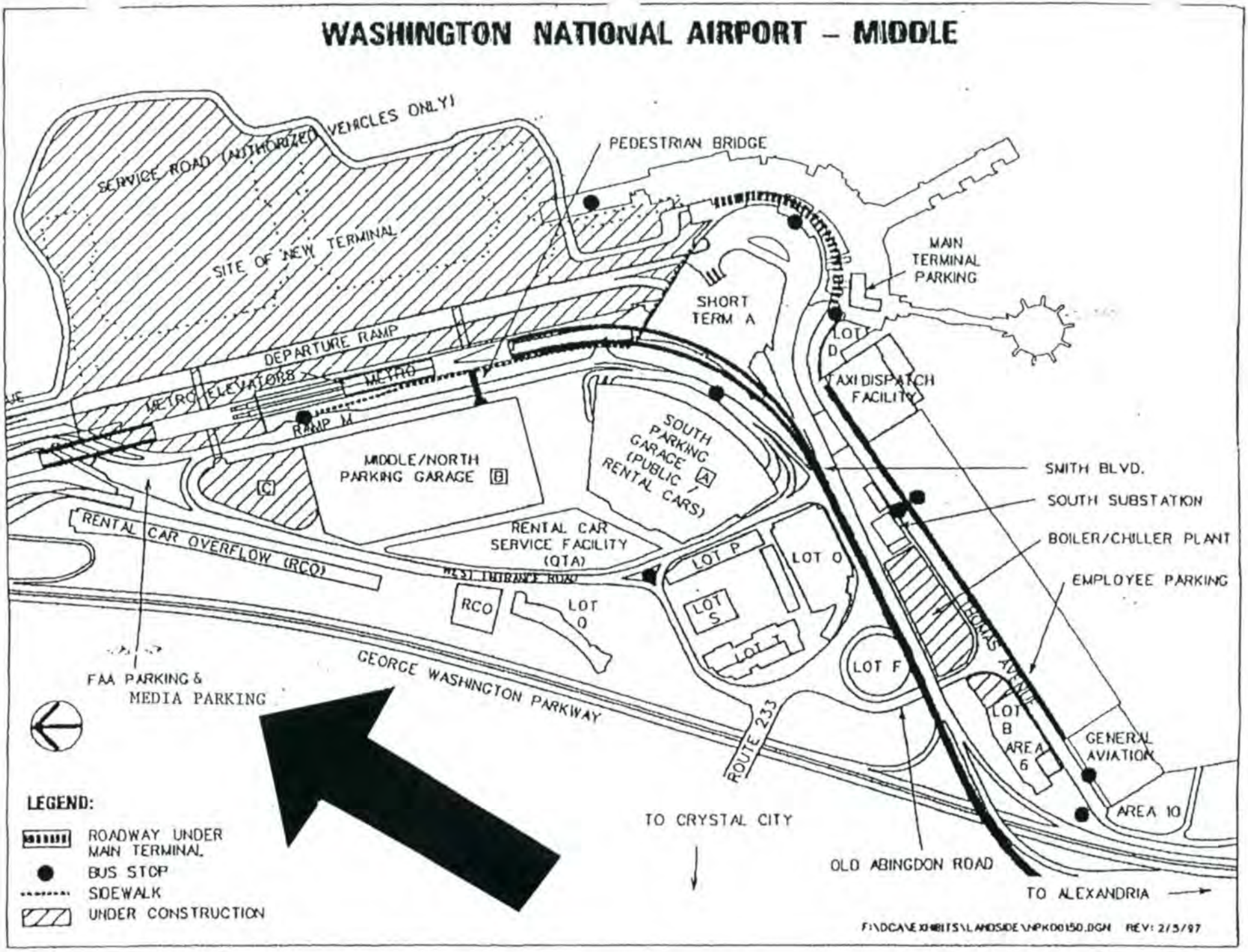
WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT – MIDDLE



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