DOT News

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With his check for $1,830 safely stowed in his pocket, John S. Nigro, FAA (right), faces the camera with his wife Patricia and Robert W. Wedan, acting director of Systems Research and Development Service. Son Loren 7, and daughter Rachelle, 5, seem pleased with the way things turned out.

Better Idea on Federal Reports Earns FAA Man Award of $1,830

Thinking is hard work, but it pays well.

No one knows this better than John S. Nigro, a technical editor with FAA's Systems Research and Development Service, who recently was presented with a check for $1,830 for his suggestion covering uniform interagency "U.S. Government Standards for Scientific and Technical Reports."

His suggestion has been put into effect by DOT and the Interior Department where tangible and intangible benefits of more than $330,000 have been realized in the first year of use.

Mr. Nigro's better idea is under consideration by the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Defense. In the event either or both these agencies adopt Nigro's improvement his suggestor's award will be increased.

He has already been named Idea Champion in the FAA and recommended to the FAA administrator as a candidate for "1975 Suggester of the Year", and to the White House for recognition in the Presidential Cost Reduction Campaign.

In 1968 Nigro played a leading role, as the originator, in developing the government-wide Committee on Scientific and Technical Information's (COSATI) "Guidelines for Format Standards for Scientific and Technical Reports prepared by or for the Federal Government."

This is the format of the more than 100,000 scientific and technical reports prepared by or for federal agencies each year. A notable feature of the guidelines is the requirement for a standardized title page containing all essential information about a report in concise form. The guide also standardizes the format including page size, margins and quality of illustrations.

Taylor Scheduled For USCG Talk

Janie Taylor

In observance of International Women's Year, the U.S. Coast Guard is sponsoring a program on Nov. 19 featuring Ms. Janie Taylor as guest speaker. Ms. Taylor is the Federal Women's Program Coordinator for the Naval Material Command and was formerly Upward Mobility Coordinator for the Civil Service Commission, where she provided technical assistance to federal agencies by planning, developing and implementing upward mobility and worker-trainee programs. Her topic will be "Career Development for Women." The program is scheduled to begin at 2 pm in Room 2230 of the Nassif Building. A question and answer period will follow immediately after.

Connor, Herman Named Asst. Secretaries

Two new assistant secretaries have been sworn in by Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr.

Judith T. Connor is Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety and Consumer Affairs and Hamilton Herman—Assistant Secretary for Systems Development and Technology.

Ms. Connor succeeds Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., Lt. Gen. USAF (Ret.), who retired Sept. 15. She had been with UMTA since July 1973 as special assistant to the administrator, acting administrator and acting deputy administrator.

She began her government service early in 1971 as a policy advisor in the Office of Economic Opportunity and in the same year joined the Department of Commerce. She was successively a member of the secretary's policy development staff, director of special studies within the Bureau of Domestic Commerce and director of the Business Policy Analysis Division.

Before entering federal service, Ms. Connor was a marketing and financial consultant in New York City after working for Trans World Airlines and the Pacific Telephone Company.

Judith T. Connor

Born in Toronto, Canada, she graduated from Wellesley College and received a master's degree in business administration from Columbia University.

She is married to James E. Connor, secretary to the Cabinet.

For the past two years an industrial consultant, Herman, 59, was from 1968 to 1973 a senior vice president for development of the American Can Company. Earlier, he held the positions of president of North American Rockwell's industrial divisions and vice president and director of research and development at AMF, Inc.

Hamilton Herman

Herman has earned bachelor's and master's degrees in engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, as well as a bachelor of arts degree from Williams College. From 1953 to 1955, he was assistant to the president of MIT, having previously served there for five years as manager of the institute's Instrumentation Laboratory Flight Facility.

A native of Highland Park, Ill., he has been living in New Canaan, Conn. for the past 20 years. Herman is married to the former Martha Louise Schueler and they have a daughter, Carolyn.

Lethal Luggage

Ordinary Objects Pose Air Travel Hazards

by Fred H. Farrar

Six distinct explosions ripped through a briefcase being unloaded from a plane at the Tampa, Fla., airport last summer. A baggage handler was cut by flying fragments and one of his eardrums was injured.

An investigation revealed that the briefcase contained 10 practice hand grenades originally made for the army, five powerful fire crackers, and a smoke bomb—all packed in a coffee can.

They had been sitting on a shelf in a northern city for six years until the owner, who was moving to Florida, stuffed the can and its contents into the briefcase and checked it with the airline for the trip south.

The owner now faces federal prosecution for carrying hazardous materials aboard an aircraft and could be fined up to $10,000 in a civil action or, if willfulness can be proven, fined up to $25,000 and imprisoned for up to five years or both in a criminal action.

What does all of this have to do with the average air traveler, the person who wouldn't consider carrying explosives or other hazardous materials aboard an airplane?

A great deal, says the Federal Aviation Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation, because every day many of those average air travelers are carrying hazardous materials in their checked or carry-on luggage without knowing it and without knowing that they can be prosecuted for having it there.

Compressed Gas

Take butane lighter fuel, for example. It is a compressed gas and every compressed gas, whether flammable or nonflammable, is banned.

This is because any gas under pressure is a potential explosive. And the danger becomes even greater if the aircraft loses pressurization since a drop in pressure outside the container would have the practical effect of raising the relative pressure inside.

The only other exception to the ban on compressed gases are aerosol toilet products. And these are limited in that the total amount of aerosol material and other toilet items, such as shaving lotion, must not exceed 75 ounces.

Few people, of course, are ever going to be carrying anywhere near that amount. But FAA says there have been instances where more than that has been found in a suitcase and that these made it necessary to set the limit.

Also banned are any flammable liquids or solids other than a small quantity of lighter fluid. And the same goes for any corrosive chemicals. The reason, of course, is obvious. A fire aboard an aircraft is a deadly serious matter and flammable materials can feed a fire and turn a minor one into a major one.

Corrosive materials not only can damage vital aircraft components if they leak, but they also can start fires and generate large quantities of smoke.

(See HAZARD, p. 2)

Clips, Staples Damage Copiers

A small, half-cent paper clip or staple can seriously damage a $30,000 copying machine, and it happens often because DOT employees are forgetful before using the machine.

"We know what's happening," says Darryl Rekemeyer, chief of the copying facilities section in the Publishing and Graphics Division. "Frequently, selenium, high-cost Xerox machine drums are all scratched from paper clips and staples that have fallen down into the insides of a Xerox machine. Employees do not remove a paper clip or staple when they copy something and then it falls between the cracks of a service door on top of the copying machine."

And it is occurring with nearly all our machines every day, adds Rekemeyer.

In addition, glass windows where the paper to be copied is placed are ruined by scratches from clips and staples, he says. This can result in poor-quality copies for everyone.

DOT rents the copying machines. If 10 percent of the machines are out of operation for maintenance due to loose paper clips or staples, this means that many thousands of dollars a year are wasted in DOT because some employees have not removed the clips and staples before they take anything into the machine copying rooms.

Hot copy room technician Gary E. Roseboro, TAD–442, explains the inner workings of a XEROX copier to Cynthia A. Lanham, OST Office of Public Affairs. Thousands of dollars worth of damage is caused each year by carelessly discarded paper clips and staples.

Renee Litton and Kathy Ware, OST accounting operations, expand their nautical knowledge through an examination of the Coast Guard's "Half Boat" which "tied up" in the patio of the DOT headquarters building last month. Small boat safety instruction is given at no charge by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary in all of the states, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands and Guam. Classes range from one lesson to a comprehensive course of 13 lessons with a total enrollment of approximately one-half million a year.

Hazard—*from page one*

But one might ask, how many people would have any reason to put such materials in their luggage?

More than one might think, FAA says. Oil company employees, for example, have been discovered with samples of gasoline in their luggage. In most cases they were taking it to a lab for octane testing and it was more convenient to pop it into a suitcase than have it legally packed and shipped.

In another instance, salesmen for a chemical firm were found to be carrying samples in their luggage—samples which included flammable or corrosive or other banned materials. This was discovered when one of the samples leaked and filled the cabin with an offensive odor. The firm was warned, the FAA says, but the same thing happened a few days later when another sample in another salesman's suitcase leaked. The firm was fined $7,500.

In another violation of the regulations, a passenger checked 20 pounds of a liquid used to harden fiberglass as extra luggage. During the flight some of the liquid leaked and the package was on fire when baggage handlers opened the cargo compartment. The liquid, the FAA explains, generates intense heat when it is exposed to air and it is considered so hazardous that it cannot be shipped by air under any circumstances.

Radioactive materials also are banned from passengers' luggage. The offenders in this area, the FAA says, usually are physicians who borrow radium needles from colleagues in other cities and slip them into their suitcases for the trip home. The fines that can be imposed for such violations are not likely to be covered by malpractice insurance.

Other hazardous materials or items that have been discovered to be illegally packed in passengers' luggage include:

Mace guns, gunpowder used for home-loading of ammunition, model airplane glue (a flammable liquid), firecrackers and fireworks (particularly around July 4th), liquid drain cleaners (corrosives), and automotive signal flares.

And there are other items not on the list that can be hazardous when they are packed in a suitcase. Foremost among these, the FAA says, are book matches.

They are usually matches provided by motels which travelers throw in their suitcases "just in case" the next motel doesn't supply them.

The problem, the FAA continues, is that the match books don't always stay closed and the match heads of one book wind up rubbing against the striking strip of another. The result is a fire in the suitcase. The FAA says it happens several times a month.

And it warns those who carry liquor in their luggage not to pack a full bottle. This is because most passenger aircraft are pressured at a level equal to from 5,000 to 8,000 feet above sea level.

But the pressure inside the bottle remains at the higher level that exists on the ground and a full bottle can leak as nature seeks to equalize the different pressures.

Curtis Heads New Bureau

James T. Curtis, Jr., has been named first director of the Department of Transportation's Materials Transportation Bureau.

Before becoming director of the bureau, Curtis, 42, was employed by the U.S. Steel Corp. in Pittsburgh, where he managed traffic, transportation and distribution functions of non-ferrous products for the corporation. He had worked for U.S. Steel in Pittsburgh and Chicago for 17 years in a variety of jobs concerned with traffic and transportation.

A native of Knoxville, Tenn., he graduated from the University of Tennessee in 1957 with a B.S. degree in business administration. After graduation he began work with U.S. Steel as a management trainee and had spent his entire working career there.

The Materials Transportation Bureau, which reports directly to the Secretary, was established to coordinate DOT's increasing overall operational responsibilities concerning hazardous materials and pipeline safety. It consists of the Office of Hazardous Materials Operations and the Office of Pipeline Safety Operations.

James T. Curtis, Jr.

Retirement: It Takes Planning

(Retirement seems to be a subject of continuing interest. The following questions were accumulated over a three-week period and set aside to be answered in one column.)

May an employee assign his retirement deductions as security for a loan?

No.

Under what circumstances may an employee retire optionally?

An employee is eligible for optional retirement upon meeting one of the following minimum combinations of age and service; (a) Age 62 with 5 years of service; (b) Age 60 with 20 years of service; (c) Age 55 with 30 years of service.

An employee who is engaged primarily in the investigation, apprehension, or detection of persons suspected or convicted of offenses against the criminal laws of the United States, may voluntarily retire (without reduction for being under age 55) if age 50, or over, and with at least 20 years of service in such law enforcement duties.

If an employee resigns with less than 5 years of service, does he have to apply for a refund of retirement deductions?

No. In fact, it may be to his advantage to leave those deductions in the retirement fund, if a return to federal employment is contemplated. Check with your personnel office for further information.

I received a refund for deductions for a period of past service. How do I repay this amount to the fund?

Submit Standard Form 2803 to the Civil Service Commission through your employing agency. The Commission will compute the amount of the redeposit, plus any interest due, send you a bill, and with the bill, an explanation as to the manner of paying it.

If a federal employee does not make redeposit for previously refunded service, will the service involved be included in determining the length of service necessary for retirement eligibility?

Yes. The service is counted toward determining entitlement to annuity, but it cannot be used for the purpose of computing the annuity.

May an employee make redeposit after his separation from the service?

Yes, if he has present or future annuity rights. However, no payment can be made after the processing of his annuity claim has been completed.

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The Price Is Right

Free Car Clinic Spots Trouble Before It Happens

You can still have something done to your car without it costing any money. A diagnostic center will check out your auto's efficiency for free.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is working with the District of Columbia Department of Motor Vehicles on auto inspection using computers and other advanced diagnostic equipment, at two D.C. sites. The motorist's choice of location depends on the make and model of his car. Participation is not restricted to D.C. registered vehicles.

At 1001 Half Street, S.W., inspection is made of the following makes and models:

Ford (Custom, Galaxie, LTD), Volkswagen (Bug, Karmann Ghia), Chrysler (Newport, New Yorker, Dodge Polara, Dodge Monaco, Dodge Dart, Plymouth Fury, Plymouth Valiant), General Motors (Chevrolet Impala, Chevrolet Bel Air, Caprice, Biscayne, Buick Electra, and all Cadillacs and Oldsmobiles except the front-drive Cadillac Eldorado and Oldsmobile Toronado). The phone number is 488–4577.

Most other car makes are handled at 1827 West Virginia Avenue, N.E. Phone 635–3328 for further information.

Many Benefits

NHTSA has made a grant for the pilot program that benefits both the consumer and the government. The motorist finds out whether his or her auto is in good shape or needs urgent repair. NHTSA, which obtains a sampling of many makes and models, can tell whether a particular car has been modified following a recall notice.

On a longer-term basis, NHTSA also can tabulate data on almost all cars and find out if a problem exists with a certain make or model. The eventual result could be fewer maintenance problems for future car owners.

In the short run, drivers will benefit from safer cars, better gas mileage, reduced tire wear and the avoidance of costly, unnecessary repairs. Auto mechanics, helped by access to the diagnostic inspections, can repair cars more efficiently and, in many cases, they can use diagnostic printout data to check on their own inspection equipment.

The states also will come out ahead if they decide that the NHTSA pilot program is for them. If the diagnostic inspection now being done in Washington, D.C. can be expanded nationwide, the states can use the accumulated data to evaluate the overall condition of cars on their roadways. Through re-inspection, states can judge their auto repair industry. Moreover, safer cars will be traveling on the states' roads consuming less energy and producing less pollution.

And most important, the number of accidents caused by mechanical defects or improper repair will be reduced.

To sign up for an inspection, call the inspection station for your make and model car for an appointment. Bring your car to the site, fill out the required forms and drive to the entrance of the diagnostic inspection lane.

Checks are made quickly of the car's oil and fluids for the battery, brake, automatic transmission and windshield washer —and fluids are added, if necessary. Sensor wires are placed on the engine, and other wires are attached to the car. Tire pressure is checked and adjusted, and the horn and windshield wipers also are inspected.

Emissions Checked

The car is placed on big rollers set in the floor while the brakes are tested. The engine is started, placed in gear and the rear wheels begin to turn the rollers. Two dials labeled "HC" (for hydrocarbon) and "CO" (for carbon monoxide) begin to register as do two other dials, "Speed" and "Power."

While this is happening, a console on wheels is rolled up close to the driver's window. Red lines on the console meters check voltage, which the inspector records and punches into a remote computer terminal suspended at several points along the diagnostic inspection route. Then traces begin to appear on the console oscilloscope which the inspector reads carefully.

Next, the wiring harness and line are removed from the engine compartment and tail pipe, and the car is moved forward to rest on two floor plates. On a pedestal, a large dial labeled "Wheel Alignment" registers a number, usually about 20, indicating the "toe" by swinging to the left for "in" and to the right for "out."

Following the alignment check, the car is raised and one or more wheels and brake drums are removed. Tire wear is checked by visual inspection and with a gauge, as are brake linings and pads. At least one wheel bearing is pulled, checked, and replaced. The steering and exhaust systems also get a thorough going over.

As the car nears the end of its checkup, it is driven a few feet farther down the line and the inspector abruptly stops the car on four large plates on the floor. When the car comes to a stop, red fluid rises inside five glass tubes mounted in a six-foot tall tower to check the difference between front and rear braking effectiveness.

At each step along the way, the findings are punched by hand onto small computer terminals. The check of braking effectiveness completes the car's examination.

The motorist comes to the desk at the end of the diagnostic inspection line and the inspector, called a consultant, reads the computer's printout about the car's state of health. The driver is given a copy and he goes over each detail with the inspector.

Problems Averted

Problems requiring attention are detailed as well as advice on making small repairs to avoid big repairs later. The inspector advises the driver on conditions that should be corrected even if they are not severe enough to reject the car.

If repairs are required (car rejected) or desirable (advisory/pass), the inspector suggests that the forms supplied to the motorist be shown to his regular service garage. He also tells the driver the procedure for re-inspection if the car has been rejected.

As the car leaves the diagnostic inspection lane, the driver knows his auto has been objectively inspected and diagnosed. If it is necessary to make any repairs, the motorist can return to the inspection stations and verify that the repairs have been properly made.

Following engine analysis the car is run on rollers at various "speeds" where brakes and general running characteristics are examined. The vehicle is then raised for an underside inspection.

After passing the initial inspection station, where the car's oil and fluids for the battery, brakes, automatic transmission and windshield washer are checked, the car is connected with an electronic engine analyzer. Here the engine's electrical and fuel systems are checked, and samplings made of engine emissions. Dairl Bragg, program analyst for the Vehicle State Demonstration Program, explains the procedure to a visitor.

Close to the final station inspectors remove a wheel and bearing to determine its condition and to estimate the general status of the other wheel bearings. As a routine matter the wheel containing the speedometer linkage is pulled.

Big Man, Big Job

DOT Security Chief Polices 'Small Town'

Frank A. Stanton, 57, has directed DOT's Office of Investigations and Security since 1969. Previously, he was an FBI agent for eight years and from 1957 to 1967 directed highway program inspections and investigations in the Commerce Department's Bureau of Public Roads. Born in Belmont, Mass., he is a graduate of Boston College.

(Stanton was interviewed by DOT News Staff Writer Howard Coan.)

What are the responsibilities of the Office of Investigations and Security?

We protect about 10,500 DOT employees and maintain security for 1.9 million square feet of office space. The Office has 13 professionals and two clerical personnel.

The investigations and protection division handles investigations of alleged violations of laws or regulations by employees and also is responsible for the protection of the headquarters facilities. It directs the GSA guards and handles liaison with federal and local security and law enforcement agencies. We protect DOT against theft, malicious damage, civilian disturbance and unauthorized access.

Another division is responsible for issuing clearances for access to classified information and safeguard and control of this material. The Office also is involved in the formulation of policies and requirements for communication and computer security. Communications security includes safeguards against the unauthorized or surreptious use of listening devices.

We also issue official ID and civilian defense cards.

Do you handle security for all the administrations?

Some administrations maintain internal operating responsibility in some areas of investigation and security, principally FAA, the Coast Guard and FHWA. They perform these functions under the policies and overview of this Office. We provide direct operating support for the Office of the Secretary and the other administrations.

We handle security for the three DOT headquarters buildings—Nassif, FOB–10A and Trans Point.

What is the security situation at these three buildings?

All employees are concerned with thefts and other incidents which have occurred in various government facilities. However, it is encouraging to note that at the DOT facilities the rate of thefts has continued to decline over the past few years to the point where we have the lowest incident rate in government buildings in the area.

Could you give any figures on this improvement?

In 1972 it was not uncommon to receive reports of 30 to 40 thefts a month of such items as typewriters, small calculators, recording and photo equipment. At the present time our average reported theft rate is approximately eight to 10 instances a month. These are primarily small, hand calculators or other easily concealable items.

While typewriters continue to be a principal target for theft, we have not had a typewriter theft for a year.

What about reports of stolen personal property in the DOT buildings?

Our declining rate is also applicable to items of personal property such as money and coats. We have three to four reports a month compared to five times that number in 1972.

How have you cut down on the number of thefts in DOT?

Much of the good results can be attributed to the fact this Office promptly investigates all significant complaints and incidents of the theft of government and personal property.

Secondly, we have carried out a security education program with pamphlets, posters, orientation seminars and sessions such as briefings to cash handlers and credit union cashiers. We hold question-and-answer sessions upon request of a group of employees or in a new facility—as we did when the department moved into the Trans Point building.

In addition, we continually alert employees by reminding them of such things as securing all easily concealed items of government property each evening, having women keep their purses with them or locked up at all times and not leaving money or valuables in their offices overnight.

Have there ever been any attacks on employees in the DOT buildings?

None. There have been no attacks or muggings of DOT employees. Rumors should not be spread about imaginary cases. Any incidents which employees may have heard talk about did not occur. In the event an employee has information concerning such a matter, the Office should be contacted to determine if there is validity to it. Our phone number is 64677.

Do you handle airport security?

We are not involved in airport security or the investigation of transportation accidents. If directed by the Secretary, we can undertake an investigation anywhere in the department. There have been instances in the past where this has occurred.

What is the Office's relationship with the Metropolitan Police and other law enforcement agencies?

We maintain an excellent relationship with all investigative and security agencies including the FBI, Secret Service, Metropolitan Police and GSA security. It's an ongoing, day-to-day relationship.

What type of criminal investigations does your office conduct?

We look into alleged violations of the law including fraud, bribery, conspiracy and conflict of interest. We receive about 100 complaints or allegations a year. Of those a large majority are investigated and found to be without basis. There are others, however, which investigations find to be valid and several have resulted in prosecution.

Do you have any further comments on personal security at work?

Just as they do at home, employees should remember personal safeguards and maintain security. At one time we had a bad situation with thefts of government and personal property. However, through education security programs and communication with employees we have achieved a low incidence rate with thefts in DOT.

Deputy Secretary John W. Barnum of the 10th Floor Titans wields his mighty mace for a triple in the bottom of the 6th inning to bring in two runs and tie the score 15–15 in the game with the FHWA Bulldozers. Mighty Mike Finkelstein singled to bring Barnum home, ending the game 16–15. The Titans scored 11 runs in the last two innings.

Three Get Awards For Excellence

Three program managers at DOT's Transportation Safety Institute (TSI), Oklahoma City, were presented with the Award for Excellence at the annual conference of the National Transportation Apprenticeship and Training Conference in Miami.

Honored were Donald P. Largess, program manager for track guided vehicles, Arthur C. Bensmiller, manager of the hazardous materials safety training program, and James F. Fitzpatrick, manager of the motor carrier safety training program.

Largess was cited for going beyond traditional safety doctrine to develop methods for accident prevention which would eliminate causes by emphasizing problem solving, communication and negotiating.

Bensmiller's award was the result of his ability to foresee the safety requirements of government and industry involved in transportation and developing a training program to meet these needs.

Fitzpatrick's recognition was due to his efficient development of the entire motor carrier safety training program at TSI and the creation of a training program that stressed safety as the principal goal of the Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety.

TSI, the safety and security training facility of OST, is located at the FAA Aeronautical Center, Oklahoma City. Since its establishment in 1971, the Institute has developed more than 30 courses at the request of the administrations which make up the Department. About 5,000 persons from DOT, state governments, and industry receive training each year at TSI.

CSC: 'Supplemental' Insurance Not Sponsored by Federal Government

In recent months the Civil Service Commission (CSC) has been receiving increasingly numerous complaints concerning the sale of life insurance alleged to be "supplemental" to the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI).

Many Federal employees who have been offered such "supplemental" insurance have been led to believe that payment through payroll allotment is an indication of CSC or government endorsement of the policies.

CSC emphasizes that any insurance agent, broker or company which indicates that the private insurance program it is selling as a so-called "supplement" to FEGLI is in any way supported or connected with the FEGLI program or the Federal government is misrepresenting the facts.

Employees wishing to make a complaint about such misrepresentations should take up the matter with insurance authorities of the state in which the misrepresentations are made.

Beg Your Pardon...

It sounded too good to be true—and it was too good to be true. The Credit Union office at Trans Point is **not** open on Fridays, as we reported in DOT News 7.

It is open Monday through Thursday, from 9:30 to 11:30, and from 12:30 to 3:30.