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A 'Top Gun' Takes Command

By John G. Leyden

The new FAA Administrator, Alan McArtor, likes to describe himself as an "impatient" man.

When it comes to running a large, complex organization like FAA, he believes that patience is not necessarily a virtue and may even be something of a vice. Air safety issues are just too important to be put off until tomorrow or the day after.

At his formal swearing-in ceremony in Washington headquarters on July 27, he said, "I want candor [from FAA employees], but I don't want anyone to ask me for patience. I don't want to wait until 1995 for some of our major technological projects to mature. The American people are demanding performance. We need essential modernization now."

McArtor's "can do" management style partly reflects his own high-energy, goal-oriented personality, but there also is a touch of realism in his approach. He assumed the top FAA job with less than 18 months remaining in the Reagan Administration and concedes that his "window of opportunity" for effecting change may be limited.

But McArtor said his tenure as FAA Administrator—"it may be a short time or it may be a long time"—will not dictate his management priorities. "It's just going to prove how impatient I am to see things happen and happen quickly," he added.

McArtor's top priorities are expanding FAA safety programs, continued modernization of the National Airspace System, encouraging greater participation of the FAA workforce in problem solving and improving the dialogue between FAA and the public. However, noting widespread concerns about air safety and security, he believes the agency "also must take the short-term measures necessary to demonstrate immediate progress to a doubting public."

Accordingly, he is putting immediate emphasis on high-impact programs that can begin showing results within 12 months. As enumerated in his July 27



speech, these include a top-to-bottom review of airline pilot training programs, a requirement for the airlines to conduct periodic internal audits of their compliance with safety and security rules,

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expansion of en route airspace capacity through such programs as the East Coast Plan, development of better safety indices that will provide a "box score" of safety performance and compliance across the aviation community and development of an action plan to assist state and local governments in building new airports and expanding existing facilities.

At 45, McArtor is the second youngest man to become FAA Administrator

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The Autumn Of Decision: CSRS vs. FERS

A retirement annuity from federal service is a benefit that all employees know lies down the road. Most employees don't focus in on the details, however, until they're within five years of throwing over the traces.

This fall is an exception for younger and older employees alike.

Except for those first hired after 1983, who already are participants in the new retirement system, all federal employees must decide whether to remain under the old Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or move into the new Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS).

Everyone should think about both plans, for there are pluses to each for early and late careerists. No provision is made in the regulations for future open seasons, and once a transfer is made, it is irrevocable.

There are no broad rules on which to base a decision; the determining factors are variable, based on your age when eligible for retirement, age at retirement, number of years of total service, number of years participating in the new system and in Social Security itself, high-three salary level and judgment calls as to your level of participation in the thrift plan and the best-for-you survivor's benefit, etc.

CSRS provides excellent benefits to

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September 1987

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Top Gun *continued from page 1*


(Langhorne Bond was 40), but he already has built a solid record of success in the military and corporate worlds. Before joining FAA, he spent eight years with Federal Express and was senior vice president for telecommunications at the time of his departure. In that position, he was responsible for all of the company's domestic and international telecommunications networks.

At Federal Express, he was deeply involved in satellite communications and the commercial possibilities for expendable launch systems. That, in turn, led to his appointment by Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole as chairman of DOT's Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee in July 1986. The job not only provided him with some first-hand knowledge of the inner workings of the DOT but also proved to be a stepping stone to the FAA Administrator's post when Donald Engen resigned.

Despite his executive experience, its McArtor's credentials as a pilot that probably will carry the most weight with FAA employees, who tend to measure their Administrators by the hours in their flight logs and their love of flying. In this regard, he stands up well with any of

his nine predecessors. A 1964 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, he flew 200 combat missions in Vietnam and was able to walk away with the Silver Star and Distinguished Flying Cross, both awarded for heroism.

Equally impressive was his tour with the Air Force's elite "Thunderbirds" precision flying team during the 1972-74 period. *Sports Illustrated* recently described the Thunderbirds as "America the Beautiful's Team," and any FAAer looking for insight into the new Administrator's character ("What's he really like?") might check out the article in the Aug. 3, 1987, issue. According to *SI*, the Thunderbird pilots not only are the Air Force's "top guns" but also are the "right sort." A high percentage go on to earn the stars of a general officer.

"If Norman Rockwell had painted the Thunderbird pilots," the magazine noted, "he would have depicted a little boy in a small town in 1962, looking up wistfully at an F-100C Super Sabre streaking overhead" and dreaming of

some day being at the controls.

McArtor doesn't remember it quite that way. But there is a memory of his early youth in St. Louis when he and his family would stop off at Lambert Field after church on Sundays and watch the arriving and departing "Super Connies, DC-3s and DC-6s" from the roof of the terminal building.

"I was fascinated with the airplanes, not that I ever knew it would be a vocation for me," he said. "But thinking back, all of my hobbies seemed to center around either model building of airplanes or model building of rockets. I used to make rockets out of old baseball bats on a lathe."

Still, McArtor says it was the "engineering side" of aviation that really fascinated him. Although he got some experience flying in light aircraft with his uncle in high school, it wasn't until he entered the Air Force Academy that



he "truly had an urge to be a pilot" and was able to combine that ambition with his desire to be an aeronautical engineer.

At the Academy, he distinguished himself both in and out of the classroom. He was graduated first in his class in military order of merit and was 41st overall merit. He also was the cadet wing commander (equivalent to the student body president at a non-military college) and a standout on both the football and baseball teams (apparently, he didn't chew up all of his old bats on the lathe).

As a quarterback on the 1963 football team, he took the Academy to the Gator Bowl in Jacksonville, Fla., where—as he was reminded at his July 27 swearing-in ceremony—the Falcons ran into a buzz saw in the shape and form of a team representing Secretary Dole's home state, the University of North Carolina. Thankfully, no mention was made by the Secretary of the final score, but McArtor remembers throwing one of his longest passes ever in that game, a 70-yarder. Unfortunately, it was caught by a player wearing Carolina blue. "It made the Carolina 'highlight' film," he mused.

Following his return from Vietnam in 1969, he attended Arizona State University and earned a master's degree in engineering mechanics and was elected to Tau Beta Pi, which is sort of the Phi Beta Kappa for the slide rule set. He then taught the subject during a two-year tour at the Academy. He left the Air Force regretfully in 1974 to seek medical treatment for his terminally ill young daughter and joined a family-owned business in Memphis, Tenn. He moved to Federal Express, another Memphis-based company, in 1979.

When he was asked to take the FAA Administrator's job by Secretary Dole, he found the decision to be an easy one, despite the obvious financial loss and the prospect of filling a post that has become something of a lightning rod for media attention.

"As an aviation professional, I was flattered, of course," he said. "For someone who loves aviation and loves his country, it was an honor just to be considered. And, then to have the opportunity to truly head the FAA and to make a difference in this particularly critical time... I mean that's an offer you can't refuse."

McArtor brings to FAA a management philosophy that is a blend of all his experiences, both personal and professional. The "team" concept is one that is especially important to him, as one might



Between 1972 and 1974, Allan McArtor was a member of the crack Air Force precision flying team—the Thunderbirds—flying a McDonnell Douglas F-4 Phantom.

expect from a former quarterback and Thunderbirds pilot who frequently flew within a few feet of his wingman.

"I expect from the rest of the team what I'm willing to contribute to the team," he said. "... that is, total dedication, professionalism, personal commitment and personal accountability."

"Loyalty also is important and it's a two-way street," he added. "I intend to be loyal to FAA and I expect loyalty in return."

On the subject of human relations, McArtor responded to a question about whether the concept has been "oversold" at FAA by saying it "can't be oversold." But FAAers might prepare for a change in terminology, because the new Administrator likes to call human relations programs "people programs."

"I just came from a company where I saw operating successfully day after day a total commitment and emphasis on people programs," he noted. "There can be no higher priority in any organization, because, if the people are the resource on which you rely for your work product and expertise, those people can be most

responsible for the actual day-to-day operation of the agency and focus his primary energies on strategic planning. That doesn't mean he intends to abdicate his decisionmaking authority. Rather, it's a recognition that the urgent can frequently push out the important.

"To effect change, to be a change agent, you cannot get so absorbed in day-to-day activity that you can't look out over the horizon to prepare the agency for the future," he said. "In order to do that, you have to rely very much on your deputy and your senior staff to help make the executive decisions on daily matters."

One of McArtor's central management themes—and one he expounds on at every opportunity—is the need to improve communications at all levels within the agency and also between FAA and its external audiences. During his July 27 swearing-in speech, he gave a preview of things to come when he praised the "thousands" of FAAers who have taken initiatives on their own "to make the FAA a better place to work and to improve safety and services for the flying public."

Improving the public image of FAA also will enhance employee "self image," he believes. "Everybody likes to work for a winner and FAA is a winner," he said. "We're keeping reading in the newspapers that we're really a loser, but we know better. I feel one of my responsibilities is to try to create a communications link to sell the fact that this is a winning team."

But McArtor has been around long enough to know that just telling a good story is not good enough. Educational efforts have to be supported with action. That brings us full circle back to the subject of McArtor's self-proclaimed "impatience" with non-action.

"I have a chance to make a difference, and I intend to do as much as I can in the time allotted," he noted. "I want to leave a legacy of continued modernization that any future Administrator can pick up and adopt with pride."

What all of this means for FAA employees was summarized by the new Administrator in a remark that demonstrates both his sense of humor and his sense of purpose.

"Tell FAA employees to buckle up their chin straps and lace their sneakers on real tight," he said with a grin. ■

productive if they also feel that management is fair and responsive to them and that their work environment is a professional one."

However, he added that people programs have to have executive commitment. "You can't announce a people program and expect the employees to pick up on it," he continued. "That's not their job; that's management's job. If I don't believe in it and I can't get senior management to believe in it, the program will die on the vine."

When it comes to management style, McArtor is a believer in the "walk around" school of management and he intends to log plenty of time in the Jetstar visiting FAA facilities in the field. "I like to get out where the action is," he said. "I like to involve the workforce in the identification of problems and their solutions. You just have to ask the right questions and listen for the right answers, because all of the solutions rest with the group."

And Washington headquarters employees shouldn't be surprised if they look up one day and see McArtor dropping in for a cup of coffee. "I enjoy talking to our FAA family," he said. "They are a very competent team."

At the same time, he would like to give the Deputy Administrator increased

People

Aeronautical Center

- **Robert R. Massie**, unit supervisor, General Materiel Section, Supply Management Branch, FAA Depot.
- **Patrick O. McKome**, group supervisor, Frankfurt, Germany, Flight Inspection Field Office, Flight Programs Div., Aviation Standards National Field Office (ASNFO).
- **Harry D. Pelphey**, unit supervisor, Radar Training Section, Air Traffic Branch, FAA Academy.
- **Billy J. Sanders**, supervisor, Airworthiness Section, Examination Standards Branch, Regulatory Support Division, ASNFO.
- **William J. Seary**, supervisor, Manufacturing Standards Section, Engineering and Manufacturing Branch, Regulatory Support Division, ASNFO.
- **Harry Y. Tome**, supervisor, Line Maintenance Section, Tokyo, Japan, Flight Inspection Field Office, Flight Programs Division, ASNFO.

Alaskan Region

- **Arthur R. Cummings, Jr.**, assistant manager for program support, Anchorage ARTCC Airway Facilities Sector.
- **John J. Kerekes**, manager, Kodiak Tower, from the Tucson, Ariz., Tower.

Central Region

- **Glenn W. Bush**, manager, Des Moines, Iowa, AF Sector, from Memphis, Tenn.
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- **James H. Snow**, manager, Resource Management Branch, Air Traffic Division.

Eastern Region

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- **Rodger A. Dean, Jr.**, area supervisor, Harrisburg, Pa., Tower.
- **Gregory J. Dunne**, area supervisor, Washington ARTCC, from New York ARTCC.
- **Richard W. Fox**, manager, Plattsburgh, N.Y., Airway Facilities Sector Field Office, Empire AF Sector.
- **Ronald W. Gugnacki**, area supervisor, Griffiss AFB RAPCON, Rome, N.Y., promotion made permanent.
- **Lorraine A. Harrison**, manager, Washington Flight Standards District Office.
- **Slim Kalichman**, unit supervisor, Electrical Mechanical Section, Construction Engineering Branch, AF Div.
- **Richard E. Kelley**, area supervisor, Charleston, W. Va., Flight Service Station, promotion made permanent.
- **Edward Mankowski**, assistant manager, Rochester, N.Y., Tower.
- **William E. McNeil**, assistant manager, Newark, N.J., Tower.
- **James J. Osuch**, unit supervisor, Atlantic City, N.J., AF Sector Field Office, Tri-State AF Sector, promotion made permanent.
- **Ronald R. Shippey**, area supervisor, Charleston Tower, from FAA Academy.
- **Paul F. Spanko**, area supervisor, Charleston Tower, from Clarksburg, W. Va.
- **Leo B. Thorbecke**, assistant manager, New York Air Carrier District Office.

- **Richard E. Kelley**, area supervisor, Charleston, W. Va., Flight Service Station, promotion made permanent.
- **Edward Mankowski**, assistant manager, Rochester, N.Y., Tower.
- **William E. McNeil**, assistant manager, Newark, N.J., Tower.
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- **Ronald R. Shippey**, area supervisor, Charleston Tower, from FAA Academy.
- **Paul F. Spanko**, area supervisor, Charleston Tower, from Clarksburg, W. Va.
- **Leo B. Thorbecke**, assistant manager, New York Air Carrier District Office.

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- **Denis C. Burke**, manager, Chicago ARTCC.

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- **Robert W. Dimock**, area supervisor, Cleveland, Ohio, ARTCC, promotion made permanent.
- **John T. Dirico**, area supervisor, Minneapolis ARTCC.
- **Vernon L. Drake**, assistant manager, Aurora, Ill., Airway Facilities Sector.
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- **Robert G. Herak**, area supervisor, Cleveland ARTCC, promotion made permanent.
- **Jimmy L. Hines**, area supervisor, Indianapolis, Ind., ARTCC, promotion made permanent.
- **Wesley R. Johnson**, area supervisor, Princeton AFSS, from Minneapolis FSS.
- **Richard V. Ketterman**, assistant manager, quality assurance, Cleveland ARTCC, from the Toledo, Ohio, Tower.
- **John D. Lewkowicz**, area supervisor, Detroit, Mich., Metro Tower.
- **Alan R.J. Lindquist**, manager, Eden Prairie Tower, Minneapolis.

- **Robert W. McAlister**, assistant manager for technical support, Illinois AF Sector, Springfield, Ill.
- **Clifford C. Miller**, manager, Grand Rapids, Mich., General Aviation District Office.
- **Gratano, Richichi**, area supervisor, Grand Forks, N.D., AFSS, from the Millville, N.J., AFSS.

- **Robert E. Roycroft, Jr.**, area supervisor, Cleveland ARTCC, promotion made permanent.
- **Christine K. Soucy**, manager, Jackson, Mich., Tower, promotion made permanent.
- **William E. Vance**, environmental support engineering technician, in Columbus, Ohio, Ohio AF Sector.

New England Region

- **William A. Corbo**, manager, Norwood, Mass., Tower, from Air Traffic Division.
- **Joseph C. Heinz**, area supervisor, Boston ARTCC, from the New York ARTCC.
- **Robert L. Shelton**, unit supervisor, Denver FSDO, from Flight Standards Div.
- **Wayne A. Kenney**, area supervisor, Bangor, Maine, Automated Flight Service Station, from the Concord, N.H., FSS.
- **Charles W. Lanphere**, manager, New Bedford, Mass., Tower.
- **David L. Smartt**, area supervisor, Boise Tower, from the Seattle ARTCC.
- **Victor L. Smiley**, area supervisor, Denver ARTCC, promotion made permanent.
- **Byron G. Smith, Jr.**, area supervisor, Seattle-Tacoma Tower.
- **Wayne A. Smith**, manager, Denver ARTCC, from the Denver Tower.
- **Dennis J. Zay**, area supervisor, Denver ARTCC, promotion made permanent.

Northwest Mountain Region

- **Sherman W. Amador**, manager, Baker, Ore., Flight Service Station.
- **Daniel E. Austin**, assistant manager, Plans and Automation Branch, AT Div.
- **Gregory S. Briggs**, area supervisor, Boise, Idaho, FSS, from Seattle AFSS.
- **James D. Brown**, area supervisor, Ephrata, Wash., FSS, from Seattle AFSS.
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- **John A. Byrd**, area supervisor, Denver ARTCC, promotion made permanent.
- **Kevin J. Cain**, area supervisor, Denver ARTCC, promotion made permanent.
- **Larol Carter**, manager, Olympia, Wash., Tower.
- **William D. Dougherty**, nav aids/communications specialist, in Spokane, Wash., Seattle Airway Facilities Sector.
- **Richard Griego**, area supervisor, Salt Lake City, Utah, ARTCC, promotion made permanent.
- **James R. Harris**, area supervisor, Portland, Ore., Tower.
- **Roy E. Krehmel**, area supervisor, Seattle-Tacoma Tower.
- **James T. Lloyd**, area supervisor, Portland Tower.

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- **James T. Lloyd**, area supervisor, Portland Tower.

- **John M. Mollinet**, manager, Trondheim, Ore., Tower, promotion made permanent.
- **Terrance Monroe**, area supervisor, Denver ARTCC, promotion made permanent.
- **Beuny A. Noff**, assistant manager, McKinville, Ore., AFSS, from the AT Div.
- **Edward E. Oberhofer**, unit supervisor, Seattle Flight Standards District Office.
- **James W. Schooler**, assistant manager, Maintenance Branch, AF Div.
- **Michael N. Schutt**, area supervisor, Yakima, Wash., Tower, promotion made permanent.
- **Roger A. Sloan**, area supervisor, Seattle-Tacoma Tower.
- **David L. Smartt**, area supervisor, Boise Tower, from the Seattle ARTCC.
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- **Wayne A. Smith**, manager, Denver ARTCC, from the Denver Tower.
- **Dennis J. Zay**, area supervisor, Denver ARTCC, promotion made permanent.

Southern Region

- **Jeffrey W. Abbott**, manager, Panama City, Fla., Tower, from Macon, Ga.
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- **Drummond J. Brown**, assistant manager, Columbia, S.C., AF Sector.
- **Thomas P. Carmody**, area supervisor, Charlotte, N.C., Tower, promotion made permanent.
- **Darrell L. Dudley**, area supervisor, Macon Tower, from Jacksonville, Fla.
- **Hoyt L. Dunn**, assistant manager, Atlanta, Ga., Hub AF Sector.
- **Peter Gullu**, assistant manager, plans and procedures, Miami, Fla., International Airport Tower.
- **Thomas F. Hofbauer**, assistant manager, plans and programs, St. Petersburg, Fla., AFSS.

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- **John Humfleet, Jr.**, unit supervisor, Kentucky Flight Standards District Office, Louisville, Ky.
- **James M. Barnard**, assistant manager for program support, Houston, Texas, ARTCC Airway Facilities Sector.
- **John R. Beasley**, manager, Little Rock AF Sector Field Office.
- **Donald K. Blanchard**, manager, Lake Charles, La., Tower.
- **Robert A. Edwards**, manager, Monroe, La., AF Sector Field Office, Little Rock AF Sector.
- **Elizabeth J. Hayes**, unit supervisor, Accounting Operations Section, Accounting Branch, Resource Management Div.
- **Charles L. Hudlow**, area supervisor, Love Field Tower, Dallas, Texas.
- **Stanley W. Jorgensen**, area supervisor, Houston ARTCC.
- **Phillip L. Latta**, manager, Houston AF Sector, from AF Division.
- **Robert W. Lee**, manager, Conroe AFSS.
- **Harold W. McGilvray**, manager, Rogers, Texas, AF Sector Field Office, Austin, Texas, AF Sector.
- **Bron H. Melius**, manager, Baton Rouge, La., Tower, from AT Div.
- **Lawrence A. Morin**, area supervisor, McAlester, Okla., AFSS.
- **Jerry W. Norwood**, unit supervisor in Tulsa, Okla., Oklahoma City AF Sector.
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- **Franklin D. Purifoy**, manager, Houston AF Sector Field Office.
- **Steven C. Roberson**, area supervisor, Albuquerque, N.M., Tower.

Retirees

- **AERONAUTICAL CENTER**
Chirpalk, Stephen Cunningham, Clarence D. Fechner, Frederick K. Gilleland, Donald James, Kodick B. Kurtz, Egan H. McGlashan, Donald, Jr. Sinsgravis, Francis L. Taylor, Walter E. Underwood, Ralph W. Venner, Mildred M. Carter, George Crofford, Richard B. Cambertson, William E. Danislowich, Herman A. Egnor, Walter A. Timmerman, Paul J. Whitehill, Basky G. Kimes, Paul M. Kowac, Harold J. Landers, George Jr. Lense, William Dale Meagh, Agnes Myak, Stephen Orsoco, Ray Parham, Robert G. Jr. Powell, Conley N.
- **EASTERN REGION**
Guenther, Charles J. Albornoz, Angelo E. Barron, James John Bryan, William J. Burkiewicz, Raymond P. Buzzani, Frank J. Franck, Charles N. Gehring, Dale G. Harrington, Merle W. Himelick, Martin L. Egnor, Walter A. Timmerman, Paul J. Whitehill, Basky G. Kimes, Paul M. Kowac, Harold J. Landers, George Jr. Lense, William Dale Meagh, Agnes Myak, Stephen Orsoco, Ray Parham, Robert G. Jr. Powell, Conley N.
- **GREAT LAKES REGION**
Castellan, Cortin M. Dorsey, George J. Franck, Charles N. Gehring, Dale G. Harrington, Merle W. Himelick, Martin L. Egnor, Walter A. Timmerman, Paul J. Whitehill, Basky G. Kimes, Paul M. Kowac, Harold J. Landers, George Jr. Lense, William Dale Meagh, Agnes Myak, Stephen Orsoco, Ray Parham, Robert G. Jr. Powell, Conley N.
- **NEW ENGLAND REGION**
Bacon, Alfredo S. Briggs, Robert C. Burke, Frank N.

Southwest Region

- **James R. Watts**, area supervisor, Metropolitan Airport Tower, Sacramento, Calif., from McClellan AFB TRACON.
- **Scott J. Dunham**, area supervisor, Oakland ARTCC.
- **William N. Heineck**, manager, Mt. Laguna, Calif., Airway Facilities Sector, from Long Beach, Calif.
- **Thomas S. Kamman**, assistant manager, programs, Minar Naval Air Station TRACON, San Diego, Calif.
- **Kathryn E. Kuhlmann**, manager, Long Beach Tower, from El Toro MCAS.
- **Jimmie J. McCord**, manager, Air Traffic Operations Branch, Air Traffic Division, from Long Beach Tower.
- **Robyn McDonough**, supervisor, Airworthiness Unit, Fresno, Calif., Flight Standards District Office (correction).
- **David Miles**, assistant manager, Phoenix, Ariz., AF Sector.
- **Robert J. Palmer**, unit supervisor, Los Angeles FSDO, from San Francisco.
- **Pedro A. Quintana**, area supervisor, Monterey, Calif., Tower.
- **Gregory F. Smith**, area supervisor, San Francisco Tower.
- **Burleigh J. Stokes**, manager, McClellan AFB TRACON, Sacramento, Calif., from the Phueasai TRACON.
- **Gordon P. Sutterfield**, manager, Fullerton, Calif., Tower.
- **Gerald C. Walton**, manager, Burbank Tower, from the Los Angeles TRACON.

- **Clarence W. Speers**, assistant manager for program support, Austin AF Sector.
- **Rosendo A. Vasquez**, manager, Dallas FSS, from the Albuquerque FSS.
- **Major C. Watts**, area supervisor, Little Rock FSS, from Jonesboro, Ark., FSS.
- **John F. Zickl Jr.**, assistant manager for technical support, El Paso, Texas, AF Sector, from DFW AF Sector.
- **Phillip S. Barbagallo**, technical program manager, Secondary Surveillance Systems Branch, Engineering Division.
- **Perry D. Copp**, technical program manager, Advanced Automation Systems Branch, Engineering Division.
- **Lok Van Koo**, technical program manager, Advanced Automation Systems Branch, Engineering Division.
- **William L. Hyland, Jr.**, group supervisor, Radio Switching & Control Program, Communications & Facilities Division, Program Engineering & Maintenance Service.
- **Peter J. Verdini**, group supervisor, Payroll & Travel Systems Division, Office of Accounting.
- **Frank Arcidacomo**, assistant manager, military operations, Los Angeles ARTCC.
- **Thomas M. Cesarz**, area supervisor, Oakland, Calif., ARTCC.
- **Ellsworth L. Chan**, manager, Safety and Standards Branch, Airports Div.
- **Mark D. Cottrell**, area supervisor, Los Angeles ARTCC.

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Technical Center

- **Clarence W. Speers**, assistant manager for program support, Austin AF Sector.
- **Rosendo A. Vasquez**, manager, Dallas FSS, from the Albuquerque FSS.
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Washington Headquarters

- **Clarence W. Speers**, assistant manager for program support, Austin AF Sector.
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- **Major C. Watts**, area supervisor, Little Rock FSS, from Jonesboro, Ark., FSS.
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Western-Pacific Region

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- **Rosendo A. Vasquez**, manager, Dallas FSS, from the Albuquerque FSS.
- **Major C. Watts**, area supervisor, Little Rock FSS, from Jonesboro, Ark., FSS.
- **John F. Zickl Jr.**, assistant manager for technical support, El Paso, Texas, AF Sector, from DFW AF Sector.

The information in this feature is extracted from the Personnel Management Information System (PMIS) computer. Space permitting, all actions of a change of position and/or facility at the first supervisory level and branch managers in offices are published. Other changes cannot be accommodated because there are thousands each month.

- **Clarence W. Speers**, assistant manager for program support, Austin AF Sector.
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- **WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS**
Acker, James R. Clark, Dewey W. Engen, Donald D. Noble, Richard A. Rowland, Wesley B. Westerman
- **WESTERN-PACIFIC REGION**
Blough, Mary M. Clark, Marvin D. Clark, William E. Crane, James D. Crouser, Charles W. Eiling, Hazel M. Fenimore, Richard B. Fullmer, John F. Heaton, Harold L. Hubbard, Robert N. Juske, Francis L. Kirk, George C. Jr. Landers, Ernestine B. Larosa, William A. Parker, Victor H. Reese, Roger N. Soebche, Dwight M. Strother, James R. Toyomura, Harry H.

CSRS vs. FERS

(continued from page 1)

those who will retire after a full career, but FERS offers more portability and flexibility if you change jobs and don't expect to retire from federal service. *Lower-salaried and higher-salaried employees generally will do better under FERS. Lower-income employees generally will do better because Social Security benefits are weighted toward the lower-salaried. Mid-salary employees will not do as well since they will pay Social Security taxes on their full salary. Higher-income employees can do well despite these factors because they will have more disposable income to invest in the Thrift Savings Plan. However, it should be noted that upper-income employees are limited in the amount they can invest to two percent above the average invested by employees earning below \$50,000 a year. Better participation by the one group boosts allowable participation by the other.*

Retirement Criteria

CSRS provides a defined retirement benefit based primarily on your length of service and high-three-year average pay. FERS, on the other hand, is a three-tiered plan, which includes Social Security payments, a small defined annuity based on age and length of service and a Thrift Savings Plan, which provides tax-deferred benefits.

Employees under CSRS may take optional retirement with unreduced benefits at age 55 with 30 years of service, at age 60 with 20 years of service and at age 62 with five years of service.

Under FERS, the rules are the same, except that those eligible for 55/30 must have been born prior to 1948. The minimum age edges upward for those born later until it is 57 years of age for those born in 1970 or later. In all cases, however, the minimum service—combined CSRS and FERS—is 30 years for unreduced benefits. Note that sick leave is no longer creditable to retirement under FERS except to the extent it was accumulated under CSRS.

Early retirement eligibility for air traffic controllers remains 25 years at any age and 20 years at age 50.

If you are eligible to retire in your fifties, the CSRS cost-of-living allowance, which is fully indexed, is more advantageous than the FERS allowance,

which is not indexed until age 62 for regular retirees.

Social Security

Social Security benefits are not payable until age 62. Under FERS, in order to provide about the same amount of retirement income before age 62 as after, a supplemental benefit is provided up to age 62.

Employees covered by FERS will pay the full Social Security wage-base contributions required by law of all Social Security participants and a small contribution to the defined annuity. The total contributions will equal the seven percent contributed by CSRS employees, except that air traffic control specialists and any others eligible for early optional retirement will pay one-half percent more.

All or part of Social Security benefits are exempt from federal income tax, which would benefit employees under FERS. Since the elimination of the three-

FERS Annuity

For the defined annuity under FERS, employees will contribute 1.3 percent of salary this year, 0.94 percent in 1988 and 1989 and 0.8 percent thereafter. ATCSs will contribute 0.5 percent more. The annuity paid is computed at 1.1 percent of the "high-3" average pay multiplied by the length of service. ATCSs will use a 1.7 percent figure. However, ATCSs with less than 26 years of ATCS covered service should note that the guaranteed minimum annuity provisions do not apply under FERS.

If an employee leaves government service before retirement under FERS, he or she may withdraw contributions to the CSRS and FERS basic annuity, but since there is no provision for redeposit of FERS funds, all annuity rights based on FERS service are permanently voided.

Disability Benefit

There are two types of disability benefits available under FERS for those with 18 months of creditable service, one from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the other from the Social Security Administration.

If you are judged incapable of "performing useful and efficient service" in your present job or a similar one within your commuting area, you may receive a benefit equal to 60 percent of your high three-year average salary for the first year and 40 percent thereafter.

An employee under FERS may also qualify for Social Security disability benefits if so severely disabled as to be incapable of working in any job for at least 12 months. To be fully insured for this benefit, an older employee must have been covered by Social Security for five years out of the 10 years preceding the disability.

If you have less than 22 years of service, the FERS disability benefits are better. If you have 22 or more years of service but are not eligible to retire, CSRS disability benefits could be slightly better, unless under FERS you also qualify for Social Security disability.

Make Comparisons

You are about to make a highly personal and complex decision and one that you must live with for the balance of your career, so pursue all the avenues of investigation. This article is designed only to alert you to some of the issues involved.

Survivor's Benefit

If an employee dies before retirement after 18 months of service, FERS will provide the surviving spouse a lump sum or annuity payments equaling \$15,000 plus one-half of the employee's annual salary or one-half of the high three-year average pay if higher. If the employee had 10 years of service or more, an an-

nuity equal to one-half of the employee's accrued annuity will also be paid. This is in addition to any other benefits due.

A retiree's benefit from the FERS defined annuity is reduced 10 percent to provide a surviving spouse with 50 percent of the original FERS benefit.

When your spouse has dependent children or is eligible for Social Security, pre-retirement survivor benefits are generally better under FERS. Otherwise and if you had less than 10 years of service, CSRS benefits are usually better. Generally, post-retirement spousal benefits are better under FERS.

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The first step, if you haven't already done so, is to obtain a copy of your Social Security earnings statement from your local Social Security office on Form

SSA-7004, if you ever worked in the private sector. Hurry, for it may take 30 days or more to get the statement.

Then turn to "The FERS Transfer Handbook," which is a guide to making

You are about to make a highly personal and complex decision, one that you must live with for the rest of your career.

your decision. It includes worksheets that you can use to estimate your benefits under CSRS and FERS.

If you have questions that are not answered by the handbook, contact a FERS "decision facilitator" assigned to your organization. You should not expect them to be retirement counselors; they can give you information, but they cannot make a decision for you or tell you what they think you should do.

Your Human Resource Management Division is also distributing a retirement benefits analysis disc for use on IBM-compatible personal computers.

Some federal employees are consulting private firms that offer computer comparisons of the benefits under the two plans at a price in the neighborhood of \$35.

Finally, while only you can make your transfer decision, you will have to get your former spouse's consent to elect FERS, if you have one to whom a court order, on file at OPM, awards a portion of your annuity or survivor benefits.

You've got a lot to think about . . . now. ■

Tops in Security Inspections



As one of his last acts, former Administrator Donald Engen (second from right) presented the 1986 National Civil Aviation Security Field Office Award to the Seattle CASFO. Present for the ceremony were (from the left) Raymond Salazar, director of the Office of Civil Aviation Security; George Paul, manager, Northwest Mountain Civil Aviation Security Division; Robert Berkley, manager, Seattle CASFO; and Wayne Barlow, regional director.

Feeling Fit

Is the Green-Eyed Monster Safe? By Rosemary Hall

Video display terminals (VDTs) currently are used by some 10 to 14 million U.S. workers who spend all or part of the day in front of an estimated 15 million green-, amber- or black-lettered screens, and a growing number of them are federal employees. About half of these workers are women of child-bearing age.

The American Medical Association's Council on Scientific Affairs in December 1986 issued a report on its study of the harmful effects of VDTs, centering on three areas: radiation, ergonomic effects and stress.

In the area of radiation, the report discusses cataracts, reproductive disorders, facial dermatitis and epileptic reactions. In all but the last, no definite relationship between the condition and VDT exposure could be established. The report notes that some epileptic patients, who adversely respond to flicker on the screen, have been advised to refrain from using VDTs.

The report also stated, "Although it is possible that . . . radiation may be emitted from any of the units, extensive

measurements in the United States and abroad determined the radiation levels to be well below acceptable standards of exposure, even when the devices were tested under a "worst-case" condition. Some levels of radiation are even less than one might encounter around ordinary household appliances."

Under ergonomic effects, the study addressed musculoskeletal and visual aspects. Most visual complaints consist of eyestrain, irritation, blurred vision and headaches after prolonged use of VDTs. The Council found that most complaints were the result of a lack of proper visual correction—that is, no eyeglasses or inadequate eyeglasses—or inadequate lighting.

The administrative officer of the Great Lakes Region's Medical Division, Ms. Hall prepared this article for the regional Intercom from a report in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

In all cases, the American Academy of Ophthalmology stated that these discomforts will not damage the eyes permanently. There is, however, a visual phenomenon—the so-called "Mc-Cullough effect"—that can occur when long periods are spent before a screen on which green characters are displayed on a dark background. The effect is harmless, but long lasting, as long as several weeks. It causes white characters to take on a pink tinge and white paper on a white background to appear to have a pink border.

Next to visual complaints, which are the most frequent, are musculoskeletal complaints—usually neck, back and shoulder pain. Most of this is caused by lack of movement, poor posture or poorly designed equipment. The report suggested that a slight slouch, rather than bolt-upright posture, is best. It also recommends frequent changes of posture or, better yet, moving around. Also suggested were breaks that provide minor diversions, social interaction and exercise, all or any of which tend to relieve

muscle strain and other stressful conditions on the job.

Stress has been the subject of numerous studies, which mainly conclude that stress is caused by stressors in the workplace, but not by the VDTs themselves. The most stressful situation relating to the use of VDTs occurs when operators are closely monitored. There is also a condition called cyberphobia, which is a fear of new technology and automation in particular, which is recognized.

When the worker is made to feel "left out," when tasks become impersonal, repetitive and boring and when performance is judged by machine measurement, stress is a likely result. Here, again, breaks, switching tasks and better human relations may make the difference.

The studies go on, but so far, VDTs are not the culprits.

A Helping Hand Waits for You

You've heard it often enough: people are FAA's most important resource. It is only through their dedication and professionalism that the nation's airspace system and the agency itself operate efficiently. It's appropriate, then, that FAA expressed its dedication to the well being of that resource by establishing an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

EAP is a government-funded service to all employees and their immediate families who find the need for information and counseling on family issues, health concerns and substance abuse.

"All of us have problems at one time or another, but most of them are resolved without intervention," says Frank F. Pirhalla, national manager of EAP. "But when a problem lingers, grows or becomes more difficult to handle, the problem may spill over into the work area and affect job performance. That's where EAP comes in."

The issues range from a need to provide information about nursing-home or in-home care for elderly parents or assistance like Meals on Wheels to problems with children in school, stress management, marriage counseling and substance abuse. In fiscal 1986, 83 percent of EAP's cases concerned family issues, health-related topics and financial planning. Pirhalla notes that more fathers are winning custody of children following divorces. As a result, more often than before, FAAers involved in shift work have a need for child care services outside of the normal workday.

EAP provides professionally trained counselors to meet with employees in confidence to discuss their problems and to develop a plan for obtaining additional services if needed. Such confidentiality is legally binding, whether the counselors are contractors or, in the case of the Northwest Mountain Region, FAAers with master's degrees in social work who work full time as counselors.

The program provides local or toll-free telephone numbers to reach a counselor. If not in the employee's area, the counselor may have resources there or subcontract to provide the service. As a result, in almost every case, the employee can have face-to-face consultations.



National manager of the Employee Assistance Program, Frank Pirhalla (left), reviews promotional materials being supplied to EAP contractors for distribution to FAA work sites and employees with three of the regional EAP managers: (from the left) Jan Lebovitz, Great Lakes Region; Vance White, Southern Region; and Tricia Schlechte, Aeronautical Center.

Taking the First Step

If you need assistance, the first place to turn for guidance is your center or regional Employee Assistance Program manager:

Aeronautical Center	Tricia Schlechte	FTS	749-2638
Alaskan Region	Roslyne Reed	**	907-271-5371
Central Region	Mary Alonzo	**	758-3889
Eastern Region	Jim Duffy	**	667-1902
Great Lakes Region	Jan Lebovitz	**	384-7416
New England Region	Alan Goldsher	**	836-7325
Northwest Mountain Region	Dennis McCain	**	446-2309
Southern Region	Vance White	**	246-7666
Southwest Region	Karen Rymer	**	734-5848
Technical Center	Joyce Ingram	**	482-6623
Washington Headquarters	Diane Ables	**	267-3880
Western-Pacific Region	Natalie Greenberg	**	984-1831

Usually, three or four diagnostic counseling sessions are held to assist the employee or dependents to define the problem, determine the best course of action and make the appropriate referral, if necessary. Sometimes, all that is needed is help in determining what resources are available in the community.

Depending on the counselor's expertise, he or she may be able to resolve the problem without further referral, often in such areas as financial difficulties, minor problems with the employee's super-

visor, help with aged family members or poor communications within the family.

"With some basic intervention techniques," says Pirhalla, "such immediate help is possible, although in medical, emotional, legal or substance-abuse problems, it's likely there will have to be a referral to another professional for extended treatment."

For more information, seek out your regional EAP manager or contact Pirhalla in the Employee Relations Division of the Office of Labor and Employee Relations, FTS 267-3900.

Says Pirhalla, "We want employees to know they can come to EAP for advice and help in making that phone call for professional help. We'll hold their hand; we'll offer them support." ■

The EAP counseling service is free to employees; however, the cost associated with a referral to a treatment provider has to be borne by the employee and his health insurance plan, if applicable.

The service is confidential—no one in the agency receives the names of employees or their dependents who contact a counselor, save in one circumstance. If a safety-related employee makes contact concerning substance abuse, he or she must agree to waive confidentiality by signing a written release to continue the counseling.

If such an employee does not sign the release, the counseling session ends right then, and the counselor cannot furnish the agency with the employee's name.

EAP is attempting to make employees aware of the service through orientation workshops, home mailing of brochures, posters at worksites that are changed monthly, wallet cards that list the EAP counselors and presentations at brown-bag lunches that deal with such subjects as smoking cessation and stress management.

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On September 17, 1987, the United States commemorates the two-hundredth anniversary of the signing of the Constitution. The document was designed to "form a more perfect Union" among a diverse and far-flung people.

When members of the constitutional convention met in Philadelphia, transportation issues were major sources of concern. Better links between people—primarily roads at the time—were essential for Americans to develop the common interests necessary to unify the young nation.

After the Revolution, Americans still thought of themselves in terms of their states. Solving transportation issues would help to develop national loyalties to strengthen the Constitution's parchment promises. Without progress in transportation, Americans would never have accomplished the revolution in political theory embodied in the Constitution.

Traditionally, democracy was considered suitable only for small territories and homogeneous people. When political theorists thought of democracies, they envisioned Greek city-states where people could meet, converse and reach decisions with neighbors. For Americans of 1787, even the 13 original states covered more territory than had been governed democratically in the past.

Moreover, experience with small democracies had not been reassuring. Defenders of the Constitution contended that older small democracies "have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths." Americans in 1787 were confident that they could sustain democracy and liberty in the individual states, but many feared that a consolidated government would open the doors to tyranny.

A large republic offered several advantages. Americans had proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence that they are one people. Many observers had noted the absence of natural boundaries separating the several states. Most importantly, many people acknowledged the ties of kinship and commerce linking

them to adjacent states. Without a national government, these independent states might become hostile neighbors and vulnerable to European nations. Concerns about protection from enemies did not provide reasons for strengthening the national government to deal with domestic matters. For the full development of national powers, proponents of the Constitution needed to convince Americans that the Union offered a unique way to secure their liberties while preserving the democratic character of their government.

The rationale for strong government stood the traditional logic favoring small democracies on its head. In *The Federalist*, #10, James Madison described how small democracies, precisely because they enabled swift communication between passionately interested parties, could not mediate destructive passions.

On the other hand, a large republic, open to a wide variety of interests, afforded opportunities to cool heated passions so that "the deliberate sense of the community," rather than the heat and violence of faction, might actually govern. "Faction," as the term was used in *The Federalist*, was not merely a synonym for "interest group." "Factions" were groups motivated by passions or interests adverse to the rights of other citizens or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community. The array of checks and balances would increase chances that, when governing majorities formed, they would support beneficial interests, rather than part of the nation at the expense of others.

Throughout the ratification debates, anti-Federalists charged that the national government would inevitably enlarge its powers. They feared that ambitious men would make the national government a means of establishing tyranny. Those fears seemed confirmed when Alexander Hamilton became Secretary of the Treasury. He proposed a program to fund the Revolutionary War debt, establish a national bank, and support the development of industries.

Thomas Jefferson, who believed agrarian virtue was necessary to sustain

democracy, favored leaving the nation's factories in Europe. Although Hamilton's national program won during Washington's administration, Jefferson won the election of 1800 and reversed policies that the Federalists had favored for the national government.

Despite Jefferson's favoring a small democracy and strict limitations on national powers, he purchased the Louisiana Territory, surely the strongest early impulse toward national expansion.

Throughout the nineteenth century, national debates addressed the development of waterways, railroads and other forms of transportation. The arguments over what were called "internal improvements" revisited the nationalist themes of the Federalists and the restricted themes of anti-Federalists and Jeffersonians. President Andrew Jackson took a particularly narrow view of national powers, vetoing many "internal improvement" programs. He asserted that an amendment to the Constitution would be needed before Congress could appropriate money for such purposes.

Despite such fears, Congress eventually found methods to support national transportation systems. No mode of transportation developed on a national scale without extensive support from the government.

Some portions of the government were often eager to provide such support. Better transportation facilitated commerce—on both a national and an international scale. Moreover, better transportation strengthened national military resources in the event they might be needed.

Early in airplane development, the Wright brothers sought the army's support and pursued contracts to carry mail. During World War I, the national gov-

A special assistant in the Office of Public Affairs, Mr. Lynch served with several other government agencies before coming to FAA and still frequent free-lance writing. He has published articles and book reviews on many public policy issues.



Transportation's Role in the Constitution

By Edward J. Lynch

ernment bought thousands of aircraft for use in Europe and trained the pilots to fly them. After the War, surplus airplanes were sold at bargain prices—providing the equipment for mail companies and the barnstorming era.

Despite steady support for aircraft development, the Air Commerce Act of 1926 prohibited using national funds for construction and development of airports. That restriction remained in place through the 1930s, even while Congress was approving public works programs that enabled the construction of runways.

In 1946, Congress adopted the Airport Development and Assistance Program to foster airport development across the United States. With the creation of the Airport and Airways Trust Fund in 1970, the national government linked aviation-derived taxes to system development. By the 1980s, with the authorization of the National Airspace System Plan, Congress had firmly established foundations for the national government's support of air commerce and its use as a resource for national defense.

Although the nurturing of the national airport and airways system can be supported on Hamiltonian grounds, the American people have sustained respect for the Jeffersonian dimension in national politics. Where a Hamiltonian perspective would support strengthening national authority over local airports as part of a national system, Jeffersonian echoes can be heard from those favoring discretion for local officials in deciding upon land development surrounding even major hub airports.

Neither Hamilton nor Jefferson would be surprised to learn that Americans are still debating whether to have a federal or a national system. *The Federalist*, #39, acknowledged the compromises incorporated into the Constitution and described the result as "partly federal, partly national." The Constitution's supporters believed the national government would gain strength as it won the trust of the people.

The challenge to the American people remains one of providing the national government with the full strength essential to serve national purposes. As long as the nation's voters remain free to change their minds about the scope of national powers, these constitutional questions will endure as vital elements of American politics. ■



He Was the Fastest Man Alive

By John G. Leyden



Capt. Charles Yeager became Brig. Gen. Yeager.

On the ground, *Glamorous Glennis* is anything but. Short, fat and painted bright orange, she was the ugly duckling of Muroc Dry Lake.

But in the air—ah, that's a different story. She was a thing of beauty in the desert sky, a swift and graceful flyer, a harbinger of things to come in aviation. Next month marks the fortieth anniversary of her epic flight across one of aviation's last frontiers.

Glamorous Glennis is an airplane—and yet not so much an airplane really as she is a flying research laboratory, designed specifically to probe the mysteries of transonic flight and, if possible, to carry man across the so-called sound barrier and into the world beyond.

These are ambitious and daring goals in the year 1947, when men still talk about the sound barrier as if it is some sort of physical obstruction in the sky—and not without good reason. Severe buffeting and other strange phenomena are reported by pilots who approach the speed of sound in power dives. And more than one pilot loses his life as a result.

To meet this challenge, the Bell Air-

craft Corporation of Buffalo, N.Y., designs an airplane shaped like a .50 caliber bullet—just 31 feet in length with a wing span of only 28 feet. Inside its stubby fuselage are four rocket engines, each of which delivers 1,500 pounds of thrust.

Officially, the airplane is designated as the XS-1 (Experimental Supersonic No. 1), but the "S" is dropped in popular use, and the aircraft is called simply the X-1. The name *Glamorous Glennis* is added later by Capt. Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager, the man who flies the X-1 on its record-breaking flights. The original *Glamorous Glennis* is Mrs. Yeager.

A double ace in World War II, Yeager is selected as project pilot for the X-1 in June 1947. Although only 24 years old at the time, he is regarded as one of the most skilled pilots in the Air Force.

Yeager first flies the X-1 in early August 1947 from Muroc (Now Edwards) Air Force Base, Calif. The test plane is carried aloft slung beneath the bomb bay of a specially modified B-29 and cut loose at about 25,000 feet. Yeager flies the ship without power on this and two subsequent flights to familiarize himself with its handling characteristics and then glides in for a landing.

The B-29 also is used for the powered flights, since a ground take-off in the X-1 would have used most of the available propellant—288 gallons of liquid oxygen and 300 gallons of alcohol. This is only enough propellant for a 2½-minute flight at full power—that is, with all four engines firing simultaneously.

On none of these flights with the B-29 does the pilot ride in the X-1 on takeoff, since the test plane might have to be jettisoned in the event of an emergency. Only when the B-29 is safely in the air does Yeager enter the X-1, climbing down a steel ladder through the slipstream into the open cockpit door.

The first powered flight is made on Aug. 29, 1947, and, according to Yeager, it goes like this:

"They drop you out and you turn on one chamber [engine], and you get a

NASM photos, Smithsonian Institution

kick in the rear; since your thrust is instantaneous, there is no build-up. I tried out all four chambers by turning one chamber on and letting it run a few seconds and turning it off. Then I turned on three chambers, climbed up to 40,000 feet, accelerated up to 0.87 Mach number—87 percent of the speed of sound; shut everything off, jettisoned the remainder of the liquid oxygen and fuel, glided down and landed and crossed myself a couple of times."

From this starting point, Yeager begins a gradual assault on Mach 1—the speed of sound. Each flight is programmed slightly faster than the last one. Mach 0.9 is reached and surpassed with no major problems, although the X-1 does encounter light to heavy buffeting and experiences some control problems.

On the morning of Oct. 14, 1947, with more than half a dozen powered flights behind him, Yeager is ready for a try at Mach 1. The X-1 is carried aloft by the B-29 and dropped out at about



The XS-1 gets airborne cradled under the belly of a B-29.

Ad Hoc Air Traffic Controller

By Mac Mackechnie

It always helps, we say to the youth of America, to have some experience when applying for a job.

When I hired on with the FAA in 1974, previous air traffic control experience would have been helpful, but I had some qualms about listing mine on the SF-171.

You see, prior to FAA, my experience in aviation had consisted of riding around in helicopters, mostly UH-1s, as a rifle company medic with the 9th Infantry Division in Vietnam and of playing ground controller.

I love helicopters, anything to do with them—looking, getting in, flying. I liked guiding them in to a good landing in a landing zone—although less enthusiastically—even in a "hot" landing zone.

But I got enthusiastic one too many times. We were waiting for a medevac chopper to take out the wounded when a large ship appeared overhead. I didn't wait to be asked. The pilot was looking for a site to land, and I jumped to my feet, running to the dike separating the smaller canal from the rice paddy side. The dike

was about four feet wider than a slick nose on, which would give its passengers plenty of room to get out.

There I stood, my arms raised high, my fists clenched. As the ship settled towards me, I lowered my arms until they were straight out in front. Checking his rotor clearance, the pilot didn't like the clearance to his left, although I thought he had plenty of room. He backed off, coming to a hover about 10 feet back and to his right. When he brought it down, only the front half of the ship was on the dike. For that reason, the pilot kept the engines going full blast.

A face appeared at the door wearing a baseball cap adorned with a star. It was the assistant division commander. The general, all 6'3" of him, stepped down onto the chopper's skid and off, disappearing into six feet of water—the canal I referred to. Only his baseball cap floated to the top.

Everyone was in shock. The door gunner closest to the general, with a look of horror on his face, began to unbuckle himself when the general bobbed to the surface. The gunner began to laugh hard until a look from the general froze him.

I ran over to help him out. His once-starched fatigues were soaking, of course, and his spit-shined boots were now covered with mud. Glaring again at the gunner, he set out to find the battalion commanding officer. To add insult to the injury, among others aboard was a network reporter and a cameraman.

When the helicopter returned for the pickup, doubling as a medevac, the general told the commanding officer he wanted some brush to be cleared away so the chopper could land where I had wanted it to in the first place.

With the wounded aboard, the cabin was packed, so much so that the cameraman couldn't get aboard. It seemed to

me there was no room for him, so I motioned to the pilot to take off. The cameraman stepped onto the skid and hung on to the reporter's arm as the ship began to rise. I grabbed him around the waist, trying to convince him to wait for another chopper but to no avail, and I dropped off.

After that incident, if there was any chance that a general might be anywhere in the vicinity, I was told to let the pilot do whatever he wanted. My commanding officer had had enough of my meddling with his career. And my budding career as an air traffic controller was over for the next six years. ■

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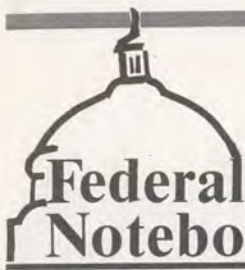
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20,000 feet. Yeager cuts in the four rocket engines one by one, and the X-1 leaps away and begins climbing at a 45-degree angle. The sky deepens to purple and stars come out, but the sun still glows. Yeager levels off and watches the needle of the Mach meter move past .90 to .92 to .94 to .96. Then at .98, the needle fluctuates, passes Mach 1 and goes off the scale.

It takes seven minutes to glide down with Yeager rolling and doing wingovers "for the fun of it" at a glide speed of 300 to 400 miles per hour.

"... I saw a heavily timbered mountain and thought it looked good for hunting; thought maybe it had a hidden lake where the fishing would be good. That's where I want to end up. Hunting and fishing. Lake Tahoe area. I'll give myself four or five more years of this kind of flying, then I'll drive an old truck like the C-47. When the 20/13 vision goes, I'll get a desk job."

This is what a man thinks about when he has just destroyed the myth of the sound barrier and opened the door to a whole new era in air transportation. ■



Federal Notebook

NEW HEALTH COVERAGES, PREMIUMS

The Office of Personnel Management has proposed:

* Health insurance coverage for children of divorced federal employees if they lose non-federal coverage under the former spouse's plan,

* Enrollment or change to a family option for a federal employee when the non-federal spouse loses his or her health insurance coverage and

* Permitting retirees to provide federal health insurance coverage for family members who lose non-federal coverage.

The downside is that a health insurance premium increase of 20 to 40 percent is expected for January, due to increasing costs and higher usage of benefits in both the federal and private sector.

At the same time, Congress is considering catastrophic health care coverage under Medicare B, which could be catastrophic for federal retirees. To finance the coverage under HR 2470, an additional premium would be assessed based on the retiree's taxable income. Since Social Security benefits are

generally non-taxable and a federal annuity is, the average civil service retiree would pay an additional \$560 a year on an average annuity of about \$14,000, as against perhaps \$140 a year in the private sector. To make matters worse, the coverage would be duplicative, because most federal retirees receive similar benefits under their Federal Employee Health Benefits program, if they carry the insurance into retirement.

NEW HEALTH BENEFIT ASKED

On the idea that health insurance covers the "natural" way of building a family and ought to cover other ways, Rep. Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo.) has introduced a bill to require federal plans to cover the medical, legal, counseling and other fees and travel expenses associated with adoption and infertility treatments and permit employees to use sick leave for both purposes. She believes it's a matter of fairness, and its costs would be offset by reductions in other illnesses in the same families.

PAY RAISES ON A SCHEDULE

The House Post Office and Civil Service Committee has approved a three percent pay raise for federal employees in January 1988, a 4.8 percent hike in January 1989 and a 5.2 percent raise in January 1990. The scheduled October dates seem to be history. And all this is in spite of an expected report by the President's "pay agents" that will state that federal pay lags

20 percent behind private industry.

Retirees' cost-of-living adjustment for January 1988 is expected to be at least 4.5 percent.

TRAVEL RATES RISE

If you haven't driven on government business lately, you may not be aware that the reimbursement rate for operating a privately owned vehicle is now 21 cents a mile, up half a cent.

The General Services Administration has also increased per diem rates. The maximum will rise from \$126 to 136 in New York City, \$112 to \$117 in Washington, D.C., \$105 to \$113 in Chicago, \$95 to \$102 in Atlanta, \$90 to \$96 in Denver, \$82 to \$96 in Detroit and \$86 to \$91 in Seattle. GSA also has added 150 cities to its list of 375 that carry set rates for meals and lodging. Top rates for other cities not on the list were increased by \$10.

THRIFT SAVINGS BOOMING

Investments in the Thrift Savings Plan continue to increase month after month, having earned 8-3/4 percent interest during August.

HATCH REFORM GAINS SUPPORT

Republican members of the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee are backing a bipartisan approach to Hatch Act reform. Rep. Gene Taylor (R-Mo) may seek to introduce a bill or amend the Democrats' HR 20, on which Democratic committee members are holding up action, pending a decision on the Republican effort.

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