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Focus Groups: A Means to Action By Leonard Samuels

If any of the employees attending the kickoff Employee Focus Group program on October 28-30 had any doubts that this was not just another futile exercise, reassurance was right around the corner.

The meeting room seats had scarcely cooled from the final session on Friday when Administrator McArtor adopted one of the group's recommendations via GENOT on Sunday, November 1.

The Focus Group is a new approach to problem solving in which employees have an opportunity to meet and talk with top management, to receive an overview of agency problems and to make recommendations right to the Administrator or his Associates.

Indeed, Administrator McArtor attended the first Focus Group meeting in Atlanta, whose participants included 27 air traffic controllers from all regions and three from their new union, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA).

The Organizational Development Division of the Office of Organizational Effectiveness (AOE) developed an idea of Administrator McArtor's into the

Focus Group concept and planned the first Atlanta meeting in just two weeks. Internal consultants from AOE functioned as facilitators for the first two Focus Groups. Subsequent meetings will use regional facilitators.



Southern Region Director Garland Castleberry (standing, center), host of the Focus Group, introduced the program and Administrator McArtor (standing, right).

The theme for this meeting was "The Right Stuff—How Do We Improve Controller/Team Performance To Reduce Operational Errors and Increase Professionalism?" Following presentations by senior officials on the National

be addressed by senior management present at the meeting. There was no prestructuring of the discussions, and anything could be raised.

The Administrator is committed to this "unfiltered" interaction between field employees and senior management, saying "I am convinced that they have the solutions to our system problems, and all we need is someone who is smart enough to ask the right questions and then write down the answers." Following this initial effort, he noted the group's enthusiasm, which led to many recommendations, some of which were implemented on the spot.

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Airspace System Plan and other programs and a question-and-answer period, the participants were broken into three groups of 10 to brainstorm solutions to the problems discussed earlier or to surface new issues and concerns to

The editor of FAA World, Mr. Samuels has been a writer and editor for trade and consumer magazines and the U.S. Information Agency.

OPS—An Idea Whose Time Has Come

If you haven't heard of FAA Order 7220.2 yet, you're probably not in Air Traffic.

In March, in the culmination of a four-year effort to change the basic way in which Air Traffic does business, Operational Position Standards—OPS for short—will become a national directive. It will affect every position in every enroute and terminal facility. Flight service stations will get their OPS this summer.

The new order will define the tasks for operating positions and specify how to do them in enough detail that everyone will have the same interpretation of the operations handbook.

"OPS gives the 'how-to' for position operation, whereas the existing operational manuals have always primarily given the 'what to do' of air traffic control duties," explains James M. Pearson, manager of the Air Traffic Training Requirements & Certification Branch, System Plans & Programs Division, Air Traffic Plans and Requirements Service, which coordinated the project. "This national directive will standardize the methods used for operating positions."

The new order will not, of course, substitute for sound judgment. It will,

however, lead to more consistent training, position certification and evaluations. Developmentals will know what is expected of them, and instructors will know what has been taught previously because all instructors will be teaching the same things. And the users of the airspace system will benefit from receiving more-consistent instructions from air traffic specialists.

It began as the result of recommendations of various reports in recent years—including the Jones Report and ones from the MITRE Corp., the National Transportation Safety Board and other aviation organizations—and

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First Jetliner Waits for a Home

By Marjorie Kriz

It was once the marvel of its age—sleek, fast and high flying. But time has not been kind. After 16 earlbround years, its paint is peeling; its windows broken; much of its instrumentation vandalized by collectors. It is, frankly, a sorry sight.

Old 6425 is one of the few remaining deHavilland Comets and a prime example of the first pure jet in commercial aviation history. But it's sagging when it should appear to be soaring.



The round windows on deHavilland Comet 6425 at Chicago O'Hare mark it as a Model C. The plane has a wingspan of 115 feet and a length of 118 feet, and each of its four Ghost engines delivered a speed just under 500 miles per hour and a range of 1,700 miles.

For years, this forlorn reminder of finer times sat near the entrance roadway at Chicago O'Hare International Airport. Passersby admired this pioneer with its twin jets imbedded in each wing root, the shiny aluminum topping gray-green paint.

The Comet will probably never fly again, but there's a good chance that 6425 may be restored to her former glory and a place of honor by the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum (NASM). Acceptance by the NASM is expected after funding approval and the construction of an adjunct museum for large aircraft at Dulles International Airport. Despite the wear of the years, Ron Davies, NASM's air transport curator, says the plane is in excellent condition for restoration.

British Overseas Airways Corp. (BOAC), predecessor of British Airways, began flying the first of nine Comets, a 36-seater, on July 27, 1949. The Comet 2, with 44 seats, first flew on Aug. 27, 1953.

The Comet was unique, fast, long range and dogged by trouble. On Jan. 5, 1954, its fifth accident in 15 months and the fourth with fatalities grounded the seven planes then flying and brought production to a halt. Six crewmen and 29 passengers were killed as a Comet plunged into the sea near the island of Elba after taking off from Rome. Investigators decided that structural fatigue and decompression at 35,000 feet were the cause. Some 50 improvements were made in the remaining planes and flights resumed.

On April 8, 1954, another Comet

crashed near the island of Stromboli. Again it was determined that explosive decompression was the cause.

Early on, Civil Aeronautics Administration experts had some qualms about the Comet. They felt the engines in the wings could destroy the plane if an engine were to disintegrate. They also distrusted the square windows on the original Comet, believing that stresses there could lead to metal fatigue. Indeed, the window corners did prove to be a weak point in the design, resulting in a sudden split in the fuselage after hundreds of pressurizations. One result of this discovery was the "rip-stop" design used on airliners today, which is intended to contain fuselage damage to a limited area.

No U.S. airline ever flew the Comet, although the plane was flown in this country by foreign airlines, like Mex-

icana. In 1958, British Overseas Airways inaugurated transatlantic jet passenger service with one Comet IV flying from New York to London and another from London to New York. The first jet flown by an American airline was a British-made Vickers Viscount, a prop-jet. The first pure jet U.S. aircraft to land at O'Hare was a Boeing 707 in the spring of 1957.

When this Comet came to O'Hare in 1971, it was owned by the operator of an Indiana nudist colony, who had purchased it from its original livery, Mexicana, which had bought the plane from deHavilland in 1960. A subsequent owner tried at one point to ferry the plane off the airport but was refused clearance by air traffic controllers who notified Chicago Air Carrier District Office inspectors. They termed the aircraft unairworthy.

And so it sat until the O'Hare Rotary Club adopted 6425. The club first convinced the City of Chicago to acquire ownership of the craft for non-payment of rent. Then for several years, the club searched for a new home for the Comet.

What remains for 6425 is locating the missing instrumentation and seats. When NASM is ready, the wings and tail will have to be removed for transporting to Dulles, but that will be the last indignity. ■

The Great Lakes Region's assistant public affairs officer, Ms. Kriz is a former reporter and has been published in the Chicago Tribune and Chicago History magazine.

Focus Groups *continued from page 1*

Most employee comments were indeed enthusiastic over the unfiltered pipeline to top management and the opportunity for improved communications and understanding. They commended an "excellent start to fostering a more positive attitude." Noted another employee, "The Focus Group program provides a relief valve for controllers to express their concerns."

There were constructive criticisms as well. A couple of controllers suggested that some background material should be supplied in advance of the meetings so that the participants could be prepared to discuss the program elements introduced by management.

Many felt that the best parts were the question-and-answer period and the small-group discussions and suggested the meetings be slated for three days instead of two.

A number of controllers said pointedly that "they should discuss system errors—today's problems—rather than the future of NAS," which is just what the small group sessions were for.

Not even three weeks later, again in Atlanta, a second Focus Group convened, this one concerned with Flight Standards. A Focus Group for flight service personnel is scheduled for this month. Although the format of the meetings is generally for non-supervisory representatives to be selected in each region, the November one brought together Flight Standards office managers with the objective of improving the agency's safety inspection programs.

The meeting's composition did not escape the managers' attention, with a number of them commenting that inspectors should be included, as well as administrative personnel. Nevertheless, the meeting was seen as an opportunity "to meet other office managers and compare notes on how they run their operation."

Again, there was a mixture of enthusiasm for the program mixed with doubts. Among controllers and the office managers, many believed that the Focus Groups were good for problem solving and enhancing communication but offered the caveat that there must be management action and followup at the facility level or it would just be another useless exercise.

And there hangs our tale. Two days after the controllers' Focus Group ended, a GENOT was issued cancelling the mandatory requirement for national implementation of the position relief overlap procedure, which came under fire at the meeting. (Flexible approaches



At an afternoon meeting, John Turner, director of the Systems Engineering Service, presented an overview of the National Air-space System Plan.



Bill Masters, manager of the Organizational Development Division, performed as facilitator in a discussion of operational errors in one of three small-group confabs at the kickoff program.



Facilitator Lilith Ren of the Organizational Development Division led a small group discussion of training needs, the quality of instruction and speeding up on-the-job training.



Organizational development specialist Cynthia Zosk, Human Resource Management Division, was facilitator for a discussion of the quality of supervision.

to dealing with the problem are now authorized.)

A controller at the October meeting said it best, "If Mr. McArter's program survives and continues to grow beyond his administration, then he will have left behind a valuable legacy." ■

Nearly 39 Years a Controller



Roy "Corky" Spilner's FAA career is almost as old as the agency. He began as an air traffic controller at Love Field, Dallas, Texas, in May 1959. Now at the Dallas-Fort Worth Tower, the 61-year-old ATCS is reputed to be the oldest active Level V controller in the entire agency.

Federal Notebook

EARLY-OUT ON MOVE, BUT...

Delaware Sen. William Roth's "early out" bill--S-42--is slated to have hearings on February 4, but it's still considered a long shot. Federal unions and the Administration oppose the legislation because of its long-term costs, as well as the loss of senior employees whose workloads would fall on the remaining employees, since the bill would bar replacements for three years. The one-time early retirement opportunity would permit up to 420,000 employees to exit, although one estimate is that only 10 percent would take advantage of it.

PARENTAL LEAVE BILL SLOW

Legislation to permit federal employees and employees of all but small private-sector companies to take parental and family emergency leave (HR-925) passed the House Education and Labor Committee and is awaiting action by the full Post Office and Civil Service Committee. The bill would grant up to 18 weeks of unpaid leave to parents of newborn, newly adopted or seriously ill children and up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave for a personal or family medical emergency.

Federal organizations support the bill, but industry opposes it as too costly to the economy.

MEDICARE CATASTROPHIC BILL WAITING

The bills to expand Medicare coverage for hospital stays, cap out-of-pocket expenses and add coverage for prescription drugs have been passed by the respective chambers (HR-2470, S-1127). Conferees have been named by the House but not yet by the Senate to start resolving the differences in the bills. The Senate version has language to preclude federal retirees having to pay two premiums for coverage they already have under their health plans; the House version does not.

PHONE CALL RULES ISSUED

As earlier announced, federal employees will be allowed to make calls on government lines under certain circumstances. The General Services Administration's regulations in effect this month will permit:

- * Calls to family or doctor when an employee is injured on the job;
- * Calls to home when an employee is traveling for the government; and
- * A brief daily call home during a government business trip in the United States;
- * A call home when an employee is required to work overtime without advance notice;
- * Calls to local commuting area locations that can be reached only during the business day, including calls to local government offices or doctors or to arrange emergency repairs for residence or car;
- * Local calls to an employee's residence, local government agency or physician; and
- * Calls included in a collective bargaining agreement.

GSA points out that it is the employee's responsibility to use the telephone system legally. Personal long-distance calls must be made over the commercial

network without charge to the government, such as by reversing charges, charging to a home phone or telephone credit card, or

FEDERAL PAY TAKES ANOTHER DEMERIT

The General Accounting Office has reported that the average total compensation for members of the military is 27 percent higher than for younger civil servants--age 19 to 44. In major fringe benefits, including retirement and health insurance, the military is 60 percent better.

GAO says that the average 44-year-old civil servant receives pay and benefits amounting to \$57,561, while a member of the service gets \$84,568. The disparities occur even though civil servants tend to have more educational degrees.

GAO pointed out in this draft report, however, that the comparisons in work may not be equitable. Also, civil service jobs are not usually noted for their physical danger, extra duty without extra pay and frequent household moves. Then, too, there's no marching with a pack on your back.

NO DOUBLE DISABILITY DIPPING

A federal appeals court has upheld an Office of Personnel Management policy that a disabled federal employee may not receive both Workmen's Compensation and a disability retirement annuity for the same condition.

UNIONS CAN GET NAMES

A second U.S. Court of Appeals has ruled that federal unions must be given on demand the names and home addresses of all employees in a bargaining unit.

Q & A

In the past in my Level III tower, VFR and IFR traffic has always been called, using the BRITE scope, by giving clock position and distance. This has been done according to the Handbook 7110.65 glossary definition of a "radar identified aircraft" and paragraph 2-21. I cannot find any reference that states that the aircraft must be informed of radar identification, unless radar flight following will be maintained, which it won't in most cases with just a BRITE scope.

It was decided recently that we must say "radar contact" to the aircraft in order to have radar identification and in order to give traffic in clock position and distance.

There seems to be a clear difference between a "radar identified aircraft" and an aircraft informed of "radar contact."

Can an aircraft be radar identified (para. 5-50) and traffic given-in-clock position and distance without the pilot being told "radar contact"?

Is telling an aircraft "radar contact" in this case directly contrary to paragraph 3-9a Note?

What is the difference between a "radar identified aircraft" and an aircraft in "radar contact" using a BRITE scope?

FAA Handbook 7110.65D, paragraph 3-6c, authorizes the controller to use the standard radar phraseology described in paragraph 2-21 (12-hour clock) without telling the pilot "radar contact" if the aircraft has been radar identified.

A limited radar approach control facility is expected to provide, as a minimum, basic radar service to VFR aircraft within their delegated airspace, regardless of the type of radar display in use. Thus, to advise a VFR aircraft "radar contact" would not be contrary to paragraph 3-9a Note, since a limited radar approach control would be authorized to perform these services. Facilities normally not authorized to perform these services would be VFR towers.

A "radar identified aircraft" is one that has been positively identified by one of the methods described in paragraph 5-51 through 5-53. Once positive identification has been established, the controller advises the pilot "radar contact." These procedures do not change merely because you are using BRITE radar. Although authorization for using BRITE does vary between facilities, these restrictions do not normally affect a limited radar approach control.

Position Standards continued from page 1

Air Traffic's own recognition that its service to the system user should be the same no matter who is on the position, that the criteria for evaluating position operation should be objective and documented and that training should have continuity from the classroom through on-the-job training to certification and beyond, regardless of who the instructor is.

Air Traffic's effort to develop standards was begun in the fall of 1983 with a coordination meeting of lead-region representatives. Northwest Mountain Region was made responsible for developing OPS for center and terminal radar positions, Central Region for flight service positions and Western-Pacific Region for tower cab positions.

Each of these regions assembled a work group, which jointly developed the definition of Operational Position Standards and a format for writing them.



Jim Pearson of the Air Traffic Training Requirements & Certification Branch addresses representatives from major air traffic facilities at the implementation meeting for the Operational Position Standards held last September.



A group representing center controllers discusses upcoming facility briefings and how to write facility-level operational position standards.



A breakout group representing the flight service option receives instructions at the implementation meeting on how to conduct their own briefings at nearby stations.

The work groups included full-performance-level controllers and supervisors, to which was added regional and headquarters input. Says Pearson, "This allowed a wide-enough cross-fertilization of ideas to hash over and arrive at the 'best' way to work each position."

Despite numerous delays due to budget and travel restrictions, the groups persevered, meeting to discuss and argue about the many existing appropriate ways of operating at positions. They then reached a consensus on just one way to work each position. Two work group members met for one to two weeks at a time, several times each year, their families and facilities being left to cope without them.

The resulting draft of national standards was sent to different-level facilities in different regions for operational confirmation. Specialists at these facilities worked their positions using the OPS, providing the work groups with written and oral comments. Using these responses to modify the OPS, the work groups reformatted the material into a handbook.

Once again to ensure that the OPS reflected employee thinking and the real air traffic world, the handbook was sent to facilities in all regions for final review. Recommended changes were entered to create the handbook that will be implemented in March.

Because this is the first time that Air

Traffic has attempted to implement something of this magnitude, which affects every position in every facility, FAA headquarters decided that a special effort was needed. More than 160 representatives of major air traffic facilities across the country were summoned to a meeting in Oklahoma City last September. There, the work groups briefed them on OPS and trained them to supervise the writing of facility-level OPS and to assist in the training of personnel at nearby smaller facilities.

No doubt there will be some adjustments needed as specialists begin using the new OPS, but it's expected to make life simpler for everyone. For example, Pearson points out that "a person receiving on-the-job training will not

have to adjust each session to the methods of the individual instructor. All certification will be based on a written set of standards, and all controllers will be evaluated against those same standards."

Following the implementation in March, OPS will become the basis for evaluations by quality assurance and regional and headquarters evaluators.

In the future, as it becomes commonplace for the specialist, OPS will be developed for such positions as area manager, area supervisor, controller-in-charge, cab coordinator, traffic-management specialist, oceanic specialist and staff. There's no stopping a good idea. ■

It's a Different Game at Andrews AFB

By Duncan B. Pardue

A public affairs specialist in the Eastern Region, Mr. Pardue has worked as a reporter for newspapers in the South and in industrial relations for two major corporations.

When Soviet General Secretary Mikhail S. Gorbachev visited the United States in December for a summit conference, FAA air traffic controllers, engineers and technicians at Andrews Air Force Base were again participants in an event that made headlines around the world.

In addition to being the base for the presidential fleet, Andrews is the main port of entry for foreign government and military officials enroute to Washington and the United States.

In a unique arrangement dating back to 1959, the tower at Andrews Air Force Base is staffed entirely by FAA air traffic controllers. In addition, Airway Facilities technicians maintain navigational, radar and communications equipment. The arrangement was created to provide improved air traffic control resulting from "single agency management of all air traffic arriving and departing the Washington, D.C., terminal control area." Andrews shares airspace with Washington National Airport.

Andrews has been the home of Air Force One since 1961. Its 4,332 acres also accommodate 20 Military Airlift Command units, 30 tenant military

units, a major air command and a naval air facility. The 177th Air Base Wing is the host wing and responsible for the overall operation of the base. Overall, the base hosts more than 19,000 active duty military, civilian employees and dependents.

Although the public has access to the base, flight facilities are restricted by the military. Elaborate protocol is



Air traffic controller Robert Fitzpatrick points to an aircraft's projected path on the precision approach radar (PAR).

A Day in ATC at Andrews AFB

It is a typical day at Andrews Air Force Base. Aircraft 27000 (Air Force One when the President is on board) sits majestically on a taxiway near the tower. A helicopter is approaching over the grassy area between runways; a P3 Orion is on the west runway; a VC-137 is practicing touch and go's on the east runway; two Phantom jets are breaking from a pattern at an altitude of 2,000 feet; and a C-141 is taxiing clear of the runway behind a Cessna 172 from the base flying club.

Coordinating these simultaneous maneuvers is routine for air traffic controllers at Andrews Air Force Base



During a busy moment in the Andrews Air Force Base Tower in Suitland, Md., air controllers (left to right) Robbie Wright, Christine Miller, Wallace Leach, Robert Bardette and Sharon Given-Davison.

observed for U.S. and foreign VIPs and military officials.

Depending on instructions, from the White House, Secret Service or the Air Force, controllers may impose a "Ramp Freeze" or "Quiet Period" when a presidential aircraft approaches.

"Ramp Freeze" means no speeches are to be made but, in a specified area, nothing will move. "Quiet Period" means that the aircraft will land and stop at a designated spot and a speech will be made. When used together, everything stops until the restriction is lifted.

"We are usually notified 24 hours in advance if the President is to use Air

Force One," tower manager Tom Hammill explained. "Then we get another notification one hour in advance. If anything is going on to deviate from our standard letter of agreement, we will be told either by airport management, the security police, the Secret Service or directly by the White House."

Marine helicopters shuttle the President from the White House to Andrews. "There may be one or as many as 10," Hammill said. "Our procedures are the same, regardless of number. In most cases, the flight will be routine. If there is to be a change, the pilot will call us, and we coordinate what is to be done for that flight."

Standard procedures at Andrews require controllers to keep all other aircraft at a specified distance from Air Force One. The aircraft has priority over any other operations except one in which human life is in jeopardy, such as a medevac flight.

Construction of a new hangar is now taking place at Andrews for the next pair of Air Force Ones—Boeing 747s that will replace the present two 707s. "This will give them world-wide non-stop range," Hammill said, "removing the vulnerability in fuel stopovers."

Apart from special procedures for Air Force One and the military flights, controllers become conditioned to dealing

"These people live and breathe security; there's no such thing as fun and games," Hammill explained. "When there is a drill, most of them think it's real. You have to respect their responsibilities and not inadvertently get in their way."

Controllers are involved in diplomatic and military protocol—which is spelled out in volumes—and sometimes they make their own contributions.

"I was on duty when the Iranian hostages were flown back," supervisor Hank Heggins recalled.

"I cleared it with Washington National and then suggested to the pilot that he make two passes over the Capitol so that passengers on each side of the airplane could see it. An enormous American flag was laid out in the grass at Andrews specifically for the returning hostages. Again, I suggested that the pilot make two passes so the passengers



FAA controllers participating in the air base's flying club include Leslie Hollinger (left) and June Lee.



Air Force One—the President's plane—a Boeing 707, stands before the FAA-staffed Andrews Air Force Base control tower.

with the unexpected. Additional security precautions, often bringing on duty military guards who don't recognize the controllers and technicians, may cause them to be delayed in gaining access to the tower until they are cleared by the tower supervisors.

Tower procedures are also watched carefully by the Secret Service as part of its responsibility for protecting the President.

on both sides could see it. There was need for words, emotions were extremely high and could be felt by everyone present."

When a head of state visits, protocol dictates who will meet the aircraft and where they will stand. The flag of the visiting country will be flying over the VIP Center. Media representatives, who must go through metal detectors, are assigned to specific areas.

For each event that occurs, there are specific procedures to follow. The ceremonies are all very impressive and some poignantly solemn, especially those for deceased Americans being brought home.

Photos by Duncan Pardue



Looking over special military flight data for the day is area supervisor Hank Heggins. Through the window of the cab can be seen some of the construction going on for the new hangar that will house the new Air Force Ones—Boeing 747s.

ington National or Baltimore-Washington International.

Controllers from commercial towers who go to Andrews, however, have to spend considerable time learning military air traffic control.

They also have to obtain a security

"This is an unusual place," Heggins said. "On any given day, we might turn out to be as busy as any major airport, only our traffic is unscheduled. They may decide to put every F-4 into the sky and fly 25 sorties, while at the same time we are running our routine traffic."

Controllers at Andrews become qualified to work at any commercial airport. Since Andrews is a Level III tower, controllers frequently move on to higher level facilities, such as Wash-

clearance. When they leave, they must sign a Security Termination Statement that will not divulge any security information they have been given.

Despite the extra work requirements, all the controllers who have spent time at Andrews have enjoyed the experience.

There are intangible rewards. Protocol may require the President to wave goodbye to staff and Cabinet officials, the media and the public. "It does not require him to wave to the tower, but he has not once failed to do so," Hammill said. ■

Andrews AFB Maintenance A Little Different

The FAA is fortunate to have people sensitive to the requirements of Andrews AFB, which is a highly visible, security-conscious airport. They are challenged daily to be patient and understanding as they perform their duties at the President's airport.

Andrews Airway Facilities technicians are responsible for the day-to-day performance of five different types of radar systems. Two are precision approach radars (PAR), which are unique to the military. The PAR systems use computers to project the path of an aircraft, enabling the pilot, with the help of the ground controllers, to land during poor weather conditions.

The technicians also maintain instrument landing systems, VORs, TACANs, RVRs and other systems found at most large commercial airports. When the President flies in Air Force One, the aircraft may land using the ILS system at the same time it is being tracked and monitored by the precision approach radar.

During an earlier visit by Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev, FAA technicians at Andrews AFB were afforded an unusual opportunity to work with Soviet personnel. Together they installed communications equipment in the control tower to interface with the

Soviet communications system. Even though there was a language barrier, both parties exercised patience and understanding and accomplished the mission without incident.

The FAA purchasing agent at Andrews has unusual duties in being responsible for supplies and services to keep both the FAA and Air Force systems operational. Another responsibility for Airway Facilities is monitoring the test-equipment calibration program. When military-owned test equipment requires calibration, FAA personnel interface with the Air Force Precision Measurement Equipment Laboratory (PMEL) to insure timely calibration and certification.

The FAA sector field office staff maintains an outstanding record of completing nearly 100 percent of required mandatory maintenance. Management and technicians work together to eliminate any barriers that would prevent accomplishing this goal.

FAA personnel at Andrews are given access to the morale and welfare facilities established for the military. These include golf courses, tennis courts, swimming pools and membership in the officer and non-commissioned-officer clubs. ■



Airway Facilities technician Gary Dickinson adjusts the signal of the precision approach radar at Andrews.



Checking the Andrews Air Force Base instrument landing system is Airway Facilities technician Evon Evans.

Feeling Fit

Eat for Good Health

You've heard it before: You are what you eat. To put it another way, your diet has an important bearing on how you feel physically and mentally.

Although the exact relationship between nutrition and disease is not fully known, more and more information is being uncovered that supports the idea that diet is linked to good health in general and specific ways.

Some nutritional experts would have you believe that curing degenerative diseases is as simple as eating a food supplement or taking a vitamin pill. Although we have to take that with a grain of salt, we do know that certain foods, vitamins and minerals can help improve or maintain your health. On the other hand, some recent literature can leave you with the impression that just about every food or activity you like in some way causes disease. The truth, of course, lies somewhere in between.

We are only beginning to identify the most basic relationships between what we put into our bodies and what we can expect as a result. We know, for instance, that heart disease and cancer are linked to certain lifestyle patterns, including diet.

Some cholesterol is necessary to the body, but research has found that excess cholesterol in the form of low-density lipoprotein deposits on blood vessel walls until it blocks the passage of blood. In the coronary arteries that supply blood to the heart muscle, this can cause heart attacks. This cholesterol is found in animal fat. And a diet high in animal fat is believed to be linked to cancer of the large intestine. Studies of African people who have infrequent access to meat but have diets high in fiber showed an extremely low incidence of colorectal cancer.

Most of you have probably heard medical reports and breakfast cereal commercials touting the desirability of

eating high-fiber foods. The American Cancer Society has recommended that you reduce your intake of fats, particularly animal—or saturated—fats, and increase your consumption of fiber and complex carbohydrates.

Too much in the way of fats, whether saturated or unsaturated, can lead to too much weight, which apart from its adverse effect on your heart, lower back, and other conditions, as well as your social life, is deemed to increase your risk of cancer.

Salt or nitrite-cured foods, such as ham, hot dogs and virtually every luncheon meat, should be avoided or eaten in moderation. Those of you with high blood pressure problems should note that the full name of the chemical is *sodium nitrite*, which means these meats should be avoided for this reason, too.

The Cancer Society has also touted the benefits of carotene, which is found in cantaloupe, peaches, broccoli, spinach, all dark green leafy vegetables, sweet potatoes, carrots, pumpkin, winter squash, tomatoes, citrus fruits and brussels sprouts. Carotene apparently can lower the risk of larynx and esophagus cancer. Other foods that can reduce the risk of gastrointestinal, respiratory tract and colorectal cancer include fruits and vegetables in general and cabbage, kohlrabi, cauliflower and whole grain cereals.

For most of us, it's not necessary to make lists of specific items to ingest or avoid. For good health, reduce your consumption of red meats and dairy products and fats in general, increase your intake of a variety of fruits and vegetables and of fiber from vegetables, grains and nuts, reduce your consumption of alcohol, don't smoke and get regular aerobic exercise to help burn off those calories and lower your pulse rate.

It's a style of eating and living that will permit you to live well. ■

As the summer of 1987 waned, the dry Pacific Northwest blazed. In the Klamath National Forest alone, the U.S. Forest Service had about 10,000 people fighting fires, out of which 2,500 were airborne.

Into this came three air traffic controllers to help at the Siskiyou County Airport in California. John Hughes came from Boise, Idaho, Dave Hawkins from Troutdale, Ore., and I were flown into Redding in a Cessna 340 and then driven the rest of the way to Montague, Calif. We had to have guide dogs to find the airport, because dense smoke reduced visibility to only a quarter-mile.

We relieved two controllers from the Western-Pacific Region who had opened the temporary tower inside an abandoned flight service station. The station still had working wind instruments, an altimeter and a 24-hour clock. These, combined with portable radios from Boise, gave us a working tower.

The next day, John took a compass and one of the radios out to the center of the runway to calibrate the wind direction with the FSS's instruments. Hardly had he reached there when he came running back. Wouldn't you know it? Probably the only place in the county



The closed flight service station at Siskiyou County Airport made a reasonable temporary tower. The controllers had a borrowed Forest Service truck.

A Small Tower in a Big Fire

By Shelley Spencer



John Hughes and Roger Brown at the temporary tower. Bill Conrad from the Klamath Falls Tower.



Dave Hawkins of Troutdale, Ore., in the temporary tower at Siskiyou, holds the primary tools of his trade for a VFR tower: a microphone and binoculars.

that had mosquitoes was the airport, and John was covered with them. We also were told that the airport is a favorite spot for honey bees, wasps and black widow spiders. Needless to say, I tore apart my bed every night before I got into it.

For the first week, we had very little traffic because of an inversion layer of

smoke over the area, with tops at about 15,000 feet. The smoke was so dense that the tankers and helicopters could not fly over the fires to drop water and retardant. The wind picked up the second week and cleared the smoke for a few days, but that also spread the fire.

After one week, John returned to Boise, and Roger Brown from the Klamath Falls, Ore., Tower joined us. The Forest Service asked us to extend our hours, possibly even to 24 hours a

day when the air traffic warranted it. To help with shift coverage, Bill Conrad came down from Klamath Falls.

Our traffic rose and fell with the visibility. We have every kind of tanker imaginable, mixed in with student pilots, helicopters, Conquars, Learjets, etc., as well as all types of Forest Service aircraft. To sequence traffic, we had one person inside talking on the radio and shouting to another controller outside the building who maintained a visual scan on the pattern and shouted back. Teamwork and a strong voice were essential.

The firefighters had to work under very adverse conditions. After three weeks of smoke inhalation, long hours and minimum rest, these crews were happy to be rotated out for some R&R.

The California Army National Guard 126th Medical Company from Mather Air Force Base provided medical support and air ambulances with a dozen UH-1 helicopters. The National Guard

Ms. Spencer is an air traffic controller at the Portland, Ore., Tower.

had two hospitals set up at the fire camps and helicopters based at each camp and the airport. The Bureau of Land Management was also in the act, supplying personnel to help in the parking and scheduling of aircraft.

Even the local townspeople pitched in, offering their vehicles and time and effort. It could be said that the town of Yreka (population 6,000) unfortunately had 100 percent employment and a boom in business.

After three weeks, I also was ready for some R&R. As I left, I had a sense of satisfaction in our FAA support of this massive effort. It was one of the few times in my career that I genuinely felt appreciated by the pilots I was servicing. Pilots would constantly visit our "tower" and tell us how glad they were that we were here and ask whether we could arrange to stay forever. That gives a wann glow. ■



Sunrise in El Paso, Texas, photographed from the flight service station, silhouettes the air traffic control tower at the international airport.

Photo by ATCS Louis H. Ploussard

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