

**Special Intercom**



# Western-Pacific Intercom

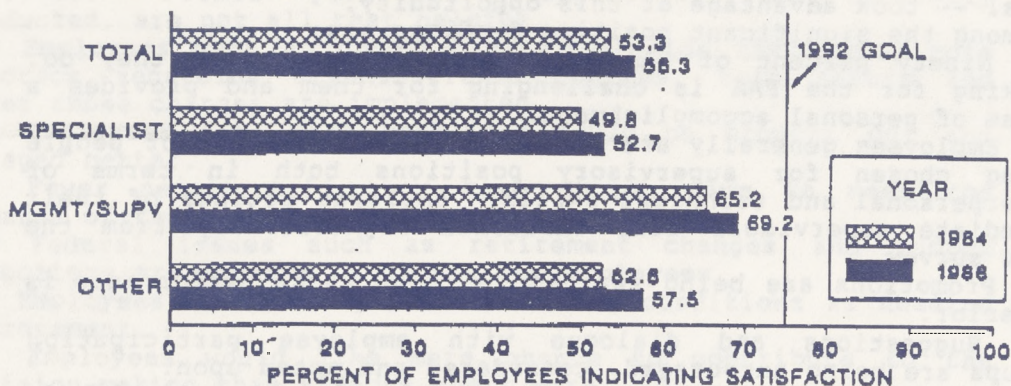
## Results of Employee Survey

FAA employees generally like their work, pay, supervisors and co-workers but are less positive about the FAA organization, commitment to change and performance in the management area.

These are some of the conclusions of the employee survey conducted this summer as a follow-up to a similar study conducted in 1984. Other findings indicate an increase in overall job satisfaction by FAA employees. It was up from 53 percent in the 1984 survey to 56 percent this year.

FAA Administrator Donald D. Engen noted that 29,500 employees, or 63.3 percent of the agency workforce, responded to the survey, giving the agency a good cross-section of employee views. This represents an encouraging eight percent

**OVERALL JOB SATISFACTION**



gain over the 55 percent employee participation rate in the 1984 survey.

In a letter to all FAA employees that will accompany the mailing of the survey results next month, Engen says:

"Again this year, you have given us valuable feedback on the degree to which actions taken in the past two years have affected the way we manage our human resources. As you will see (and as you probably know, we have made important improvements in several areas, particularly with respect to our supervisory activities. However, we also have not shown much positive movement in some other areas. We will work on those."

Engen promised to continue the practice of soliciting employee feedback every two years, so that FAA managers are fully aware of employee concerns and able to define action to deal with these concerns. He identified these areas of management concentration over the next year:

- \* Optimizing the balance of resource and work demands;

\* Increasing employee involvement in decisions that affect them;

\* Improving information exchange between management and employees;

\* Increasing emphasis on the human resource impact of major system changes; and

\* Improving selection and development of managers and supervisors.

Additionally, Engen said he has mandated a process at all levels of the agency that will hold managers accountable for addressing the employee concerns highlighted in the new survey. "Improving our performance in all these areas will be a major FAA goal during the upcoming year," he added.

Engen noted that employees had been particularly negative on the range of Federal issues, such as proposed changes in the retirement system, budget reductions and contracting out. He noted that respondents said these issues adversely affected their overall satisfaction as FAA employees.

The survey questionnaire, which was sent to all FAA employees in June, contained 139 items divided statistically into eight categories. These were management, supervision, pay and benefits, job involvement, work group, job understanding, Federal issues, and the agency and change. There also was a section for written comments and more than 9,000 of the respondents -- better than 30 percent of the total -- took advantage of this opportunity.

Among the significant positive findings are:

\* Ninety percent of FAA employees like the work they do. Working for the FAA is challenging for them and provides a sense of personal accomplishment.

\* Employees generally are pleased with the caliber of people being chosen for supervisory positions both in terms of interpersonal and technical skills. Employee ratings of their immediate supervisors also increased significantly from the 1984 survey.

\* Promotions are being awarded to those whose performance is superior.

\* Suggestions and dialogue with employee participation groups are being encouraged, considered and acted upon.

\* Job duties and standards are being clearly articulated.

The Washington/Oklahoma City team responsible for creating and subsequently analyzing the survey was headed by Dr. William Collins manager of the Aviation Psychology Laboratory at the Civil Aero Medical Institute (CAMI) at the Aeronautical Center. In charge of the survey itself was Dr. David J. Schroeder who was ably assisted by Carolyn Dollar and programmer Linda Ritchie and by other laboratory staff members. Supporting the CAMI team in Washington were Alan VanDeventer, manager AHP-100, and Shelley Thomas and Mary Weltin, also of AHP-100.

Employees do understand what they are supposed to be doing.

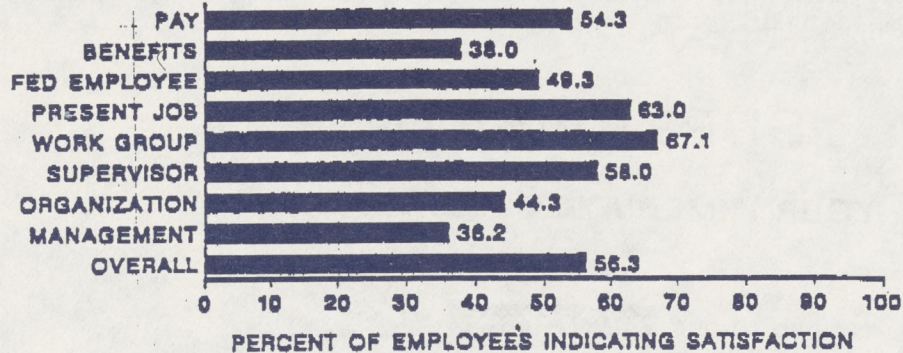
\* Employees respect their co-workers. Relationships between different work groups is good.

\* The lines of authority are clear.

\* Substantially fewer air traffic employees show signs of "burnout" than in the 1984 survey. Overall the agency has a low percentage of employees who survey answers indicate a danger of burnout.

Balancing these signs of

## SPECIFIC SATISFACTION MEASURES



organizational strength at the FAA were some other areas that indicate the need for further improvement:

- \* Management commitment to people concerns and respect for employees' judgment were rated low by the employees. Questions in this area produced positive response ratings of about 50 percent or less.

- \* While supervisors have high expectations for employee performance, the amount and quality of feedback they give employees about their performance could be improved. Formal performance appraisals, as currently conducted, are not all that helpful.

- \* Employees want an opportunity to provide the agency more feedback regarding organizational changes, both before and after those changes are implemented.

- \* Employees feel that conflicts could be brought out and managed better.

- \* Fewer people said they have enough time to meet the demands of their jobs than in the 1984 survey.

- \* Federal issues such as retirement changes and budget reductions are sources of stress for employees.

- \* Employees see their physical working conditions as needing improvement.

- \* Employees would like more chance to contribute to the decision-making that affects their work.

The survey forms were distributed to 46,628 employees at their worksites in June. Responses came back from 29,510 employees (63.3 percent) of which 29,331 were fully completed and usable. The Western-Pacific and Alaskan Regions had the highest participation rates among the regions -- 73.4 and 68.3, respectively. The European Region had an 81.3 participation rate but, because of its small size, is reported as though it is a part of the Washington headquarters.

- \* Many employees are doubtful about whether management will use the survey information to make improvements for their employees.

In his letter to employees, Engen urged them to familiarize themselves with the overall survey results as well as subsequent reports that will break the findings down to the facility level.

"Your managers will be meeting with employee groups and union representatives to discuss these findings," he

added. "Give some thought to how we can improve and thereby continue to make the FAA a better place to work. By working together meaningful progress will be possible."

# SUPERVISION

## YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR



PERCENT POSITIVE



Besides this overall report of survey results, other breakouts are on the way, including regional/center reports, due in early October, and individual facility reports scheduled for November and December.