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**Federal Aviation
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Western-Pacific Intercom



● FAA Participates In Airport Disaster Drill

Cover Story

Story & Photos By Bob Schnell

Picture the following:

A twin-engine charter with 12 people aboard is flying over the rugged mountains of the Trinity National Forest in northwestern California. The plane develops engine trouble and must land... fast. An emergency landing is attempted at remote Ruth Airport, but the plane crashes next to the runway. The pilot is killed and the passengers, with various injuries, are scattered about. Someone at the airport dials 911. The dispatcher in Weaverville, a two-hour drive away, receives the call. The clock is ticking, lives may be ebbing... now what?

Such was the scenario that was set up at Ruth Airport recently. The purpose of the exercise was to test, check and review the responsiveness, timeliness and coordination among federal, state and county agencies whose collective responsibilities are spread out over several hundred square miles of mountainous terrain.

A crash site was set up next to the runway, volunteer "victims" were placed in their positions, and evaluators from the respective agencies were ready. Though the governmental facilities involved knew the drill was going to occur, every action (whether simulated or actually done) taken after the initial notification of the "crash" would be a real time response to the emergency.

The victims, all volunteers from communities in the county, were given predetermined "injuries," courtesy of an injury simulation kit which included grease paint burns, vinyl wrap-around arm and leg compound bone fractures, chest coverings to simulate torso trauma and even fake blood (to be liberally dispersed). The survivors also had scripts to read to advise arriving medical help of their conditions. One victim was timed to "die" if help did not arrive within a certain time limit.

The assigned injuries ranged from cuts and bruises to critical condition. One survivor was even assigned the task of

being the moaner-groaner-whiner-complainer so as to fluster the medical help, and perhaps frustrate rescue efforts.

First on the scene was the Forestry Department fire crew. Next the area Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) began arriving in ones and twos from their normal jobs. Then the ambulance came (a 45-minute drive from its base of operations). The area was roped off, a command post set up and the work of evacuating dead and wounded began in earnest. A local ground coordinator handled all radio traffic so that six agencies wouldn't be trying to communicate all at once.

After the drill, a critique session was held for evaluation and review. The various agencies participating in the drill included California Highway Patrol, California Department of Forestry, Trinity County General Hospital, Sheriff's Office, county coroner and assistant coroner, dispatcher, a local ambulance service, Emergency Medical Technicians (both solo and with the ambulance). Contingency plans were even available to use the U.S. Coast Guard helicopter from Arcata and private Lifeguard flights to fly out the most critically wounded. The U.S. Forest Service also participated.



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EDITOR
Elly Brekke

REGIONAL DIRECTOR
H. C. McClure

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER
Barbara Abels

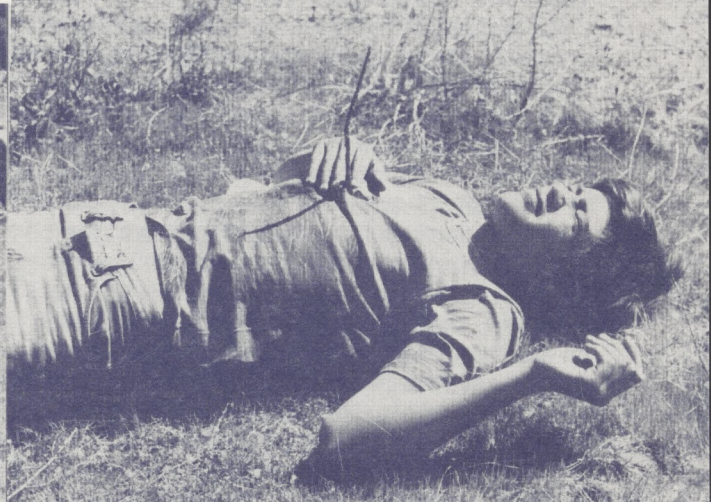
PUBLIC AFFAIRS SPECIALIST
Russell Park

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"Disaster" at Ruth Airport

The FAA was invited to observe the exercise and offer any opinions as to the FAA's role in coordination with the other agencies. Representing the FAA were Pat Robinson from Arcata Flight Service Station and Bob Schnell from Red Bluff Flight Service Station.

Cover photo: An "injured boy" receives first aid as workers test their responsiveness to a simulated aircraft disaster at Ruth Airport.



Optional Retirement By FSS Specialists Argued

FAA is responding a ruling by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) that blocks early optional retirements by air traffic control specialists whose eligibility is wholly or partly based upon flight service station (FSS) service prior to January 1, 1987. The decision does not affect controllers who are using tower and enroute center service only for the early retirement option.

In addition to FAA efforts, a Congressional committee also is trying to resolve the problem with an amendment to the 1986 retirement laws.

In announcing that it no longer will process these early retirement requests, OPM said pre-1987 service can not be counted because the legislation giving early optional retirement to FSS specialists did not specifically include a provision to make it retroactive.

FAA's position is arguing that the legislation was intended to be retroactive. The agency also is trying to clarify the impact of the OPM decision on FSS specialists who already have taken advantage of the early optional retirement law. Discussions currently are under way with OPM officials.

Reporting Of Emergency System Failures Proposed

FAA has proposed a new rule that would require large air carriers to report all failures and malfunctions of emergency evacuation systems. The idea is to build a better data base on these problems that would facilitate corrective action where needed.

Currently, reporting by the carriers is voluntary with the result that the agency received only 106 such reports between 1980 and 1985. Most experts agree that this represents a significant unreporting of incidents.

Engen Says Capacity Is International Problem

Airport capacity problems are not limited to the United States but have international ramifications, Administrator Engen told a Paris Air Show audience.

Capacity problems "will ripple across the Atlantic," he said. "A lack of airport capacity at New York's Kennedy International Airport can be felt in London, Paris, Madrid, or any of the other major European cities."

Engen outlined some of the recent FAA programs to expand capacity and reduce flight delays but noted that the only lasting solution is to increase airport capacity. "America's airport capacity limitations are going to have an effect here in Europe. And to the extent that you have capacity constraints, it is going to effect us. We must all work-- across international boundaries--to expand airports to meet the world's growing demand for air travel," he said.

Letter Of Confidence Warmly Received By ATCSs

Air traffic controllers and the members of the National Business Aircraft Association (NBAA) have formed something of a mutual admiration society.

A recent NBAA letter to all ATC facilities discounting negative publicity about the system and thanking controllers and supervisors for a job well done has found an appreciative audience.

The FAAers have responded in kind as typified by a letter to NBAA from a facility manager. Our success, he wrote, "is a direct result of the cooperative attitude and 'can do' spirit displayed on the part of the professional system users of which your association is comprised."

Delays Down In May

Here is some good news on flight delays: They were down 18 percent in May from the same month of 1986. Total delays of 15 or more in the system last month numbered 31,517 for an average of 1,059 per day. That compares with 38,365 in May 1986 and a daily average of 1,238. For the first five months of 1987, delays are running about three percent above the 1986 figure.

New FAA Office To Speed

Denver Airport Planning

The Northwest Mountain Region has established a new Denver office to coordinate FAA interests and activities associated with the siting, design, and construction of the proposed new airport in that city.

The office director is George F. Brewer, who formerly represented FAA in London and most recently assigned to the Office of International Aviation in Washington headquarters.

Planning for the new \$3 billion facility is well along and the city and country have agreed on a site ten miles east of Stapleton. Construction could begin as early as 1988.

Saving Plan Restricted For Higher Income Employees

Federal employees earning over \$50,000 a year may have their maximum contributions to the Thrift Saving Plan curtailed by the IRS.

The reason is a provision in the law that limits the average contributions of high salaried employees to just two percent more than the average contribution of those making under \$50,000 per annum.

The Thrift Board, will notify employees if adjustments are necessary and subsequent contributions will be reduced to bring yearly total within the prescribed limit.

Marilyn Neff Earns Award



Marilyn Neff recently received a Special Achievement Award based on sustained superior performance.

Marilyn, who has been with the federal government for ten years, serves as a Staffing Assistant in the Operation Branch of the Human Resource Management Division. She has the responsibility of recruiting applicants to attend the Air Traffic Control Academy in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Since taking over her new job six months ago, she has filled classes in advance (three months currently) and substantially reduced the number of required security and medical waivers in filling the academy slots.

Marilyn earned an outstanding rating by far exceeding every job element in her performance standards and has been cited by the Air Traffic Division, numerous Air Traffic Managers and the Academy for her truly outstanding performance of her duties.

In addition to her outstanding work, she has found time to write office Standard Operating Procedures and train new clerks.

During her career, Marilyn has received a dozen performance awards and numerous outstanding ratings, making her current high level of work typical for a truly exemplary employee.

Photo: Marilyn Neff accepts her award from Todd Pearson, Supervisory Personnel Management Specialist.

Upward Mobility Status

Six positions were recently announced throughout the Western-Pacific Region under the Upward Mobility Program. A total of 73 employees applied for the positions, which will be filled in Airway Facilities, Logistics, Human Resource Management, and Financial & Management Resources Divisions. A number of employees applied for two or more positions. The number of applicants for each position was as follows:

General Supply Specialist, Airway Facilities Division -- 44; Realty Specialist, Logistics Division -- 42; General Supply Specialist, Logistics Division -- 47; Personnel Management Specialist, Human Resource Management Division -- 47; Contract Specialist, Logistics Division -- 42; and Computer Programmer, Financial & Management Resources Division -- 41.

All 263 applications were rated as qualified for the positions for which he/she applied. A panel of three spent over 120 hours reviewing and rating each application.

The Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAO) method of advertising -- which is mandated by the new merit promotion plan -- was used in rating the candidates. The candidates were rated using the submitted SF-171 and KSAO descriptions. Under the KSAO methodology, levels were determined which took into account an employee's total background (experience, education, awards, outside experience, etc.) as it contributed to their level of potential described in the rating plan.

It is important to note that, in an Upward Mobility bid, applicants are rated on potential, with less emphasis is given to current levels of performance. No position requires any experience within a related field - only the potential to learn and perform. No one element (education, awards) can create a high ranking on its own. The applicants who have diverse or rich backgrounds, demonstrating potential as well as current competence, were usually rated high.

The lists went to selecting officials the week of June 8, and they were strongly encouraged to interview each

applicant whose name appeared on the certificate. Due to excellent qualifications of the candidates and the number who applied, competition was tremendous and, in most cases, the maximum of ten candidates were referred to the selecting official.

The Human Resource Management Division will be holding briefings on KSAO's July 10 and 13 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m., and on July 17 at 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. in the Regional Office, Room 3W3. Any Upward Mobility applicant who desires counselling should attend one of the briefings. In addition, all employees who have questions on the KSAO process might also check with their supervisors on attending one of the briefings.

Selectees for the Upward Mobility positions will be announced on the "White Sheet" and in a future issue of the Intercom.

News In Brief

* The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is still making lump-sum payments to retiring employees although the Internal Revenue Service has not yet issued tax guidance. The tax rules are expected to be available within the next few weeks. Lump-sum payments are equal to the amount of money employees put into the retirement fund. Retirees who elect this form of payment will receive a reduced annuity in exchange.

* Deliveries of the Host computer systems continue on schedule with the Memphis enroute center receiving its unit on June 19. Nine Host systems now are on site and deliveries will reach the half way point July 3 when the Cleveland center gets its unit. All 20 domestic centers will have the Host by December and all are scheduled to be operational with the equipment by June 1988.

* Pratt & Whitney's new PW4000 commercial jet engine has passed the final-year path to commercial airline service. Airbus Industries A310-300 twin-jet aircraft, powered by PW4000 engines, was certified for passenger service by the agency on June 11. The first PW4000 Airbus is expected to enter service this month with Pan American World Airways on the New York/Miami run.

Los Angeles Center Presents Awards

The following Los Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center employees are congratulated for receiving awards during this fiscal year:

On-the-Spot Awards were presented to Kay Hammer, Jon Scudmore, Benjamin Pappa Jr., Norm Sumner, Donald Cline and Donald Gunner.

Outstanding Ratings with Special Achievement Awards went to Dennis Sullivan, Henry Heinzerling, Howard Long, John Hatcher, Tom Lynde, Michael Unverferth, David Allec and Dennis Mayer.

Outstanding Ratings with Quality Step Increases were awarded to Eugene Koller, Larry Tipton, Jon Scudmore, Dwight Virtue, Terry Comstock and Thomas Kite.

Special Achievement Awards were presented to Gary Mileski, Joseph Bowman, Norma Keipe, and Pamela Pokorny.

Quality Step Increases were awarded to Jerry Stone and Rothey Rogers.

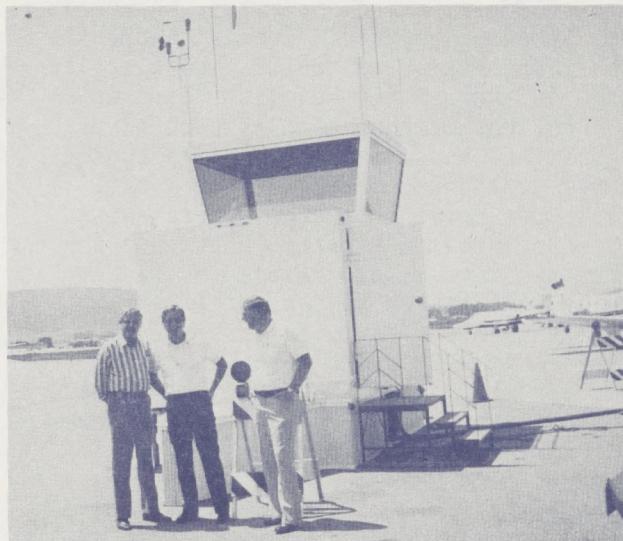
Letters of Commendation were received by Mark Loudon, Jack Van Zandt, Danny Teschler, Tom St. Clair, Terry Comstock, Dale Markowski, David Alford, Henry Heinzerling and Mark De Grood.

Janet Snyder Earns Award



Janet Snyder, left, Secretary at the Riverside Flight Service Station, is presented a Quality Increase Award by Manager Norm Hopkins.

Temporary Tower Opens At San Luis Obispo



The San Luis Obispo Temporary Tower opened May 20, 1987, after a few minor delays. The permanent tower is scheduled to be completed in March 1988.

Ready to go to work are Jim Guinasso, Manager, Richard Valentine and Robert Perkins.

FAA Helps With Info Systems

DOT has adopted FAA's Uniform Accounting System (UAS) as the foundation for a Departmental Accounting and Financial Information System (DAFIS).

DAFIS will permit the consolidation of the individual automated accounting systems now used by each DOT modal administration. The Accounting and Data Services Division at the Aeronautical Center have been given the job of designing and developing the new department-wide system.

The National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration (NHTSA) will be the first modal administration to be added to the UAS/DAFIS system with work expected to be completed in March.

DOT's adoption of the UAS follows previous actions by the department in using FAA's Uniform Payroll System (UPS) and the Personnel Management Information System (PMIS) as the basis for an all-modes system.

Heimlich Manuver: Breathing New Life

Each year nearly 3,000 Americans choke to death when food or other objects become lodged in their airways. According to Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, the most successful method of aiding a victim is through the Heimlich Manuver.

Previous methods such as back slaps, chest and abdominal thrusts are considered hazardous, even lethal. A back slap can drive a foreign object even deeper into the throat. Chest and abdominal thrusts can result in cracked ribs and damaged spleens or livers.

The Heimlich Manuver was developed in the early 1970's and works in the theory of air expulsion. Most victims already have a large volume of air in them even if they were exhaling when the choking began. The Heimlich Manuver forces the trapped air out of the lungs, which in turn extricates food or other objects out of the throat.

If someone appears to be choking from food you are advised to press the victim's abdomen with a balled fist wrapped in the opposite hand at a point just above the navel (but below the rib cage and diaphragm). The reservoir of air is expelled up the airway with a great deal of force, thus dislodging the obstruction from the victim's throat.

Koop says the procedure can be performed on standing or seated victims and on persons who have fallen to the floor. It can be performed on children and even on one's self.

Tips to prevent choking:

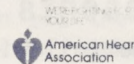
- Cut food into small pieces, chew slowly and throughly.

Ethnic Heritage Day Slated

On Saturday, August 15, the Bay Area Civil Rights Committee will host a Ethnic Heritage Day at Oakland Center in Fremont, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. This will be a multi-cultural event, celebrating the ethnic diversity of the FAA through exhibits, food and entertainment. All FAA employees and their families are invited to attend. For further information, please call Ron Willis, Bay TRACON FTS 536-6005; Michael Motta, Oakland Towers FTS 536-7418; or Bill Buck, Oakland Center FTS 449-6200.

FIRST AID FOR CHOKING

CALL FOR HELP NUMBER



CONSCIOUS VICTIM

1



Ask the victim: "Are you choking?"
If the victim can speak, cough, or breathe, do not interfere.

2



If the victim cannot speak, cough, or breathe, apply subdiaphragmatic abdominal thrusts (the Heimlich maneuver) until the foreign body is expelled or the victim becomes unconscious.

IF VICTIM BECOMES UNCONSCIOUS

1



Open mouth and perform finger sweep.

2



Open airway and try to ventilate.

3



If unsuccessful, apply 6-10 subdiaphragmatic abdominal thrusts.

BE PERSISTENT

Activate the EMS system as soon as possible.
Repeat sequence: thrusts, finger sweep, attempt to ventilate.
Continue uninterrupted until advanced life support is available.

- Don't laugh and talk while chewing or swallowing.
- Avoid excessive intake of alcohol before and during meals.
- Keep children from walking, running or playing while they have food in their mouths.
- Keep small objects, such as marbles and thumbtacks, out of the reach of infants and small children.

Reunion Planned In Oakland

On Saturday, September 26, Oakland Towers will host a 50 Year Anniversary Reunion of former employees during the Oakland International Airport's Annual Airshow. The gathering is still in the planning stages, and the facility's Human Relations Committee is seeking the whereabouts of any former Oakland Towers employees, especially those that have retired. If you need any further details or have any information on former employees, please call Michael Motta at 415/273-7418 or 415/273-7419.