

Good morning. Thank you for coming to the FAA's sixth annual international aviation safety forum. This year, we have 500 attendees from 45 countries. Even at a time when things are tight with the budget, this industry takes time to learn best practices for safety's sake.

In short, that's the goal of this conference. Our aim is to make sure that we raise the relevant issues, that we discuss them thoroughly, and that we bring it back to the front lines.

With the economic difficulties facing our nations and the companies who form the backbone of this industry, it's never been more important to discuss the new ideas out there. The lesson of safety management systems is that there's much to be learned from data *and* discussion. For years, we've focused on the forensic sciences. That's gotten us to the place we are today.

But it's no longer enough. You know it. I know it. And the numbers prove it. The only way we're going to step up safety is by beating accident causes to the punch. We've got to remove the ignition source *before* it even gets a chance to spark a fire. The system is incredibly safe. It's to the point where we know with certainty that there are only a handful of accident causes left.

But it's the other category ... the *there's-no-way-anyone-could-have-anticipated-this* category ... that brings us here today. The clues to that category lie in our ability to collect data points in small amounts and let them fill in the shadows on the canvas. That will reveal accident causes in a way we can't do with a standard forensic approach.

Having said that, I encourage you to speak up. That's what we're here for. At the end of the day, we know that cutting back on safety is always the worst alternative. Safety should never be a line item in a budget, nor should it be a place to cut corners.

