



FAA Intercom

FAA Faces Budget Grief in FY2005

The House markup of the FY2005 budget sent a warning shot across the bow of the FAA that next year's financial situation is going to be more challenging than this year's.

The president's FY05 budget for the FAA requested a modest increase in operations spending while scaling back investments in facilities and equipment by almost \$400 million, or 13.6 percent, compared to the FY04 level. Despite this tight budget request, the House wants to

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'SWAT' Teams to Address DELPHI/PRISM Problems

The FAA is working to aggressively address frustration with the agency's new DELPHI financial management system and the new PRISM procurement system that the agency has had difficulty using since implementation last fall.

The Office of Financial Services is organizing "SWAT" teams to focus on the major operational areas causing the most difficulty.

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The FAA's budget turns grim, DELPHI faces SWAT teams, the TWO mentoring program expands, an FAAer fights a tornado, and much more!

New Rule Opens Flying Experience to Thousands



Ron Wojnar, Aircraft Certification Service deputy director, takes a seat in a 2004 AirBorne XTS 912 Trike after announcement of the sport pilot rule at Headquarters. Behind him is Peggy Gilligan, deputy associate administrator for Regulation and Certification.

If there were any doubt about general aviation's reaction to the FAA's new sport pilot rule, the home page of the Experimental Aircraft Association said it all: "Years of effort pay off! Your flying dreams are about to come true."

The FAA is expecting an influx of new pilots with the announcement of the much-anticipated rule.

The rule will make recreational flying — a growing segment of general aviation — safer while keeping it affordable and fun. It is cost effective and could help in introducing recreational flying to a new generation of pilots.

AOPA President Phil Boyer said: "It was important to AOPA that our members who love and support general aviation, but have let their medical certification lapse, be able to fly again. That's why we asked the FAA to make the rule effective quickly, and they responded."

The General Aviation Manufacturers Association said the rule "provides safe standards for an evolving category of general aviation aircraft and operations without being overly burdensome."

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News in Brief

Gowdy Honored with Posthumous Award

The Society of Automotive Engineers posthumously honored Van Gowdy with a lifetime achievement award at this year's General Aviation Technology Conference in Wichita, Kan.

Gowdy, who headed the biodynamics research team at the FAA's Civil Aerospace Medical Institute (CAMI) in Oklahoma City from 1980 until his death last December, was recognized for his contributions to aviation safety.

The award recognized Gowdy's diligent work in advancing occupant safety and his encouragement of other researchers to share their work at scientific meetings. Gowdy is also known for his work on aircraft child restraint systems.

Rick DeWeese, the biodynamics research team coordinator at CAMI, accepted the award on behalf of Gowdy's family. Gowdy's four children attended the ceremony.



Rick DeWeese (right) accepted the award on Van Gowdy's behalf. Joining him at the ceremony were Gowdy's children: Sara, Erin, Lana, and Bert.

Traffic Flow System to be Upgraded

Computer Sciences Corp. (CSC) will upgrade the agency's traffic flow management system as part of an initial contract worth \$13.5 million.

CSC will design an advanced computer platform that uses air traffic data from across the country to better predict when the number of flights exceeds available routes and capacity.

The FAA uses this information to reduce delays due to severe weather and congestion. Airlines also use it to provide accurate flight departure and arrival information to passengers.

The current traffic management flow system uses software developed over several decades. The new system will be expandable to handle future capabilities and keep pace with growing air traffic volume and complexity.

May Storms Wreck Havoc on Arrival Times

A seemingly never-ending series of storms in the Midwest and on the East Coast increased flight delays during May.

The on-time arrival rates of major airlines fell to 77.6 percent, compared to nearly 85 percent in May 2003, and 83 percent in April 2004. The storms and scheduling congestion at Chicago O'Hare International Airport hurt on-time arrival rates so badly that FAA management announced it could not meet its Flight Plan goal for on-time arrivals.

Airlines reported that 8.8 percent of their flights were delayed by aviation system delays, compared to 6.9 percent in April 2004; and 1.1 percent were affected by extreme weather, twice the rate of April. Weather is a factor in the extreme weather and aviation system categories.

The percentage of domestic flights cancelled during May — 1.7 percent — was double that of May 2003 and April 2004.

ANM's Charity Drive Ain't Half-Baked

They knew they were coming so they baked a cake. Actually, they baked a lot of cakes, not to mention brownies, cookies, and baklava.



Northwest Mountain's Great American Bake Sale raised \$2,000 for charity.

The occasion was the Northwest Mountain Region's "Great American Bake Sale" to benefit the hungry. The event raised \$2,000 for Share Our Strength, a Combined Federal Campaign charity that is dedicated to ending childhood hunger.

Sponsored by the region's Human Resources Division, and supported by the regional entertainment committee, employees from nearly every line of business participated. The sale included a live auction of desserts baked by the division managers, as well as two specialty cakes. The auction raised \$700.

Some 75 percent of the proceeds will fund summer and after-school meal programs in the states and communities where the funds were raised. The remaining money will fund programs in areas of extreme poverty, the Food and Action Research Center's national child advocacy efforts, and other anti-hunger organizations.



FAA Recognizes International Safety Audit Program

U.S. carriers may use a safety audit accreditation program developed by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to fulfill their responsibility to conduct safety audits of code-share partners.

The FAA recognized the international airline audit standards set by IATA's operational safety audit program. IATA launched the program last year following two years of intense development in conjunction with airlines and international aviation experts.

A review of the audit standards by the FAA determined that they are comparable to and consistent with the FAA's own standards.

Under the program, accredited audit organizations conduct operational safety audits of U.S. and non-U.S. carriers, including those that operate international flights for U.S. airlines under code-sharing agreements.

The program will provide U.S. carriers with another tool for meeting the Department of Transportation and FAA audit guidelines that call for foreign code-share partners to undergo periodic safety audits. U.S. airlines must certify the findings of any safety audit, including those performed by organizations accredited under the program. The audits will be valid for up to two years.

International Committee Hits 10-Year Mark

The Southwest Region International Aviation Committee recently celebrated 10 years of fostering cooperation with Mexico on aviation matters.

Formed in July 1994, the committee consists of division representatives who coordinate the Southwest Region's day-to-day international operations in Mexico; provide

a forum for regional initiatives in Mexico; foster inter-divisional teamwork, and make recommendations regarding the international programs to regional management, division and directorate managers.

The committee has developed a cadre of employees to whom regional managers can refer unique international aviation situations not ordinarily handled through the agency's surveillance, legal enforcement, or assessment offices.

Experts — such as U.S. Embassy employees and Mexican government officials — often are invited as guest speakers at committee meetings.



Members of the International Aviation Committee have fostered closer relations with Mexican aviation officials.

Chief among the committee's accomplishments are a Web-based country clearance request form and an automated approval process that utilizes Lotus Notes. The committee also has issued guidelines for official business travel to Mexico.

Civil Rights, Diversity to be Honored

The Eastern Region Employee Forum commemorated the 40th anniversary of the signing of the Civil Rights Bill by establishing a "Wall of Celebration" at regional headquarters.

The employee forum conceived of the idea of hanging a plaque to celebrate the Civil Rights Act, said Art Kenne in the Air Traffic Organization's Eastern Terminal Service Area. When presented with the idea, Regional Administrator Arlene Feldman suggested expanding the concept.

The wall now will feature plaques that "celebrate what Eastern Region employees are doing to honor the diversity of our society, and significant hallmarks such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964," said Kenne. Eastern Region employees may submit to the employee forum a nomination for an Eastern Region employee or significant anniversary that advanced the idea of diversity in society and the workplace. The plaques will be hung on a wall outside of the cafeteria where employees will have a chance to view them everyday.

As part of the ongoing emphasis on diversity, each group represented on the forum will make a presentation about a hallmark in the civil rights struggle for their particular group.

Correction

Part of an item in last month's News in Brief section was incorrect. Regarding an FAA contract with Lockheed Martin, it is the FAA that will select an airport at which an airport surveillance system might be evaluated.

A paragraph in last month's article, "Travel Charge Card Amnesty Offered for Two Months," could be misleading. While the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) does counsel employees about a variety of issues, including financial difficulties, it is not directly involved with the administrator's travel charge card amnesty program.

Also, the telephone number for the EAP in the same article was incorrect. The correct number is (800) 234-1327.



Honoring the Wright Stuff

Two bicycle shop owners have now taken their places among those of other famous Americans who have had buildings in Washington, D.C., named after them.

By decree of Congress, the names of Orville and Wilbur Wright now adorn the two FAA Headquarters buildings, joining those of Reagan, Hoover (J. Edgar and Herbert) and Kennedy that also grace federal buildings.

In an event capping the centennial of flight celebrations, Administrator Marion Blakey, congressmen and relatives of the Wright Brothers attended the dedication ceremony.

Amanda Wright Lane, great grandniece of the Wright Brothers, shared family memories of "Uncle Orv," whose "crippling shyness" must have been bittersweet payback for launching the era of flight. Nevertheless, she said, the FAA couldn't have chosen two "finer or more remarkable" individuals to honor.

Blakey noted "perseverance, strength of conviction, a willingness to do what the great many said couldn't be done" were the hallmarks of the Wright Brothers'



Administrator Blakey, DOT Secretary Mineta and Wright Brothers' great grandniece, Amanda Wright Lane, participate in the ribbon cutting for the Wilbur Wright Building.

success.

"May our efforts testify to the vision of Orville Wright and Wilbur Wright," she said. "Given the track record of the men and women who stand before me now, I'm confident that it will," she said.

Internal Comm Plan Due Next Month

The FAA's effort to improve internal communications continued into the month of July. InSidedge, the company that is assisting the agency in strengthening internal communications, has talked with nearly 200 executives, managers and non-supervisory employees across the country about the state of communications at FAA.

"The biggest thing I've been hearing is that people want to make their voice heard," said Ann Melinger, one of several consultants interviewing FAA employees. "Employees have good ideas that can help the agency work toward its goals, but they are frustrated because they feel like nobody is listening."

Employees also want communication that is more timely and relevant to their work. Melinger said she's also sensing a "sort of nostalgia" for the old ways of doing things. This is common for any organization that's going through major change, she explained.

Managers, on the other hand, are hoping that field employees will remain patient because the changes that are in store will take place gradually.

InSidedge's preliminary findings have been presented to the administrator and senior management. It will present its recommendations and internal communications plan to the agency next month.

Controller's Child Has Miles to Go toward Recovery

It started with a kick to the shin of Miles Foisy, the 12-year-old son of Cleveland Center controller Dan Foisy. But what followed was more like a kick in the gut of the entire Foisy family.

The relatively mild shin bruise that Miles sustained during a soccer game on June 2 eventually revealed something far more serious.

After waking up the next morning feeling ill and with excessive bruising, Miles was taken to the hospital where he was diagnosed with juvenile leukemia.

Now the Foisy family has rallied around Miles and they've gotten a lot of help from friends and coworkers. At press time, more than two dozen people — mainly FAAers — had donated platelets to aid Miles' recovery. Platelets are tiny blood cells formed in the bone marrow that are essential for clotting.

Doctors said that volume of donations is "phenomenal for one person," according to Elaine Kimbler, administrative assistant to the center manager.

Miles returned home July 2 and the good news is that he is currently in remission. However, he will be undergoing chemotherapy treatment for at least the next year, plus more testing and other treatment. Platelets can still be donated in Miles' name. If Miles does not need them, they will go to another child.



Miles Foisy

Employees working in or passing through the Cleveland area who wish to donate platelets should contact the hospital at (800) 238-6364. The facility, part of University Hospitals, is located at 11100 Euclid Ave. in Cleveland.



TWO Mentoring Program Expands into Regions

The Technical Women's Organization's (TWO) mentoring program is expanding this year into at least two new regions.

The program, which is sponsored in conjunction with Professional Women Controllers, has been a mainstay for employee training and improvement at FAA Headquarters since 1998.

Technical Operations in the Southwest Region used a modified version of the TWO mentoring program last year and is planning to expand it this year. Now the Western-Pacific and Northwest Mountain Regions will offer mentoring to employees at their regional headquarters and in facilities within 50 miles of the headquarters.

At press time, there was the possibility that other regions might begin offering the mentoring program, as well.

"The mentor program is an excellent opportunity to inspire employees," said Marcia Corey, Mentor Program manager. "Participants learn about the FAA, about themselves, and about their values,

goals and aspirations — a holistic look at who they are, how they fit in, and what they need to focus on for professional and personal growth. It's challenging, rewarding, and fun," Corey added.

Employees may apply for the program at Headquarters and in the regions beginning Sept. 1. Mentors and their protégés will be paired in October, with the program kicking off in November. It runs through June.

With 25 graduates this year and 163 graduates to date, the mentoring program is well established at Headquarters. Protégés meet with their mentors regularly for guidance, and attend seminars and workshops to improve their work skills and knowledge of the agency.

Both mentors and their protégés have expressed enthusiasm about the program.

Jaime Eley, a NAS Configuration Management and Evaluation employee, said she got a "sense of satisfaction" upon achieving the goals she'd set for herself.

Patricia Ware, a management and program analyst in the Office of Acquisitions, said she learned "the ins and outs of the FAA."

Tom Holloway, manager of the Office of Environment and Energy, became a mentor for the first time this year. He liked the personal interaction with his protégé, Ellen Muldoon.

"I enjoyed what I did and it was a very rewarding experience for me," Holloway said. "I think we should encourage more people to look at the program so they can learn more about FAA and more about themselves."

"The program met my expectations by giving me the opportunity to learn and grow in my professional career," said Shirley M. Stroman, an analyst in the Office of Rulemaking. "This growth has given me a revived confidence that I can make my dreams happen, both professionally and personally," she added.

Lesley Poberezny contributed to this story.



Fifty mentors and protégés participated in this year's TWO mentoring program.



Northwest Mountain Region Leads FAA in Thinking Green

The new large Seattle-Tacoma TRACON is actually a low, crouching building, clad in brown and gray. In another sense, however, it's a greenhouse.

When planning began to build the TRACON, Technical Operations planners were determined to show their green thumbs in making the facility a showcase for environmental awareness. The TRACON's design will be used as a template for Technical Operations' modernization plans for other facilities.

The success of the concept was made official recently when the Green Building Counsel gave the tower its gold-level certification for leadership in energy and environmental design, the first FAA building to earn such a designation.

No stone went unturned to achieve the gold certification. Lights automatically dim to decrease energy use



The new SeaTac TRACON has been recognized for its environmental design.

in offices when natural light is adequate. A high percentage of the building materials were recycled. All heating and cooling equipment will be monitored constantly to make sure they are operating at peak efficiency. All finished products used indoors had to meet guidelines to cut down on air contaminants in order to increase occupant health and comfort.

Specifications were designed to reduce the impact of moving building materials on the environment. Natural vegetation that doesn't require much watering was used to landscape around the building. The region anticipates watering costs will be cut by at least 30 percent.

Remember the Hatch Act this Election Year

It's election time again and the U.S. Office of the Special Counsel wants to remind employees about their responsibilities concerning political activities.

The Hatch Act restricts the political activity of employees of the federal government. In 1993, Congress passed legislation that significantly amended the Hatch Act as it applies to federal employees. Following are some do's and don'ts regarding elections and federal employees.

Employees may:

- ◆ be candidates for public office in non partisan elections
- ◆ register and vote as they choose
- ◆ assist in voter registration drives
- ◆ express opinions about candidates and issues

- ◆ contribute money to political organizations
- ◆ attend political fundraising functions
- ◆ attend and be active at political rallies and meetings
- ◆ join and be an active member of a political party or club
- ◆ sign nominating petitions
- ◆ campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, municipal ordinances
- ◆ campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections
- ◆ make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections
- ◆ distribute campaign literature in partisan elections
- ◆ hold office in political clubs or parties

Employees may not:

- ◆ use official authority or influence to interfere with an election
- ◆ solicit or discourage political activity from anyone with business before the FAA
- ◆ solicit or receive political contributions (this may be allowed in certain limited situations by federal labor or other employee organizations)
- ◆ be candidates for public office in partisan elections
- ◆ engage in political activity while on duty, in a government office, wearing an official uniform, or using a government vehicle
- ◆ wear partisan political buttons on duty

Additional information about the Hatch Act may be obtained by viewing the Special Counsel's Web site at www.osc.gov.



Heroes Emerge in the Eye of a Storm

Colleen Healy knew she and her family were in trouble when the tops of the 80-foot pine trees began "snapping like toothpicks."

She remembers her husband, Bernie, an environmental supervisor at the Chicago Center in Aurora, Ill., standing on the steps of their camper trying to hold it down as a tornado hit their camp in Jellystone Park in Warrens, Wis., on June 23.

Afraid that the camper, along with the three children inside would be blown away, Colleen reached inside to pull them out. When she turned around, Bernie was lying on the ground with a tree limb on top of him. His head was split open and he was bleeding profusely.

So began Colleen's literal life-and-death race to save her husband. Moments earlier, Healy had acted the hero by pulling 11-year-old Brent Jones into the camper, likely saving his life. But as Jones told the *La Cross Tribune*, "[Healy] didn't get inside in time."

Colleen faced a woman's worst nightmare: She was trying to protect Jones and her children — 11-year-old Chad and 7-year-old Shannon — even as they urged her to help her husband.

They managed to pull the tree off of Healy. "He was really bad off," Colleen recalled. She remembered thinking they had to get him out of there or he wouldn't make it. "I was ready to put him over my shoulder and carry him," she said.

Just when it seemed fate had stranded the Healy family, their luck changed in the presence of two strangers.



A pair of heroes: Bernie Healy (top) rescued an 11-year-old boy just before a tornado hit their campsite. Below is Ryan Brummet, with his mother. Ryan assisted Healy after he was seriously injured.

Lifeguard Ryan Brummet was in a nearby restaurant and rushed to the scene when the call came for assistance at the campsite. Healy was walking, totally unaware of his injury and trying to deny assistance. Brummet and Colleen Healy managed to corral him into a golf cart with great struggle; Bernie apparently hit Brummet trying to get away.

The second piece of luck came in the guise of a paramedic, who just happened to be camping down the road from the Healys.

The paramedic had his equipment with him and bandaged Healy. He tried to arrange for an air medic helicopter, but they were grounded

because of the weather. So Healy was transported via ambulance to the nearest hospital in Toma.

"God just put everybody in the right place," Colleen said.

Healy eventually was airlifted in critical condition to St. Franciscan Skemp Hospital. Diagnosed with a fractured skull and brain injuries, he was placed on a respirator, and then given steroid shots and put into a drug-induced coma to prevent further swelling of his brain. "The doctors told me it was literally a miracle that he was alive," said Colleen.

Having already defied death, Healy began defying doctors' predictions. He emerged from the coma in a week; the doctors expected him to be under for several weeks.

He progressed well enough to be transferred to Chicago on July 6 where a rehabilitation center evaluated his situation.

Colleen is breathing easier now that it's clear Bernie will live. Still, she and her family face a long road. "Is his life going to be changed and altered? Yes," she said plainly.

Bernie went home on July 24, just one month after nearly dying. Those interested in his recovery can access the Web site at www.bernieupdate.us for the latest news.

Some details of the tornado were culled from *La Cross Tribune* stories.



Recognition

Aerospace Medicine handed out honors at its 12th annual awards program during a ceremony in McLean, Va. A national awards panel selected the winners in each category. Receiving awards were **Robert M. Shaffstall** for Outstanding Manager; **Noal D. May**, Ph.D., Outstanding Leadership; **Tuanb D. Diep**, Outstanding Innovator; **Connie L. Ingram** and **Jeffrey M. Pratt**, Outstanding Team; **Lori J. Stormo** and **Paula M. Harkins**, Administrative Excellence; **Elaine M. Pfeiderer**, **Russell J. Lewis**, Ph.D., and **O. Veronika Prinzo**, Ph.D., The William E. Collins Publication Award; **Dennis V. Canfield**, Ph.D., and **Michael E. Wayda**, AAM Mission Support; **Jennifer G. Szatkowski**, Outstanding Customer Service; **Dorothy B. Tharnish**, Friend of AAM; **Walter D. Davis**, M.D., Flight Surgeon of the Year; **Connie L. Holle**, Inspector of the Year; **Kara M. Semer**, and **Jean D. Mack-Choyce**, Regional Employee of the Year; and **Medical Specialties Division**, AAM Office of the Year.

The Air Transport Association recognized **Jim Ballough**, director of the Flight Standards Service, with its annual "Nuts and Bolts" Award. The honor is given to "individuals who have gone the extra mile and succeeded in improving the system or component processes related to airline engineering, maintenance or materiel management." Ballough is the third consecutive FAA employee to win the award. Last year, Nick Sabatini, associate administrator for Regulation and Certification, received it in the non-airline category. In 2002, John Hickey, director of the Aircraft Certification Service, received the award.

Jim Burress received a NAS Implementation Support Contract "Spot Award" for using the Heimlich Maneuver to come to the aid of an FAA employee who was choking.



Members of the Medical Specialties Division received their office of the year award from Dr. Jon Jordan (center).

Jimmy Szajkovics, safety programs manager at the Milwaukee Flight Standards District Office, presented an award to a medical helicopter crew for saving the lives of two men on snowmobiles who plunged into the waters of Green Bay, Wis. Receiving the commendation were pilot George Miller, paramedic Shaun Stamnes, and emergency medical technician Mike Orlando.

Rudolph Escobedo, Gulf Coast SMO manager, received the regional EEO manager of the year award from the Aeronautical Center/Southwest Region National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees.

The Wyoming Federal Executive Council gave **Kurt J. Carpenter**, operations manager at the Casper Automated Flight Service Station, its 2004 Outstanding Civil Servant Award.



Kurt J. Carpenter

Mark Wilborn and **Louis Vargo**, principal maintenance inspector and principal avionics inspector, respectively, from the Fort Worth FSDO, received bronze medallions from the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) for outstanding contributions to drug law enforcement. Their work in certifying an ATR-42 enabled the DEA to complete a special mission the following day that involved the safety and lives of nearly 50 people.



Vargos (left) and Wilborn receive plaques commending their work with the DEA.



FAA Focuses on DELPHI/PRISM Issues

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The complexity of the new systems has created a "large learning curve," said Ramesh Punwani, chief financial officer. Initial implementation problems — common for complex systems such as DELPHI and PRISM — created a large backlog of transactions, including processing contract actions, paying bills and billing customers.

The decision to develop new financial systems evolved in 1997 when the Department of Transportation determined that the Departmental Accounting and Financial Information System (DAFIS) was nearing the end of its lifecycle and could not meet the current and future needs of the DOT.

Not compliant with government accounting standards, DAFIS did not always enforce the correct processing of transactions, thereby causing tremendous workload problems in many areas, especially at year-end when preparing financial statements.

For example, the FY03 financial statements required more than 500 accounting adjustments to correct the improper accounting done in DAFIS.

The DOT needed a state-of-the-art, commercial off-the-shelf financial system. The new system had to provide for continuous enhancements, extensive and flexible reporting, and financial statements created directly from the system, and serve as the foundation for cost accounting information.

A team of representatives from the FAA, Coast Guard, and Federal Highways Administration, developed criteria to assess alternate systems and eventually decided that DELPHI was the solution.

At the same time, the FAA decided to implement the PRISM procurement system and introduce the Cru-X labor distribution system to track the cost of labor in the former Air Traffic Services. These systems provide the FAA with an integrated procurement, property, and financial system, facilitate project cost management, and enhance financial reporting capabilities.

These multiple initiatives, as well as a government-wide mandate to cut 45 days off the schedule for producing year-end financial statements, significantly increased the complexity of the agency's conversion and led to consternation and disgruntlement among many FAA employees.

Punwani credited the "huge amount of work throughout the lines of business and by the DELPHI / PRISM Team" for fixing software bugs, resolving bad data, and reducing the backlog of transactions by the end of June — all in time to produce quality data for financial statement audit work.

To prioritize the most critical initiatives that were affecting the agency's ability to receive a clean opinion on its financial statements, a list of the "Top 16" issues was created in March 2004.

Bobby Sturgell, FAA deputy administrator, provided ongoing guidance in bi-weekly meetings to chart the progress for the June 30 deadline. More than half of the "Top 16" issues were completed, but

challenges still remain. The FAA has updated the list, taking into consideration operational problems and what is needed for the clean audit.

First, the FAA continues to focus on improving data integrity by cleaning up suspense accounts, reclassifying expenditures based on lines of business reconciliations, and correcting some remaining data problems.

A new focus will be reengineering business processes for receiving goods, paying invoices, and processing reimbursable bills.

The SWAT teams will include Headquarters and field accounting staff, lines of business finance staff, as well as DOT and vendor experts. The SWAT teams will begin operating immediately.

Despite the clear long-term benefits of having modern integrated financial and procurement systems, transition problems involving data cleanup, business process reengineering, and shifts in workload are difficult and frustrating for management and the workforce, said Punwani.

"We are currently working our way through this process," Punwani said. "Our success in overcoming these challenges will be the result of all of our employees working together to solve the remaining problems."





Back to Headquarters

New Gym to Open in September

Like a trained athlete, the new FAA Headquarters Wellness/Fitness Center is beefing up for its anticipated opening next month.

With a fourfold increase in size, the new facility in the Wilbur Wright Building kicks sand in the face of the current small gym in the Orville Wright Building. The group exercise room alone is about the size of the current gym, said Wanda Manochehri, FAA Wellness/Fitness manager at the gym. "We will have all exercise equipment a gym is supposed to have," she said.



That includes — Hallelujah! — separate locker rooms for men and women with four showers each (one shower in each locker room is set aside for the disabled). That means the split gender hours that plagued FAA employees for decades will be dropped. Male and female employees will be able to exercise anytime Monday through Friday between 6 a.m.-7 p.m.

With the additional space, new equipment and convenient hours, Manochehri believes the gym will attract new members. She would like to see the current membership of 403 increase to at least 700-800 to provide health benefits to more employees.

The current \$90-per-year dues will increase to \$120. Lockers can be rented for \$75 per year. But with the increased dues comes a far superior facility.

All of the cardio and weight equipment is being updated. There will be six treadmills, six elliptical cross trainers, four recumbent and three upright stationary bikes, and two ARC trainers, a type of upgraded Stairmaster. Employees doing their cardio workouts can catch up on the news and other programming by watching the overhead closed-captioned TVs.

For strength training, there will be approximately 30 weightlifting machines designed to isolate different muscles while working the upper, middle and lower body, plus plenty of free weights.

The group exercise room will feature classes in yoga, kickboxing, Tae Bo, and resistance training, and regular aerobics. Guest instructors also will be invited to teach specialty exercise classes.

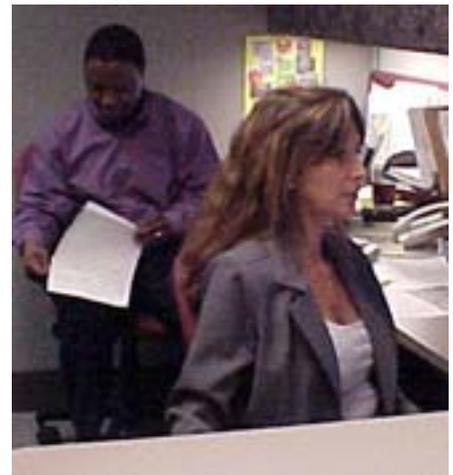
The gym will highlight regular health awareness programs, such as body fat composition, blood pressure screening, optional fitness assessments, and basic workout prescriptions.

The grand opening will feature tours, fitness demonstrations on new exercise equipment, a small health fair, and free fitness giveaways. As an added incentive for employees thinking of starting an exercise program, new members who sign up during the grand opening will receive two weeks free membership.

Financial Customer Service Desk Opens

A new customer service desk has opened at Headquarters that assists employees who use the DELPHI financial management system.

The Financial Operations customer service desk was opened "to provide prompt answers, resolutions and explanations of accounting operational issues at a single location," said Carol Rose, acting manager of the Accounting Operations Division.



Helen Hnarakis and Sikolia Edwin are available to answer questions at the Financial Customer Service Desk.

The center answers questions about contract payments, invoice status, travel authorizations and voucher payments, billings and collections, and coding of payment documents. It also handles other accounting issues dealing with travel credit card inquiries, purchase card payments, direct deposit information, travel manager, and employee separation.

The desk, located in Room 533 of the Orville Wright Building, is open from 8
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a.m.- 4:30 p.m. daily. Headquarters employees can contact the desk at x75081 or (866) 787-2666, or by email at 9-AWA-ABA-AFM200-Helpdesk@faa.gov.

Brown Bag Lunches Focus on System Safety

The Office of System Safety recently held two brown bag lunches to educate employees about its programs. More than 100 employees attended.

Employees learned what safety data, tools and services are available through the National Aviation Safety Data Analysis Center, and how to access the center from their desktop computers.

Participants learned about how the Global Aviation Information Network (GAIN) program advances aviation safety concepts and influences safety programs in organizations around the globe. They learned how to locate GAIN publications and contribute to the workgroup activities and products.

Also discussed was the FAA-sponsored Aviation Safety Reporting System that collects 35,000 voluntarily submitted incident reports annually. The system provides safety information about a variety of hazards and insights into why they happen.

Employees also learned about the FAA Aviation Safety Hotline, a 24-hour service that is available to anyone who wishes to report violations of Federal Aviation Regulations and unsafe aviation practices. They also heard about the 6-step process in safety risk management.

Take Ten

A new health awareness program that began July 29 encourages federal employees to take 10 minutes out of their day to exercise.

The program is aimed at promoting healthier lifestyles at a time when 70 percent of Americans don't engage in any physical activity. It is scheduled to last through September.



Employees are encouraged to take a brisk 10-minute walk or related exercise each day at work to ease stress and improve health. They're encouraged to wear "Take Ten" stickers when they walk to promote the effort and spread the word among coworkers.

The stickers are applied to a calendar at the end of the day to help employees track their progress. Sign-up forms, stickers and calendars are available at the health clinic on the 3rd floor of the Orville Wright Building.

This pilot program was developed by a team of federal employees as part of the executive potential program at the Agriculture Department's graduate school.

If successful, the program might be expanded to include other agencies around the country. For more information, contact Dr. James Fraser at x34850.

The Office of Personnel Management also offers advice on healthy lifestyles at its Web site: www.opm.gov/healthierfeds/#.

FAA/Industry Gold Tournament Slated for September

The 11th annual FAA/Industry fall golf classic is scheduled for Sept. 29 at the Shenandoah Valley Golf Club in Front Royal, Va.

The main event is an afternoon 18-hole scramble with optional individual stroke play in the morning. The entry fee is \$85 for the scramble, and \$120 for the scramble and stroke play. The fee includes carts, range balls, prizes, breakfast, box lunch, dinner, and gift.

Entries close on Sept. 17 or when a full field of 224 has been reached. For more information, contact Dave Knorr at (202) 220-3357, or Roger Martino at (202) 493-5935.



The System Safety Office's brown bag lunches drew more than 100 employees.



Sport Pilot Rule Hailed by General Aviation Interests

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Immense interest in the rule was evident from the start. A request for comments from the FAA about the rule garnered more than 5,000 responses.

Administrator Marion Blakey, in announcing the rule, said, "If you've always wanted to become a pilot, but the cost and the time required were too much, today is your big day."

be used for flight training and rental, something not previously allowed.

The experimental light-sport certificate applies to aircraft deemed "ready to fly" when the manufacturer determines the aircraft meets standards developed by the FAA and industry. It may

be used only for personal use.

Maintenance and inspection requirements accompany the two certificates, as well as new pilot training and certification requirements.

The FAA estimates that 15,000 people will earn sport-pilot certificates.



Photo: Mario Tuscano

Blakey, EAA President Tom Poberezny, and Sue Gardner, the FAA's national program manager for sport and recreational aviation, get cozy in a Kit Fox fixed-wing aircraft.

The FAA estimates that the cost of acquiring a sport pilot certificate would be \$2,600, compared to \$9,000 for a regular airman's certificate. In return, pilots get the benefit of certification standards for the aircraft, maintenance, inspection, training and flight reviews that were previously unavailable to the industry.

Sport pilots must have a driver's license and undergo training and flight instruction, but on a scale much narrower than for private pilots who fly larger, faster aircraft.

The rule creates two new special airworthiness certificates: one for a light-sport aircraft and one for experimental light-sport aircraft. Light-sport aircraft can

FAA Sailing Financial Straits Again this Year

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reduce FAA operations funding by \$125 million below the president's FY2005 budget level. That's twice the size of the cuts made to the FAA operations budget last year by the House. The Senate has not begun marking up the budget, but FAA officials are uncertain that the president's budget will prevail.

The House cuts, along with another possible \$125 million in projected rescissions and other assessments, will force dramatic changes at the FAA in the upcoming fiscal year. Employees should also expect aggressive cost reductions and reprioritization of projects.

In the July Flight Plan review, Chief Financial Officer Ramesh Punwani

spoke bluntly about the agency's financial straits. "This is huge. This is a heads up that the task in '05 is much more onerous" than this year, he said.

The Flight Plan is one of the areas in which the funding crisis could become apparent. A large number of Flight Plan initiatives have yet to be funded. The funding crisis could force the agency to adjust some of the initiatives. The management board will decide this before the beginning of the next fiscal year.

The budget cutbacks are "a reflection of the times," Punwani said. Factors such as a declining aviation trust fund and the war in Iraq have created a very tough budget environment.

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