



FAA Intercom

DELPHI Catching Up on Payment Backlog

The FAA caught up in its payment of backlogged travel vouchers at the end of last month.

When the FAA transitioned to its new DELPHI financial system, it expected a backlog of transactions that would need to be managed. The backlog first appeared with travel vouchers.

Some employees expressed concern that their personal credit would be damaged because they could not pay off their travel charge card until they were reimbursed.

Managers were concerned that employees might be prevented from traveling for their jobs because their cards had been suspended for non-payment.

"The number-one issue for the FAA was to make sure our employees did not suffer financial losses as a result of the transition to DELPHI," said Tim Lawler, acting director for the Office of Financial Management.

Lawler asked Citibank, the government credit card provider, to temporarily lift the suspension on travel cards for employees with mission-critical travel needs. Citibank agreed that any employee who is referred to a credit bureau as a result of the DELPHI transition would not have their personal credit damaged. Citibank will request removal of *continued on page 6*

FAA Takes Action on O'Hare Delays



United and American airlines have agreed to reduce their number of flights during peak hours at Chicago O'Hare.

The FAA is taking new action to fight a record rise in the number of delays at Chicago O'Hare International Airport.

Nearly 40 percent of O'Hare arrivals were delayed in November and December, with an average of 492 delays per day and an average of nearly 1-hour delay per aircraft. Delays in December created a ripple effect throughout the system, leading to an overall increase in delays at the nation's top 35 airports.

Top agency executives had been in constant contact separately with representatives from the airport and United and American airlines, the two major carriers there, throughout January. Their

sense of urgency is clear when considering O'Hare's location and the major presence of America's two largest carriers, making it a key airport in the National Airspace System.

FAA executives also are acutely aware that the busy summer season is just around the corner.

"The public must have confidence that their flights will take off and land on time," said Administrator Marion Blakey. "The current level of flight delays at O'Hare is unacceptable. We had no choice but to call upon the airlines for relief in the interest of the flying public."

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In This Issue:
Read about the latest ATO staff changes, flower power for sick kids, an air traffic choreographer, and the FAA's role in helping an Orlando science center.



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News in Brief

FAA's February Focus is on Commercial Space

The FAA's 7th annual Commercial Space Transportation Conference is scheduled for Feb. 10-11 in Washington, D.C.

Sessions will be held on the history of commercial space transportation, new developments in propulsion, environmental streamlining, and system safety.

Elon Musk, founder and chief executive of SpaceX, a company that is developing low-cost rockets for orbiting spacecraft, will speak before the emerging suborbital market panel. Employees from Commercial Space will moderate each session and appear on some panels.

Other scheduled speakers include Jeffrey Shane, DOT's under secretary for policy; Peter Diamandis, founder and chairman of the X-Prize Foundation; Ronald Sega, former astronaut and DOD director of defense research and engineering; and Rep. Tom Feeney from the Florida district that includes the Kennedy Space Center.

2003 Shows Across-the-Board TSP Increases

For the first time since 1998, all of the funds in the Thrift Savings Plan showed positive returns last year.

The "S" small cap fund lead the way with a 43 percent return on investment in 2003, followed by the international "I" fund at 38 percent, and the "C" stock fund at 28.5 percent. The government "G" and "F" bond funds each showed a return of 4.11 percent.

All the funds showed gains in December as well. The I fund lead the month with a 7.7 percent return, followed by the C fund (5.24 percent), S fund (2.04 percent), F fund (1.01 percent) and G fund (0.49 percent)



Elon Musk poses with his first complete Falcon launch vehicle. The FAA helped arrange for public display of the new vehicle last month in front of Headquarters.

Cleveland TRACON Tops Old Record

The Cleveland Terminal Radar Approach Control (TRACON) broke its single-hour arrival record on Dec. 27. The TRACON accepted and landed 57 aircraft within a 1-hour period using a dual runway operation, beating the old record of 56.

Credited with the feat were Jim Lanum, Kevin O'Keefe, Julie Accavello, Jim Doyle, and Steve Stasek. Glen Krafcik kept it all running smoothly.

Advanced Warning on Icing Conditions Now Available

The FAA has approved a new system that gives advance warning to the aviation community about possible icing conditions. It will go on-line at <http://adds.aviationweather.gov/> next month.

The Forecast Icing Potential identifies areas where icing might occur by showing a graphical picture of icing conditions up to 12 hours ahead of time. Using this information, pilots — especially those flying general aviation aircraft — can determine safe routes to travel.

The pictures, created from computer modeling of weather conditions, display the information as a horizontal view

of icing potential at flight levels from 3,000 to 21,000 feet. It can also depict overall altitudes in a vertical cross section. Dispatchers are able to see the data in three-, six-, nine- and 12-hour intervals.



The graphics complement simple text forecasts provided by the National Weather Service.

Forecast Icing Potential was developed for the FAA's Aviation Weather Research Program by the National Center for Atmospheric Research.



New Rule Promotes Increased Visibility

A new technology approved by the FAA gives pilots improved vision when trying to land at airports in poor weather conditions.

Pilots may now use enhanced flight vision system equipment to fly a standard instrument approach procedure to as low as 100 feet above the runway, even when the airport is not visible to the naked eye. Under current rules, pilots aren't allowed to attempt instrument approaches below a certain altitude if the airport can't be seen.

The equipment uses infrared imaging sensors that depict on a display a real-time image of the topography around an airport. The pilot would be better able to detect objects such as approach lights, or obstructions on runways, such as aircraft or vehicles, earlier in the approach. The technology also allows pilots to see potential runway incursions during ground operations in reduced visibility conditions.

Because of the equipment cost, the new rule applies mainly to air carriers, corporate jets and small air carrier aircraft.

FAA Adds to Fleet

The FAA has ordered a new Challenger 604 widebody jet from Canadian manufacturer Bombardier for use in runway and airway calibration and other special missions.

The new aircraft will join a fleet

The FAA has ordered a Challenger 604 for use in runway and airway calibration.



of three 601-3R jets based in Oklahoma City that are used mainly for worldwide runway calibration missions. The FAA also flies six Learjet 60s for civil and military runway calibration.

"We have been very satisfied with our Challenger 601-3R aircraft and look forward to further strengthening our capabilities with these aircraft," said Joe D. Smith, the FAA contracting officer.

The new jet is scheduled for delivery in November. The FAA also has placed options for two more Challenger 604s.

GAIN Project Shows Promise

An FAA-sponsored project demonstrated the concept for a text mining system that furthers airline flight safety data analysis.



Text mining capability is a central element in the Global Aviation Information Network's (GAIN) ability to identify and share safety information throughout the aviation community.

The text mining system developed by a company called Megaputer Intelligence

analyzed large amounts of raw data supplied by Southwest Airlines and converted them into visual graphs.

"Exciting advances in text and data mining tools are enhancing the aviation community's ability to convert ever-growing volumes of data into valuable knowledge to further improve an already-commendable safety record," said Christopher Hart, assistant administrator for System Safety.

Harris Corp. Joins Specialists in A-76 Competition

Flight Service specialists have a new ally in the competition to bid for their positions.

Harris Corp., a well-known FAA contractor, will join with specialists to compete for the management and operation of the automated flight service station operation in the upcoming public/private A-76 competition. They have formed a team called the "Most Efficient Organization" (MEO) for the competition.

The A-76 competitive process allows private companies and the MEO to "bid" for services traditionally provided by the federal government to provide improved services at reduced costs to the public.

Ten vendors have expressed interest in becoming prime contractors in the competition. The FAA's goal is to narrow the field down to 3-5 offerers — including the MEO — by August.

The Office of Human Resources Management is discussing ways of minimizing the impact of the competitive process on specialists with the National Association of Air Traffic Specialists.

Correction

The name of the manager of the Technical Employee Suggestion Program mentioned in the January 2004 issue ("Suggestion Program Nets FAAer Big Buck\$" on p. 4) was misspelled in one instance. Her name is Lisa Bercher.



People

ATO Fills Two Positions

John Thornton and William S. Davis are the latest additions to the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) management team.

In addition, Chief Operating Officer Russ Chew announced the offices and their directors that will appear under each operating unit of the ATO (access www.ato.faa.gov and click on "ATO Information" and "ATO Directorates").

Thornton has been named acting vice president for communications. He had been director of the Free Flight program office, which is now part of the ATO. He also had been communications manager for Free Flight Phase 1 and later was in charge of Free Flight Phase 2.



William S. Davis

John Thornton

From 1983 to 1995, Thornton played a key role in reorganizing the controller workforce. He was instrumental in establishing the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, where he served for more than 10 years in various executive positions.

As the acting vice president for ATO safety, Davis is taking the first steps to build the new internal safety and quality assurance service unit. He will continue as director of the Office of Runway Safety, which works to reduce one of the agency's top performance metrics — runway incursions.

His extensive aviation experience includes serving as the deputy associate

administrator for Civil Aviation Security and the chief of the U.S. Coast Guard Aviation Safety. Davis is an airline transport pilot rated in multiengine jet, turboprop and helicopter aircraft, with more than 25 years of domestic and international flying.

REDAC Chairman Named

DOT Secretary Norman Mineta announced that John J. Hamre has been selected to serve a 2-year term as chairman of the FAA's Research, Engineering and Development Advisory Committee (REDAC).

REDAC advises the administrator on research and development issues, and coordinates the FAA's research, **engineering and development activi-**

John J. Hamre

ties with industry and other government agencies.

Administrator Marion Blakey said Hamre's expertise and background would be "particularly invaluable as we move forward with performance-based management and increased accountability at the FAA."

Hamre, president and chief executive officer of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, has a broad range of experience on defense, congressional and security issues. He has served in top-level positions at the Department of Defense, and was a staff member for the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Getting the Connection

The Air Traffic Organization is entering the second phase of its overhaul of telecommunications by implementing the FAA Telecommunications Infrastructure (FTI).

Having just achieved its first major program milestone - receiving the okay to link the 27 major facilities that comprise the backbone of the FAA's air traffic control system - the ATO now is planning to link all remaining facilities in the National Airspace System (NAS).

"The services we provide tie all of that together," said Steve Dash, telecommunications manager in the ATO's Technical Operations Unit. "It's a massive enterprise."

Among the services that the contractor, Harris Corp., is providing are voice communications between controllers and surveillance information between the airport and control tower.

By consolidating its networks and sub-networks under one contractor, the FAA expects to reap more efficiency and "much lower costs," which Dash estimated to be in the \$700 million range over the 15-year life of the contract. If the economy changes for better or worse, the prices specified in the contract can only be negotiated downward.

With the successful testing of FTI at Kansas City, Fort Worth and the William J. Hughes Technical Center, the FAA will spend the summer linking the "backbone" of remaining en route centers, the Herndon Command and Control Center and the VOLPE facility. This first phase should be done by the end of September.

The second phase would extend the network to about 600 manned sites, including 349 air traffic control facilities, and thousands of unmanned remote sites, such as radar locations. A decision to proceed on the second phase is due in July, with the schedule for completion by the end of 2007.



FAA to Play Big Role in Air Transportation System for 2025

The FAA will play a major role in a new far-reaching planning effort to improve air transportation that will be as revolutionary and important to the nation as the creation of the interstate highway system proved to be for the 20th century.

In a Jan. 27 speech to the Aero Club, Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta announced the Next Generation Air Transportation System initiative, a multi-year, multi-agency effort to develop the air transportation system for the year 2025 and beyond.

"If the United States wants to retain its global air transportation leadership — and we do — we need to modernize and transform our air transportation system starting right now," Mineta said. (The full speech can be found at www.dot.gov/affairs/briefing.htm under "Aero Club of Washington.")

The FAA is working with the Department of Transportation, NASA, the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and Commerce, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and other experts from the public and private sectors to transform the system.

This collaboration, which will result in the *National Plan for the Transformation of Air Transportation*, represents a unified public/private sector commitment to shape air transportation policy and research in a way that results in more jobs, a strong economy, and a more positive balance of trade.

This plan for the first time will provide a common long-term vision, with key transformation steps, that each of the agencies can use in their internal planning and to guide investment decisions both public and private.

The DOT has established a Joint Planning and Development Office (JPDO) based at the FAA, with John Kern serving as office director. The office is in the newly formed ATO and reports to Russ Chew. For purposes of national policy and leadership, the office works directly with FAA Administrator Marion Blakey and the Secretary of Transportation.

The JPDO will have links to key offices — such as AVR and ARP — outside of the ATO, as well.

The JPDO will serve as the "suggestion box" for gathering thoughts and proposals on what the future can be.

In the FAA, the JPDO is a continuation of the effort of the agency to address critical issues in the near-, mid-



John Kern will direct the Joint Planning and Development Office.

and long-term. The FAA Flight Plan identifies the FAA's key activities out to 2008; the OEP until 2014-2015; and the National Plan will extend this planning horizon even further into the future.

For example, the DOT will make the necessary policy changes, while the FAA will provide the infrastructure and procedural and operational changes for air traffic management and airports.

Similarly, Homeland Security is responsible for the infrastructure and procedural and operational changes to ensure security throughout the system that is increasingly transparent to air travelers.

The Defense Department has three roles: ensuring national security

In the Year 2025

The *National Plan* — the roadmap for what the future aviation system will look like — has six broad goals:

- ◆ Promote economic growth and create jobs;
- ◆ Expand system flexibility and deliver capacity to meet future demands;
- ◆ Tailor services to customer needs;
- ◆ Ensure national defense readiness;
- ◆ Promote aviation safety and environmental stewardship; and
- ◆ Retain and enhance U.S. leadership and economic competitiveness in global aviation.

implications are considered in the development of new ATS systems, as a researcher of new vehicle and air traffic service technologies, and safeguarding America.

Commerce also wears two hats: ensuring a level playing field for the air transportation system and providing aviation weather services.

NASA will research and develop new cost-effective and enabling technologies to meet joint operational requirements. NASA will work with the operational agencies and private sector through technology transfers to ensure that new technologies can be used when production capabilities are available.

"At the end of the day," said Kern, "creating the Next Generation Air Transportation System is more than just improving aviation and how people and goods are moved from curb to curb. It is transforming the system we operate."



FAA Tackles Voucher, Vender Problems

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any such referral on an employee's credit record when the FAA provides proper documentation.

The agency's focus has now turned to the backlog of vendor payments, which it expects to pay off by the end of February.

"As with any new system, there are kinks to work out and new processes and systems to learn," said Kathy Smith, team leader for the DELPHI program. "One of the primary areas to work through is the new procurement system and its interface with the financial system. We're still trying to get a handle on that, but we are working closely with the logistics offices and ASU so we can reduce the backlog as quickly as possible," Smith added.



It's been more than 20 years since the FAA's accounting system was changed, which makes conversion from the old financial system to DELPHI a complex one. At the same time, the agency also implemented a new procurement system, PRISM, adding to the complexity.

These new systems require a level of data integrity that the FAA has never experienced but that in the long run will benefit the FAA with improved financial and acquisition information. There is a large learning curve for DELPHI and PRISM, but the FAA expects the system to be running smoothly by summer.

Teaming to Help International Aviation

The FAA's importance to international aviation is often in evidence during major accident investigations or while advancing new technology and concepts.

Sometimes, it's less apparent, such as during the sessions held in a few nondescript classrooms at the Center for Management Development (CMD) in Florida. It's in those classrooms that the FAA is teaching two new management courses specifically designed for international aviation officials.

The FAA Academy's International Training Division at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center worked with the CMD to develop the courses. It's the first time the two organizations have collaborated on a training class to merge technical and managerial techniques, and the feedback from participants has been very positive.

The first classes comprised participants in the Safe Skies for Africa program, who were particularly thirsty for insight into aviation management. One participant said, "This course should be attended by all managers, regardless if they manage a facility or not." Another said the course "arrived just in time" for him.

Teachers were equally enthusiastic. The participants did "some of the best work we see in any of our classes," said Tim Schroeder, program manager for international air traffic training, who taught the new courses with Kim Shelver and Ann Marie Valenti, contractors from the CMD.

"They really have a strong desire for any kind of technical or philosophical training that will help them improve the way they do business," he added.

The new courses differ from traditional FAA management courses in that they combine many of the management skills typically taught in separate, short-term courses into a longer, more comprehensive course that also includes some technical information for those



Tim Schroeder uses "rock management" in his international training course.

managing a technical staff.

A heavy emphasis is placed on managerial concepts, such as leadership, communication, strategic planning, and systems thinking, with the addition of units on communications, navigation and surveillance; air traffic management; and preparing for changes that might result from new technologies.

On the International Front

The FAA Academy's International Training Division might sound new to some employees, but it's been around for a couple of years. In fact, it teaches hundreds of participants annually.

The division trains employees of foreign civil aviation authorities, performs training needs assessments in other countries, and tailors training plans and courses to their needs.

The division's courses usually relate to the technical side of regulatory standards, airway facilities, air traffic, aviation safety and security. Courses at the CMD normally are related to managerial training.



Sharing the Spirit of the Holidays

As always, FAA employees came through big time during the holiday season to help those less fortunate enjoy the spirit of giving and receiving. Following is just a tiny sampling of the many events held around the country in November and December.

Alaskan: Employees collected books, toys, clothes and household necessities for the Alaska Women's Aid In Crisis organization, including winter jackets, hats, gloves and boots, phone cards for long distance calls, and gift cards to local stores. Also collected were diapers, toiletries, pillows and bed sheets.

Eastern: Regina Mulder, Fritz Duchatellier and Mark Figuero represented the New York Metro Chapter of the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees in the collection and donation of toys and coats to the Skyway Shelter Facility on the South Conduit.



Regina Mulder and Fritz Duchatellier from the Eastern Region helped make this little girl's holiday a happy one.

Great Lakes: Cleveland Center employees sponsored 104 children in this year's Season of Sharing charity.

Northwest Mountain: The Northwest Mountain regional entertainment committee raised nearly \$11,000 at its 16th annual silent and live auctions. Thirteen charitable organizations (food banks, shelters, etc) received checks.



Doug Murphy auctioneered Northwest Mountain's annual auction with help from elves Warren Ferrell (left) and Mark Taylor (right).

Also, 20 needy families (with a total of 32 children) received wrapped presents and gift cards from local grocery stores. Regional Administrator Doug Murphy was the auctioneer this year.

Western-Pacific: The Oakland Center and Golden Gate Systems Management Office collected more than 250 toys and 200 pounds of food (frozen turkeys and non-perishables) for more than 1,500 families for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Also, the Reno Tower provided gifts to a family of eight, including children ranging in age from 11 months to 13 years.

FAA Strengthens Partnership with Gulfstream

The FAA's Aircraft Certification and Flight Standards Services has begun the second phase of its Partnership for Safety Plan with airplane manufacturer Gulfstream that sets a new high standard of cooperation between the public and private sectors.

The plan is designed to ensure that manufacturers focus on safety to receive timely and efficient FAA approval of their work. The first successful phase of the plan covered Gulfstream's design and production operations in Savannah, Ga. The second phase focuses on four Gulfstream facilities that conduct business jet completion, service and maintenance.

The jointly-developed plan explains how each of the aircraft manufacturer's completion and service sites and the corresponding FAA field offices will operate, communicate, identify and resolve issues to ensure consistency between organizations, sites and field offices.

This latest initiative — which is far more encompassing than any partnership agreement the FAA has forged with industry — defines the way in which the four Gulfstream repair stations will work with AIR and AFS field offices in completing FAA approval of projects such as complete new business interiors and other major modifications and repairs.

Although not required, most companies find that such partnerships with the FAA benefit them and their working relationship with the agency over the long term.

The FAA and Gulfstream expect better standardization in terms of FAA approvals, as well as with procedures for such everyday business practices as communication, issue resolution, operating norms and delegation.



Maintaining Balance in a Work-a-Day World

You might have been too busy to notice, but the U.S. Senate designated last month as National Work and Family Month.

The Senate proclamation reminds federal employees of the importance of effectively managing work and personal lives. Research has found that difficulty in one area of a person's life — such as with family — can impede progress in another area of life.

The Department of Transportation's Work-Life advisor encourages employees to consider how balanced their lives are. Individuals dealing with unexpected crises, or just the routine but sometimes conflicting demands of work and family, might feel that it is impossible to achieve balance in their lives.

The first step in achieving a balanced life is to identify which areas in life are most lacking balance. There are three areas in which balance is key for enjoying a healthy life: home, work and leisure.

Find out how balanced you are by answering the questions in the box at right. If the score indicates your life is a little out of whack, you might want to consider the following tips provided by the Work-Life advisor.

Tips for Achieving Balance

◆ Evaluate your expectations: Some people feel that if they cannot give 100 percent in all areas of life, then their efforts are worthless. This feeling of guilt can be self-defeating. Instead, set realistic expectations. Realize the value that you do bring to family and work and let go of those ideas that say, "To succeed, you must do it all."

◆ Set priorities and stick to them: Make a list of things that need to get done in order of importance. Consider crossing off the less important things and letting go of them. Otherwise, these little things can eat up all of your energy. And worrying about little things will not help you get them done!



◆ Delegate Responsibilities: Ensure partners contribute equally, not only to bringing in income, but also to maintaining the home.

Also, give children household chores that are appropriate for their age. This can help prepare children for future challenges and help them feel like a proud, contributing member of the family. Keep a chore sheet posted. Make chore time fun by including music or singing!

Contact the DOT Work-Life advisor, Candace Cronin, at (800) 525-2878, ext. 1, or e-mail dot.worklife@ost.dot.gov.

Is Your Life Balanced?

If you answer "no" to more than three questions within a category, you may need to focus on this area of your life to find balance.

Home

1. Is your family satisfied with the amount of time you spend with them each week?
2. Does your family have regular meetings to discuss chores, errands and other family topics?
3. Do you communicate your expectations about household responsibilities in a positive way?
4. Do you plan and prepare meals in advance?

Work

1. Do you have long-term career goals?
2. Do you understand and agree with your employer's expectations of you?
3. Is the number of hours you spend at the office sufficient to complete your job?
4. Is your income sufficient to support you and your family?

Leisure Time

1. Do you follow a regular exercise routine?
2. Have you taken a vacation in the last year?
3. Do you take time to develop your personal interests, such as gardening, crafts and education?
4. Do you feel comfortable taking time for yourself, without your spouse or children?



Flower Power for Seriously Ill Children

At first glance the DC-3 looks like a throwback to the psychedelic days of Flower Power. Huge multi-colored flowers blossom over the fuselage like a floral version of the old Partridge Family bus.

Is this the work of some aging hippy?

Actually, it's the work of thousands of children who are experiencing catastrophic and chronic medical problems. They and their families painted the floral designs as part of a unique therapy program called Portraits of Hope. The symbol of the program is a 6-pointed flower that represents joy, life, beauty, hope, inspiration and healing, the heart of the program's message. The plane is named "Garden in Transit—Airborne."

Some 270 pounds of paint were used to create the flowers on more than 10,000 square feet of self-adhesive panels, which were then applied to the airplane. The flowers range as large as 14 feet by 14 feet in size, providing a huge canvas as an outlet for the children's struggle against illness and disease.

Portraits of Hope worked closely with FAA to ensure that the procedure for applying the graphics to the airplane met safety standards. Although Richard Kiang, an aviation safety inspector from the Greensboro, N.C., Flight Standards District



Seriously ill children produced the floral design on this plane as part of a therapy program.

Office, was touched by the children's efforts, he couldn't let it interfere with his work. "You can't take that emotion and let it affect the safety of the aircraft."

Kiang ensured that none of the plane's leading edges were exposed in such a way that might cause the adhesive to peel off and potentially jam a flight control surface. He checked that no material covered the pitot static system, which senses the plane's airspeed and altitude, or covered the flight control surfaces.

Special consideration was given to the positioning of the registration and tail numbers so they adhered to FAA regulations without marring the floral design.

With the help of the FAA, the Garden in Transit—Airborne was one of



Individual sections of the adhesive panels are signed by the children who painted them.

only 100 aircraft that flew in a special ceremonial fly-by during the Centennial of Flight to honor the Wright Brothers.

Tips for Writing in Plain Language

The *FAA Intercom* occasionally runs tips on how employees can write in plainer language. It's part of the effort supported by Administrator Marion Blakey to make FAA regulations and other communication easier for customers to understand.

Plain language classes have been scheduled in some regions and centers. Charles D. Smith has been certified to teach classes in the New England region. Call him at (781) 238-7123.

Organize your thoughts.

People read to get answers. They want to know how to do something or what happens if they don't do something.



Organize your document to respond to these concerns.

Often, this means describing events in the order in which they occur — you fill out an application, you submit the application, FAA reviews the application, FAA makes a decision on the application.

Think through the questions your readers are likely to ask and then organize them into a comprehensive table of contents that will be an outline of the document.



New Orlando Tower Opened . . . in a Museum!

A new air traffic control tower has sprung up in Orlando, Fla. What makes this tower different from the one at Orlando International or Orlando Executive airports is that it was constructed in the middle of a science center and kids have as much access to the control panels as controllers.

When Controller Rick Crose from the Orlando Tower learned that the Orlando Science Center wanted to set up an authentic air traffic control display, he couldn't say no.

With help from Airway Facilities and other Air Traffic employees, Crose and his team spent hundreds of volunteer hours as they fought some red tape to meet the center's deadline.



A young visitor to the Orlando Science Center gets a close-up view of an air traffic control console.

The museum's goal for the 6,500-square-foot, 4-section aviation display was to educate kids about aviation and get them interested in it as a possible career. If that's the case, Crose's work seems to have paid off.

"Visitors are very, very fascinated," said Todd Kent, exhibit developer for the center. "As soon as kids see the control tower, they run up to it immediately. [I've heard] nothing but compliments," he said.

Crose played the role of wrangler more than controller in the three short months he had to assist the center. Through sheer persistence and tenaciousness, he got the Miami Tower to donate to the museum an old ARTS-3 radar display and keyboard with track ball, just like controllers use. He trucked it to Orlando himself and with the help of a few controllers installed it in the tower.

Then he gutted the radarscope and put a computer in the console that simulates Orlando airspace in a 15-minute loop, including communication between the controller (that's Rick's voice visitors hear on the audio) and pilots.

Then Crose turned carpenter, constructing an overhead console like those found above controllers' positions where navigation maps are displayed. He then took digital pictures of real overhead maps and turned them into transparencies to display at the museum.

The museum also has acquired an integrated terminal weather system that controllers use to predict severe weather. There's even a video of Crose near the exhibition speaking about air traffic control.

"People like Rick Crose are a rare breed nowadays," Kent said. "Through the partnerships with folks like the FAA, we have been able to produce an experience that really touches the heart of everybody that comes through here."

Seeking Stories from the Field

The *FAA Intercom* is always interested in stories and story ideas from the field and all lines of business, especially from employees in Flight Standards and Airway Facilities.

Employees who would like to contribute may call Editor Jim Tise at (202) 267-3443, or e-mail him via Lotus Notes or at jim.tise@faa.gov.

Following are the tentative deadlines for this year's issues of the *FAA Intercom*. Contact the editor for further information. Cut the schedule out and keep it for future reference.

Hard-copy and digital photographs are welcome. Digital photographs should be sent as separate attachments, not embedded in a story. Do not send negatives.

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
March	Feb. 19
April	March 25
May	April 22
June	May 20
July	June 24
August	July 22
September	Aug. 22
October	Sept. 23
November	Oct. 21
December	Nov. 24



FAA Wins Voluntary Flight Reductions at O'Hare

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The agency independently has pressed American and United Airlines to alter their schedules. It also is studying concerns expressed by air traffic controllers about staffing and procedures there.

A Recipe for Trouble

Beginning last November, major airlines began adding flights to an already congested schedule. "If you add in winter weather and other ground conditions we contend with on a daily basis, you have a recipe for trouble — record delays from November through December . . . the most the FAA has ever recorded at a single airport," Blakey said.

American and United have consented to an FAA order that calls for reducing their scheduled operations during peak times by 5 percent — or 62 flights — returning the level of operations to October

2003 levels. Reductions would be spread throughout the peak period.

The FAA will monitor the situation and will not hesitate to convene a delay-reduction meeting as permitted under its reauthorization if the order does not alleviate the delay problem.

Tiger Team Moves In

There has been a recent increase in the number of operational errors by controllers at the Chicago Terminal Radar Approach Control facility. In response to controllers' concerns about staffing levels, and as part of its goal to reduce operational errors, the FAA has dispatched a "Tiger Team" that is spending this month studying all aspects of the air traffic control system at O'Hare.

Team members will work side by side with controllers and supervisors to evaluate staffing, training, traffic volume, procedures, the amount of time each

controller spends on position and overtime.

Team findings will be addressed after the 30-day evaluation.

Long-term Planning Initiated

Although the current situation at O'Hare is unique, the FAA still is planning for the long-term future of the airport. O'Hare is one of eight major airports targeted by the agency's new strategic Flight Plan. The agency is reviewing a proposed modernization plan for the airport and proposals to build a new South Suburban Airport.

On a national level, the FAA will give out \$3.3 billion in grants for airport expansion now that the appropriations bill has been passed. And a landmark conference called by the FAA for March will focus on "growth without gridlock" for the National Airspace System.

Recognition

The **Northwest Mountain Region** was awarded the 2003 Combined Federal Campaign's Traveling Chair Award for best campaign in the "large agency" category for King County, Wash. The regional office attained 102 percent of its goal, collecting \$200,122, an average of \$518 per employee.

The Air Traffic Supervisors Committee announced its Air Traffic facility managers of the year for 2003. This year's winners are **Jim D'Ambrosio** of Houston Center, **Dawn Holst** of the Minneapolis Tower, and **Paul Infanti** of Kansas City Center. Supervisors nominated 17 individuals for this award — the largest number in the program's history.



Receiving the Traveling Chair Award on behalf of the Northwest Mountain Region are (from left) Tom Busker, regional executive manager; Connie Coleman-Lacadie and Rand Foster, co-campaign coordinators; and Doug Murphy, regional administrator.

J. Carlos Manduley, the FAA's National Hispanic Employment Program manager, has been named first vice chair for the National Council of Hispanic Employment Program Managers. Manduley also received the Secretary of Transportation's excellence award for developing last year's National Hispanic Heritage month theme.

The FAA's **David Galella** from the Aviation Research Office, and **Fred Sobeck** from Flight Standards, were part of an industry group that won the 2003 Better Way award at this year's Air Transport Association Nondestructive Testing Forum. The award, sponsored by the FAA and Air Traffic Association, was given to the group for developing composite reference standards.



FAA ‘Choreographer’ Hangs up His Shoes

When Warren Sellers started his career as an air traffic controller at the Atlanta Center, the Boeing 707 was still the workhorse of the skies. President Eisenhower was winding up his second term as president. And Sellers was pulling down \$4,500 a year, a decent salary at the time.

Forty-three years later, Sellers retired as one of the oldest — if not the oldest — controllers in the FAA. At 69, he talks fondly of the agency, and maybe feels a touch of nostalgia for a job he described as “really exciting and challenging and rewarding.”

Sellers was actually eligible for retirement in 1984 when the FAA passed a rule requiring controllers to retire by age 56. But a grandfather clause gave this soft-spoken Southerner nearly 20 more years to ply his trade.

In the six decades in which he worked, Sellers has witnessed much change. What made him so able to adapt?

“I sort of fell into doing something that from a mental standpoint was good for me. And I made it work,” Sellers said.

“You have to confront problems,” he continued. “You have to deal with it. This is true to life and everything else. And it’s what you have to do with air traffic.”

Sellers viewed himself as a “choreographer,” a talent that became increasingly important as the skies grew more crowded every year. “It’s just so much more it’s unbelievable,” he said as he looked back at the years of crowded skies.

Controllers, too, have changed, Sellers said. When he started in 1959, many of his coworkers had military backgrounds that he credited with “helping them be controllers.”

Change, in fact, seems to be the one constant in Sellers’ professional life. He’s run the gamut of different controllers, different equipment, different pilots. “Everything is always changing from one



Warren Sellers celebrates his retirement at the age of 69.

moment to the next, like a kaleidoscope,” he offered.

His ability to keep his head despite all those changes and challenges earned him “a very solid reputation,” said Lynn Ray, the Atlanta Center manager. “He obviously enjoyed his work a lot.”

Fay, his wife of 45 years, said

Sellers is getting refocused in retirement. “It’s been a high in his life,” she said about her husband’s job.

“I was quite content [at the FAA]. I kind of felt at home here,” Sellers said. But at 69, he “reached the magic age in life where a fella’ just has to go,” he said matter-of-factly.

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