U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
April 2000

FAA Intercom

Enhancing Runway Safety

The FAA is taking new steps to reduce the chance of collision between aircraft and other planes or ground vehicles at airports.

Runway safety is one of Administrator Jane Garvey's top five priorities. She recently increased executive oversight, creating a new program office reporting to Peter Challan, deputy associate administrator for Air Traffic Services. John Mayrhofer is the director of the new Runway Safety Program staff.

"Education, training and prevention are key elements of the plan," Mayrhofer explained.

The agency will hold workshops around the country, enlisting airlines, airports, the general aviation community, pilots and air traffic controllers to develop plans to reduce runway incursions. "We want to come up with new procedures and heighten the awareness of pilots, controllers and airport vehicle drivers," Mayrhofer said.

The first regional workshop was in Los Angeles at the end of March. A national summit on runway safety will follow in the summer to share results of the regional sessions and discuss how human factors and new technologies play a part in reducing runway incursions.

The FAA also wants to speak with pilots involved in runway incidents to determine their causes. In return, the agency is willing in most cases to limit
continued on page 5

New Plan Will Rein in Weather-Related Delays

The FAA and airlines are working to minimize flight delays during bad weather.

The bad weather that plagued the country last spring and summer —and raised a storm of protest from passengers over flight delays — has not receded from the memory of the FAA and airlines.

Thousands more passengers were stranded last year compared to 1998, as the number of flight delays jumped 22 percent. The agency and industry heard the outcry from their customers and have phased in a plan to improve the flow of air traffic during severe weather.

The "Spring 2000 Plan," announced by President Clinton March 10, focuses on making the best use of available airspace, improving communications between the FAA and airlines, and expanding the use of new technology to deal with the less pleasant side of Mother Nature.
continued on page 5

In This Issue:
Read about the Executive Listening Session in Great Lakes, updates on Core Comp, hard work on the clean audit, Earth Day and lots more!

Page 3. CMD and technology transfer.

Pages 6. Opening up the floor for discussion.

Pages 11. Welcome to the hall of fame.

Page 15. A user's mannual for the brain?

News in Brief

Web Site Master Committee Formed
Acting Deputy Administrator Monte Belger leads a new committee that will oversee the FAA's Web sites.

The committee will develop a corporate message to be coordinated across the agency's wide range of sites and reference sources. It also will study the availability of the FAA's home page and related security issues, as well integrate the lines of business' Internet activities.

Input will be sought from passengers, the media, aviation manufacturers, FAA contractors and students.

Members of the Communications Integrated Product Team at a standing-room-only event for industry at Headquarters.

Oracle to Provide Data Service to ATS
Air Traffic Services contracted with Oracle Corporation to assist with its database needs.

Under the terms of the 5-year site license agreement, Oracle will provide database products, technical support and licensing that helps Air Traffic Services improve its storage, access and management of data and information. The products and services are available to all air traffic employees, and other FAA organizations and contractors working on Air Traffic Services-sponsored programs or projects.

The agreement unifies a number of previous agreements between Air Traffic Services and Oracle, and will save the FAA $20 million over the life of the contract.

The contract enhances existing programs, such as the Free Flight, Regional Information System, and Operations Network. In addition, it anticipates the implementation of major new air traffic support systems, including NAS Information Management, Environmental Safety Information systems, and the Air Traffic Operational Data Store.

Additional information is available at the Intranet Web site at http://atsoracle.faa.gov.

Data Link Day Draws Overflow Crowd
The annual Controller Pilot Data Link Communications Industry Day might have to move to larger quarters in 2001 based on this year's standing-room-only session.

More than 200 representatives from airlines, manufacturers, unions and international aviation organizations filled Headquarters' auditorium, with an overflow audience wired in at the Bessie Coleman Center.

This year's event focused on FAA/industry plans for making data link communications between air traffic controllers and pilots a reality by mid-2002.

A consortium of airlines announced delivery of a software package to the FAA that enables controllers and pilots to exchange data messages, the heart of data link communications. A host of issues was discussed, including security requirements, inclusion of foreign carriers in the data link effort, and system testing in Miami.

Di Reimold, the FAA's acting leader of the Communications Integrated Product Team, moderated.

New Telecom Contract Planned for Air Traffic
The FAA will put a contract out for bid in May to upgrade its air traffic control telecommunications capabilities.

The agency's Telecommunications Integrated Product Team leads the project to replace the current LINCS telecommunications contract with a new system that will capitalize on the dramatic changes in telecommunications over the past decade.

The team expects to tap into improved service and lower costs by replacing its current service with one that can be updated easily and allows for price adjustments reflecting industry trends.

The FAA expects to award the contract early next year.

(From left) Monte Belger, Steve Brown, Larry Weeks, chairman of the Farquier County Board of Supervisors, Garvey, and Rep. Frank R. Wolf (R-Va.) prepare to break ground for the new Potomac TRACON.

FAA Breaks Ground for Regional TRACON

The FAA broke ground March 6 for the facility that will consolidate air traffic control for the Baltimore-Washington area.

The Potomac Terminal Radar Approach Control facility in Vint Hill, Va., will improve air travel safety and efficiency by consolidating TRACONs at four airports: Baltimore-Washington International, Dulles International, Reagan Washington National, and Andrews Air Force Base.

The new TRACON will guide aircraft within a 75-mile radius of Washington. Each of the four airports will still be served by its existing control tower.

"Having a consolidated facility will allow us to redesign and simplify air routes in our local airspace," said FAA Administrator Jane Garvey. Simpler, more direct air routes will provide significant savings in time and fuel to airlines, the military, and others flying in the area. The FAA estimates it will save $2 million annually in reduced operating and maintenance costs. Noise problems also should diminish.

The facility should be operational in May 2002.

FAA Academy Cancels Classes

The debilitating effects of the budget crunch continue to be felt at the agency. The Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center has notified field offices that 73 classes enrolling 1,257 students will be canceled at the Air Traffic Training Program at the FAA Academy to offset a budget shortfall.

The cancellations, combined with the elimination of 43 contract workers, will provide Air Traffic $2.7 million to cover other operational deficiencies.

Taking You Where You Want to Go

May 14-20 is National Transportation Week, when federal employees and citizens may participate in a number of activities and events.

Phil Lilly, CMD program manager, greets Hastings' Principal Ron Russell. Paul Gannett, CMD property specialist, and Bill Britton, Hastings' computer specialist (second and third from left, respectively), help with the donation of computers to the elementary school.

This year's theme, "Transportation . . . Taking You Where You Want to Go," will be celebrated at Headquarters and around the regions and centers. Many of the events are tied in with the Garrett Morgan program, aimed at interesting youth in the transportation industry.

Employees may access the Web site at www.ntweek.org for a list of activities and events in their area, or call 1-877-558-6874.

Ta-Dah!

Airway Facilities' new home page has made its debut. The expanded site includes more information of importance to Airway Facilities employees, such as electronic newsletters by the administrator, Airway Facilities, and the Air Traffic Service.

The site also features weekly activity reports, links to human resources and personnel information, and news about important issues and events occurring within Airway Facilities. Access the site at http://interweb.faa.gov/ats/af/.

Evelyn Brackman is the site's Webmaster. She may be contacted via cc:Mail or the Internet at evelyn.brackman@faa.gov.

CMD Completes Technology Transfer

The FAA's Center for Management Development recently proved it has another take on technology transfer when it donated 70 computers to the Hastings Elementary School in St. Augustine, Fla.

The computers became surplus after CMD received newer equipment from the U.S. Naval Depot in Jacksonville, Fla.

Hastings' Vice Principal Ron Russell said, "I can't tell you just how valuable these computers will be for the education of our kids."

The school, which enrolled 294 students this year, has not been able to provide extensive computer and Internet training for its pupils.

Correction

The *FAA Intercom* erred in a recent article about parachute regulations ("FAA Attorney Enjoys FAR-Out Experience," March 2000 issue, p. 8).

The FAA does in fact have many experts in parachute operations, but they were not formal members of the parachute rulemaking team discussed in the article.

People

Garaufis Nominated for Federal Bench
President Clinton nominated FAA Chief Counsel Nick Garaufis to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, upon the recommendation of Sen. Daniel P Moynihan (D-N.Y.).

Garaufis joined the FAA in 1995, and is the longest serving chief counsel in 30 years. Prior to that, he was chief legal counsel to the president of the Borough of Queens, New York. He received his law degree from Columbia Law School in 1974 and his bachelor's degree from Columbia College in 1969.

Nick Garaufis

Moore Picked to Head Airway Facilities
Alan Moore is the new director of the Airway Facilities Service. He will lead an 11,500-person organization responsible for system transition, integration, and maintenance engineering; instrument flight procedures development; flight inspection; and field support of current NAS systems, as well as aeronautical spectrum management. He had been acting director for the past three months.

Alan Moore

Wallace Named to Accident Investigation Slot
Steve Wallace will replace Dave Thomas as director of the Office of Accident Investigation. Wallace had been the FAA's representative in Rome. Bud Donner will continue as acting director until Wallace moves to Washington in May.

Staff Changes in Air Traffic Announced
Bill Peacock has been named program director for Air Traffic Tactical Operations. Peacock had been air traffic division manager in the New England Region.

Jack Kies has been named Peacock's deputy and manager of the Air Traffic Control System Command Center in Herndon, Va.

In Memoriam
Steven Sumner from the Airway Facilities Operational Support office at the William J. Hughes Technical Center died Jan. 12. He was 40.

He joined the agency in 1988, working at the long-range radar site in Trevose, Pa., before transferring to the Tech Center in 1994. His last position at the FAA was team leader for the Mode-S beacon system.

His wife, Diane, four children, parents, and mother- and father-in-law survive him.

Steven and Diane Sumner

Robert N. Allen, an aviation inspector from the Detroit Flight Standards District Office, died in his hotel room in Arlington, Texas on March 22. He was on official travel performing surveillance duties at the time of his death. Preliminary investigation indicates he might have been the victim of a robbery and murder.

Allen, 44, joined the FAA as an avionics inspector in 1995. Prior to that, he served in the U.S. Navy for 20 years.

Allen is survived by his wife Loretta, one son and four daughters.

Robert N. Allen

Deputy Chief of Staff Departs
Marie Therese Dominguez, deputy chief of staff and counsel to Administrator Jane Garvey, has taken a new job.

She will serve as principal deputy assistant secretary of the U.S. Army (Civil Works), supporting the assistant secretary in developoing policy guidance and managing the Army Corps of Engineers.

Weather Delays Addressed in New Plan

continued from page 1

Passengers will be able to stay better informed about flight conditions around the country by accessing a new FAA Web site.

"After last summer's record delays, the Federal Aviation Administration has put together an extraordinary partnership with the airline industry, the pilots and workers who keep the planes in the air, and the air traffic controllers who bring them safely home," the president said at the announcement. "This partnership represents a crucial first step in our ongoing efforts to improve efficiency and safety in air travel and reform the nation's air traffic control systems."

Under the plan, the FAA, airlines and the Aviation Weather Center form a team to update weather forecasts several times each day.

Controllers and pilots will work from the same forecast, unlike past practice. These forecasts ranging two to six hours in advance will help airlines prioritize which flights to operate when weather reduces capacity at some airports.

The Story on Delays

Some 374,000 flight delays were reported last year out of 165 million operations. Following are the most frequently cited reasons for the delays.

Weather	68.8 percent
Traffic Volume	11.8 percent
Runway Closures	4.7 percent
ATC Equipment Problems	2.1 percent
Other Causes*	12.6 percent

**e.g.,* aircraft problems or one-time installation of new air traffic control equipment.

Controllers also will have more flexibility. By expanding available airspace during severe weather, controllers may clear aircraft for departure at lower-than-normal altitudes and direct flights through airspace off the East Coast normally reserved for military operations.

At airports, flights grounded the longest will be first in line to depart when conditions permit.

Passengers are not forgotten under the program. A Web site at http://fly.faa.gov will update flyers about flight delays at major U.S. airports and allow them to adjust their travel plans prior to leaving for the airport.

Administrator Jane Garvey emphasized that safety, as always, will remain the top priority when trying to reduce flight delays. But, under the new plan, the nation's air traffic system won't necessarily have to back down when Mother Nature gets cranky.

.

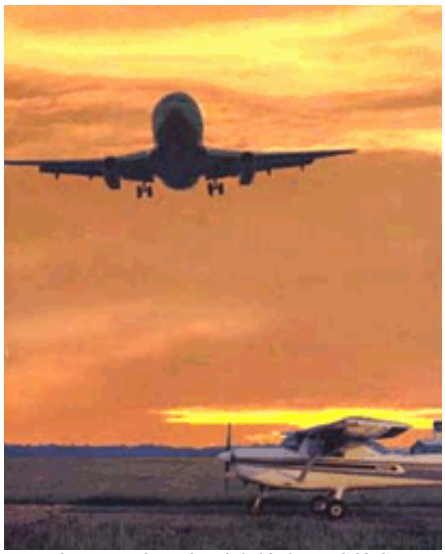
Runway Safety Initiative Underway

continued from page 1

enforcement to administrative action if a pilot is found responsible for an incursion. A pilot ordinarily might face an enforcement action that carries the weight of law and tends to be more severe. This program will last a year.

The FAA continues to pursue technical solutions, including the development and deployment of airport surface radar and warning software. The agency is on schedule to deploy the Airport Movement Area Safety System — better known as AMASS — at the 34 airports that have ASDE-3 surface radar by the fall of 2002.

The agency hopes it has turned the corner on runway safety. In the last seven months of 1999, there was a 17 percent reduction in runway incursions compared to the same period during the previous year. It's too soon, however, to discern a long-term trend from these data.



Preventing runway incursions is behind a new initiative being carried out by the Runway Safety Program Office.

Sending a Message

Photos: John Swaney

(Clockwise from above) Tate and McSweeny field a question from Great Lakes Region employees at the all-hands meeting. Bob Kerner from the Cleveland Flight Standards District Office considers a response. Aviation Safety Inspector Colleen Stevens makes a point during the session.

Members of the FAA's management board are visiting each region and center to listen to employee concerns and issues and provide feedback. FAA Intercom *was invited to attend the listening session in the Great Lakes Region, which featured Glenda Tate, assistant administrator for Human Resource Management, and Tom McSweeny, associate administrator for Regulation and Certification. Following is a general recap of the meeting.*

Trust, communication and resources were the primary issues discussed during the Executive Listening Session held in the Great Lakes Region March 14.

Implementation of the Core Compensation plan remains a concern, as employees expressed worries that details will be left hanging come the roll-out date of April 23. They wondered why a system of rewards for an organization's best workers could not be included under the current FG pay system, rather than shifting to a whole new pay plan. There was disgruntlement from those in the early steps of a grade who will see their salaries rise at a slower rate than under the current system.

McSweeny and Tate took turns addressing these issues. They acknowledged that the Superior Contribution Increase portion of Core Comp would not be implemented until next year because more testing and preparation is needed. McSweeny said the SCI program will be tested and perfected organization by organization until it's ready to go. "We're going to take the time it takes to do it right," he said.

McSweeny noted that Core Comp will impel greater communication between management and the workforce, which he admitted is not happening enough under the current pay system. "What the agency hasn't done is equate raises to some real performance," he said. That should change under Core Compensation, he added.

Tate addressed the communication issue with supervisors at an earlier session, saying, "Your job and my job are going to look very different if [Core Compensation] is going to work. You're going to have to spend a lot more time with your employees." Tate also provided an in-depth explanation of the pay bands and why employees in the early steps of a grade might experience a slower rate of growth in their salaries (see page 11 for more details).

Harder to address was the issue of pay differentials between air traffic controllers (job series 2152s) created under the latest NATCA contract. Several hundred air traffic controllers detailed to the regions as part of the career track to becoming facility managers ended up with substantially less pay than other controllers with the same — or less — experience.

The need for more communication, especially about Core Compensation, was apparent. Employees moving to the Core Comp plan were anxious to see their pay conversion sheets. Some felt communication with their managers was so inadequate they didn't feel they could receive realistic performance appraisals.

Supervisors, meanwhile, inquired about their responsibilities and whether training would be made available to help them carry out the implementation.

Tate promised that employees and supervisors would receive pay conversion sheets and training by the end of March. She explained that each line of business has a representative on the Corporate Core Compensation Implementation Team to whom supervisors may refer questions.

Great Lakes is feeling a budget crunch that has prevented it from filling empty positions and providing more training. Information technology was cited specifically as a problem area for recruitment.

McSweeny said FAA reauthorization was imminent, which should relieve some of the financial strain. Core Comp, he added, is designed to help the agency hire the best talent available by giving managers more flexibility over setting beginning pay.

Receiving the Message

Tom McSweeny, associate administrator for Regulation and Certification, and Glenda Tate, assistant administrator for Human Resource Mangement, share their views of the Great Lakes Region all-hands listening session.

How would you characterize the tone of the all-hands meeting?
I thought there were very frank discussions on issues that were very appropriate. I think we learned some perspectives that we didn't have going in that would help us day to day in our decision-making. It's the kind of open and frank discussion that I think this agency is looking for.

What were the overriding themes or issues?
People are clearly concerned about Core Compensation. Core Compensation is a major change for this agency, and a major change of any kind is difficult. People who are impacted by it naturally feel some uneasiness about it. Hopefully, in the amount of information we were able to impart, they recognized that we have spent a considerable amount of our personal time making sure we understand everything going on and are looking at it from their perspective as well as ours.

The other issue was resources to do the job. There was a lot of discussion about tight budget times and people feeling the crunch in the field. They weren't able to do the work that they thought was important.

What struck me is that regardless of what the issue was, there seemed to be a significant number of people who felt the same way. Clearly, the views expressed by the people were shared by many in the room, which is a dimension that is important to know. You wouldn't know that unless you were there physically. You don't get all the body language and you don't really know that the opinions were shared by any of the participants unless you're there.

What message did you hope to leave with the employees?
While we may make decisions that not everybody agrees with, they would understand that those decisions were made only after giving them a lot of thought with a lot of input from a lot of folks.

While Great Lakes was my first all-hands meeting with employees from across lines of business, I've had four others with my own workforce around the regions.

The main message is that management is really listening to what they have to say and dialing it into their thinking. With probably every issue, I ask my management team "How does the workforce feel about this?" and how do we get their inputs into decision making.

How would you characterize the tone of the all-hands meeting in the Great Lakes Region?
I think there was trepidation about changes occurring in the agency. There were some expressions of fear and also some frustration, again about not knowing and being very clear about the change that was [coming under Core Compensation] and how it was going to impact individuals.

What were the overriding themes or issues expressed at the meeting?
Individuals want more information. They just feel the need to know more about what is coming.

But also, what I heard from some of the employees was that they had particular situations and they want someone to listen. And how a lot of the concerns we're talking about have to do with Core Compensation.

We as managers really need to be much more sensitive to employees and what their concerns are, and even if we don't always agree, to really make the effort to make sure we're listening to them.

We wanted to hear people. We will take their issues into consideration, and the most important thing we could do was to give them feedback about what we heard. Both Tom and I are committed to do that.

What message did you hope to leave with the employees?
One message I would want to leave with them is that you have managers in Washington with lots of work that needs to get accomplished. But they still know that the people who really get business accomplished in the organization are the employees. We do understand and we do care about what their issues and concerns are.

Do you have any IOUs to the employees?
There were two things. We've got to speed things up regarding information about Core Compensation. We've got to get the information out there now.

And making sure that training is done. Not just training about the Core Compensation system in general, but what we need to do to help our managers, whose jobs are going to change pretty significantly as a result of Core Compensation.

More emphasis has to be fixed on setting performance standards, in communicating those standards, having dialogs with employees about what expectations are, having consulting and coaching kinds of conversations throughout the course of the year, and then understanding how to get feedback.

Hopefully, employees will say, "They heard us, they listened and I've seen some intervention."

New Audit Shows a Clean House

The FAA's first-ever clean financial audit is a big boost for the agency's credibility on Capitol Hill. It couldn't come at a better time, either, with Administrator Jane Garvey regularly talking with Congress about the agency's budget.

Harry Heflin

It's also a tribute to agency employees who undertook a monumental effort to determine the value of the FAA's assets and balance its financial books, Garvey said. More than1,500 employees across many lines of business in every region and center worked early mornings, late nights and weekends to complete the project.

"This is a tremendous step for us," Garvey noted. "A clean audit brings the FAA to the standards of private industry for fiscal responsibility."

The CFO Act of 1990 started the agency down the road to achieving its first clean audit. It required all federal agencies to have their financial statements audited by an independent party and auditors to issue an "opinion" on their financial statements.

The amount of work that went into this project was staggering, requiring a combination of brains and legwork.

Employees were part sleuths, part archeologists, digging up financial data going back some 50 years, and scrutinizing complex contracts to piece together key information.

Take for example the Great Lakes Region's 11-member team that had to hunt down some 2,000 documents for the audit.

Asking co-workers to locate documents that dated back years wasn't easy. "I felt like I was a pest to people," recalled Neil Angelotti from the NAS Implementation Program. Part of the problem was that employees not directly involved in the project did not realize at first how the audit would help the FAA clear out some important budget issues, he noted.

"When we began this process, I don't think people realized what was totally involved," said Harry Heflin, Central Region's chief financial officer. The Central Region handles financial record-keeping for Great Lakes, which does not have its own accounting office. "A lot of people throughout the agency made the assumption that since accounting prepares the financial statements, this was an accounting problem," Heflin noted. "Just about everything the agency does is reflected in the agency's accounting system and financial statements."

Those gathering information had their work cut out for them. "We had to use some creativity" to recover the information, Great Lakes Logistics Division Manager George Bloomingbird explained. His wife, Harriet, who works in Airway Facilities, said they came to rely on senior staff in the field who had the institutional knowledge and memory to help. Building cornerstones helped establish construction dates of facilities, as did facility dedication flyers and plaques.

After receiving information from the field, accounting offices around the FAA — with help from AF, ANI and Logistics — had to ensure the agency's equipment and property were accurately reflected in the proper categories on the financial statements.

"It was a whole new way of thinking for an agency that, from its very beginning, has focused its total effort on safety issues and operations," Heflin said. "We talked about running the FAA like a business, but our financial statements couldn't support what we were saying or doing," he added.

Using a Department of Defense valuation model, the worth of more than 600 FAA facilities was calculated at $825 million based on construction costs at the time they were built, despite the fact that many date back to the 1950s and 1960s. Regional differences in the cost of construction were taken into account. Information from old deeds, blueprints and plans was mined to determine the square footage of a facility.

The value of air traffic control equipment — more than $11 billion — was ascertained by poring over hundreds of old contracts and analyzing costs line by line. Those costs had to be compared to information placed on the FAA's books at the time.

The result of this FAA-wide project is the first clear picture of the agency's finances and a clean slate from which the agency will be able to depreciate the costs of its equipment and property — just the way companies do.

The audit totaled FAA assets at $25.5 billion and obligations at $14.2 billion, making the agency comparable in size to many of the nation's largest companies.

Support from colleagues in upper management and from different lines of business contributed to the success of the audit.

With the bulk of the work completed, a weary-looking Angelotti likely spoke for every employee who worked on the aduit when he said, "Now that we've got the clean audit, we need to keep it clean."

Looking 20 Minutes into the Future

The FAA dedicated a new flight path probing tool at the Memphis Air Route Traffic Control Center that is an important element in the agency's Free Flight Phase 1 program.

The User Request Evaluation Tool (URET) allows controllers to track airplane trajectories 20 minutes into the future. It gives controllers an early warning of potential conflicts and can reduce delays, operating costs, and the frequent maneuvering of aircraft to give airlines more flexibility in selecting the quickest routes between airports.

URET was dedicated March 3 along with the center's new Display System Replacement.

URET is one of five Free Flight operational systems to be deployed at a limited number of sites by the end of 2002. Free Flight will benefit the aviation industry and its customers by reducing the need for aircraft to follow longer, prescribed routes, saving fuel and time.

The program focuses on removing restrictions, enabling improved flight planning and scheduling, fostering a better exchange of information among users and controllers, and more efficiently managing airspace and airport resources.

The DSR dedication continues the agency's intensive program to modernize the nation's air traffic control system. DSR replaces older equipment with high-resolution color displays, improved real-time weather information and display of weather, operational flexibility, and software upgrade capabilities.

Photo: Russ Beatse

Memphis center controller Vic Cortner demonstrates DSR technology to Administrator Garvey (right) and Jean Logan from Vice President Gore's National Performance Review office.

OPM Rules Would Make FEHB Costs Non-Taxable

FAA employees soon might have the opportunity to pay their health benefits premiums before taxes, saving them money in the long term and increasing their take-home pay.

The Office of Personnel Management expects to issue new rules before Oct. 1 that allow all federal employees to pay their share of enrollment costs in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program with pre-tax dollars. President Clinton is pushing the new plan.

Right now, employees pay taxes on the salaries they receive, including the amount that is withheld by the government to pay for health benefits. Under the proposed rules, the amount withheld to pay for health benefits will not be taxable. Employees will not have to pay as much salary tax and their take-home pay should increase. In addition to federal tax savings, employees would benefit from savings on Social Security and Medicare taxes and, if applicable, state and local income taxes.

Participation in the pre-tax withholding plan would be automatic for all employees. Those who wish to waive participation will have to fill out appropriate forms to do so. The government will continue to contribute its share of the cost of health benefits, so federal employees will not have to pay additional premiums.

The vast majority of federal employees is expected to take advantage of this new tax break. A limited number of employees might waive participation because it could slightly reduce the base on which Social Security benefits are calculated.

Federal agencies would decide each year whether to participate in the premium conversion plan.

For more information, employees may contact their servicing human resource management division or access the Web site at www.opm.gov.

FAA Says Sky's the Limit for Commercial Aviation

The FAA's commercial aviation forecast for 2000-2011 can be summarized in three words: more of everything. More flights, more aircraft, more passengers, more cargo. More pressure on the FAA, too.

If there's a niche market, a carrier probably will fill it. If an airport slot becomes available, an airline likely will claim it. Expect growth in the regional/commuter market, and increasing numbers of passengers winging their way to Latin America and the Asia/Pacific region.

One of the few things the FAA forecasted to decline is the real cost of airline tickets, which will increase in price in the future, but at a slower rate than expected inflation.

These and a million other facts can be found in *FAA Aerospace Forecasts*, assembled annually by the Office of Policy, Planning, and International Aviation.

It predicts a vibrant U.S. aviation industry in which major air carriers and regional/commuter airlines will transport more than 1 billion passengers and fly 34.8 million operations by 2011, compared to 664.5 million passengers and 25.2 million flights in 1999.

General aviation activity also is picking up. The number of hours flown by general aviation aircraft at FAA and contract towers grew by 5.2 percent to 40 million in 1999 compared to the preceding year, and is expected to balloon to 49.2 million hours by 2011. Much of this increase is due to the growing popularity of business aircraft, which, like their regional and major air carrier cousins, require more service from air route traffic control centers.

The forecast lends new urgency to the agency's goal of increasing efficiency in the air traffic control system before these numbers become reality and the skies are transformed into the aerial version of an L.A. traffic jam.

Photo: Mike Lee

Garvey answers press questions after her Forecast Conference speech.

FAA Celebrates Earth Day 2000

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Earth Day, and the FAA is mobilizing efforts to give the day a big (green) thumbs up.

The FAA will participate in the ONE DOT display featured on the Mall as part of the national event that includes appearances by Leonardo DiCaprio, Carole King, Kenny Loggins, Indigenous, James Taylor, and other celebrities and activities.

Also, the Office of Environment and Energy will host a National Environmental Policy Act workshop May 2-4 at Headquarters. Panels feature speakers from the Council on Environmental Quality, EPA, Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and other DOT modes.

For more information on Headquarters events, contact Ann Hooker at x34018, or Brenda Howard at x73563

Here's a rundown of other FAA regions and centers joining the celebration:

♦ Northwest Mountain has been giving presentations on environmental laws and associated liability.

♦ Central Region will host a speaker on Native American environmental concerns.

♦ Alaskan Region plans a display on FAA environmental cleanup, fuel tank replacement, and energy conservation efforts in the lobbies of the Anchorage Federal Office Building and U.S. Courthouse.

♦ Southern Region will collaborate with the Environmental Protection Agency on posters and brochures to be placed throughout the regional office and other facilities.

♦ Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center will dedicate a tree in memory of James D. Sparks, former program director of the Office of Facility Management. The center also will sponsor a contest featuring kites made out of recycled materials.

The Alaskan Region saved nearly $300,000 in energy costs last year by using renewable energy technology, such as this photovoltaic array that captures energy from the sun.

FAAer Earns Spot in Aviation Hall of Fame

Ask Barb Lucich-Biehl about her election to the Washington State Aviation Hall of Fame, and she'll sound a little uncomfortable. "I do what I do because I love doing it," she confides. "I get little thank-you notes from the pilots. That's all I really need."

In fact, Lucich-Biehl's nomination for the hall of fame could be looked at as one big thank-you note from pilots and aviation physicians who have worked with her over the last 19 years and who nominated her for the honor.

Lucich-Biehl is a program analyst in the Office of Aviation Medicine in the Northwest Mountain Region. Every day she talks with some of the 425 aviation medical examiners trained by the FAA to medically certify pilots. Her job is to expedite the medical certification process for commercial and general aviation pilots.

It's not an easy job.

Most of these pilots literally can't afford to wait for application processing; they need to be certified quickly, usually right in the doctor's office. Without her help, pilots would have to wait weeks, even months, for their medical certificates to be approved.

FAA Aviation Medicine employees in the regions and centers work hard to help them. Lucich-Biehl receives 20-25 calls per day from examiners, who have learned to rely on her for immediate answers.

In her nominating letter, Dr. Petra Illig, regional medical director for Delta Air Lines, said that with Lucich-Biehl, "safety is always stressed, never compromised, and yet her knowledge and abilities promote the quickest return to the cockpit possible. She is a treasure house of information." Lucich-Biehl says that's true of all division secretaries.

She's more than willing to share that treasure. A large part of her time is spent educating pilots about what checkups, records, and forms they'll need for medical certification. She voluntarily attends three air shows a year and often speaks to local flying clubs to share information.

Lucich-Biehl is enshrined in the Washington State Aviation Hall of Fame.

"I take it on myself to make sure everybody knows what I know," she said, adding without undue pride or humility, "And I know a lot." She attends training sessions for medical examiners to meet the doctors personally and keep abreast of the information they're receiving so that she can operate from the same page.

Lucich-Biehl emphasizes she's part of a team — the pilot, aviation medical examiner, and the FAA. "We've got to work together or air safety cannot be accomplished," she said. Lucich-Biehl supports Regional Flight Surgeon Michael Jones and Deputy Regional Flight Surgeon Chris Taylor, and handles the extensive medical paperwork, as well.

She's accessible, knows her stuff and can communicate it clearly, just the sort of customer service and plain-English approach that the administrator has been pushing for the agency. Her main focus is that of the agency's: safety.

"Any time *60 Minutes* wants to walk in here, I have no problem. There's nothing that we do here that isn't by the book," she said.

Paid in Full

Twenty years and $50 million later, the FAA is now the official owner of the William J. Hughes Technical Center.

On March 1, Director Dr. Anne Harlan presented a check for one dollar to Kirk Conover, chairman of the Atlantic County N.J. Board of Chosen Freeholders, for the final payment on the center's 20-year mortgage.

Veteran FAAers might recall President Jimmy Carter attending the groundbreaking for the building in 1978, and Vice President Walter Mondale dedicating it in 1980. The construction of the center was a major event for the area, which was experiencing an economic downturn at the time. The Tech Center continues to have a major positive impact on the South Jersey area's economy.

Former center directors Joe Del Balzo and Larry Williams attended the event, and a photo session was arranged for all FAA employees working at the time of the dedication of the building.

President Jimmy Carter celebrates the groundbreaking for the FAA's Technical Building in 1978.

Core Compensation Plan Enters Final Stretch

With the Core Compensation Plan due to be implemented April 23, the FAA Intercom *provides this update.*

Fixing an Existing Disparity

Many employees in steps 1-3 under the current FG system have expressed concern about what will happen to their pay under Core Compensation. The Core Plan Estimator projects that most employees in this situation will receive smaller annual pay increases than they would have under the FG system. It also projects that their cumulative pay over the 5-year projection period might be lower than under the current system. Here are the reasons why:

Under the current FG system, employees in steps 1 through 3 receive a within-grade increase (WIG) annually, in addition to the January general increase. This compares to employees in steps 4 through 6 who receive a WIG every two years, and those in steps 7 through 9 who receive a WIG every three years. Employees in step 10 do not receive WIGs. These timeframes result in significant pay differences, based solely on how long employees have been in a grade and step.

Under the Core Compensation plan, WIGs based on longevity are eliminated and replaced with performance-based increases. This means all employees will have the same opportunities to earn pay increases based on their individual contributions and the overall success of the FAA — regardless of how long they have been in their position or level. These pay increases are the Organizational Success Increase (OSI) and the Superior Contribution Increase (SCI). They are based on performance, rather than on a rigid time-based formula.

While some might look at this as unfair to employees in lower steps, another way to look at it is that the FAA is eliminating an existing inequity that provided lower pay increases for employees in higher steps.

The Core Plan Estimator illustrates the potential impact of this change over the next five years. However, over a longer period of time, differences in pay between the Core plan and the current system will eventually even out. A lot depends on what is factored into the equation. Employees can use the estimator to factor in one or more SCIs, for example, and the results are quite different.

Unfortunately, the estimator can not project all possible scenarios. For example, employee promotions are not factored into the estimator. However, promotions to the next higher pay band would have quite an impact on future pay.

In Other Core Comp News:

Job Series Now Assigned to Pay Bands. Employees in certain job series have been waiting to learn which pay bands are associated with their jobs. The pay bands were recently approved for most of these jobs and will be listed on the Intranet at www.faa.gov/corecomp/.

Core Plan Estimator Updated. Recent decisions on the pay bands cited above will be reflected in an updated version of the estimator. The estimator can be found on the Intranet at www.faa.gov/corecomp/.

Attorneys' Pay Bands Coming Soon. Pay bands for attorney positions (series 905) will be finalized and announced to employees shortly.

OSI Goals Being Developed. FAA management is working to refine the agency goals on which the OSI will be based. Setting the right goals is a critical component of Core Compensation, and the agency is working to have these goals in place by April 23.

Premium Pay Decisions Made. For those employees receiving the 5 percent operational responsibility differential (also known as ATRA pay), that differential will be "rolled into" base pay at conversion in the form of a 4.1 percent increase in base pay. The 4.1 percent increase reflects that this premium will now be part of base pay rather than a separate differential. The 10 percent Interim Incentive Pay differential will continue to be paid as a 10 percent differential to employees in eligible positions under the Core plan.

SCI Criteria and Process Will Be Finalized. The agency is finalizing the criteria and process for the SCI. They will be shared once they are complete. The SCI will be "shadowed" — *i.e.,* practiced but not paid — before it is implemented in FY 2001.

Core Compensation Training Underway. Training for managers and personnel staff is underway and will be completed shortly. Interactive briefings featuring the employee training video will continue through implementation.

After April 23. There will be increased emphasis on performance management, critical to making Core Compensation work well. There will also be a continued focus on learning from experiences with Core Compensation through the ARA pilot program and the broader implementation across the agency.

For more information about the Core plan, employees should contact their supervisor or organization's representative on the Corporate Core Comp Implementation Team (CCCIT), or check the Web site at www.faa.gov/corecomp/.

Employee Satisfaction Levels Have Room to Improve

The FAA has some real work to do in improving employee satisfaction levels, according to a survey conducted by the National Partnership for Reinventing Government.

The survey sought to find out employees' perspectives on workplace issues.

NPR recorded declines in two areas of the survey. Sixty-four percent of the 284 FAA employees who responded either agreed or strongly agreed that there are service goals within their organization aimed at meeting customer expectations. This marks a decline from 70 percent in 1998. Only 14 percent of the respondents were clear as to how their organization defined good performance. That was down from 22 percent in 1998.

NPR said the FAA results remain below average in comparison to government-wide and private-sector results on overall job satisfaction, recognition for good work, quality of supervision, and overall quality of work life.

The FAA has developed a plan to improve employee perceptions. It will try to find out why employees feel they don't understand how good performance is defined, and focus on improving internal communications, especially about the FAA's goals and customer orientation.

The FAA Employee Improvement Strategy also pushes the use of plain English in documents for the benefit of the FAA's customers, especially in advisory circulars, airworthiness directives, and regulations.

The Web site for the FAA strategy is www.faa.gov/new.htm.

To view the survey results, access the NPR Web site at www.employeesurvey.gov. The NPR employee survey is one element of the "balanced scorecard" approach to better management the Clinton Administration has endorsed. Studies show that high-performing organizations use a balanced set of measures to determine how they are doing in achieving bottom-line mission results, maintaining strong employee morale, and satisfying customers.

New Databases on Web

The Aircraft Certification Service has developed an Internet site that gives government and industry professionals quick access to key regulatory and aircraft information.

The Regulatory and Guidance Library contains three user-friendly, searchable databases:

♦ The Federal Aviation Regulations database has both current and historical versions.

♦ The Regulatory Basis database allows users to see certain parts of the regulations as they existed on any given date.

♦ The Make/Model database has information about all civil aviation products, including certificate data sheets for all current types. Visit the library at www.airweb.faa.gov/rgl.

Express Yourself!

Want to get changes to your benefits processed PDQ?

Skip the paperwork and use the electronic Employee Express system. Following are some key addresses and numbers.

Make changes through the Employee Express Web site at www.employeeexpress.gov.

Make changes using your office telephone by dialing (912) 757-3084 or TDD (912) 757-3117

Make changes using your home phone by dialing 1-800-827-6289 or TDD 1-888-880-0412.

Need to replace your PIN?
Call (912) 757-3030.

Her-Story Complimenting His-Tory

FAA Headquarters completed a series of events in March that honored the accomplishments of women in the agency and throughout history. Following are some images from the month's celebration.

(Above, from left) Jacqueline Rehmann moderates a panel on career development featuring Peggy Gilligan (AVR-2), Alice Wong (ARN-1), Barbara J. Smith (AHR-1), Maureen Woods (AAT-2), and Fanny Rivera (ACR-1).

(Left) Angelia Kinston from the Office of Acquisition studies a lobby display concerning the accomplishments of women who have been overlooked or forgotten in history.

This display in the lobby contains notes and photos acknowledging women who work at Headquarters.

Photo: Lance Strozier

Fanny Rivera (left), assistant administrator of Civil Rights, presents a pin and plaque to Dr. Dorothy Height, civil rights icon and chair emeritus of the National Council of Negro Women. Ida Castro, chairwoman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, looks on.

A User's Manual for Your Brain

The FAA has produced an informative and witty publication that gives insight into a number of topics of direct interest to air traffic controllers.

The title, "Human Factors for Air Traffic Control Specialists: A User's Manual for Your Brain," pretty much says it all, as far as the document's style and substance.

The authors include several psychologists, but don't expect to find the kind of psychological jargon that could be the pitfall of a document like this.

Put together by the FAA's Office of Aviation Research in conjunction with the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, it features common-sense advice written in plain English about issues of primary concern to controllers. It describes methods for improving memory, communicating effectively with pilots to avoid errors, and tips for sleeping better and remaining alert on the job.

It also features humorous illustrations by FAA controller Brian Fallon from the New York Terminal Radar Approach Control facility.

Much of the information is applicable to all employees, whatever their jobs.

Excerpts from studies back up the information with interesting examples.

For instance, there is an increase in traffic accidents on the Monday after daylight-savings time begins (when a person loses an hour of sleep) and a decrease in accidents on the Monday after the return to standard time (when a person gains an hour of rest).

The publication discusses how caffeine, smoking, alcohol, sedentary lifestyle, and environmental conditions (light, heat and noise) might affect a controller.

To communicate better with pilots, the document suggests limiting the amount of information in each transmission. A study shows that only 4 percent of all air traffic control transmissions contain five or more pieces of information, but account for 26 percent of readback errors in which the pilot misunderstands or forgets important information.

Copies of the document are available by emailing Kim Cardosi at cardosi@volpe.dot.gov.

Preventing Strokes

Stroke is the third leading cause of death and a leading cause of serious, long-term disability in the United States.

A stroke occurs when a blood vessel bringing blood to the brain gets blocked or ruptures, preventing brain cells from getting the flow of blood they need. Deprived of oxygen, nerve cells can't function and die within minutes. When nerve cells don't function, the part of the body controlled by these cells can't function either. The effects of stroke are often permanent because dead brain cells can't be replaced.

Following are warning signs for a stroke:

♦ Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.

♦ Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.

♦ Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.

♦ Sudden trouble with walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.

♦ Sudden severe headache with no known cause.

Those most at risk to suffer a stroke are older people, men, African-Americans, and people with diabetes or heart disease. Still, a lot can be done to prevent a stroke, including not smoking, keeping blood pressure down, eating a low-fat, low-salt diet and getting regular exercise.

For more information, call the American Stroke Association at 1-888-4STROKE or access the Web site at www.strokeassociation.org. If you or someone you know has had a stroke, call the association's "Warmline" at 1-800-553-6321.

CFC Take is Half a Million

The 1999 Combined Federal Campaign proved once again the generosity of FAA employees.

Employees contributed $500,846 to the CFC, nearly 94 percent of their goal and 4.8 percent more than last year's record of more than $477,000.

The Office of System Safety led this year's campaign. Organizers across the country held a variety of events to stir up interest. Southern Region employees in Chattanooga, Tenn., participated in a "CFC Day of Caring" by helping to renovate a shelter for abused children. Representatives from the Northwest Mountain Region joined in a "Walk to Care" event, while their fellow FAAers at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center cleaned cars and hula-hooped for bucks.

Classic car shows, putting contests, baked sales — you name it and FAA employees in every region and center found a way to raise money for many worthy charities.

This putting contest held at Headquarters was just one of many CFC events held by the FAA around the country.

Accountability Board to Address Additional Forms of Harassment

The Accountability Board is expanding its scope to include additional harassment or misconduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

Barbara J. Smith

Administrator Jane Garvey and her management team agreed to the expansion plan presented in a March 10 briefing by Barbara Smith, board director. Currently, the board addresses only allegations of sexual harassment, misconduct of sexual nature, and related reprisal.

The expansion calls for oversight of all allegations of verbal, written, graphic or physical harassment, and other misconduct that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age or disability. A draft order expanding the board's scope and detailing the Accountability Board process is currently out for comment. The plan calls for the expansion to become effective July 1.

"The board's expansion into other areas of harassment and misconduct is a significant step toward creating and maintaining a model work environment at the FAA," Smith said.

Under the expansion plan, the role and function of the board remains the same. It will work to ensure timely, consistent and appropriate responses to allegations of covered misconduct. While the board remains a management tool for executive oversight, it does not provide redress for individual employees, nor supplant the Equal Employment Opportunity or grievance processes.

Board procedures will change only slightly. The goal for handling cases internally (without a security investigation) has been increased from 10 to 15 days.

Smith emphasized that this was the only change made to what she says is the board's very aggressive time frames.

Plans for training managers and supervisors, as well as human resource specialists and security investigators involved in board cases, are underway. Brochures and posters detailing the expansion will be distributed to all employees and facilities.

FAA Intercom

Diane Spitaliere
Manager, Media and Internal Communications Division

Jim Tise
Editor
Tel.: (202) 267-3443
Fax: (202) 267-5965

Barbara Downs
Editorial Assistant

Published monthly by
The Federal Aviation Administration
Office of Public Affairs
Media and Internal Communications Division, APA-300
800 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20591

The *FAA Intercom* is available on-line at www.faa.gov/apa/intercomindex.htm.
For circulation/distribution questions, call (202) 267-8735.