

### III. KEYNOTE SESSION

## “No Rumble Strips”

**MR. ROBERT STURGELL**

*Acting Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration*



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**MR. ROBERT STURGELL:** “Fatigue makes cowards of us all.” That was Vince Lombardi’s motto. He won 105 games that way. But while he very well may be the greatest football coach of all time, he’s not going to score any points in this room.

We like to think that not getting enough sleep, working tired, being a little drowsy — that they’re just all part of how Americans live. If you’re like me, you think, “I’ll catch up on Saturday.” We don’t like to think that fatigue can be linked to catastrophe, but there’s some truth in that. I wish that our biggest worry were dropping a pass or missing a tackle. We know better.

In aviation, there are no rumble strips like there are on the trip back from the Outer Banks. In aviation, speaking generally, we don’t understand the science of fatigue the way we need to. By “we,” I mean all of us — all the players — the regulators, the industry, the academics, the controllers, the pilots, the dispatchers, flight attendants, technicians.

What we need is the knowledge to determine the right thing to do. The will is already there.

I think we all acknowledge that even with an outstanding safety record, we’re not where we need to be when it comes to understanding and dealing with fatigue. This meeting aims to put us on a level playing field with what we know, with what we understand. We have international fatigue experts and eight countries here. At this conference, I want to look at new ways to manage fatigue for all personnel in this industry.

Specifically, let’s provide the most current information on fatigue physiology, management and mitigation alternatives. Let’s share information and perspectives among aviation industry decision makers. Let’s discuss the science regarding fatigue management. Let’s hear fatigue mitigation initiatives and best practices.

Perhaps we can get agreement in the form of proposals for data collection — agreements for studies, for oversight, for steering.

And while we’re at it, I encourage you to leave your day job at the door. Think outside the box. Specifically, black ones.

So, where are we? We know that adequate sleep is only half of it. We know time of day of

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sleep affects performance just as much. Right Even small restrictions on sleep can lead to a sleep debt that causes continuous degradation in performance.

As we move forward, we need to define what is an acceptable level of fatigue risk and what levels of fatigue must be minimized. We need to come to agreement on what studies or data would be needed to provide those definitions.

I'm not talking necessarily about adopting prescriptive criteria for fatigue risk abatement. All options will be considered. I think we need to address all levels of fatigue and put appropriate mitigations in place — mitigations that are proportionate to the risk. Endurance shouldn't be a Vince Lombardi thing. This isn't a test of how close we can get to the edge.

In closing, let me remind us all that we share in this issue together. And it's not just at the organizational level. Every person in every line of work bears the personal responsibility to report for work rested. All modes of the transportation system depend on that. Everyone knows that fatigue affects memory, attention to detail, communication ability, decision making. It affects our situational awareness. We've all long thought — and Richard Sumwalt and Dr. Dinges are about to tell us — that while fatigue may have not been called out by name, it's been there lurking in many of the accidents we've faced over the years.

We're trying to do something innovative here with a topic that generates a lot of emotion and anecdotal claims. My hope is that the conversations we're about to have will bring some clarity to the issue and help us decide where to go using a data-driven approach. This isn't a venue for arguments about economics,

now, the rules only address sleep opportunities. and it's not about contract negotiations. But it is a chance for us to give a boost to safety where one is needed. Thanks for being here.

***Biography***

Bobby Sturgell was named FAA Acting Administrator on September 14, 2007. He had been FAA's Deputy Administrator since 2003.

As Administrator, Sturgell regulates commercial and private aviation in the United States. He leads the 43,000 FAA employees who operate and advance the safety of the world's largest air traffic control system and most complex network of airports. He also oversees the agency's day-to-day operations, capital programs and modernization efforts.

Before joining FAA, Sturgell was the senior policy advisor at the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). He was the focal point for analysis and coordination of NTSB's safety recommendations, policies, programs and safety initiatives.

Sturgell came to the federal sector after flying for United Airlines, where he was a flight operations supervisor and line pilot. He flew the B-757 and B-767 on domestic and international routes. Sturgell also practiced aviation law in Washington, D.C.

A former naval aviator, Sturgell was an instructor at Top Gun, the Navy's Fighter Weapons School. He has flown the F-14, F-18, F-16 and A-4. Sturgell is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and the University of Virginia, School of Law. He retired from the Navy as a commander. Sturgell, his wife Lynn and son reside in the Washington, D.C., area.