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Your Rights When the FAA Comes Knocking

By Paul A. Lange

What do you do when the FAA comes knocking? Have you thought about it in advance? Do you have a plan? Regardless of what certificates you hold and the nature of your business, the basic advice starts the same and is consistent for all.

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By Gil Wolin

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The New FAA Chief Can Fly!

(Now who would have imagined that?)

By James K. Coyne

Yes, it's true. J. Randolph (Randy) Babbitt, the new FAA administrator, is a pilot. Will wonders never cease? He actually knows one end of an airplane from the other. What's more, he thinks the FAA needs to improve. He even admits that business aviation is good for America! Can such a man survive in Washington, D.C., these days? Let's hope so.

I've known Administrator Babbitt for 15 years, since his days as head of ALPA, the big pilots union. In fact, we worked together over the years on many mutual concerns, from FAA modernization to crew resource management and other aircrew safety recommendations. He is well known and well liked by aviation professionals across the country. Friendly, tactful, smart, and well-connected, he is taking the reins of the FAA at a most auspicious time. Simply put, he faces unprecedented economic turbulence, an entrenched, disheartened bureaucracy, and a Congress that has been unwilling to tackle the tough legislative issues before it.

Normally, truth be told, I wouldn't be happy to see a "union boss" chosen to run the FAA (even though Randy's personality is as far from "boss-ish"



J. Randolph (Randy) Babbitt
FAA Administrator

as you can get), but three factors make this a very different situation. First, ALPA is a very professionally run union and under Mr. Babbitt it worked effectively with everyone else sitting at the policy table—Republican or Democrat, business or labor, it didn't really matter that much. Second,

if ever there was a time when some union negotiating know-how might be useful, this is that moment, after years of simply terrible labor-management relations within the FAA itself. And third, Randy has, since he retired from ALPA, worked throughout the breadth of the aviation industry, labored on several important FAA advisory councils, and served as CEO of Eclat Consulting, where I'm sure many of his clients were aviation businesses like yours. He understands, after all this (not to mention his 25 years at Eastern Airlines), that no one in aviation can succeed if aviation businesses don't make a profit!



On Top of the Issues

I sat and listened to Mr. Babbitt answer questions from interested senators during his confirmation hearings last month. He definitely knows the issues: getting FAA reauthorization through the Senate, funding NextGen, improving morale, standardization, and focus at the FAA, keeping aviation taxes reasonable and fair, and harmonizing with other nations without compromising the important strengths of our multifaceted air transportation system.

My greatest fear, however, is that the White House won't listen to the pilot they've put in charge

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President's Message

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of the FAA. Like a backseat driver who knows just enough to be dangerous, there are those in the White House Budget Office who want fees, taxes, and other unspecified new economic and regulatory burdens on "rich private pilots." Administrator Babbitt will have to use the next few months building support for his own independent authority at the FAA and hopefully getting the White House to trust his judgment and analysis.

He's already shown that he can get Congress to listen, and I suspect that even the most powerful congressional barons know that the new administrator can't do his job if he has 535 other hands on the yoke trying to steer the plane.

Mr. Babbitt has an opportunity few pilots ever get: to help launch American aviation into a new era. After weeks of delay, hearings, and preparation, he's cleared for takeoff and ready to push the throttles forward. Before long, we'll see if this plane can fly with Randy at the controls. Godspeed, Captain Babbitt.



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Now's the Time for General Aviation to Tout Its Wares

By Eric R. Byer

As most of you have read, NATA President James K. Coyne earlier this year sent a letter to President Obama highlighting the importance of general aviation. Like Jim and many others in our industry, I firmly believe the black eye given to our industry in recent months by media attention and public opinion in the wake of the auto executives heading to Washington, D.C., in their corporate jets to request bailout money is unjust and crippling an invaluable contributor to our national economy.

The facts are quite clear about just how invaluable GA is to this country, according to data released by the General Aviation Manufacturers Association:

- The GA industry contributes \$150 billion annually to the U.S. economy,
- The GA industry accounts for 1.2 million jobs,
- GA aircraft fly to approximately 4,000 airports in the U.S. with paved runways compared to a little more than 550 commercial airports, and
- GA aircraft fly 27 million flight hours each year, with 67 percent of those flights for business purposes.

Since late last year, NATA has worked hard with its industry partners to mitigate this public-perception crisis, highlighting the jobs lost to our industry, the impact GA has on small and rural communities, and the contribution the GA industry has on the American and global economies.

NATA recently expanded these efforts by becoming a proud partner and major contributor to the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association's (AOPA) General Aviation Serves America campaign. AOPA launched the campaign recently to combat the economic, regulatory, and legislative difficulties besetting general aviation. The campaign's premise is that widespread misconceptions about general aviation are at the root of all of these challenges.

Through targeted broadcast, print, and online advertising, General Aviation Serves America is telling GA's story in a way that many in the non-flying public have never before heard it. The campaign is funded by AOPA, its members, and those, like NATA

and its members, who are interested in seeing this vital sector of the American economy survive and thrive.

Jim Coyne will serve as the chair of the GA Serves America Advisory Council, which will help ensure that opinion leaders, policy- and lawmakers, and the public at large understand the full breadth and scope of general aviation. Through General Aviation Serves America, we will dispel the myths about our community and promote the significant, meaningful contributions we make to our nation's economy, supply chain, and, in some regions of the country, even the standard of living. As chairman, Jim has pledged to help generate the momentum we need to tell the real story of general aviation to the public, policymakers, and opinion leaders.

AOPA President Craig L. Fuller may have said it best: "I truly don't believe that regulators and legislators are out to 'get' a \$150 billion industry. They and their constituents just don't understand what general aviation is and all that it contributes to the economic and social fabric of the nation. All of us in GA must stand together and define ourselves, showing the importance of the vital link we provide in the transportation system. Because if we do not, others whose priorities do not include general aviation will."

I hope that all those reading this will take a moment to learn more about this important new initiative by visiting www.gaservesamerica.com. Your support is needed! Together, we can unite and demonstrate just how important the GA industry is to the U.S. and global economy.

And for those NATA members interested in joining the GA Serves America Advisory Council, please email me at ebyer@nata.aero. I would be happy to discuss your potential involvement.





Jet Solutions Is First Industry Audit Standard Registered Operator

Since its inception in June 2007, the Air Charter Safety Foundation's top priority has been the development of a comprehensive audit program for the air charter and shared aircraft ownership industry. And now, the Air Charter Safety Foundation (ACSF) is proud to recognize Jet Solutions, LLC, of Richardson, Tex., as the first operator to complete the foundation's new Industry Audit Standard and achieve registration status with the foundation.

"We are proud to have successfully completed the ACSF audit and to be recognized as the first operator to do so," said Dennis Keith, president and owner of Jet Solutions. "The process provided a valuable review of our regulatory compliance procedures and the health of our safety management system. Our registration demonstrates the continuing efforts of all our employees to develop higher standards and is a natural next step beyond our ISO

registrations of the past."

Jet Solutions, one of the largest FAR Part 135 on-demand air carriers in the world, has operated more than a million hours with an unblemished safety record since its establishment in 1995.

ACSF members looked to the foundation to create a fair and comprehensive audit program to evaluate regulatory compliance and the incorporation of safety management systems (SMS) at on-demand air charter operators and shared aircraft ownership programs. The industry was simply overwhelmed in recent years by the frequency of audits they receive, and the ACSF founding members believed there had to be a better way. Enter the ACSF Industry Audit Standard.

The Industry Audit Standard (IAS) is the only audit program on the market that comprehensively evaluates both an operator's SMS and its Part 135 regulatory compliance. The IAS consists of a rigorous review of an operator's processes, procedures, and regulatory compliance as well as the operator's implementation of and adherence to an SMS. The IAS is designed to position an operator, through a single audit, to enhance its safety system, provide an independent assessment customers can rely on, and gain worldwide recognition of its SMS program.

The program evaluates operators every 24 months rather than annually, minimizing the administrative burden on operators and program managers. ACSF audits are managed by the foundation and performed by companies whose auditors have completed ACSF IAS training. All audits are scheduled with ACSF, which then assigns a company to complete the audit.

Jet Solutions is only the first of many operators that will complete the ACSF IAS process this year. More than 30 audits are scheduled over the next 12 months, and operators are contacting ACSF to learn more about the program and schedule their own audits.

"We encourage other operators to meet the audit standards," Keith said. "In the future, we will look for IAS registration when contracting operators to support our supplemental lift needs. Their registration will let us know exactly the standards to which


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When the operator successfully completes the IAS, the ACSF recognizes them as an IAS Registered Operator. These operators are provided the Registered Operator logo for their websites and marketing materials. Access to the registry to verify an operator's status and confirm key details is available at www.acsf.aero/registry.

they operate.”

Operators interested in learning more about the ACSF IAS should visit www.acsf.aero/audit. From this webpage, users can download the complete *Operator Standards Manual*, which walks an operator through every aspect of the IAS. Operators wishing to schedule an audit will also be provided with a comprehensive pre-audit checklist to complete before the arrival of the audit team.

ACSF believes the arrival of the IAS can help bring about a paradigm shift in the industry. In accordance with the vision of the foundation, the IAS will not only evaluate an operator’s current regulatory compliance and safety systems, but it will also foster a corporate culture of continuous safety improvement. 

Interested in Scheduling an Audit?

Contact ACSF at (888) SAFE-135 or audit@acsf.aero. Your contact information will be taken, and you will be sent the pre-audit checklist. The checklist must be completed and returned to ACSF before scheduling an audit date.

Who will conduct my audit?

ACSF has partnered with these well-respected and established aviation audit firms to conduct the IAS:

BlackBird Aero Services
CharterX/Wyvern
Morten, Beyer & Agnew
R. Dixon Speas Associates
Simat, Helliesen & Eichner, Inc. (SH&E)

All audits are scheduled by ACSF, and the foundation will assign the audit company. Operators may not directly schedule an ACSF IAS audit with the audit company.

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Your Rights When the FAA Comes Knocking



By Paul A. Lange

Editor's note: This is part one of a two-part article on dealing with FAA inspections. Part two will appear in the 4th quarter edition of *Aviation Business Journal*.

What do you do when the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) comes knocking? Have you thought about it in advance? Do you have a plan? Do you know *which* FAA is knocking on your door? (There's more than one). As a certificate holder, your FAA experiences will vary depending on the type or types of certificates that you hold and the types of operations that you conduct. For example, the ramp inspection of a private pilot is relatively short and simple. A comprehensive inspection of an air carrier or repair station, on the other hand, involves many more documents, issues, and considerations. Regardless of what certificates you hold and the nature of your business, the basic advice starts the same and is consistent for all. Due to their larger size and complexity, aviation businesses simply have additional issues to address when the FAA comes knocking to conduct an investigation.

The FAA Enforcement Process

The FAA enforcement process can take a variety of forms. These processes are described in Part 13 of the FARs. The most prominent are certificate ac-

tions and civil penalties. Regardless of which path the FAA takes, the investigation stage is the same. What differs is who is doing the digging, how deep are they digging, and whether the investigation is random or targeted.

The FAA's enforcement authority derives from enabling legislation. These federal statutes are written into the U.S. Code and prior to 1994 were known as the Federal Aviation Act of 1958. The FAA implements these statutes by writing detailed regulations published in the Code of Federal Regulations—what are commonly referred to as the FARs. As mentioned above, Part 13 of the FARs defines the scope of what the FAA is permitted to do toward enforcing its regulations. For additional guidance and to direct its employees in how to conduct their activities, the FAA publishes handbooks and orders. Order 2150.3B is the FAA's Compliance and Enforcement Program and provides the greatest level of detail with respect to the enforcement process.

How It All Starts

Let's start with the simplest investigation, the random ramp inspection of a pilot and aircraft. We were taught early in flight training what documents are required to be on board an aircraft at all times: airworthiness certificate, aircraft registration, radio station license (for flights outside the U.S.), oper-

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FAA Inspections

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ating limitations, and weight and balance. Pretty simple. These are required by the FARs, and you're required to produce these documents to an FAA inspector upon request.

Are you required to speak to an inspector during a ramp inspection? You're definitely better off being polite, but the FARs don't require you to actually speak to an inspector during a ramp inspection. The best advice is to treat the inquiry as if you're being interrogated by the police or by an opposing lawyer at a deposition or trial. Politely answer the question posed as honestly and succinctly as possible, but don't volunteer anything. If the questions go beyond what you're required to carry on the flight, the flight plan, whether the flight is operated under Part 91 or 135, and who has operational control, politely suggest that you need to discuss the details further with management or your counsel.

What should you do when your principal inspector appears at your air carrier or repair station for a

What about base inspections? Base inspections are when the FAA shows up at your base of operations to conduct a comprehensive, in-depth inspection. They are typically scheduled and can be conducted by either the principal inspectors or "independent" inspectors from other FAA offices. Knowing who is coming to visit can make a significant difference in how you approach the inspection. Is this a routine, periodic in-depth base inspection conducted by the FAA district office assigned to oversee your organization? If so, then you can justifiably avoid immediately and loudly ringing the alarm bells. Are the inspectors from another office? If so, FAA management may have some concerns about the level of oversight that the assigned district office is conducting with respect to your certificate. FAA has an institutional paranoia over its inspectors becoming too close with those whom they regulate and thereby failing to be as diligent as they should in their regulatory responsibilities. As a result, FAA sometimes inspects its own district offices. Unfortunately, that is done by auditing how the district office conducts its inspections of your business, resulting in even more disruption and risk to you.

Most concerning is the targeted inspection. Like a base inspection, a targeted inspection is generally performed by at least several FAA inspectors. It is an in-depth inspection but may not comprehensively cover all areas of your certification. The inspection teams have often been created on an *ad hoc*, temporary-duty basis. In the past several years, however, FAA has created a team based in Dallas, Tex., that was initially referred to as the Charter Quest team due to its focus on operational control issues. FAA now refers to this team as the Special Emphasis Inspection Team, or SEIT. High-level FAA management has publicly referred to the assigned inspectors as "pit bulls." In these special-emphasis inspections, the team's goal is to find something wrong. Even in the best-run organizations, you're likely to find something if you look hard enough. This is like an IRS audit. Your best chance of coming out unscathed (or at least only a little scratched up) is to start with the basics: be impeccably polite, be honest, be concise, and by all means don't volunteer anything. You can further minimize your risk by preparing in advance for such an inspection in the ways described below.

What Are Your Rights?

The FAA conveniently describes the roles and responsibilities of its investigative personnel in

The principal inspector is often your best advocate back in the depths of FAA bureaucracy if you have a good relationship. Remember that the principal inspector initiates most routine enforcement actions and has tremendous discretion in determining just how to approach the matter and what type of sanction to pursue.

routine, *ad hoc* inspection? The advice is essentially the same, though here you have an established working relationship with the inspector, are in the process of establishing one, or otherwise need to maintain the best relationship possible even if it requires effort. The principal inspector is often your best advocate back in the depths of FAA bureaucracy if you have a good relationship. Remember that the principal inspector initiates most routine enforcement actions and has tremendous discretion in determining just how to approach the matter and what type of sanction to pursue. Ask the principal inspector, and all visitors, to sign in. Always. Then keep the log.

Chapter 4 of the Compliance and Enforcement Program, Order 2150.3B (order). The order is available for free at www.faa.gov. Chapter 4 of the order further describes to an inspector how to go about conducting his or her investigation. In the course of explanations that span 43 pages, the FAA describes what its inspectors can and cannot do during an investigation as well as what certificate holders can and cannot do.

What is the FAA's authority to conduct inspections? The FAA has general statutory authority to conduct inspections pursuant to 49 U.S.C. Sections 44703, 44709 and 40113. The FAA also has a variety of implementing regulations that specifically authorize inspections, such as FAR 119.59, which starts, "At any time or place, the Administrator may conduct an inspection or test to determine whether a certificate holder under this part is complying with title 49 of the United States Code, applicable regulations, the certificate, or the certificate holder's operations specifications."

Are there limits to the FAA's authority? There are. The Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, for example, prohibits unreasonable searches and seizures. Even the FAA recognizes this and tells its inspectors that they may not force their way onto private property if refused access unless they first obtain a search warrant issued by a judge. Having said that, the order cites FAR 119.59 as an example of where the FAA states that it has a right to enter private property to conduct inspections.

What happens if the FAA is denied access to the premises? The FAA may enlist help from a U.S. Attorney in asking a federal court to issue an Administrative Inspection Warrant. More likely, however, the FAA may simply issue an Administrative Subpoena ordering individuals to appear and give testimony at an FAA office under oath before a court reporter and in response to deposition-type questions from an FAA lawyer. The FAA can issue an Administrative Subpoena on its own without consulting a U.S. Attorney or involving a federal court. Alternatively, the FAA may simply issue an emergency order of suspension or revocation of the relevant certificate, claiming that it has no basis upon which to determine continued compliance with the FARs.

A recent example of this involves the highly publicized case of Air Trek. The facts relevant to this issue are that FAA inspectors appeared unannounced at Air Trek's premises for a follow-up inspection after the carrier was grounded by an Emergency Order of Suspension. Air Trek asked the inspectors to wait while it sought guidance from its counsel,

given that the FAA and Air Trek were already engaged in litigation and subject to the NTSB's Rules of Practice in Air Safety Proceedings with respect to discovery. While Air Trek's counsel was discussing the issue with FAA counsel, the inspectors left the premises claiming that Air Trek refused them access to the premises. At trial, the NTSB Administrative Law Judge ruled that Air Trek violated the FARs by refusing FAA inspectors access to the premises. Air Trek did not raise that issue as part of its appeal.

A controversial ruling? Definitely. Lacking clear guidance? Definitely. How would the full NTSB have decided the issue on appeal? We obviously won't know until the next case comes along and the board is presented with the issue on appeal. In the meantime, the moral is to tread carefully in these situations, as the analysis is heavily fact dependant.

Are there time limits for the FAA to conduct an investigation? Sure. The order says that inspectors should strive to complete an investigation and the related Enforcement Investigative Report (EIR) within 75 days of the date that the FAA learned of the apparent violation. The order also states that the NTSB Rules of Practice require that any certificate action be brought within six months of that date unless the FAA can show good cause for its delay (i.e., late discovery of a violation) or alleges a lack of qualifications. (The FAA can be very creative in alleging a lack of qualifications.) Most civil penalty actions against businesses are required to be brought within two years, though certain civil penalty actions have a five-year limitations period.

Who has the burden of proof? The FAA. In short, the FAA is required to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that each element of the charged violation(s) has been proven. While this may be the lowest evidentiary standard in the law (the highest standard is the beyond-a-reasonable-doubt standard used in criminal proceedings), you're still innocent until proven guilty. You also have the right to confront the FAA's evidence against you in a hearing before an administrative law judge if the investigation results in enforcement action. Inspectors are directed to send a Letter of Investigation (LOI) notifying the subject of the investigation that it is being investigated for a particular reason or reasons and inviting a response. You have a right to respond to the LOI, but you would be well advised to have counsel respond on your behalf because anything stated in your response may be an admission that is used against you.

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Does the FAA have the right to interview witnesses? There's nothing in the FARs that specifically requires individuals to talk to the FAA. As a practical matter, however, it's often difficult to demonstrate compliance without producing one or more of your employees for FAA interviews. Moreover, the FAA can issue an administrative subpoena compelling the testimony of a reluctant witness. While the FAA cannot enforce its own subpoenas to compel a witness to testify, refusal to do so will most certainly result in a nearby U.S. Attorney's office utilizing the power of a federal court to compel the testimony. The witness' rights in this regard are that the FAA must have a reasonable basis to believe that the witness has information that is material and relevant to its investigation of a violation of the FARs. A low standard indeed, but a standard nonetheless to which rights attach.


Does a witness have a right to refuse to testify based on his or her Fifth Amendment rights against self incrimination? Absolutely. But that right must have a reasonable basis in law and fact. Moreover, if you assert that right, the administrative law judge may make a negative inference against you as a matter of law. Therefore, you want to only assert that right in extraordinary circumstances and after careful consideration with counsel.

Does the FAA have a right to your records? The FAA has a right to the records that the FARs require you to keep. Do they have a right to more? Not at the initial investigatory stage. Can they seek more in discovery if the matter is litigated? Sure. Will they get the documents? That's a facts-and-circumstances test as much as it is at the discretion of a judge. You do have certain privacy rights in your records, however. These rights emanate primarily from the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act. Chapter 4, paragraph 2.b. of the order states, "The Privacy Act prohibits FAA investigators from disclosing information contained in an EIR about an individual to third parties without prior written authorization from that individual or without the disclosure being made pursuant to a FOIA request. Release under FOIA occurs only after an analysis balancing privacy concerns with the public's need for disclosure."

Financial records are also protected from disclosure under FOIA, as are documents prepared for use in litigation. There are other protections available to documents under FOIA as well, but they are beyond the scope of this article. For all practical purposes, the FAA, in general, carefully follows the Privacy Act in protecting from disclo-

sure personal information relating to an individual. The FAA is also generally cautious about disclosing your documents even in the face of a FOIA request when they know that you consider the documents privileged. Your job is to insure that the FAA knows that the documents it takes from you are proprietary and confidential. A practical way to do this is to stamp all documents provided by the FAA with a prominent marking that labels them as privileged and confidential. If a FOIA request for the documents is made, another FAA order requires the FAA to notify you of the request and permit you reasonable time to seek a protective order from a court if you wish to block disclosure.

Does an FAA inspector need to act within the course and scope of his or her employment? Yes. You have the right to expect that an inspector acts appropriately toward you and does not do anything that is beyond what the FAA permits him or her to do in his or her job description. If an inspector does stray, a suit against the inspector for civil rights violations pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1983 is possible. Not surprisingly, the order does not discuss this subject. While a detailed discussion of the issue is beyond the scope of this article, the aviation industry has had a difficult time prevailing in the small number of such cases that have been initiated over the years against inspectors.

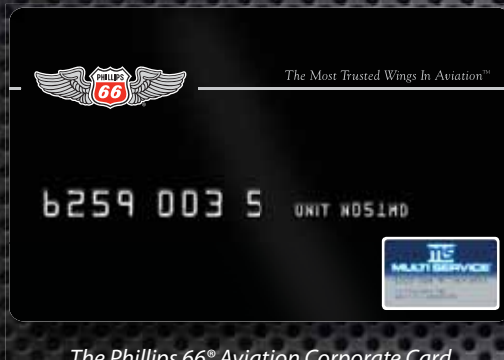
Lastly, the FAA states in its own publications that it will treat those whom it regulates with fairness, timeliness, mutual respect, integrity, a clear explanation of decisions, an environment without fear of retribution if you challenge their decisions, and clear guidance on how you can elevate your concerns to the next higher level of authority. While these guiding principles are best stated within the FAA's Customer Service Initiative on its website, they are nonetheless found, in whole or in part, in various places throughout FAA orders, including in the Compliance and Enforcement Program. As a last resort, these principles can at least provide some comfort that the FAA has a policy to follow and that the farther away from that policy an individual inspector deviates, the more difficult his or her actions will be to justify. 

In the next issue of *Aviation Business Journal*: practical advice that will help you during an FAA investigation.

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Total Airport Services

Five Years Old with Decades of Experience

By Paul Seidenman and David J. Spanovich

TAS CEO Jack Evans

When Total Airport Services (TAS) marks its fifth anniversary in November, it will, in reality, represent more than 30 years of cumulative experience in the air carrier and airport services business by company cofounders Jack Evans and Denny Eichenbaum.

Evans, the Simi Valley, Calif.,-based company's chief executive officer, chairs NATA's Airline Services Council and has a long history in aviation, including 26 years in the U.S. Air Force, with much of that time spent as a B-52 pilot. With more than 3,500 hours of jet time, he retired as a colonel and wing commander at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., in 1998 and joined Airport Group International (AGI).

Eichenbaum, TAS's senior vice president of business development, got into aircraft handling in 1986 when he founded Coast to Coast Aviation Services, Inc (CCAS). Based at San Francisco International Airport, CCAS began as a ground support and refueling company with one customer. When Eichenbaum sold CCAS to AGI in 1999, it had developed

into a multi-service firm, serving 16 airlines at San Francisco and with sales in excess of \$4 million. It was through the AGI connection that the two entrepreneurs became associated. "When we acquired CCAS, I made Denny senior director of business development," Evans said. "At the time, we were growing at about a 42 percent annual rate."

AGI was formerly known as Lockheed Air Terminal and was highly regarded in the airline services business, Evans said. However, with the growing trend toward airport privatization, the company was expanding into airport facilities management. "I was initially hired by AGI as managing director of airport operations, and we grew that part of the company to manage operations at 16 airports in North and South America, Europe, and Australia," Evans said.

In 2000, AGI was sold to United Kingdom-based TBI Plc, which had extensive experience in airport management. With the sale of the company, Evans became president and chief operating officer of AGI, which continued to operate under its own

name. “It was decided that AGI would concentrate on the airline services business exclusively, while TBI focused on the airport management side of the business,” he said.

But the situation changed again in October 2004 when TBI decided that it wanted out of airline services and sold AGI to a competitor. “When that happened, Denny and I were essentially out of jobs,” Evans said. “So on November 15, 2004, just 18 days after AGI was sold, we registered TAS as a national airline and airport services business.”

Building a High-Quality Niche

The new company allowed the founders to build a niche offering high-quality service, which Evans said was disappearing with industry mergers and consolidations, especially among the larger airline services companies.

“We were told by air carrier and airport authority representatives that among some of their service providers the emphasis on good customer service was no longer there to the extent it once was,” Evans said. “Our customers told us they wanted a high-quality, more personalized service, and that’s what we offered—but at a reasonable price.”

Developing that as a business model meant offering more customized service solutions, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, Evans said. Along this line, customers made it clear that if there were any problems, they didn’t want to deal with a big bureaucracy to get them resolved. “We let them know that all they had to do was pick up a phone and call, and we would respond immediately,” he said. “And we have done that.”

TAS backs its claims of superior customer service by offering a “complete satisfaction or money back” guarantee. “To our knowledge, we are the only airline services company that does this. There were other airline service firms that told us we were crazy to do this, but we’ve found that people simply want to get what they are paying for,” Evans said. “The result is that our station managers have made every effort to be more in tune with our customers’ requirements, especially at the local level, and we’ve had only minor claims.”

Setting a high bar for service, TAS secured its first contract on January 1, 2005, to perform ramp scrubbing at San Francisco International Airport. Starting with ten employees, TAS secured the contract to operate the ramp tower for the international terminal, employing an additional nine employees who had worked for Evans during his AGI days.

Under a subcontract with San Francisco Terminal

Equipment Company (SFOTEC), TAS is responsible for governing the airplane movements around the international terminal and those domestic gates in close proximity to the international terminal. TAS is also responsible for displaying flight departure and arrival information and information regarding baggage pickup locations for incoming flights at the international terminal.

At San Francisco, TAS uses mechanical scrubbers and environmentally sustainable cleaning solutions for cleaning oil and fuel leaks from aircraft and ground service equipment. The ramp-scrubbing contract with SFOTEC encompasses the international airport and most baggage make-up areas.

From total revenues of \$2.6 million in 2005, TAS finished 2008 with more than \$18 million in sales. Of that, 70 percent came from the company’s cargo aircraft handling, airfreight warehousing, and transloading services. The remaining 30 percent were derived from what Evans called “a diversified portfolio of services,” including facilities management, maintenance, into-plane fueling, aircraft de-icing, ramp scrubbing, and fuel-farm management. He said that due to the economic impact on worldwide airfreight shipping, TAS’s revenues for 2009 are projected to be about \$16 million.

TAS employs 350 individuals, down from a high of 375. But Evans pointed out that as the economy deteriorated, staff reductions were accomplished through normal attrition. “We’ve never had a lay-off,” he said.

Superior Service at O’Hare

The company’s showcase cargo aircraft ground handling operation is at Chicago O’Hare International Airport, where TAS employs 100 individuals and services nine air carriers: Air China, British Airways, Cargolux Airlines, Cathay Pacific Airways, EVA Airlines, Korean Airlines, Lufthansa Cargo, Air France, and U.S.-based Kalitta Airways. Services include the unloading and loading of airplanes, crew transportation, cockpit cleaning, and aircraft de-icing.

TAS handles about 50 aircraft per week at O’Hare, mostly 747 freighters. The weekly average is down from the 60 aircraft serviced when the economy was stronger, Evans said. “But those 50 aircraft still account for some 70 percent of all the cargo airplanes currently serving the airport,” he said. “We have been at O’Hare since 2007 and have built an excellent reputation for on-time aircraft handling there, which was at 99.3 percent between April 1, 2008, and March 31 of this year.”

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Total Airport Services

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On-time handling for a typical wide-bodied cargo jet is usually in the two- to two-and-one-half-hour turn-time range, he said.

TAS's next largest cargo services location is at San Francisco International Airport, where the company employs 75 people and provides various services for carriers such as Alaska Airlines, Air Canada, Continental Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Northwest Airlines, SkyWest Airlines, United Airlines, and US Airways. The company also manages a 55,000-square-foot warehouse under a contract with Japan's Nippon Cargo Airways (NCA). In addition, TAS performs ground-handling services for NCA and Hong Kong-based Cathay Pacific Airways.

The company also has air cargo activities at Newark Liberty International in New Jersey and

Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks, Conn., which serves the Hartford-Springfield area. Under contracts to private companies, TAS operates a 20,000-square-foot cargo facility and a 12,000-square-foot warehouse at Newark and Bradley, respectively. The Newark warehouse handles cargo and mail for Lufthansa, Air India, and LOT Polish, while the Bradley operation does the same for Air Canada, Continental Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Northwest Airlines, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines, and US Airways. The company performs some ramp services for those airlines at both locations.

TAS also has a contract with Luxembourg-based Cargolux Airlines at Huntsville International Airport in Alabama, where it supervises the airline's

services provider. "Mostly, we do the weight and balance and related functions, plus load supervision," he said. "Our job is to make sure that the aircraft is handled in a safe and timely manner, but we do no cargo or aircraft handling there."

In addition to its cargo-focused business, TAS has always drawn upon the experience of its founders in airport facilities operations and management and provides a variety of services. In fact, one of its largest contracts is with Los Angeles World Airports at Los Angeles International Airport, Terminal One. TAS is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the baggage system infrastructure and the jet bridges.

On June 5, TAS was awarded another contract at Los Angeles International Airport to perform the fuel pit and hydrant system maintenance at Terminal One and Three. "That will add a few more employees," Evans said. "Those are the kind of contracts we expect to pick up this year and in 2010, along with more ground handling and warehousing at our current and new locations."

The company is also the designated fuel farm manager at March Inland Port (formerly March Air Force Base) in Riverside, Calif. The joint use military/civil aviation facility primarily caters to airfreight. Under its agreement with the March Joint Powers Authority, TAS manages a temporary, aboveground fuel storage facility, which was established to serve DHL. "DHL no longer flies into the airport, but we do have a contract to manage a new

TAS CEO Jack Evans (left) with Pat Kelly, Chief Electrician for TAS at Los Angeles International Airport, Terminal One.



permanent fuel farm, which will be operational by late 2009 or early 2010," Evans said.

Evans is also looking beyond the current recession to future potential growth possibilities. "We are confident that our air cargo aircraft handling and warehousing business will expand, especially as the economy improves," he said. "In fact, we are already seeing some cargo aircraft coming back into service. But at the same time, we are continuing to pursue diversification opportunities in order to grow our company into a one-stop shop. In this way, when our cargo business, for example, is down, we can focus our resources in other areas and grow."

Along that line, Evans cited passenger aircraft handling as one likely opportunity for expansion based on the company's experience with cargo jets and previous passenger handling experience. "The requirements for handling cargo aircraft and passenger aircraft are a lot alike," he said. "It's the equipment requirements that are different."

TAS is also pursuing passenger check-in and boarding, which according to Evans are being increasingly outsourced, as well as line maintenance. Also under consideration are more airport services contracts within the continental United States.

"For instance, to our knowledge we are just one of two companies in the U.S. that provide ramp tower operations," he said. "As opportunities like that present themselves, we can expand into them."

The Value of Training

For Evans, the key to running a successful, growing company is to assemble a staff of highly motivated, highly experienced employees. To reinforce this, TAS puts a heavy emphasis on training.

"Everyone—from leads, to supervisors, to general managers—is trained using a manual that we developed in-house," he said. "Before they are promoted into the higher position, they are required to read the manual and pass a test. Because of this, we have created a group of like-minded people who do their jobs and manage their time and priorities in the same way."

While optimistic about TAS's growth potential, Evans stressed that there are still a number of challenges to overcome. "The air carriers are under constant pressure to cut costs yet still provide good service," he said. "The problem is that the same


"We are confident that our air cargo aircraft handling and warehousing business will expand, especially as the economy improves," he said. "In fact, we are already seeing some cargo aircraft coming back into service. But at the same time, we are continuing to pursue diversification opportunities in order to grow our company into a one-stop shop. In this way, when our cargo business, for example, is down, we can focus our resources in other areas and grow."

—Jack Evans

pressure impacts the service providers. Companies such as ours are being forced to reduce costs further, even though the costs of doing business are rising. For example, we've seen our employee medical and dental plan rates increase from 8 to 14 percent per year."

Then there is the matter of new security regulations impacting air cargo shipping. "Ten years ago, air cargo security was mostly focused on preventing theft. You had to provide security cameras and other checks within the warehouse to guard against stealing," Evans said. "Now this has been expanded to make sure that nobody puts a dangerous device aboard an airplane. It's the service providers who are being asked to underwrite the cost of the enhanced security, such as X-ray machines and other explosives-screening devices and the training of employees on how to use them. In this economy, we find it's difficult to pass along those costs to our airline customers, who are asking us to charge less."

The Airline Services Council has been working and will continue to work with the Transportation Security Administration to address the new security regulations and implementation issues, Evans said. "Together, we've been working to implement the new security measures in a smart business fashion."

Despite today's business conditions, Evans sees a bright future for TAS. "We will continue to maintain our good reputation with the airlines, which will continue to need a quality service provider that can offer them service at a reasonable price and at a lower cost than they can do it in-house," he said. "If you can meet that requirement in this business, you'll be successful." 

Air Charter Summit and FBO Leadership Conference

Positive Messages for Business Aviation

NATA's Air Charter Summit and FBO Leadership Conference, both held in early June in Dulles, Va., delivered hard-hitting information, expert guidance, and insightful answers focused exclusively for on-demand charter and FBO audiences. Positive attitude, up-ticks in business, and a sense of aviation community were underlying themes of both events.

"NATA's Air Charter Summit and FBO Leadership Conference provided unparalleled venues for Part 135 and FBO members to learn about current legislative and regulatory issues directly from government leaders, generate new ideas to reinvent and recharge their businesses, and discover methods to reinvigorate positive public perception of our noble industry," NATA President James K. Coyne said. "We were especially pleased and encouraged by the attendees' enthusiasm in this challenging year."



FAA's John M. Allen (left photo), Director, Flight Standards Service, and Dennis Pratte (wearing red tie above), Manager, Part 135 Air Carrier Operations Branch, provide summit participants with updates on current initiatives.

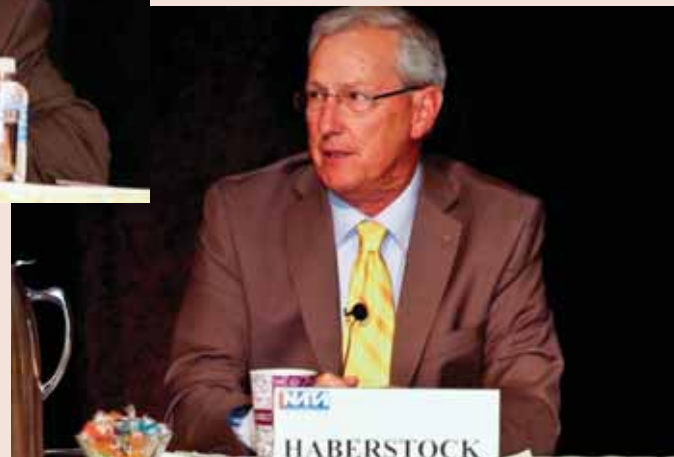


Above, Douglas Hofsass, General Manager, Commercial Aviation & Airports, TSA, briefs conference attendees on the latest security developments.



Left, NATA President James K. Coyne presents William Garvey, Editor-In-Chief, *Business & Commercial Aviation*, with the 2008 NATA Aviation Journalism Award during the Industry Excellence Awards Breakfast.

Below, Bill Haberstock, President & CEO, Million Air Salt Lake City, offers his views during a summit session on Positioning Your Business for Success in the New Economy.





Left, FBO Leadership Conference Luncheon keynote speaker, Craig Fuller, President, Aircraft Owners & Pilots Association, discusses how NATA members can play a leading role in the General Aviation Serves America campaign.

Below, Kent Jackson, Esq., Partner, Jackson & Wade, LLC, offers insights during the summit's Criminalization of Aviation Accidents session.



Below, attendees from both events enjoyed a dinner performance by the Capitol Steps, D.C.'s favorite political satire troupe.



Right, Catherine M. Lang, Acting Associate Administrator for Airports, FAA, presents an airports office update to conference attendees.



Right, Todd Guelich (left), AirSure Limited, and Patricia and Steve Loyd, Loyd's Aviation, catch up during the pre-dinner reception.



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Public Relations for Business Jet Charter: Six Essential Lessons

By Gil Wolin

Perception is reality. Clichéd, yes, but clichéd for a reason: All too often, how you are perceived in the marketplace has a direct bearing on your business success. And, as has become all too apparent in recent months, it's not just your own business, but our industry as well. The current recession and stock market slide have made targets of all forms of conspicuous consumption, into which the "excessive expense" of business jets fits quite neatly.

How did business aviation fall so quickly in the public eye? What can you do about it today, and what can you do to inoculate yourself against future image challenges? The answers lie in the successes of recent years as well as in some basic steps to develop an ongoing public relations program.

"Business" jets had little media appeal when first introduced in the early 1960s. But "private" jets did, and the first wave of publicity that accompanied the Lear Jet 23 and its ilk focused on photo ops with Hollywood luminaries and touring rock stars. The Byrds' songs "Eight Miles High" and "2-4-2 Fox Trot (The Lear Jet Song)" were typical of the kind of exposure garnered by mid-1960s PR.

The first generation of jet charter companies had limited marketing budgets and happily rode this wave of public exposure. Few celebs could afford their own jet, but charter was within easy reach of most PR budgets. It was a match made in Hollywood, if not heaven.

By the 1970s we'd grown more sophisticated as an industry. The eight aircraft manufacturers in concert with the NBAA focused their marketing messages on the timesaving and management-efficiency aspects of "business" jet use. Those themes dominated advertising and public relations for the better part of the next two decades, until the emergence of a new kind of celebrity: the ultra-successful business executive. These were the new "rock stars," darlings of both the general and business press. "Business" jet travel now became grist for the media mill.

Today, the public perception of our industry, as well as our revenue, rises and falls not only with our safety record (as was brought into focus by the 2004 Montrose and 2005 Teterboro charter ac-

cidents) but also with the Dow Jones Index. The current recession, now the longest of the post-war period, has produced too many damaging stories regarding perceived abuse of business jets, beginning with the automakers' November trip to Washington, D.C., to ask for a \$25 billion bailout. Simply put, Thorsten Veblen and conspicuous consumption are out—big time! Even the editor of *Vogue* speaks of some things being just "too Dubai."

Simply informing the media of good news or responding to bad is not enough. This is especially true for those of us in the bizjet charter industry, where our public relations manuals often consist solely of disaster plans. Press releases, spin doctors, and media control are terms that come to mind when someone mentions public relations. Thanks to various entertainment media, from books to television, movies, the internet, and YouTube, most people believe the primary role of public relations is to manipulate and control the public's perception of a person or company. There may have been a time when that was true, perhaps even possible, but today's communications channels are so wide, so varied, and so immediate, that such control is virtually impossible. Texting, PDAs, and cell phone cameras make it possible for even the average Joe or Jane to take and download a picture of your CEO with egg on his face before you can say LOL. Everyone now has the capacity and the technology to be both a reporter and a pundit.

All of this means that your public relations plan can no longer remain merely a subsection of your emergency response manual. It must be fully integrated into every phase of your marketing communications program.

Following are six pointers to help insure that your public relations effort effectively supports your business plan.

1. Create a Clear Message

Most people think of public relations as situation specific: good and bad. But it's more than just celebrating your anniversary, announcing your new CFO, or reacting to an accident or incident. Public relations tells your story to all your constituencies, everyday: Who are you in the eye of all your pub-

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Public Relations

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lics? What is your brand, and what does it stand for? Branding is all about expectations. More exactly, it is about creating positive expectations and carving a unique niche in the minds of your customers and prospects so that they call you first when they need to charter. Successful branding occurs when, based either on experience, word of mouth, or advertising, your customers call because they expect a good experience.

You must be consistent here, as the slightest variation becomes magnified and echoed across the internet. That is why *all* employees must deliver the same message about your company in a positive manner. This, more than any other single action, will determine what the public thinks of when it thinks of your company. And always remember that whatever message you create goes to a number of different constituencies, from clients to regulatory agencies.

2. Define Your Constituencies

Remember that when any employee speaks, he or she speaks to a wide audience, any one of which will influence your ability to conduct a profitable business and grow. Every moment of interaction between any employee and a constituent carries both positive and negative potential. You have at least six different audiences, each with its own interest in your operation: your clients/customers, your employees and their families, your vendors, the press (aviation trade, business, and local), your community, and the FAA and other regulatory agencies. If you draw business primarily from one geographic region, then the regional media come into play, as will lifestyle publications in high-profile resort and some metro areas. Bear in mind, your FSDO and vendors always have their ears to the ground. If there is information about your company to be had anywhere, in print or electronic, they will know it. For the FAA, questions about financial solvency

inevitably lead to questions about safety.

3. Know Who's On Your Team

Everyone in your company works for the public relations department—your flight crews on the road, the administrative assistant who answers the phone, the client service rep who books a trip. Nothing travels faster than facts and rumors in business aviation, given the worldwide face-to-face mobility of our employees and clients. When the November 2004 Challenger accident occurred in Montrose, Colo., I knew of it hours before the media. An aviation associate in Denver called minutes after getting a call from a friend in Grand Junction, virtually as the accident happened. Bad news travels fast, and all employees need to understand the importance of not being a carrier.

At the same time, be aware of who is *not* on your team. Your competitors are obvious, but less observable are former clients. One bad experience can undo thousands of dollars of advertising, as the word spreads at board meetings and exclusive country clubs across the country. Disgruntled former employees are more than willing to share their discontent. The internet and search tools like Google Alerts provide them with a platform seen potentially by millions worldwide instantaneously. You can't respond to each one individually, and don't ever try to plant information on the web, lest you ruin your reputation for truth.

4. Nurture Your Relationships

Good times, bad times—it's no longer enough just to send out a press release in correct format. Editors and reporters are literally flooded with such releases. Unless yours is truly industry changing, you may not get the play you think you deserve. So don't wait; cultivate a relationship with the appropriate media outlets before you have news and before anything negative happens. Share your knowledge, and place yourself at their disposal as an "industry expert" on related stories, be it increased airport noise or declining airline frequency and service quality.

Being perceived as an expert puts you in position to participate as a presenter at seminars and conferences. But don't wait for the conference to be announced. Build your relationships with event planners ahead of time so that your company comes to mind when they plan the event. It is far more effective to have someone else call you an expert than to try to proclaim it yourself.

It pays to pay attention to what is written about our industry in your local press. When a story ap-



pears about business aviation, write a letter to the editor agreeing, disagreeing, or clarifying points in the story. Establish yourself as the expert, the ones reporters want to call for another credible voice. You might also try your hand at a timely op-ed piece to further enhance your credentials.

5. Give a Good Interview

What do you need to know to give an interview or hold a press conference that sizzles? You must follow a few basic rules. The first is to always tell the truth. It's OK to give your story a positive spin, except when it would be inappropriate or absurd to do so, but stick to the truth. As noted above, the internet world will find you out if you stray. If at all possible, time the release of your story to fall on either a slow news day (e.g., the weekend) or coincide with a local or national event (e.g., the anniversary of a local airport opening or a famous local aviator's birthday).

When you have the opportunity to do a news conference or interview on television or radio, be sure to speak slowly, simply, and with clarity. Use inflection as appropriate but with care. Explain your main point in a few short sentences at the very beginning of your statement. Repeat your main point once or twice if time permits. Smile. When you smile, you tend to speak positively. Gesture sparingly and naturally. The relaxed half-fist used by so many politicians to make their point is clichéd and overused, so just be natural. Practice ahead of time so that you do appear natural. Try to anticipate the questions you will be asked. What would your competition ask you in an open forum? Always be prepared. And remember to breathe! Many people, especially those new to the public eye, forget to breathe naturally when they get nervous. If you tend to get really nervous, take a few deep cleansing breaths before you enter the studio or mount the platform or stage. Relax and be yourself.

6. Have Fun!

There also are opportunities to engage your entire company in getting the news out. While you may focus on ensuring that your employees deliver the right message, don't leave employee PR to the annual picnic and holiday party. When Executive Jet Aviation passed 55 million charter miles in the late 1970s, the company purchased 5,500 Ohio lottery tickets on behalf of all employees. EJA descended *en masse* on the local television station for the weekly drawing, exciting the employees as well as reaching the local market with a great message for prospective clients and prospective employees.

While they didn't win the big prize, the exposure was priceless.

Where advertising tends to target specific audiences, public relations can reach almost all of your constituencies simultaneously. These are your opportunities to broadcast your message about the quality of your service and people in the most cost-effective manner possible, and that's the best message for these times. ■

Gil Wolin has more than 35 years aircraft management, charter, and FBO management experience, most recently as a senior executive at Wayfarer Aviation, Inc., and its predecessor TAG Aviation USA. He served as publisher of Business & Commercial Aviation and A/C Flyer magazines from 1999 to 2004. Wolin headed sales and marketing at Executive Jet Aviation (now NetJets) during the mid-1970s and directed marketing at Combs Gates, a leading U.S. FBO chain, throughout the 1980s. Wolin is a past member of the NATA Board of Directors and currently serves on the Corporate Angel Network and GE Capital Solutions-Corporate Aviation advisory boards.

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Striving for Number One Using the Ritz-Carlton Leadership Model

By Colin Bane

In April, Texas Jet Inc. was voted the number-one fixed based operator (FBO) and the number one independent FBO in the United States in the *Professional Pilot* magazine 2009 PRASE (Preferences Regarding Aviation Services and Equipment) Survey. And for the first time in its 30-year history, Texas Jet was ranked in the top ten U.S. FBOs in *Aviation International News'* 2009 FBO Survey.

The PRASE survey scores service in six categories: line team, customer service representatives, facility, amenities, promptness, and efficiency and value for cost. The key to this recent success, said Texas Jet President Reed Pigman, Jr., is an increased focus on customer service over the last decade and the implementation of what Pigman calls Texas Jet's Exceptional Customer Service program.

At the heart of this award-winning program are Customer Service Manager Holly Hopkins (pilots ranked Hopkins in the top ten customer service representatives in the U.S. on the PRASE surveys in 2007, 2008, and 2009) and a training partnership with the Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center that began four years ago.

Looking for the Gold Standard

"We were looking to raise the level of service we offer, and the model we looked to was the five-star hotel business," Pigman said. "We knew that we had similar clientele, and we knew that we wanted to be able to offer the same level of luxury. Ten years ago, back when we were ranked number 44 in the *Pro Pilot* survey and thinking about how to get to number one, we were looking for the gold standard in customer service. The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company had just won the president's Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for Service, and it was a key realization for us to understand how much the Ritz-Carlton had in common with charter and FBO businesses and to realize the level of service many of our customers have grown accustomed to."

At Texas Jet's Executive Terminal at Fort Meacham International Airport, Pigman offers fast, courteous "red carpet" service, from the line service technicians working with the aircraft to luxury terminal services like gourmet catering, executive

conference rooms, office space, rest rooms, fitness center, crew lounge, and rental car and limousine service accommodations for guests.

For the last four years, Pigman has sent all Texas Jet employees through customer service training with the Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center, and in June Brian Grubb, corporate director of learning and content delivery for the Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center, addressed NATA's 2009 Air Charter Summit and FBO Leadership Conference.

Grubb made the point that FBOs are, first and foremost, a service industry. Customer engagement, anticipation, and service are key, he said.

"One of the things we've been most impressed with as we've looked to the Ritz-Carlton hotels as a model and participated in training at the Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center is how they've empowered their employees at every level to anticipate customer needs, make decisions, and solve problems," Pigman said. "If we have a problem out on the line, we don't want to the line service technician who encounters the problem to pass the buck and say, 'You need to go to talk to the line service manager about this,' because that's the last thing the customer wants to hear. Now we've empowered our staff at every level to take ownership of the problems they encounter. So it's up to that line service tech to own the problem until it's solved. They can ask for help—the line service manager's help, my help, anyone's help they need—but it's up to them to solve it and see it through to the customer's satisfaction."

Pigman said he's come to understand that the difference between good customer service and exceptional customer service is all about customer engagement: working to transform the ordinary, workaday experience of flying and traveling into an extraordinary luxury experience.

In his session at the FBO Leadership Conference, Grubb suggested that it's actually less important to measure customer satisfaction than it is to measure customer engagement. "Engaged" customers and guests are eight times more loyal than "satisfied" customers and guests, Grubb said.

A good company does what it does extraordinarily well, makes connections with its customers, and recognizes the importance of a customer's time and needs. Regardless of price point, "bedside manner

does count,” Grubb said. “Providing a level of legendary service doesn’t have to cost a lot of money.” Simple things like timeliness, a warm greeting, and attention to service can be worth more than almost any other investment you might make in your company.

A Culture of Continual Improvement

“At Texas Jet, we train everybody in the company on our customer service, what we call our Exceptional Service Program, everybody from the custodian to the bookkeeper,” Pigman said. “Customer service is more than the person at the front desk, much, much more. It’s got to be everybody. We try to run everybody through training twice a year to reinforce it and to foster a culture of continual improvement around here.”

At Ritz-Carlton hotels, all employees carry credo cards reminding them to give warm and sincere greetings using the guest’s name, to anticipate and fulfill each guest’s needs, and to give a fond farewell and warm good-bye, again using the guest’s name. Grubb also advocates “random acts of kindness,” such as giving a customer the correct change for airport toll roads, providing umbrellas for use in inclement weather, and offering additional service perks.

Making Service Memorable

“A company’s mission statement should be a written service strategy,” Grubb said. To fully engage customers, employees need to anticipate customer needs and stay in the moment with all senses on alert, remembering that great service to one is not great service to another. “Service should be unique, memorable, and personal.”

Grubb suggested the following areas where any service industry should seek continual improvement: smiling and welcome staff, greeting customers by name, treating every day as a special occasion, answering phone calls promptly, wrapping purchases, keeping the restrooms clean, inviting customers back, and inviting and welcoming customer feedback.

The bottom tier of customer service, according to Grubb, is what is “expected.” A customer counts on this level of service and quality product but will not remember an experience that merely meets expectations. The second tier of service is “requested.” A customer requesting a certain level of service expects responsiveness, and will likely remember the experience—good or bad—based on the level of responsiveness. Companies should shoot for a

third tier, Grubb said. Engaged customers should leave feeling “delighted.” When a customer receives world-class service that surprisingly exceeds their expectations, they will always remember it. Conversely, “People will always remember when you could not honor a special request,” Grubb said.

When measuring customer engagement, Grubb wants to grasp a guest’s likeliness to return (at Ritz-Carlton hotels, 20 percent of guests bring in 80 percent of the company’s business) as well as their likeliness to spread a positive word to friends and colleagues, their overall sense of well-being, and the degree to which a guest feels they’ve been treated as an individual.

“We go to great lengths to measure customer engagement here at Texas Jet, using all kinds of different measures,” Pigman said. “We just got voted number one in the country. That’s the best measure yet.”

Businesses interested in participating in training sessions with the Ritz-Carlton Leadership Center can visit <http://corporate.ritzcarlton.com/en/LeadershipCenter> for course descriptions and a full schedule.



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It's a Small World After All— Know Before You Go!

By Lindsey C. McFarren

Remember the days when “international flight” meant a jaunt to Canada or the Bahamas? Now more and more U.S.-based aircraft operators fly long-legged aircraft, and client requests for non-stop flights from New York to Munich or even farther are not uncommon. It is certainly a smaller world now than it was even ten years ago. What do you need to consider before you fly internationally, particularly to new destinations? Read on for tips on avoiding the “gotchas” of operating internationally. Remember, this is just an overview of a few hot topics in the international arena. Consulting an experienced handling firm and conducting your own research before an international flight will help ensure a successful, pitfall-free trip.

Second-in-Command Type Rating

Do all of your crewmembers hold a second-in-command (SIC) type rating yet? In 2005, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) published a new

requirement for a SIC pilot type rating on U.S. airman certificates for flights in aircraft whose type certification require a minimum crew of two pilots and where the flight will be outside U.S. airspace involving a landing in a foreign country. The compliance date to hold the appropriate SIC pilot type rating for international flights was June 6, 2006, but many operators and pilots missed the memo.

Several operators report unsuccessful ramp checks at international destinations where they were reminded by inspectors of the SIC type rating requirement. Frequently this resulted in the need to airline in an additional appropriately type-rated pilot to complete the flight. Obtaining the SIC type rating is relatively easy. A pilot must undergo familiarization training from a qualified instructor or pilot-in-command who holds the same aircraft type rating. The trainer logs the instruction time in the SIC-to-be's logbook and upon completion of the training, makes an endorsement in the SIC's

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International Flights

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logbook confirming the training. The SIC then completes a form 8710-1 and submits it to an FAA examiner or Flight Standards District Office.

Don't risk fines, delays, or the cost of replacing an unrated crewmember by forgetting this simple requirement!

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Compliance dates for the European Union's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) are rapidly approaching, yet many U.S. operators seem unaware of the pending dates or possible sanctions. The European Union (EU) recently adopted Directive 2008/101/EC, which describes a market-based carbon allowance-trading program designed to account for and reduce specified entities' greenhouse gas emissions. This directive applies to all aircraft over 5,700 kilograms (12,566 pounds) arriving at or departing from EU airports. Any aircraft, including rotorcraft, over 12,566 pounds flying to, from, or within EU countries must comply with the EU ETS by 2012, although the step-up program has compliance requirements beginning in 2009.

The details of the EU ETS and acceptable compliance methods are, frankly, fuzzy. Operations are tracked by Eurocontrol, and the operator will be regulated by the country it flies in/over the most. (An equally complicated and so very appropriate U.S. analogy would be state use taxes, through which a state levies taxes on the portion of the flight conducted in/over that state.) Although it sounds complex, this arrangement brings good news: an operator will need to work with only one EU state regulator for all EU ETS dealings.

All operators are required to submit an emissions monitoring plan to the appropriate EU state regulator by August 31, 2009. The European Commission has promised templates for operators to use in drafting their emissions and benchmarking plans. These templates were in draft form at the time I wrote this article, but final templates should be available from the EC by mid-July. Operators will then need to monitor emissions during 2010 according to their submitted plan and report back to the appropriate authority by March 31, 2011. Emissions trading requirements will be based on the report of 2010 emissions data.

An operator has three ways to pay the emissions piper: free allocations (described below), carbon offset credits, or purchasing carbon credits on the open market. Penalties for non-compliance could be steep. Civil penalties will range from monetary fines up to impoundment of the aircraft.

There are a few ways to avoid paying for all or a portion of your emissions. First, there is an exemption for certain commercial aircraft operations. Any commercial operator with fewer than 243 flights per period for three consecutive four-month periods or flights with total emissions lower than 10,000 metric tons per year may be eligible for an exemption. Second, operators may voluntarily submit a plan to the appropriate EU state regulator by August 31, 2009, which outlines how an operator plans to monitor metric ton kilometer data in 2010. If the regulator approves the plan, the operator must monitor data accordingly in 2010 and submit a report of 2010 emissions data to the regulator in order to be eligible for free allocations. Finally, training flights, military or police missions, and search and rescue, firefighting, humanitarian aid, and EMS flights are exempt from this program.

The EU has dedicated a website to the aviation ETS (see sidebar on page 36). The site includes a list of aircraft operators preliminarily identified as "ETS-eligible," though the list should not be considered the final word for a particular operator. Aircraft operators are still responsible for determining the applicability of this regulation to their operations.

Stay tuned to www.nata.aero for updates on the EU ETS, and visit the EU's ETS website for more information. Good stewardship of our planet is a noble task indeed, but you don't want a technicality or missed compliance date to lead to hefty fines or impoundment of your aircraft!

Flight Data Analysis Program

Do you fly an aircraft heavier than 27,000 kilograms (59,522 pounds) on commercial flights to Europe? Do you participate in a flight data analysis program (commonly referred to in the U.S. as FOQA)? If you answered "yes" to "big airplane in Europe" and "no" to "FOQA," I would consider avoiding France and possibly other EU states.

At least one operator recently reported to NATA concerns resulting from an attempted commercial flight to France. During this check, the operator was asked for proof of participation in a flight data analysis program. Other operators report being denied charter permits into France for not participating in such a program. The French DGAC is basing this requirement on an ICAO Annex 6 provision that a flight data analysis program be part of a commercial operator's safety management system for all aircraft more than 59,522 pounds.

Operators of airplanes heavier than 59,522

pounds flying commercial trips to Europe should consult with their handlers to determine if an exemption or waiver may be obtained from the French DGAC.

Age 60 Rules Vary

The U.S. has changed the mandatory retirement age for part 121 pilots to age 65. This requirement does not apply to part 91 or part 135 operators in domestic operations, and there is no mandatory retirement age for pilots in these types of operations. But, of course, it would be too simple for that requirement to be universal. Many ICAO contracting states do not recognize the liberal U.S. retirement regulations.

ICAO does not consider retirement requirements in terms of part 91, 121, and 135. Rather, the ICAO language found in Annex 1, Chapter 2, refers to "international commercial air transport operations" where "commercial" means any operation "for remuneration or hire." ICAO states generally do not permit an individual to act as pilot-in-command of an aircraft engaged in international commercial air transport operations if the individual is 60 or older. However, in two-pilot operations most ICAO states allow for age-based crew pairing, whereby one of the pilots may be up to age 65 (not having reached his/her 65th birthday) and the other pilot is younger than 60. Any pilot older than 60 must have a medical issued within the preceding six months. A few examples are below.

- It is June 15, Sam's 60th birthday. Sam is flying a single-pilot commercial operation in an ICAO state with no deviation from the age 60 rule. Is he compliant with the ICAO mandatory retirement standard? No. Sam could have completed this flight legally yesterday (June 14), but on June 15 he is not compliant with the ICAO standards.
- Diane and Cliff are flying a two-pilot commercial operation in an ICAO state with no deviation from the age 60 rule. Diane is 63 and had a medical

eight months ago. Cliff is 45. Are they compliant with the ICAO mandatory retirement standard? No. Although Cliff is young enough for legal crew pairing, Diane must have a medical every six months to comply with ICAO rules.

- Mary has updated her medical and is flying a two-pilot commercial operation with Norm in an ICAO state with no deviation from the age 60 rule. Diane is still 63 and has a freshly inked medical. Norm is 60. Are they compliant with the ICAO mandatory retirement standard? No. Norm should be swapped with a crewmember *younger* than 60. His 45-year-old colleague Cliff would make this a compliant flight.

Additionally, ICAO has issued a recommendation—not a standard—that member states not allow a pilot to engage in two-pilot international commercial operations after the pilot's 65th birthday. Many member states follow this recommendation and prohibit commercial operations by pilots age 65 and older.

Continued on page 36

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International Flights

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The bottom line on the age 60 rule? To avoid an international “gotcha,” single-pilot commercial operations flown internationally should be performed by a pilot under age 60. Two-pilot commercial operations flown internationally may benefit from age-based crew pairing, with one pilot up to age 65 and another pilot under age 60. Keep an eye on medical dates, and be sure any pilots between the ages of 60 and 65 operating commercial flights internationally obtain a medical every six months.

Medical Mix-Ups

Last year the FAA extended the duration of medical certificates for pilots younger than 40. Third-class medical durations were extended from 36 to 60 months for pilots younger than 40 on the date of the medical exam, and first class medical durations were extended from 6 to 12 months. ICAO’s definitions of medical classes (found in Annex 1) do not correspond to FAA’s definitions, so a first-class medical is required for all commercial pilots or ATPs, regardless of whether the flight is for hire or compensation or is a private flight. Therefore, this discussion will focus on commercial pilots, Airline Transport Pilot licensed pilots (ATPs), and the first-class medical duration. Although the FAA’s recent extension was intended to bring the U.S. in line with ICAO standards, many other ICAO member states—and nonmember states—have very different medical duration limitations.

ICAO standards do not recognize the calendar-month basis that is the U.S. regulation. Rather, ICAO standards state a medical expires on the same calendar number of the month as the date of the medical examination or if there is no day listed, the last day of the month. Additionally, many states do not recognize the FAA’s new extension to 12 months for first-class medicals of pilots under age 40. What was that? A few examples will help clarify:

- Carla, age 41, has a first-class medical issued on January 15, 2009. For most ICAO member states, that medical is valid until July 15. In the U.S., the medical is valid until July 31, 2009.
- Rebecca, age 35, has a first-class medical issued on January 15, 2009. For most ICAO member states that medical is valid until July 15. In the U.S., the medical is valid until January 31, 2010.
- Ted, age 50, has a first-class medical issued on January 15, 2009. In the U.S., this first-class medical drops to second-class status after July 31, 2009. However, in most ICAO member states, this medical would be non-compliant for commercial operations after July 15, 2009.

Important Dates

August 31, 2009

- Submission of emission monitoring plan
- Submission of benchmarking plan (optional)

January 1, 2010

- Operators must begin emissions monitoring.
- Operators who desire free allowance must begin tracking benchmarking data.

March 31, 2011

- Third-party-verified benchmarking data must be submitted.
- Third-party-verified monitoring data for 2010 must be submitted.

June 30, 2011

- Application for free allowance must be submitted.

2012

- 2012 is the first year in which allowances must be submitted for emissions.

Additional Resources:

- NATA EU ETS White Paper
- NATA EU ETS Member Update, Dated June 9, 2009
- EU’s ETS Aviation website http://ec.europa.eu/environment/climat/aviation_en.htm

Although technically it can be argued that the FAA second-class medical requirements meet the ICAO first-class standards, making that argument to an inspector on a ramp in Brazil in the middle of the night might not have the successful outcome you desire. It is recommended that all pilots holding a commercial certificate or ATP who conduct international operations maintain a six-month first-class medical certificate and consider the medical expiration to be date-based, not calendar month-based.

This article is just an overview of a few of the “gotchas” most frequently reported by NATA members who fly internationally. It is not intended to scare operators from accepting requests for international flights but merely to alert operators to the potential pitfalls they might encounter once they leave U.S. airspace. You should consult with a handler or another operator experienced in operating in the countries in which you intend to fly. In this ever-smaller world, it is crucial to know before you go!

Lindsey C. McFarren is president of McFarren Aviation Consulting. She can be reached at (703) 445-2450 or lindsey@mcfarrenaviation.com.

The Plan That Keeps Paying Good Experience Returns

The NATA Workers Compensation Insurance Plan - underwritten by USAIG - has now paid over \$66 million in Good Experience Returns since its inception in 1975. Moreover, this Plan has earned a Good Experience Return in 31 of its first 33 years!

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Fire Code Changes Could Affect Your Business

By Mike France

Many different factors affect the cost of operating and expanding aviation ground facilities. Labor, insurance, utilities, and capital are all costs that managers and owners expect and plan for when setting a course for the future of the business. One area that may be overlooked is changes in fire codes. Fire codes vary by locality, city, and state, and they also change over time. In any locality around the country, it is unlikely that a hangar built in the 1970s would meet today's fire codes without a significant investment in upgrades.

Often enough changes can occur to the fire code over time so that if a hangar is destroyed by fire or weather, insurance may not cover the full cost of bringing a reconstructed hangar up to the current fire code. At NATA's recent FBO Leadership Conference, NATA member Bob Showalter of Showalter Aviation in Orlando, Fla., described a similar situation that occurred at his facility after several hangars were severely damaged by a hurricane. Often overlooked, fire codes can significantly impact your business. The entity that leads the industry in establishing these fire codes is the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

The NFPA is an international member organization whose mission is to reduce the worldwide burden of fire and other hazards by providing and advocating consensus codes and standards, research, training, and education. The NFPA has more than 80,000 members from 80 different countries. The NFPA develops, publishes, and updates more than 300 standards and codes designed to reduce the potential of fire and minimize the damage done by fire in a wide variety of environments. The codes and standards developed by the NFPA are frequently adopted by localities or states as fire codes.

One NFPA standard that is of particular importance to the aviation industry is NFPA 409—the Standard on Aircraft Hangars. This standard sets

forth the minimum requirements for aircraft hangar construction and protection from fire. In NFPA 409, hangars are divided by size and construction type into three groups, and fire protection requirements are specified for each group. The protection requirements can range from portable fire extinguisher to high-expansion foam fire-suppression systems. The development and revision of NFPA 409 is overseen by the NFPA Technical Committee (TC) on Airport Facilities.

The last release of NFPA 409 occurred in 2004 and the 2009 revision process is underway. One particular proposed revision to NFPA 409 caught the attention of NATA and its membership. A proposal was received by the Airport Facilities TC that would require the installation of automatic sprinkler systems in all new Group III hangars. This proposal would affect all new construction of hangars 12,000 square feet and smaller. Currently, Group III hangars are required to have only portable fire extinguishers installed, so the new requirement would add significant cost to the development of all new hangars.

NATA believed this proposal failed to weigh costs versus benefits. The construction costs for a small general aviation hangar can quickly escalate to the point of infeasibility when an automatic fire-suppression system is included. Those costs can become staggering if an adequate water source is not readily available. In a recent NATA survey, 44 percent of responding NATA members said they have been forced either to cancel plans to build new hangars or reduce the size of those hangars because of compliance costs with NFPA 409. More than 77 percent of the respondents said the costs of the proposed changes in Group III fire-protection requirements would prevent them from constructing new hangars.

To better understand the fire risk to general aviation hangars, NATA contacted NFPA's "One Stop Data Shop" to obtain statistical data on hangar fires.

We learned that the National Fire Incident Reporting System has not tracked hangar fires as a single entity for the past ten years. The only statistical fire data available is on vehicle, boat, and aircraft storage facilities as a group.

Two months ago, NATA President James K. Coyne and Mercer Dye of Dye Aviation Facilities spoke at the Technical Committee on Airport Facilities' annual meeting in Seattle, Wash., to give the committee members a better insight into general aviation and the impact the proposed rules would have on our industry. Coyne stressed that the nature of our industry requires that newly proposed rules be soundly based on a risk-benefit analysis. Dye shared extensive information on the current level of safety of aviation hangars and lack of any real justification for increasing protection requirements for Group III hangars.

After taking questions from the committee members the group took the short drive to Boeing Field for a tour of Galvin Flying Services. The tour allowed the committee members to see the types of facilities and operations their NFPA 409 revisions would affect. After the tour, the committee continued considering the revisions to the standard in a closed-door session.

The committee just released its report on the comments received from NATA regarding the proposal to require automatic sprinkler systems in all group III hangars. The committee agreed in principle with Coyne and Dye's comments and proposed rewording the proposal to require automatic sprinkler systems only in "residential" hangars and to require fixed fire protection systems in other group III hangars only when required by local authorities.

NATA is pleased with the proposed changes and believes that they are a step in the direction toward ensuring that standards are based on risk and have a reasonable implementation cost. I have applied to NFPA to represent our association on the NFPA TC on Airport Facilities. My membership application will be voted

on this August, and if approved, I will be the first representative on the committee from the general aviation industry in many years. NATA is hopeful that partnering with the fire safety professionals at NFPA will bring about a standard that is both effective in reducing the risk posed by fire and does not unduly impose costs that will stifle the growth of our industry.



Tax Help for Smarter Charter Operations

NATA Commercial Operators Tax Seminar

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Founded in 1940, the National Air Transportation Association aggressively promotes aviation safety and the success of aviation service businesses through its advocacy efforts before government, the media and the public, and by providing valuable programs and forums to further its members' prosperity.



Banyan's Champion Recognized for Entrepreneurial Excellence

Don Campion, president of Banyan Air Service, is the 2009 Inductee for the Florida Aviation Trades Association (FATA) Entrepreneurial Excellence Hall of Fame.

The award was established in 2006 to honor those who have made significant contributions to the business aviation industry in Florida. These visionaries have drawn on their professionalism and integrity to ensure the aviation industry will flourish and inspire others to make aviation their career and commitment.

"FATA was honored to receive the nomination of Don Campion as this year's recipient of the Entrepreneurial Excellence Hall of Fame award," said FATA Executive Director Paula Raeburn. "Don joins others who have persevered to not only fulfill a dream but also continue to improve and add to their visions for aviation in Florida."

On May 20, a bronze plaque of Campion was hung in the Hall of Fame at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Becker Joins First Aviation Services

Former Landmark Aviation marketing executive Millie H. Becker has been named vice president for business development at First Aviation Services, the fast-growing new business aviation FBO at Teterboro Airport.

"Millie has more than two decades experience marketing business aviation travel in the New York area," said Bill Thomas, managing director/CEO at First. "She knows the market, and she knows our customer. We're delighted to have her on our team."

Becker became CEO of Westchester Air, an air charter firm at Westchester County Airport, N.Y., in 1994 after seven years as its vice president of marketing. She was most recently vice president of marketing and sales for Landmark Aviation.

Becker was honored in 2001 as Business Woman of the Year in the Northeast by the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She later received a presidential appointment to the National Women's Business Council in Washington, D.C.

Executive Air Taxi Announces Purchase of Avionics Business

Executive Air Taxi Corporation recently announced the acquisition of M&M Avionics, a Minot, N.Dak.,-based avionics business from former owners John and Kathy Martin. John is joining the staff at Executive Air as the avionics department manager.

"John Martin has earned a solid reputation for quality workmanship in complete aircraft instrument and radio repairs, installations, and upgrades," said Executive Air COO Paul Vetter. "John understands full well the needs of aircraft owners and operators as he is also an FAA-licensed A&P mechanic and pilot. We are excited to add this FAA-approved, full-service avionics capability to our business model. It demonstrates our commitment to providing full and complete aviation services to aircraft owners and operators all across the upper Midwest."

Martin said he is looking forward to a new working relationship with Executive Air Taxi Corp. "As we accommodate our existing customers that have supported us the past several years, we look forward to our new customers with great enthusiasm," he said. "We are excited to be a part of this company and look forward to the future of aviation expanding in North Dakota."

Chicago Executive Airport Plays a Critical Economic Role

During times of financial uncertainty and in the face of today's economic head winds, business leaders across the nation and around the globe continue to rely on general aviation as a prime tool for conducting business. Chicago Executive Airport provides access to more than 5,000 airports in cities and small towns across the nation as well as destinations around the world, while serving as a powerful economic engine for the local, regional, and national economies.

Signature Flight Support, one of Chicago Executive's most innovative enterprises, continues to contribute significantly to the local economy as well as to the airport's regional and national busi-

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ness partners.

Throughout 2008, Signature generated substantial revenue for the local economy. For example, area hotels realized revenue estimated to be more than \$136,000, directly as a result of Signature's referral program. And considering ground transportation services, catering services, building maintenance activities, hangar rentals, and fuel sales, Signature pours estimated annual revenues of \$7 million into the local economy.

Priester Aviation manages a fleet of more than 50 aircraft and employs more than 50 pilots, technical and support staff at its Chicago Executive Airport corporate headquarters. Priester employs more than 150 people across its national network.

Priester also offers specialized services that the airlines are unable to provide. For example, the company often transports elderly or seriously ill patients who are unable to tolerate airline travel.

A third major contributor to the region's economic strength is Atlantic Aviation, one of the country's largest networks of FBOs. Atlantic offers a wide range of aviation services, provides well-paying jobs for highly skilled individuals, and generates hundreds of thousands in salaries and tax dollars annually, directly impacting the local economy.

CORRIDOR Version 9 Released

Continuum Applied Technology recently announced the release of Version 9 of its CORRIDOR Aviation Service Software, which introduces a new Multi-Currency Module, automated weight and balance features, and new application program interfaces.

Designed to support organizations that do business internationally, CORRIDOR's Multi-Currency Module integrates with all relevant modules in the suite to manage multiple currencies throughout.

"CORRIDOR Version 9 is comprehensive, providing currency handling for all areas of your business", said Continuum Founder and President Jack Demeis. "With the increasing rate of globalization and the growing need to attract as much business as possible, the Multi-Currency Module in Version 9 will provide valuable increases in efficiency and customer service for our clients doing business globally."

New capabilities provided by the Multi-Currency Module include handling of conversions and utilization of customer- and vendor-preferred currencies throughout. When CORRIDOR's Enterprise Plus

Edition is deployed and shared inventories are managed across departments or companies, the Multi-Currency Module allows shared inventory to be viewed in each location's local currency.

Version 9 also offers new weight and balance features, which are fully integrated and provide automated calculation, tracking, and reporting as parts are removed or added to an airframe.

Version 9 includes new APIs, providing opportunities to integrate CORRIDOR with myriad third-party applications. Key among these is the Work Order Quote Approval API, which provides the ability for a business to integrate its corporate website with CORRIDOR so their customers can view, review, and approve squawks online, whether from an initial quote or on out-the-door estimates.

Empower Aviation Eyes Move to Lunken Airport

Empower Aviation LLC is negotiating with the city of Cincinnati, Ohio, to relocate from Butler County Regional Airport to Lunken Airport, where it plans to bring 75 jobs immediately and grow that number to 130 in a few years.

The two-year-old company would be the third FBO at Lunken. It was the only bidder for the right to establish an aviation maintenance and fuel-sale facility on city-owned land at the end of Airport Road. Owner Rick Brunzman plans to invest \$5 million to construct a 30,000-square-foot maintenance hangar and a 20,000-square-foot headquarters. He would consolidate employees from Butler and Boone counties. Over time, the Lunken facility would add 80,000 square feet of hangar and maintenance space.

"We're out of room at Butler County," Brunzman said. "We'd like to get everybody under one roof and have room for expansion. I have a major financial company in this city that has seven jets they want to bring to me right now. I have no place to put them."

FltPlan.com Handles eAPIS Submissions

Beginning on May 18, all general aviation pilots departing from or arriving to the United States from an international airport are required to electronically provide pilot information, aircraft information, and passenger manifest to DHS/Cus-

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NATA's Operational Best Practices

NATA's Safety & Security Committee is proud to introduce best practices specifically developed for FBOs. The first of many to come, these operational best practices (OBPs) were developed by industry experts on the committee who bring together many years of aviation experience. The recommendations contained in the OBPs provide guidance that helps each FBO develop procedures applicable to its own operation and associated risks.

NATA's OBPs provide an introduction that guides you through the process of tailoring the OBPs to

your operation, a record of revisions, and guidance relating to your safety committee, safety management system, 50/10 stoppage procedures, proper propeller handling, safe securing of aircraft, foreign object damage (FOD) prevention, and the safe towing of aircraft. The Safety & Security Committee encourages you to evaluate your practices with NATA's OBPs to ensure safety on your ramps.

Members may view NATA's OBPs on NATA's Membership Resources page or the Safety & Security page under "Important Links."

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OPERATIONAL BEST PRACTICE-GROUND Your Company Name Here	
Title: Propeller Handling No OBP-5	
Effective Date: March 27, 2009	Revision: Original
Purpose:	The NATA Member Company has adopted this OBP for its employees, customers and guests for the safe handling of owned and customer aircraft propeller driven aircraft.
Policy Responsibility:	Chief Executive, General Manager, Line Supervisors, Maintenance Technician (as applicable).
Policy:	No employee shall touch an aircraft's propeller with the intent of moving the propeller to hand prop or "turn it" / "pull it" through as a reciprocating (piston) engine propeller is very dangerous and may be positioned to fire.
Procedure:	<p>ALWAYS APPROACH AS IF THE AIRCRAFT MAY BE READY TO START.</p> <p>DO NOT GRAB, HOLD, PUSH, PULL, TOUCH OR LEAN ON ANY PROPELLER AT ANY TIME.</p> <p>ALWAYS CHECK TO CONFIRM "MAGNETOS OFF" and "KEY OUT OF IGNITION."</p> <p>When installing chocks at the nose-wheel position—confirm that the magnetos are in the "OFF" position and the electrical system is off before installing the chocks. EXTREME CAUTION MUST BE TAKEN WHEN IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO PROPELLER(S).</p> <p>When installing a tow-bar on a piston driven aircraft, do not handle the propeller. If the propeller will impede the swing of the tow-bar within the nose-wheel turning radius, the propeller should be moved OPPOSITE its normal rotation until it is out of the tow-bar radius.</p> <p>THE PROPELLER MUST NEVER BE MOVED IN ITS NORMAL ROTATION FOR ANY REASON.</p> <p>Technical services personnel should adhere to extreme caution when working with reciprocating piston engines.</p>
PPE:	As applicable to Operational Best Practice adopted by Member Company.
OBP-5 on safe propeller handling	

Aircraft Ground Service Online

NATA's Safety 1st is diligently working on phase two of the PLST Online. The popular Aircraft Ground Service Guide will be updated and expanded to include vital ground servicing details on the general aviation aircraft that visit your ramps. The best part is the guide will be available 24/7 online and will include the most up-to-date specifications along with pictures and videos of critical refueling and towing details.

NATA's Aircraft Ground Service Online (AGSO) will be released on a rolling basis beginning with

the most complex aircraft, jets, in mid to late summer. The AGSO will be available to current NATA members who sell fuel and/or participate in NATA's Safety 1st PLST Online. Eligible NATA members will receive access instructions by email and notices will be posted in our newsletters.

If you are not sure you have access, contact safety1st@nata.aero or (703) 845-9000 to ensure you have access to the most up-to-date aircraft details possible.

Member News

Continued from page 42

toms (CBP) at least 60 minutes prior to departure. Complying with the new eAPIS rules is important, and doing it right is imperative. The first fine for an infraction is \$5,000.

In anticipation of this requirement, FltPlan.com researched the CBP site and developed proprietary software that would make life easier for Part 91 operators flying internationally.

Bob Allen, who has ten years of experience at FltPlan.com, is the coordinator of the eAPIS program. He has spoken with hundreds of pilots over the past two months and said the eAPIS system has been universally well received by the many pilots that signed up for it.

In March, FltPlan.com was the first commercial provider to be certified by DHS/Customs for submissions of eAPIS Manifest for Part 91 operators.

Since FltPlan.com's first submissions on April 1, it has continued to improve and modify the system to make our eAPIS program even more versatile.

Dassault Falcon Hosts Awards Ceremony for Fund

On June 3, Dassault Falcon hosted the 23rd annual awards ceremony for the Teterboro Airport Community Benefit Fund. The fund was established in 1986 and has provided more than \$124,000 in scholarship awards to nearly 150 individual students.

John Panarello, co-chair of the scholarship committee, said that a goal of the fund is to help inform

young people about the numerous career opportunities in aviation, engineering, and related fields of study. To be eligible, scholarship applicants must be in the top 25 percent of their class and intend to pursue a two- or four-year college program in aviation/aerospace or one of a number of related fields, such as math, science, and engineering.

This year, nine scholarships of \$1,500 each were awarded to students representing 14 different towns in the surrounding area. The awards ceremony provides an opportunity for people from local communities to see first-hand the environmental and safety initiatives of Teterboro Airport, which employs approximately 1,200 people.

Mauricio Delgado, one of this year's scholarship recipients, is a graduate of Teaneck High School and is going on to science and pre-med studies at Essex County Community College. "I'm really grateful for this opportunity," he said. "As a student it's always good to have some help."

Dassault Falcon has hosted the Teterboro Airport Community Benefit Fund awards ceremony for three consecutive years and has been a major contributor to the fund since 2001.

Executive Air Adds Capabilities

Executive Air at Austin Straubel International Airport (GRB) in Green Bay, Wis., with its friendly, non-stop service has been approved by the USDA for handling international trash. Remember that when you make your U.S. Customs stop at Executive Air (GRB).

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For almost as long as there have been aircraft, Chevron Global Aviation has been in the business of keeping them airborne. With over 90 years of aviation experience, we've played a key role in developing products and technological advancements, always with an eye toward safety. Back in 1936, Chevron and Texaco formed Caltex to serve our customers in Asia. The merger of Chevron and Texaco in 2001 created Chevron Global Aviation and our family of brands. We invite you to be a part of aviation history as well. To learn more, visit www.chevronglobalaviation.com



Global Aviation



Fueling the aviation business since aviation became a business.



1922 Texaco begins marketing aviation gasoline, later named Texaco Aviation Gasoline.



1929 Demonstrating the superior quality of Texaco aviation products, Frank Hawks pilots the Texaco No. 5 in his speed record setting transcontinental flight from Los Angeles to New York.



1948 To increase safety, Chevron reinstates its 1926 program to aid pilots everywhere with the painting of town names on the rooftops of company buildings.



2001 Chevron Global Aviation forms after the Chevron and Texaco merger of 2001, bringing over 180 years of collective innovation and experience.



2008



Texaco fuel suppliers remain a key part of a reliable system that continues to deliver high-quality fuel to over 750 United States airports.



1918 Chevron becomes the first company on the U.S. West Coast to sell special aviation fuel with the introduction of Red Crown Aviation Gasoline.



1927

Using Chevron aviation products, Charles Lindbergh makes his historic trans-Atlantic flight from New York to Paris.

1939



Available at over 2,168 supply points and airports nationwide, Texaco becomes the fuel of choice for the aviation business with more airline mileage flown than any other brand.

1958

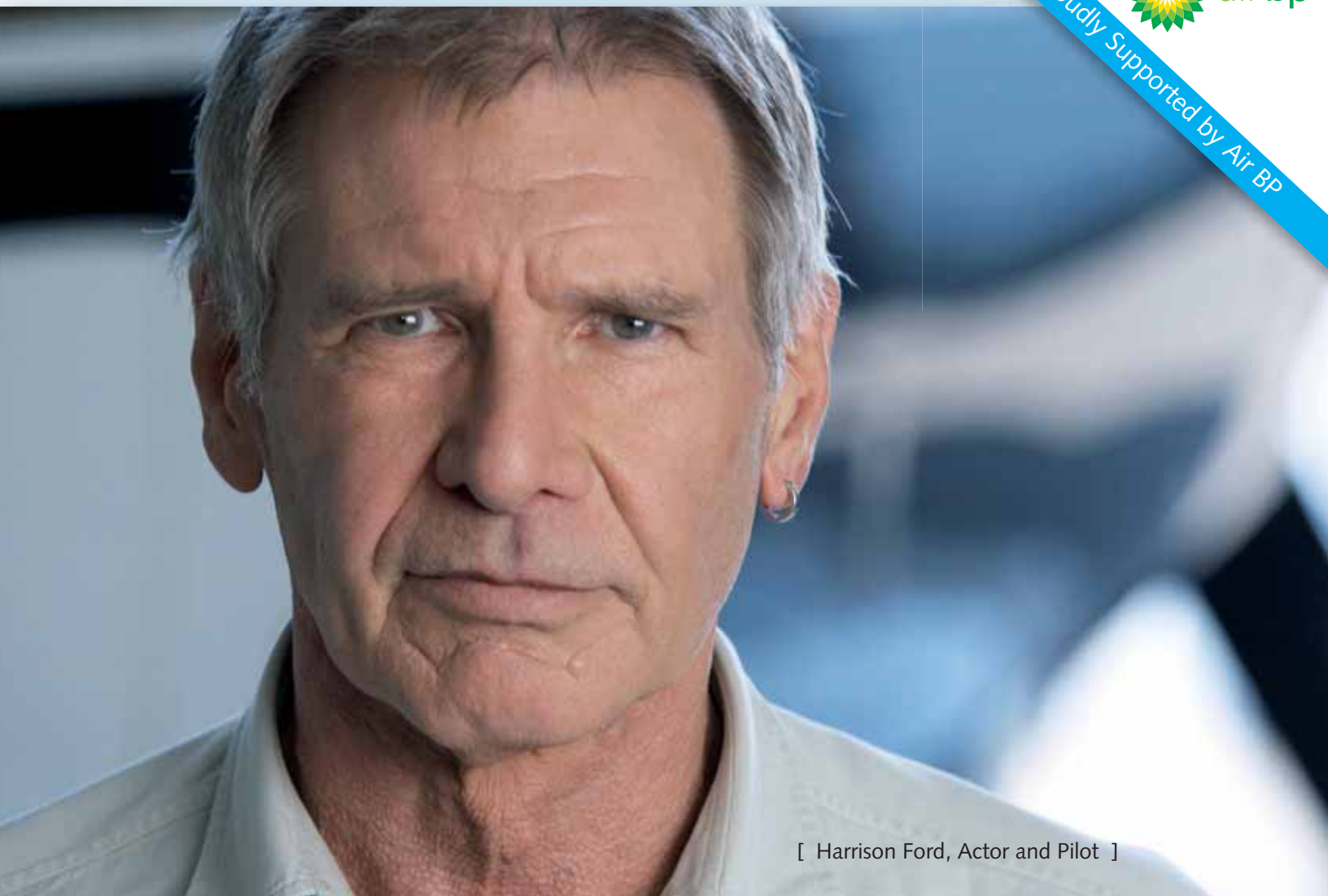
Texaco launches AVJET and AVJET A-1 jet fuels.



2007



Chevron becomes the sponsor of North America's famous solo aerobatic pilot, Captain Julie Clark.



[Harrison Ford, Actor and Pilot]

FIGHT OR FLIGHT? LET'S TRY BOTH.

I'm Harrison Ford and I've volunteered to spread the word about a costly and misguided federal budget scheme that would impose crippling new fees on general aviation that could devastate small communities in every state.

We need your help. And you don't have to be a pilot to pitch in. Working together, we can stop this.

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