

# The Air Traffic CONTROLLER

December 1999, Vol. 13, Issue 9

## Dec. 31 draws closer, contingency plan still not complete

**F**ive, four, three, two, one....and then what?

After the countdown to the new millennium, the aviation industry may go about business as usual or resort to a contingency plan if the air traffic control system malfunctions. And surprisingly, the contingency plan is still not complete.

"The Federal Aviation Administration's Y2K branch has updated its systems so they are compliant, but the most important thing remains incomplete, the 1900.47 Contingency Plan. Although this order has been in the field for years, it has always been recognized as nothing more than an unworkable dream," remarked National Y2K Representative Chris Sutherland. "In a nutshell, it states if an adjacent facility goes offline for any reason, the surrounding facilities would take over its airspace and run the traffic. Every controller in the country knows this is totally unworkable. The order contains lots of information regarding what routes planes would use, but the document fails to tell the controller what he or she should do."

For the past several months, Sutherland has worked with the agency to make alterations and additions to help controllers know what they should do if equipment fails to function. Each regional office must



make the following changes and have them in place and briefed by Dec. 18.

✓ **Emergency Video Maps** – Maps must be developed so controllers may turn them on if needed. They would display boundaries, major VHF Omni-Directional Ranges and airways of the affected facility.

✓ **Voice Switching Communications Systems Adaptations (for en-route centers)** – Each facility will add additional maps for sectors depicting other centers' airspace and provide contact information for surrounding facilities. This will provide controllers with the necessary data to assume another facilities' airspace if needed.

✓ **Sector Binder** – Should an emergency arise, these binders will provide a quick reference of information a controller may need, such as a diagram of the airspace, frequencies aircraft would normally operate on and

memory joggers explaining different ways to contact an aircraft.

✓ **Training** – Motivating the agency to provide proper training for controllers is the greatest obstacle. The FAA sent a Y2K training package to the field without negotiating it with NATCA. Sutherland, along with several other NATCA liaisons at agency headquarters, met with managers to try and resolve this problem. As a result, facilities received the information listed above, along with guidance on how to proceed.

"The majority of the regions have worked hard to meet the deadline, with the exception of the Eastern Region. It never transmitted the necessary information to its two centers. Now Washington Center is trying to play catch up and obtain everything it needs to accomplish the objectives," remarked Sutherland.

So what will transpire on Dec. 31?

Most of the air traffic control equipment is set to the Universal Coordinated Time, so clocks on the East Coast will actually roll over to the new year at 7 p.m. local time and those on the West Coast at 4 p.m. local time. But, just because everything is functioning properly at 7:01 p.m. or 4:01 p.m. does not mean all is well. Many of the utilities Air Traffic relies heavily on, such as power, telephone and water, are on local time. One of the first U.S. facilities to experience 0000 local time is Guam CERAP. "We will be watching Guam closely to see if any systemic Y2K problems arise. This will give us a possible heads up as to what may occur on

December

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In his own words...

NATCA President  
Michael McNally



Dear Members and Friends:

Once a year, the AFL-CIO hosts its convention where affiliates gather for several days of penetrating meetings and motivational sessions. For most of us leading our respective unions through the every day challenges, the constitutional convention is the only opportunity for us to mingle, and carry on extended conversations about the nation's complex socioeconomic and political landscapes. At the outset, it is tough to rationalize the time away from the daily grind. By the time the convention ends, I am rewarded with renewed pride in today's labor movement.

The biggest news was the AFL-CIO's endorsement of Vice President Al Gore. Before continuing, let me state I do not see NATCA making an endorsement for the upcoming election, although we will offer a pro-NATCA, pro-labor slate of congressional candidates for your consideration. However, I will quote from the endorsement resolution: "During his seven years in the Senate – where he represented a state in the heart of anti-unionism – Al Gore voted with working families and our unions 88 percent of the time. He has helped us protect workplace health and safety, community wage standards, Medicare and Social Security....More than any other national leader, Al Gore has used the power of his office to defend the freedom of workers to choose a union, free from interference by their employers, and he has repeatedly urged other elected officials to do the same."

The full text reflects a very real reality that high level anti-union sentiment can rear its ugly head in subtle as well as overt ways – both equally damaging to employees who need workplace protections. It is incumbent upon us all to carefully study all candidates, based on many individual criteria, including pro-family and labor positions.

The convention went further than endorsing a presidential candidate. Delegates asked affiliates, such as NATCA, to put their money where their mouth is. In spite

## AFL-CIO convention boasts unity, inspiration

of increasing numbers, union membership as a proportion of the workforce is still stagnant. The AFL-CIO asked unions to move significant resources into organizing; it, in fact, is devoting 30 percent of the budget to this one area. This commitment is seen through organizing publications, posters, bumper stickers, buttons, advertisements and an across-the-board acceptance that organizing is the foundation of a union's future success. The AFL-CIO further made organizing its primary strategic goal for the coming year.

As a federal sector union, many of our specific issues differ from private sector bargaining units. Still, our overriding objectives are strikingly similar. We all view Congress as a major challenge. We fear an inward-looking mentality will blind us to significant external threats, and we fight to maintain a public perception that generally leans in favor of unions.

While the cumulative seriousness of the AFL-CIO's annual convention weighs heavily on our minds as we near the beginning of a new century, the commitment to improving and fighting for our members is greater, and stimulating.

Randy and I sincerely urge every member to enjoy the tangible fruits of our labor, and target our efforts and resources to political influentials and decision-makers who can drastically alter the way our profession progresses. The AFL-CIO has it right. NATCA can join other affiliates by

encouraging you to help elect public servants favorable to our livelihoods and families, and to look anew at the potential for long term security in organizing other aviation and safety-related groups near and far.

In solidarity,

Michael McNally  
President

### In Gratitude

While I am not today prepared to speak at length about your many prayers, calls, cards, letters and tokens of your love and encouragement for Sam, I do want to at least acknowledge how much you have meant to my family and me. We are strengthened each day with your care and concern. Thank you from us all.

With deep gratitude,

Randy Schwitz  
Executive Vice President

### The Air Traffic Controller

December 1999

How to reach  
The Air Traffic Controller

#### Feedback

All letters must include an address and phone number. NATCA reserves the right to edit letters for clarity and space.

#### Address Changes

All changes of address should be addressed to NATCA Field Services, 1150 17th St., NW, Suite 701, Washington, DC 20036.

The Air Traffic Controller is published monthly by NATCA. First class postage paid in Washington, D.C.

### An official NATCA publication.

Vol. 13, Issue 9

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# Year 2000

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the mainland," explained Sutherland.

"Since we are 14 hours ahead of most of the other U.S. facilities, I believe it's smart to watch our local to see what really happens. I have every confidence the system will work, and if something happens, it will be completely unexpected. Some things may need to be fixed, but we aren't going to let planes fall out of the sky," elaborated Guam CERAP Facility Representative Bud Slavin.

Another unique facility is Kwajalein, an island part of the Marshall Islands located in the Central Pacific Ocean, about 2,100 miles southwest of Hawaii, and 1,500 miles east of Guam. "The Republic of the Marshall Islands was recently listed as a country with possible Y2K problems within civil aviation. But it really isn't a problem because there isn't much civil aviation because most of the traffic in this country operates to and from Kwajalein, a U.S. Army controlled atoll," explained Kwajalein Facility Representative Jeff Winter. "With the exception of phone lines to Oakland Center, our facility isn't 'connected' to any others. I believe we are ready and expect no complications. Sometimes it's good to be isolated!"

## Are special provisions being taken?

Airway Facilities will have extra staffing on hand on New Year's Eve, including every facet of equipment repair, software programmers at Oklahoma Center, as well as the tech center in Atlantic City. A team at the command center will act as the top

of the information tree, and diagnose and direct any plan of action.

Some of the facilities are taking special precautions by calling for increased staffing levels, mandatory overtime and even bringing in cots and bottled water. Other controllers remarked their manager hasn't broached the topic yet.

To ensure the flying public the skies are safe, Federal Aviation Administration Administrator Jane Garvey will fly on New Year's Eve. She will leave Washington National Airport at 5:10 p.m., fly to Dallas Fort Worth Airport, depart there at 10:09 p.m., and arrive at San Francisco Airport at 12:07 a.m.

## Controllers' viewpoints

The majority of the controllers polled responded they believed the air traffic control system was Y2K compliant because this is what the agency told them. And if something did malfunction, the controllers would hold the system together. The answers varied as to whether or not they would fly if given the opportunity.

"At this point the FAA swears the system is Y2K compliant, so we have to rely on its statement. This year we are expecting 750,000 tourists to visit Las Vegas for New Year's Eve, so we will have extra people to deal with the heavy traffic flow. But, we are normally busy this time anyway and aren't planning on doing anything different for Y2K," remarked Gerry Davison, facility representative for Las Vegas TRACON.

"We are having a full-scheduled staff until 2 a.m. Normally around 10 p.m. we go to one or two people, but on this New Year's Eve we are planning to have 12 controllers until 2 a.m.," stated Houston International TRACON Facility Representative Eric Owens. "We will have scheduled overtime and they are even bringing in cots," offered Denver International Tower Facility Representative Mike Coulter.

"We aren't anticipating increased staffing levels because if we don't have any equipment to work with, what's the point in having extra people sitting around with nothing to do," commented Albuquerque


Center Facility Representative Donald Hill. "Interestingly, when it came time to choose our days off, Jan. 1 was the first day to go because no one wants to be here."

"I would rather not be at the facility, but I will because I am sure the press will camp out in our front lawn," added Indianapolis Tower Facility Representative Kevin Brown.

"I believe this whole thing is overblown. The bottom line is our equipment is so unreliable and antiquated to begin with. We are lucky if it can recognize the date, much less one in the year 2000," offered Grady Padgett, Atlanta Tower facility representative. "Our equipment fails on a regular basis anyway, and the controllers continue to hold it together. Why should we rely on it in 2000," commented New York TRACON Facility Representative Phil Barbarello. "If the system isn't Y2K compliant, controllers will handle the problem and make it work like they do today. Trust us to take care of the flying public," added Mark Sherry, San Francisco Tower facility representative. "At least this time we will be more prepared if the equipment fails because we are mentally ready for it to possibly happen," concluded Santa Ana/Orange County Facility Representative Howie Rifas.

"I would fly, but only if I had to. I am more concerned about whether the older aircraft are Y2K compliant, than the equipment in the facilities," commented Boston Tower Facility Representative Tom Joyce. "I wouldn't fly on New Year's Eve, but not because I don't think it is safe. I assume the FAA has all the bugs worked out. But why risk it? Somewhere something will happen," said Kansas City Center Facility Representative Howard Blankenship.

"It really isn't going to be safety issue," contends Chicago O'Hare Tower Facility Representative Craig Burzych, "but more of a delay issue. I believe the system will operate as normal, but may run a little slower. And we are used to delays, so it will be business as normal." "No one really knows what will happen on Dec. 31, but I would take a shot and fly. Actually, I would love to ride on the plane with Jane Garvey because I trust my brothers and sisters behind the scene," concluded New Orleans Moisant Tower Facility Representative K.C. Leonard.

Member	<b>viewpoint</b>		We want to hear from YOU!
<b>What equipment or safety issues would you like NATCA to address?</b>			
Mail Courtney Barron at the national office Email cbarron@natcadc.org Fax 202/659-3991		January 1 Respond Today! Selected answers will appear in the online newsletter.	Deadline

# Preparations for 8th Biennial Convention in Anchorage underway

Circle April 26-29, 2000 on the calendar because preparations for NATCA's 8th Biennial Convention in Anchorage, Alaska, are well underway. Anchorage locals and national office staff are working hard to put together a worthwhile experience for all attendees.

"Alaska is looking forward to hosting NATCA's convention, and we hope the controllers and engineers enjoy the hospitality of the city," remarked Alaskan Regional Vice President Ricky Thompson. "It's also a great opportunity for our regional membership to see what a convention is about because very few of our members are normally able to attend the biennial event because it is usually too far away."

Anchorage boasts four controlled airports within seven miles of downtown Anchorage, and the largest per capita percentage of aircraft owners (over 60,000) within the state. The international airport is located five miles from the suggested hotels. Free shuttle service from the airport will begin on Wednesday. NATCA is currently undergoing negotiations to determine local subsidiaries and obtain reduced airfare. Air carriers servicing Anchorage International include Alaska, American, America West, Continental, Delta, ERA Aviation, Northwest and TWA.

Egan Convention Center, a new facility located in downtown Anchorage, will serve as the site for registration, exhibits, merchandise sales and general sessions. Just two blocks away members may stay at the Anchorage Hilton Hotel (907/272-7411) for \$135 a night for single/double occupancy or the Anchorage Westmark Hotel (800/544-0970) for \$78 a night for single/double occupancy. For more information, log onto the hotels' websites at [www.hilton.com](http://www.hilton.com) or [www.westmarkhotels.com/locations/anchorage/anchorage.html](http://www.westmarkhotels.com/locations/anchorage/anchorage.html).

The opening reception will occur on Wednesday evening and the Alaskan facilities will host the local party at Chilkoot Charlies Bar ([www.koots.com](http://www.koots.com)) on Thursday night from 6 p.m.-10:30 p.m. This famous Alaskan bar has various dance floors and bars. "We are planning on having two live bands, two disc jockeys, darts, pool, karaoke and a buffet dinner," commented Thompson.

Regions will hold their dinners on Friday

evening and the closing banquet will take place on Saturday night. General sessions will fall during the day on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

## Highlights

### Exhibit Hall

Twenty-five percent of NATCA's exhibit hall is already filled up, with organizations such as Raytheon, FAA Aeronautical Data Link and SITA. Participants have free reign of the hall starting April 26, continuing until April 28. Make sure to stop by and drop off a business card with Katie Wittig, convention exhibit coordinator. Prizes will be given away daily. Know someone who might want to exhibit? Contact Wittig at 202/223-2900 or [kwittig@natcad.org](mailto:kwittig@natcad.org). Early space registration closes on Jan. 15.

### NATCA Merchandise

In the market for NATCA paraphernalia? Then stop by the locals' sales booths located inside the exhibit hall and pick up a T-shirt or other merchandise. It isn't too late to still sell NATCA items. Contact Office Manager Adell Humphreys at 202/223-2900 or [ahumphreys@natcad.org](mailto:ahumphreys@natcad.org) if interested.

### NATCA PAC

Help strengthen NATCA's political clout by contributing to the NATCA PAC. Members may participate in a PAC raffle at convention and enter to win prizes. Some of the prizes last year included airplane tickets, the NATCA quilt and golf shirts.

### Anchorage Activities

When not attending the convention, a variety of unique opportunities await. "We hope NATCA members will stay afterwards and see what Alaska has to offer," stated Thompson. Some of the recreational and tourist activities for the convention include the following. Discounted packages will be available.

✕ Nostalgic DC-3 and helicopter sightseeing tours from ERA Aviation of Mt. McKinley, Prince William Sound, Chugach

Mountain Range, Turnagain Arm and Anchorage

✕ Fly in Fishing and sightseeing tours by Ketchum Air Service and Rust's Flying Service

✕ Halibut and king salmon fishing charters after the convention

✕ Rustic Alaska railroad train tours

✕ Four-Wheel ATV's adventure in Alaska's mountains

✕ Dog sled rides

✕ Pub-crawl night- A tour of Anchorage's finest bars and nightclubs (date TBD)

✕ Motor home discounts packages

✕ NATCA tattoos offered on-site during the convention

✕ Grayline of Alaska is offering tours, 1-800/478-6388 (others not listed are available)

✓ Anchorage City - 3 hrs - \$40/person

✓ Portage Glacier - 6 hrs - \$37/person

✓ Kenai Fjords Whale Watching Cruise - all day - \$109/person

"Hosting a NATCA convention in Alaska has been a long-term personal dream that has come true for me. I have wanted to share some of the beauty and splendor of Alaska with my NATCA brothers and sisters from around the country. Alaska also has a very special place in the world of aviation and in the global economy. The professional air traffic controllers in Alaska attain a very unique diversity, including elements of remoteness and the need for a global awareness and presence necessary for the benefit of the profession of air traffic controllers in the future. I love Alaska and I love NATCA. How sweet it will be to have both in the same place at the same time," remarked Jerry Whittaker, former Alaskan regional vice president.

"It is a true honor to host the NATCA 2000 Convention in Alaska. We are not only sincerely committed to the success of the convention itself, but also to making the 'Alaskan Experience' a memorable one for all who attend. As they say in Eskimo, 'Quyanaghalek Tagilusi,' or 'Welcome, thank you all for coming,'" concluded Anchorage TRACON Facility Representative Dave Levesque.

Keep up-to-date with the latest convention activities by logging onto NATCA's website, [www.natca.org](http://www.natca.org), and go to News Center, NATCA 2000 Convention or visit [www.alaska.net/~natca2k](http://www.alaska.net/~natca2k).

# Southwest Airlines agrees with NATCA: no privatization of facilities

Many airline executives and spokespeople have touted the advantages of privatization as the solution to this summer's increase in flight delays. However, Southwest Airlines Chief Executive Officer Herb Kelleher is a voice of reason among the chorus of other industry leaders, warning privatizing the nation's air traffic control system may not bring the rewards promised.

Kelleher told *USA Today* full-fare airlines could dominate a privatized air traffic control system and use it to clobber smaller and discount carriers like Southwest. Indeed, the charge for privatization has been led by Continental CEO Gordon Bethune and the head of American Airlines Donald Carty, two of the nation's largest carriers. They were also the hardest hit by the summer's delays because they frequent the country's most congested airspace, the New York metropolitan area and Texas. Southwest Airlines, which is known for its strategy to serve smaller, less congested airports, has the highest on-time percentage of any air carrier—leading to the belief it has found the key to circumventing delays. For example, Southwest flies into Baltimore Washington International Airport and Providence, R.I., rather than serving Washington National or Boston.

"If we're not going to build more runways at major airports, airlines need to schedule responsibly and utilize secondary airports to ensure the public is not waiting unnecessarily for their flights," said Randy Schwitz, National Air Traffic Controllers Association executive vice president. "We've been saying this from the beginning and it's good to see Southwest has proven there is a way to decrease delays and stay profitable." Kelleher continued to say air traffic control is not the kind of service that lends itself to multiple companies competing for an airline's business and he worries a private system will give larger carriers overpowering influence to manipulate the system. For example, larger carriers could make sure their planes land first, while smaller carriers are left to wait. The system, as it stands now, is first come, first served.

Instead, the Southwest chief supports a House transportation committee plan to increase the FAA's facilities and equipment budget by 50 percent to modernize air traffic control. "Modernization has been at the top of the NATCA agenda for years," Schwitz said. "We are working hard to ensure controllers have cutting edge equipment to guarantee the safest and most efficient system possible. We can do that under the FAA, which is charged with the duty to protect the flying public. The giant air carriers are profit motivated and would provide inferior service."

United Airlines President Rono Dutta recently co-opted an idea originally suggested by Schwitz in his October testimony on delays in front of the House Aviation Subcommittee. Schwitz called for a multi-layered, ongoing, many partnered work group drawing from the expanse of the aviation community. During a speech to George Washington University's Global Summit on International Aviation Infrastructure, Dutta said proposals in the past have not sought the consensus of all stakeholders, but still suggests privatization is a good option.

## Improvements made on GPS WAAS, but NATCA still has concerns

Two steps forward and one step back. Strides toward improving the Global Positioning System Wide Area Augmentation System continue, but NATCA still attains several concerns about the equipment.

WAAS has the potential to transition navigation and landing from a ground-based system to using signals from the Defense Department's GPS. It presents opportunities to enhance safety, airspace efficiency and service flexibility by improving accuracy, increasing GPS signal availability (continuity of service), assuring users of GPS' signal integrity and providing Category I precision approaches at selected airports. GPS, a constellation of 24 satellites circling the earth, provides all weather positioning information worldwide, but has limitations and does not meet the high standards required for civil aviation, except in limited applications. "WAAS should correct these limitations by monitoring, processing and providing corrections to the basic GPS signals," commented GPS Representative Jon Riley.

The WAAS continues to perform well in tests, including a recent eight-day series of analysis at Morgantown, W. Va., where Category I precision approaches were exercised. The system demonstrated a vertical accuracy better than the 7.6 meters specified, a tremendous improvement over the unaugmented GPS accuracy of 156 meters. This was the third in a series of signal-in-space test milestones for the equipment.

Its signal-in-space should be available for testing, but not navigation, in December. It will take the Federal Aviation Administration three months to validate the system requirements and performance prior to accepting the WAAS from the contractor. Following the contractor's acceptance inspection, it will take approximately six months of additional performance testing. "During these periods, controllers may encounter a WAAS test aircraft. Nationwide, 50 airports attain WAAS instrument approach procedures, which will help validate the systems. Controllers should expect and accommodate requests for Visual Flight Rule approaches

when possible. Handle these airplanes like any other aircraft," explained Riley. "All facilities will soon receive an education video, followed up with a computer-based instruction course."

"NATCA still has concerns regarding the equipment's inability to secure the signal-in-space from intentional or unintentional interference. The current network of land-based navigational aids serve as the primary air traffic control safety net in the event of serious service failures, such as surveillance system outages," elaborated Riley. "The impact of a large-scale GPS outage on air traffic control, without a backup system of land-based navigational aids, or any other backup system, is unknown."

"Controller workload and situational awareness associated with a sudden loss of GPS may result in an unmanageable and chaotic situation. Before we can entertain the idea of completely shutting down any navigational aids, we must determine the impact, as well as the inevitable result of increased direct routing," concluded Riley.

In accordance with the constitution of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, Article VII, Section 3, we, the National Election Committee designate the following dates and timetable for the 2000 NATCA National Elections.

## Section 1 - General Provisions

A. Elections will be held by referendum, and all balloting will be conducted by the use of a secret ballot. Write-in votes will not be permitted.

The official ballot return envelope will have on its face an official number assigned to each member. A list of names of the membership, together with the corresponding official numbers, will be made available to the National Election Committee of the Association for the purpose of checking, at the time of the ballot count, the voting eligibility of the members whose ballots have been returned.

Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in these by-laws, all ballots will be returned to a depository predetermined by the National Election Committee to ensure the secrecy of the ballots, and will be held there until the time designated for the counting of such ballots.

B. Except as otherwise specifically provided herein, any challenge to the conduct of a National Election must be made no later than **15** days from the date of the count of the ballots.

Such challenges must be in writing, must set forth the specific conduct challenged, be signed by the complaining member(s), and be sent by certified mail to National Election Committee at the Association's headquarters.

Hearings on such challenges will be held within **15** days of receipt of the challenge and a decision will be rendered within **15** days after the conclusion of the hearings.

C. Any further appeals must be filed with the Secretary of Labor pursuant to Title V U.S.C., Section 7120, and applicable regulations.

## Section 2 - Nominations

A. A candidate for National Office must be nominated by a member in good standing and must accept the nomination. Nominations must be in writing and must be delivered via certified mail to the National Election Committee at the Association Headquarters no later than 5:00pm EST on February 29, 2000.

All candidates for National Office must be members in good standing for at least one year prior to the close of nominations.

B. No member may accept nomination to or be a candidate for more than one office in any National Election.

C. The National Office will be charged with the safekeeping of these nominations, and will turn them over to the National Election Committee.

D. The acceptance of the nomination will be dated and contain the following information:

1. The full name of the candidate and, if desired, any special name to appear on the ballot.

2. The candidate's facility, home or mailing address and social security number.

3. The title of the National Office for which the candidate is nominated.

4. A certificate in the following form, signed and dated by the proposed candidate:

"I hereby accept the nomination for the office of \_\_\_\_\_. I certify that I am not now, nor have been for the past 13 years, convicted of or served any part of a prison term resulting from conviction of robbery, bribery, extortion, embezzlement, grand larceny, burglary, arson, violation of narcotics laws, murder, rape, assault with intent to kill, assault which inflicts grievous bodily injury, or violation of Title II or III of the LMRDA Act of 1959 as amended, or the Landrum-Griffin

Act, or conspiracy to commit any such crime."

E. Nomination acceptance must be received at NATCA National Headquarters no later than 5:00 pm EST on March 30, 2000. Nomination acceptances not received by this time will be considered invalid.

F. The National Election Committee will determine whether the candidate has correctly submitted their nomination acceptance and possesses the necessary qualifications for the proposed office. The National Election Committee will prepare a report listing each candidate under the office they are seeking.

Each candidate will be marked "qualified" or "disqualified" according to the findings of the National Election Committee. Where a candidate has been marked "disqualified" the reason must be stated in the report. The report will be signed by the National Election Committee and submitted to the National Executive Board.

G. When the National Election Committee disqualifies candidates, they will be notified immediately by certified mail at the address listed on their nomination acceptance of the reason(s) for disqualification. Disqualified candidates will have the right to file a written appeal to the National Executive Board within 10 business days of the receipt of the disqualification notice. The National Executive Board will review the appeal and reply within 5 business days of the receipt of the appeal.

## Section 3 - Balloting Procedures

A. The National Office will, at the direction of the National Election Committee, ensure the proper and timely preparation of ballots without partiality as to candidates. The names of the candidates for each separate office will appear in alphabetical order. The ballots will contain voting instructions consistent with the provisions of these by-laws.

B. The ballots prepared at the direc-

# Election Rules

tion of the National Election Committee will be the only official ballots. No others may be used. A sufficient number of ballots will be printed and distributed. The National Election Committee will maintain a record of the ballots distributed.

C. Ballots must be sent to a pre-determined depository, which will be paid for by the association. Secrecy of the ballots must be assured. No signature of any voter or other distinguishing mark will appear on the ballot. A signed or marked ballot will automatically be ruled ineligible.

D. No member's ballot will be counted unless the member is in good standing as of 15 days immediately preceding the closing of the balloting.

E. Ballots will be mailed to the membership on May 31, 2000. Ballots must be returned to the depository by 5:00 pm EST on July 31, 2000. Ballots not received in the depository by this date will not be counted.

F. Members will be entitled to a duplicate ballot and receive same, provided they notify the National Election Committee via the National Office.

Envelopes used for duplicate ballots will be identified as "Duplicate Ballot" and of a different color other than the envelope used for the original ballot. Duplicate ballots will be counted unless the original and duplicate ballot mailed to a member are both cast, in which event neither ballot will be counted.

G. The National Election Committee will supervise the conduct of the election and take other measures they deem necessary to assure a fair and impartial election.

## Section 4 - Ballot Collection, Tally Procedure, Protests and Special Votes

A. A member of the National Election Committee will on the morning of August 1, 2000, proceed to the depository and obtain all the ballots. Ballots will

be retained in the custody of the National Election Committee until such time as they are checked and counted.

B. The National Election Committee is charged with the tally of all ballots and the preparation of a report, which sets forth in complete detail the results of the election, including a complete accounting of all ballots and reconciliation of the ballots with rosters and verification lists of membership.

The report will clearly detail all discrepancies discovered and will contain recommendations for the treatment of such discrepancies. All members of the National Election Committee will sign the report without prejudice.

C. The National Election Committee will commence their work on the same day that the ballots are collected and will complete their work as quickly as possible. The report of the National Election Committee will be filed with the Association no later than 24 hours following the completion of the count.

D. The National Election Committee is also charged with the receipt and evaluation of written protests by any member who claims an illegal denial of the right to vote. If the National Election Committee finds the protest to be invalid, they will dismiss the protest and so inform the protesting member, via certified mail on the day of dismissal.

If the National Election Committee finds the protest to be valid, they will permit such member to cast a vote on such terms as may be practical. The report of the National Election Committee will include a brief summary of each protest received, the name of the protesting member, and a summary of the disposition of the said protest.

## Section 5 - Runoff Procedures

A. In the event of a runoff election, The National Election Committee will supervise the mailing of ballots. The ballots will be mailed no later than **16** days after

the National Election Committee has ruled on challenges or protests of the election or, if there are no challenges or protests within **16** days after submission of the National Election Committee's report.

The National Election Committee will have the right, in its discretion, to postpone the mailing of ballots in the event of a protest to the Secretary of Labor under section 1C of these procedures.

B. The runoff election will be conducted in accordance with Section 4 of this document.

Marked ballots will be mailed to the membership and due back into the pre-determined depository no later than 30 days after the date of the mailing. In the event that the 30-day deadline falls on a weekend or holiday, the next regular business day will be designated as the deadline for receipt of returned ballots.

The National Election Committee will meet the following day to tabulate ballots and announce the results of the runoff election.

## Section 6 - Installation of Officers

A. New officers will take office on September 1, 2000, or after the National Election Committee and the National Executive Board resolve all protests pertaining to their office, whichever is later. In the result of a runoff election such officers will take office 30 days after the results of the runoff election are finalized.

George Lloyd, MCO  
Brendan Connolly, BWI  
Cynthia Mahafkey, BOS

# Progress made on making AMASS a viable tool to reduce incursions

**A**s runway incursions keep rising the Federal Aviation Administration continues to struggle with the development of equipment to help prevent these accidents. One such system is the Airport Movement Area Safety System.

The AMASS started as a result of promises made by the FAA to Congress and the National Transportation Safety Board after the accidents at Los Angeles, St. Louis and Detroit years ago. It is a PC based system that takes ground and approach radar information and translates it into visual and aural alerts for tower controllers.

Launching AMASS successfully is a key component to the FAA's goal of reducing the number of runway incursions. In the decade since the agency announced plans to develop equipment that would warn controllers of possible runway collisions, 59 individuals died in five runway crashes. But creating a system that doesn't bombard controllers with false alerts has proven difficult. AMASS also continues to experience software problems, and the radar has issues with double imaging and blind spots. Originally tested as a prototype at San Francisco International, its development has lagged in recent years and only

recently gained new momentum. A series of budget problems, lack of coordination and technical problems have plagued the AMASS since controllers saw it at San Francisco in 1992. But last year, the FAA approached NATCA for assistance in determining if this was actually a useful tool for the controllers and, if so, how to make it work.

Last fall, a workgroup, comprised of three NATCA and three FAA officials, was created, empowered to make decisions affecting all aspects of the program. It has dealt with and resolved issues ranging from training and implementation, to the human factors "nuts and bolts" of what the controller will see and hear. The three NATCA representatives are Dave Caldwell, San Francisco Tower; Joe Jochheim, Chicago O'Hare and Rick Ward, St Louis Tower.

The agency initially planned to install AMASS at 34 airports by the mid-1990s, at a price of \$89.9 million. A revised schedule forecasted the equipment to be operational by next August, but now the FAA claims "human factors and software development problems," will delay the system until September 2002, at a cost still to be determined. The new plan calls for San Francisco to receive AMASS first in summer 2001, possibly sooner depend-

ing on the actions done to correct items.

The fixes are necessary to meet AMASS' newly defined purpose. Originally conceived as an incursion prevention device, the scope has now narrowed to prevent collisions on the runways. The work group brought about this change because it recognized the inherent physical flaws of ground radar such as ASDE3. "If we had allowed this to be set and fielded as a conflict alert device, it would have ended up as just another nuisance alarm for the controller to put up with. "As it is, we feel it can be that last line of defense to warn the controller of an impending collision with enough time to take corrective action," according to Caldwell. "The last thing we wanted was another chicken little system distracting us."

"Taking into account all of these problems it appears that progress is being made to field a viable and useful tool for tower controllers. I have to admit we may have found a method to deal with the madness. Our work group, on both sides of the aisle, have successfully solved problems and resolved issues without going to impasse or having to call Big Brother for permission. And I certainly don't want to work with something I can't use," concluded Caldwell.

## NATCA continues to work to ensure safe commissioning of ADS-B

**A**s two dozen planes from around the nation circled through the air over the rolling farm country of southern Ohio this past summer, their pilots became aware of an evolutionary change in navigation and air-to-ground communication. Each aircraft carried a new technology providing them with detailed information now only available to the controller: the precise location and identity of other airplanes, their speed, direction and altitude, rate of climb or descent and even planned route.

The operational evaluation was the first of several trials in the United States under the Federal Aviation Administration's Safe Flight 21, a governmental/industry program to develop and demonstrate a set of operational capabilities leading to the implementation of the "Free Flight" concept. Further testing will expand into other Ohio River valley sites, including Louisville and Memphis. Areas of Alaska are

also installing equipment for participation in Automatic Dependence Surveillance Broadcast evaluations.

The system, ADS-B, may provide pilots and controllers with real-time information about aviation traffic, something currently unavailable to them. It relies on the satellite-based Global Positioning System and broadcasts airplane positions to ground stations and aircraft receivers. Unlike radar, ADS-B is effective at capturing targets at all altitudes and on the ground, regardless of the terrain. Target information may be updated several times a second, and broadcast by data link to aircraft and ground stations. Eventually, surface traffic now invisible to controllers on standard radar screens will be visible with ADS-B to avoid potential runway conflicts.

"Earlier testing successfully demonstrated ADS-B and its potential safety enhancements. Benefits of this technology are endless to both controllers and

pilots. It has the potential to decrease our workload because the pilots will already have some information and won't have to solely rely on us. This will allow us more time to manage traffic flow by concentrating on our patterns, sequences and speed control," stated former ADS-B Representative Dan Olsen.

"Cargo airlines are going ahead with its installation on all of their aircraft. They believe ADS-B will pay for itself in closer aircraft spacing during visual approaches, which nearly 70 percent are. (They may be able to fly closer because they will know each other's actual speed)," commented Olsen. "Initially, not all airports will receive ADS-B. First in line are those airports with runways spaced 1,500 feet or less apart. It will help the facilities working cargo hubs, but will take a few years to equip all airplanes." For example, in San Francisco when the cloud layer descends to 3,000 feet, planes may not conduct si-

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# NARI Team thoroughly impressed with URET system's functionality

**F**ree flight is a popular term with mercurial definitions. Essentially, it's a concept that opens up the airspace for pilots under certain conditions, minimizing air traffic controller involvement during those periods. Even marginal freedom from ground control will involve greater reliance on dependable equipment.

The Federal Aviation Administration is assessing various tools for its fit in the free flight environment. The User Request Evaluation Tool, known as URET, is the first in a series of critical controller support tools that will enhance safety, controller efficiency and meet FAA mandates toward free flight. Understanding its importance, the agency contracted with the National Aviation Research Institute to study URET's development, current practices and future issues. As a result, NARI produced a report on such issues as training, staffing, procedures, human factors and system integration.

During a 120-day period in 1998, NARI met with representatives from the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, contractor MITRE Corp. and the agency. Air traffic controllers and facility managers were also interviewed. Findings confirm URET has the potential to become the genesis for operational change with air traffic control, although important obstacles must be faced and overcome before nationwide implementation commences. None, however, presents itself as insurmountable. With deliberate, yet aggressive, evaluation and remedy, URET could help controllers and pilots begin to meet ever-growing air traffic demands.

## ADS-B

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multaneous landings because the airport's two runways are just 750 feet apart. But if ADS-B gave each pilot a clear picture of where the other plane was while both were still in the clouds, such a landing might be possible.

According to experts, international aircraft may also benefit from ADS-B. Flights over the Atlantic, far from radar, are separated by 60 miles laterally because no one is quite sure exactly where the planes are. This technology could decrease the distance. Participants in the Ohio experiment agreed potential problems linger with ADS-B. It would take over navigation, surveillance and communications function

“URET represents a potential quantum change in air traffic. It is an information system that allows controllers, managers and system users to view future and present traffic flows. For once, these individuals may plan ahead and coordinate with the system users to adjust flows to increase efficiency, eliminate flow restriction and prevent controller overload. Also, URET provides the sector controller with a strategic view of his or her traffic flow, that is missing from today's environment. URET, in conjunction with other new systems, will allow for continued growth in aviation, while also enhancing the safety of flight,” elaborated NARI Executive Director Mike Connor.

While not specifically designed to replace manual flight strips, URET has been successfully used at both Indianapolis Center (ZID) and Memphis Center (ZME) in that regard. Daily use of URET at ZID and ZME prototypes has been ongoing since January 1996 and June 1997, respectively. While training differs at the two, both approaches have been effective. Operational procedures at both centers differ, and are not clearly defined. NARI evaluated other URET issues, among them training and human factors.

The training programs developed and implemented at ZID and ZME are meeting the facilities' requirements and producing URET-trained personnel for the conduct of prototype testing. These programs will serve as a model for programs developed in five additional URET facilities. A standardized approach focusing on controller methodology and utilization is rec-

ommend. And, because of complexities unique to each facility, further evaluation to determine local provisions over and above the national standard will be essential.

“NARI proposed the FAA direct its Air Traffic division to develop a national URET training program that standardizes the curriculum, methodology, materials and instructors for use in all URET facilities. This recommendation assumes the agency will first complete the necessary evaluations,” commented Connor.

Another important area for additional study prior to full URET implementation is human performance. URET introduces significant increases in functionality and significant changes in the process of the air traffic management. Consequently, multiple implications for human factors engineering exist. Human factors in the URET environment also include the workload and situation awareness; automation, conflict prediction and training; and functioning in a partial stripless environment, among others.

Other issues requiring additional research and evaluation before implementing a comprehensive URET initiative include looking at how Display System Replacement installation and implementation will halt URET testing for a period of time, potentially setting the program back. Also, URET development procedures are not sufficient to govern operations at other proposed sites, and they are not integrated into FAA manuals, handbooks, etc. The impact of user benefits and system impact has not been definitively evaluated. Effective management and strategic planning requires study. An organizational structure must also be clear to all users and stakeholders.

“After months of close scrutiny and evaluation, the NARI team was thoroughly impressed with the functionality available with the URET system and its potential value as a decision support tool in the national air space. URET and other technology under development will allow controllers to cope with projected increases in traffic. These ground-based tools will support ‘free flight’ and grant time to accommodate growth while decisions about a space-based navigational and air traffic system are researched, evaluated and resolved,” concluded Connor.

Want to find out what the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Association is all about? Attend its 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Marrekech, Morocco, March 6-10, 2000. Registration is \$120. Royal Air Maroc is offering 50 percent off all airfare from Montreal, Canada.

(Remember to book early because there will be an extra 800 passengers looking for flights from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup>.) Hotel prices range from \$40 to \$130 per night for double occupancy, with breakfast included.

Stephen Wells, a retired Canadian controller now with Uniglobe Premiere Travel in Ottawa, is preparing additional travel arrangements. Numerous opportunities await NATCA members, whether it's touring the Imperial Cities of Casablanca, Rabat and Fez, a trekking tour of the High Atlas Mountains, a camel caravan with overnights in Bedouin villages, golf in Marrakech or the beach in Agadir. For more information contact Wells at 1-800/267-9372 or [stephen@yow.premieregroup.com](mailto:stephen@yow.premieregroup.com).

For additional information contact Art Cauty at 613/731-8648 or [tcauty@home.com](mailto:tcauty@home.com). Take advantage of the lower Canadian dollar, and have an inexpensive holiday.

*Executive Vice President Randy Schwitz recently testified on air traffic control delays on Capitol Hill. (l to r) Carol Hallet, Air Transport Association, Captain Duane Woerth, president of Air Line Pilots Association, Schwitz and Russell Chew, managing director, systems ops control, American Airlines.*



*Photo Credit: Ray Crowell/Page One*

### Aeronautical Information and Procedures Specialists Needed

Specialists will be primarily responsible for development of Terminal Instrument Procedures (TERPS) for the Global Positioning System (GPS). Candidates for these positions will have had a minimum of five years experience in either military or civil TERPS development. Previous experience as a pilot, aeronautical information specialist, air traffic controller or in a related aviation oriented position is desired. Bachelors degree desirable; sufficient experience may be substituted. AMTI offers a competitive salary and benefits package. Positions to be located in Washington D.C., or other regions of the country. Please email [recruiter@amti.com](mailto:recruiter@amti.com), fax to 703/841-1443; or mail to 1515 Wilson Blvd., Ste. 1100, Arlington, Va., 22209, EOE/M/F/D/V.



*Engineers gathered for their quarterly facility representative meeting, and visited the Seattle Regional Office to meet with local Northwest Mountain engineers.*

Make plans now to attend the Southwest Region 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Skifest, in Banff, Alberta Canada Jan. 29-Feb. 5, 2000. The package includes seven nights lodging, two dinner banquets, five days of lift tickets, two barbecue lunches, a Super Bowl party and taxes and gratuity for \$510. (Rate quoted is based on per person double occupancy and is an estimate based on the exchange rate.) Members will ski on Ski Sunshine and Lake Louise Ski Resorts. For information and registration contact Milton Scherotter at 817/540-6661. Reservations must be completed by Monday, Jan. 3, 2000. Space available thereafter.

Want to find out the up-to-the-minute whereabouts of aircraft while sitting at home rather than in a facility? Log-on to Dimensions International Inc.'s website, [www.dimensions-intl.com](http://www.dimensions-intl.com), and see much of the same data controllers see, including radar-generated position and flight number. The information comes over the World Wide Web, updated every three to four seconds, and is available to about 500 companies through a service called Flight Explorer. It will also offer a scaled-down version to armchair travelers as well. All of this costs \$10 a month. It is hoped this will system will help airlines and airport transportation and catering companies by allowing them to track commercial and charter flights, providing real-time data on aircraft location, weather conditions and flight speed.

*NATCA members from ORL and MCO came out in full force making financial donations and participating in the planning and activities of the second annual Orlando Air Fair held at Orlando Executive Airport Oct. 23-24. This event was designed to attract middle and high school students and introduce them to the world of aviation. The air fair included aviation-related displays, a simulator, aviation educational activities and static display aircraft. (in the photo) ORL Fac Rep Todd Parker points to NATCA listed as a sponsor.*

Help others during the holiday season and participate in NATCA's Second Annual Holiday Community Service Recognition Program. NATCA will look at how many people benefited from members' endeavors, whether it is a new or established project, how many in the facility participated and if any publicity resulted. To enter, complete the Holiday Community Service Description Form (available from Communications Specialist Katie Wittig, [kwittig@natcadc.org](mailto:kwittig@natcadc.org) or 202/223-2900) and submit it, along with a photograph of the event while it is in progress, to the national office by Jan. 15. Any questions, contact Wittig.

National Air Traffic Services confirmed only the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, of all European countries, have fewer air traffic control delays this year, compared with last year, despite traffic levels increasing by eight percent. European situations such as Kosovo and a shortage of controllers exacerbated the situation elsewhere.



The annual Pittsburgh Air Traffic Control Golf Classic helped to raise more than \$6,000 for charity. Pittsburgh's Family House and Arnold Palmer's Latrobe Area Hospital Charitable Foundation were beneficiaries of this year's outing.

**FLRA denies PATCO appeal**

The Federal Labor Relations Authority ruled the Federal Aviation Administration did not violate Article 37, Section 1 of the collective bargaining agreement when it hired PATCO controllers at their former grade and step. The FLRA stated the union presented no evidence to show the PATCO controllers should have been rehired at the “highest previous grade held.” The FLRA also relies, as did the deciding arbitrator, on the argument “classification of positions and management’s right to assign work, which are non-negotiable subjects and therefore...could not have been incorporated into any collective bargaining agreement.” One authority official gave a dissenting opinion, stating the contract language incorporates “applicable laws” that would govern maximum compensation. And also made note the majority opinion fails to acknowledge the interrelationship of the arguments presented by the union, thus failing to address an aspect of the claim that the award is contrary to law.



(l to r) President of Transportation Trades Department and Transport Workers of America Sonny Hall, Atlantic City Fac Rep Kathleen Gough and Department of Transportation Deputy Secretary Mort Downey stand in front of the trade booth.

*Katie Wittig*

You’ve seen it mentioned in this publication, the mailings to the facility representatives and even the [natca.org](http://natca.org) website. “TRADE BOOTH AVAILABLE FOR RESERVATION.” Many facilities take advantage of this excellent resource each year. After all, the national office pays for the mailing of the booth, any reservation charges and the production of handout materials.

Members are in charge with finding events in their area where the booth may be used, and must volunteer their time to staff the show. This year eight groups reserved the booth. Why isn’t the booth on

**Arbitration regarding official time for NTSB investigation denied**

An arbitrator recently ruled union officials should only be granted official time when aircraft accidents and incidents in which fatalities or injuries are present, involve a scene and are within regional geographic boundaries of the union designee. In this case, NATCA designated an Atlanta area controller as the union representative to act as the contact point during an operational error, which occurred at Cleveland Center. The grievant was selected because of his background as an accident safety investigator and his past participation in a number of NTSB investigations.

**Memoranda of understandings recently signed on several issues**

Several memoranda of understandings were signed recently involving the following issues:

- 1) Standard Terminal Automation Replacement System Early Display Configuration transition issues;
- 2) Proof-of-concept Testing of the Cru-X computer system; and
- 3) Multi-Sector Oceanic Data Link System at New York ARTCC.

These MOU’s can be found in the members only section of the [natca.org](http://natca.org) website.

**Reserve NATCA’s trade booth for events**

*Take advantage of this excellent resource in 2000*

the road all year? Some say time, “Our costliest expenditure is time.” However, nothing can be compared to time well spent.

When you hear about the chance to staff a convention, do you immediately have visions of sitting at a booth, twiddling your thumbs? Well, this is a myth. In fact, volunteering at an event is extremely rewarding. Aviation trade shows, conventions and air shows are all environments geared toward finding out about a certain type of career. And that information can only come from an air traffic controller!

“The general input of those who approached was that of sincere gratification and respect for the air traffic controllers, and the hard work and dedication they have for their jobs,” said Eastern Region Administrative Assistant Maria Broschart, who recently volunteered at the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association Expo in Atlantic City, N.J.

Attendees are drawn to the NATCA booth to speak with people working in the air traffic control world:

- Pilots who want to discuss recent happening in the aviation world.
- The general public who want to tell

you what a great job you’ve been doing or find out how to become controllers themselves.

➤ Equipment vendors who want to get your expert opinion of their particular product.

Tom Matthews, a controller at Teterboro Tower, also worked the AOPA show and expressed good feelings toward volunteering, recognizing its ability to open doors for public relations. “You have the opportunity to discuss atc issues with people face-to-face. They are well versed about what’s going on in the aviation world. It’s great to see someone learn from your experience, and even better to see them come around to your point of view!”

Starting to have second thoughts about overlooking the air show you could have volunteered to work last year or how about the aviation convention you weren’t sure would be a good use of time?

Call Communications Specialist Katie Wittig at the national office for more information, or visit the members only section of [www.natca.org](http://www.natca.org) (path: News Center -> Trade Show Booth Request).

Remember, asking questions doesn’t obligate you.

