

WEEKLY MESSAGE FROM ATO COO TERI L. BRISTOL

March 25, 2016

Communicating for Safety

ATO COO Teri Bristol reinforces the need for a proactive, collaborative safety approach at NATCA's annual Communicating for Safety conference. In her weekly message, Bristol describes some of their successful initiatives and explains two new ones.

Hi everyone. This week, I was at NATCA's Communicating for Safety conference. We talked about safety issues involving remote towers, pilot/controller communications, unmanned aircraft integration, aviation weather and human factors, among others. I stressed the need for our safety approach to continue to be proactive and collaborative, as we look ahead to a NAS with new technologies and drones in the coming years.

The FAA and NATCA have collaborated on numerous safety programs and campaigns including: ATSAP, Professional Standards, Turn Off Tune In, and Fully Charged. Since 2008, controllers have submitted more than 110,000 ATSAP reports, from which we've made more than 150 corrective actions.

This week, we launched the Take a Stand for Safety campaign to address key safety topics, the first of which is weather dissemination. A pilot's equipment alone can't see the full weather picture. In many cases, smaller aircraft don't have access to weather tools and equipment or have delayed information on board. So it's important to verify the forecast early and often and solicit pilot weather reports to be able to disseminate up-to-date information to all pilots. When both controllers and pilots have the most up-to-date weather information, they can make the best decisions possible.

And we've also put the Respect campaign in place, which focuses on ensuring a workplace with dignity, support and respect between all individuals that work together to maintain the safety of the National Airspace System. The campaign will emphasize how our own choices become critical to affecting this kind of culture.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to this year's Archie League award recipients. The awards are given to controllers who stepped up in critical situations, such as when a pilot is in distress due to aircraft failure, a medical emergency, bad weather, or often more than one of these conditions at the same time. These controllers found solutions while maintaining their calm and professionalism.

This year's recipients were: Ron Sparks and Mike Thomas, Anchorage Center; Brett Rolofson and Liam Keeney, Kansas City Center; Jeff Schuler, New York TRACON; Dave Kilgus, Columbus Tower; Joseph White, Providence Tower; Josh Pate, Seattle TRACON; Donald Blatnik III and Kenneth Scheele, Central Florida TRACON; Nick Valadez and Wade Martin, Dallas/Love Field Tower; Ryan Nines, William Hoppe, Jr. and Luis Ramirez, Northern California TRACON.

I also want to thank all those who were nominated, as well as our entire controller staff, for everything they do to keep our system the safest in the world.

Thanks everyone,

Teri L. Bristol
ATO Chief Operating Officer