

NATCA INSIDER

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Member Benefits

Senator Honors Boston Center Members' Heroic Actions in Congressional Record



Pictured left to right: Boston Center (ZBW) member Jeff Aulbach, Boston TRACON (A90) FacRep and New England Region (NNE) Alternate Regional Vice President Curt Fischer, New Hampshire Senator Jeanne Shaheen, ZBW members Michael Jacobson and Neil Cospito, ZBW FacRep Fred Romani, and A90 member and National Legislative Committee NNE Representative Andre Jean.

On Thursday, Feb. 6, New Hampshire Senator Jeanne Shaheen presented Boston Center (ZBW) members Jeff Aulbach, Neil Cospito, and Michael

Jacobson with a statement she recently put in the Congressional Record (click on image to the right to view) that honors their actions during a Nov. 20, 2018 save that also earned them the 2019 New England Region Archie League Medal of Safety Award at NATCA's Communicating For Safety conference.

Shaheen made the presentation during an event at ZBW with friends, family, and co-workers. Several New Hampshire and Boston news media outlets were also present.

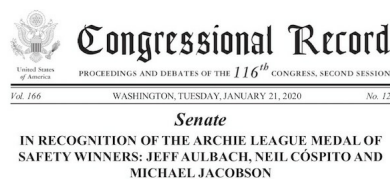
"This is an incredible story," Shaheen said. "Today, I was honored to present these controllers with a statement I put in the Congressional Record that honors their heroic actions. Their courage, calmness, and quick thinking will now be recorded in history."

The three members were tracking an F-16 from the Vermont Air National Guard, piloted by Lt. Col. Nate Smith. Poor weather prevented Smith from landing at his home base in Burlington, Vt. With only 15 minutes of fuel left, Aulbach, Cospito, and Jacobson quickly came up with a plan and were able to divert a flight of KC-135 refueling tankers to Smith for a mid-air refueling. After the F-16 refueled, they safely guided the plane to an alternative landing location in Syracuse, N.Y., preventing a disastrous outcome. [Read more.](#) [Watch save.](#)



"What a great day for NATCA, ZBW, Jeff, Neil, Mike, and all air traffic controllers," ZBW FacRep Fred Romani said (pictured left with Senator Shaheen). "Honor, pride, professionalism and accomplishment was the theme for Thursday afternoon. For Jeff, Neil, and Mike to not only be recipients of the highest award given to air traffic controllers, but to be recognized by Senator Shaheen and the state of New Hampshire was amazing. Anytime controllers get to talk about what we do, day in and day out, and share with such esteemed guests such as Senator Shaheen and her staff, it's a great day.

"The Senator and her staff were all such a joy to work with. They were all so appreciative of how accommodating and professional we are as controllers. What a great honor it was to represent not only ZBW NATCA local, Jeff, Neil, and Mike, but for a moment, be the face of this great Union and all its members. The professionalism of all involved was above and beyond the call of duty. The personal pride I feel is difficult to put into words. So proud of our Union, its members, our profession, and the great men and woman that keep the skies safe each and every day."



Mrs. SHAHEEN: Mr. President, I rise today to salute the work of three New Hampshire-based air traffic controllers—Jeff Aulbach, Neil Cospito, and Michael Jacobson—who calmly and quickly resolved a complex situation in the snowy skies of New England in 2018. The three men were awarded the prestigious Archie League Medal of Safety Award from the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) last year, and I ask all Americans to join me and NATCA in marveling at the poise they all showed on that November afternoon.

Jeff, Neil and Michael work at the Boston Air Traffic Control Center, a regional Air Route Traffic Control Center in Nashua, NH that covers tens of thousands of miles of airspace above New England, New York and northeast Pennsylvania. On Tuesday, November 20th, 2018, Neil was working an F-16 aircraft from the 158th Fighter Wing of the Vermont Air National Guard. Poor weather conditions were preventing the pilot from landing the aircraft at its home base in Burlington, VT. Neil scoured the region for a suitable location outside of the sprawling weather system, and he quickly found one in Syracuse, NY. He cleared the aircraft to travel southwest to its new destination and asked the pilot to estimate his time en-route and his remaining fuel. When the pilot relayed that he had 15 minutes of fuel for a 15-minute trip, Neil knew that the F-16 had become an emergency aircraft.

As the aircraft left Neil's controlled airspace, fellow air traffic controllers Jeff Aulbach and

Mike Jacobson continued working the emergency situation. Jeff and Mike promptly evaluated their options. They decided the best course was to divert a flight of KC-135 tankers from an unrelated mission and to conduct a mid-air refueling. Jeff explained to the KC-135 pilots that the F-16 was at "Hingo Fuel"—a term used by military pilots when they reach a critical and emergency fuel state. When he secured agreement from both crews, Jeff executed precise time intercept vectors to join the two aircraft and begin refueling. As Jeff worked with the aircraft in the sky, Mike worked the radar and communicated with the airport in Syracuse to confirm suitable landing conditions. A short time later, the F-16 safely touched the ground in Syracuse.

Quick thinking and error-free execution from Neil Cospito, Jeff Aulbach and Mike Jacobson saved the F-16 and its pilot from a number of dangerous alternatives. And they played a pivotal role in maneuvering this flawless refueling with a number of other planes sharing the skies. As many of us travel across the country throughout the year, we should take a moment to reflect on the significance of air traffic controllers like Neil, Jeff and Mike and thank them for working every minute of every day each year to keep our skies safe.

On behalf of the people of New Hampshire, I ask my colleagues and all Americans to join me in thanking Neil, Jeff and Mike for their service and wishing them all the best as they continue their good work.

See coverage of the meeting and honor:

Senator Shaheen Social Media:

[Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)

[Twitter, part 1](#) | [Twitter, part 2](#)

Media Coverage:

[WBZ-TV Boston](#) | [WMUR-TV Manchester](#)

[Union Leader \(Manchester\)](#)

DAB Controllers' Teamwork Prevents Serious Event from Occurring

On Jan. 14, Daytona Beach ATCT (DAB) members Richard Smith and Rene Mieschke noticed an airport fire truck attempting to cross a runway with an aircraft departing.

The vehicle was performing routine driving training and had requested to reposition from the fire station to the southeast ramp. Smith, in the ground control position, provided instructions for the vehicle to proceed and hold short of Runway 7R.

All vehicles and aircraft operating on the airfield must receive specific instructions to cross a runway. There is a buffer zone between the hold short line (yellow lines painted on the taxiway) and the edge of the runway (designated by a white line). The vehicle read back the instructions and, after proceeding as instructed, was observed holding short of Runway 7R. However, between the time of that transmission and Smith's communication with an aircraft, the vehicle began to move forward, crossing the hold short line and into the runway safety area. Being aware and engaged in the operation, Smith gave immediate instruction to the vehicle to stop, and the vehicle did, well short of the runway edge line. While this runway incursion was taking place, there was another aircraft utilizing Runway 7R for traffic pattern work. This aircraft had just touched down on Runway 7R, executing a touch-and-go to depart again.

Mieschke, the local 2 controller, recognized what had happened with the vehicle and immediately instructed the aircraft to stop. Mieschke's awareness of the movement of vehicles and aircraft on the airfield was key in being able to quickly issue instructions and safely stop the aircraft well short of the intersection with the vehicle.

The awareness and quick actions of both controllers prevented a significant and potentially serious event from occurring.

"This was a great example of the tower team working exactly as they should," said DAB FacRep Mike Driscoll. "The ground controller immediately recognized the situation and acted. The controller-in-charge jumped into action and told the local controller to stop the departing aircraft. This situation highlights the professionalism and skill of the controllers here and is another example of why our airspace is the safest in the world."

Nominate Your Colleague for a 2020 Archie League Medal of Safety Award



The Archie League Medal of Safety Award highlights aviation "saves." Some involve a team of professionals working together, while others are the result of just one person's efforts. Any NATCA member can nominate another member in good standing year-round. The nominating period for the 2020 Archie League Awards is still open and covers aviation events that have occurred from May 1, 2019 to April 30, 2020. [Click here](#) to complete the nomination form.

2019 Honorable Mention Awardee Recognized

Cincinnati ATCT Member Adam Prinz



During a member meeting at Cincinnati ATCT (CVG), FacRep John Buonadonna (right) presented Adam Prinz (left) with his 2019 Honorable Mention Archie League Medal of Safety Award, which he received after being nominated for his extraordinary save last year. "Congratulations to Adam," said Buonadonna, "the first ever in our facility to receive this prestigious award."

For Slate Book Members: MOU Between NATCA and FAA Will Enable Members to Get Email Confirmations of ERR Submissions

As a result of the memorandum of understanding (MOU) between NATCA and the FAA that was signed on Jan. 29, the Agency will now provide electronic acknowledgment of FAA Form 3330-42 Part IV and Part V for all bargaining unit employees (BUEs) that provide an email address (personal, NATCA, or work email address) as part of the submission for voluntary transfer.

Once an email address is submitted, the Agency will send an electronic confirmation of FAA Form 3330-42 Part IV and Part V to the email address provided. If the BUE does not submit an email address, they will receive a hard copy acknowledgment of FAA Form 3330-42 Part IV and Part V to the mailing address indicated on FAA Form 330-42.

[Click here](#) to read the signed MOU.

South Florida Members Welcome in the Aviation Traffic for Super Bowl LIV



NATCA-represented air traffic controllers, traffic management coordinators, and staff specialists in South Florida worked heavy traffic levels not seen in many years for one of the biggest challenges of their careers -- safely and efficiently handling air traffic for Super Bowl LIV.

Both the week prior to the Feb. 2 game in Miami Gardens, Fla., and in the days following, the NATCA team performed as well in the clutch as Super Bowl MVP quarterback Patrick Mahomes of the victorious Kansas City Chiefs.

"The members collaborated with multiple entities and have been the professionals that we have come to expect," said NATCA Southern Regional Vice President

(RVP) Jim Marinitti. "I am incredibly proud of their work ethic and showing how big things can be accomplished when we work together."

Added NATCA Southern Alternate RVP Jason Arnold, "The South Florida and especially Miami-area FacReps have been integral in leading their facilities to successfully handle this event."

The teamwork that was on display just didn't happen overnight.

"For the past four months we've been working to optimize our operations together," Miami Center (ZMA) FacRep Tom Flanary said. "Every facility in South Florida, everybody was in the loop. It became a natural thing to have a weekly teleconference, and that lent itself to a more collaborative group, so if they needed something or we needed something, we could all be more responsive."

The weekly teleconferences included all of the South Florida facilities, including Federal Contract Towers (FCTs), Fort Myers ATCT (RSW) and Tampa ATCT (TPA). Miami leadership included TPA in anticipation of Tampa hosting Super Bowl LV in 2021. Many pilots chose to fly into RSW and drive to Miami to avoid the flight restrictions that are necessary for an event of this magnitude.

"I applaud MIA and the surrounding facilities for thinking outside the box to ensure that all South Florida facilities knew and understood the procedures that would impact the Super Bowl traffic," Arnold said.

ZMA saw an increase in operations the week leading up to the Super Bowl and three to four days afterwards.

"We got together and made it happen," said Flanary. "We did something totally different for this event than we've done previously. Our new processes helped us with clearing airplanes faster on a more standardized flow."

Miami ATCT (MIA) FacRep Narciso Torres attributed the successful operation to the collaboration among all the facilities and entities involved, and said that Monday, Feb. 3, was MIA's busiest IFR operation day since 2007. MIA predicted that more than 4,500 operations would be handled that day.

"Success was achieved through the great support from our adjacent facilities, and of course through collaboration with the Agency and our industry partners," Torres said. "A lot of outreach was also done to the users to include flight schools and other entities."

"We didn't have a single VFR pop-up request, and that is really unheard of for these types of events," Flanary said. "The reason behind that was that all the towers were on board with the plan and they all understood what we needed."

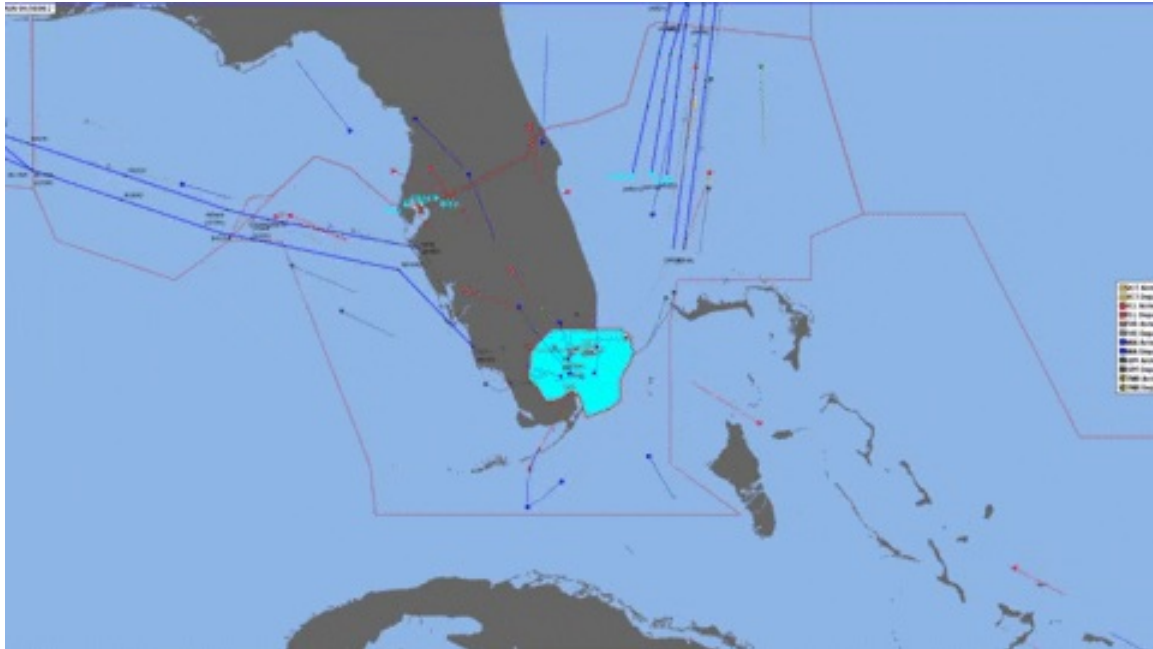
Opa Locka FCT (OPF) FacRep Brian Wells said, "We had all the private jets coming to our airport, over 500 planes. That's at least a 20 percent increase in IFR traffic. We had to close every taxiway and one runway for overflow parking. On the Monday after the Super Bowl, we had 433 arrivals and departures, mostly departures. And we successfully managed all this traffic with four certified controllers, three trainees, and one manager.

"It was a challenge, but it was easy thanks to our brothers and sisters at Miami TRACON," Wells said. "Once we got clearance for auto-releases, we were able to get our 433 departures out on Monday a lot faster."

Flanary said ZMA had planned for more traffic on Sunday night during the midnight shift than ended up happening, so the facility was really inundated with traffic on Monday.

"The flow was really good. It was considerable all day Monday and again on Tuesday," Flanary said. "We moved some airplanes, that's for sure."

"It was the epitome of teamwork and collaboration," Marinitti said. "I was incredibly impressed by how so many different entities came together to make things appear seamless. Our workforce should be proud."



Congratulations to all the aviation safety professionals who did a tremendous job managing increased operations before, during, and after the Super Bowl in Miami Gardens, Fla. The video above shows a replay of traffic from halftime at the game through Monday afternoon the following day.

NATCA News and Notes

ZID is Recognized for CPDLC Contributions



Members at Indianapolis Center (ZID) were recognized for their contributions to the National Airspace System (NAS) as a keystone for Controller Pilot Data Link Communications (CPDLC). CPDLC is a two-way data-link system by which controllers can transmit non-urgent strategic messages to an aircraft as an alternative to voice communications. The message is displayed on a flight deck

visual display.

FAA Deputy Vice President for Air Traffic Services Brian Throop, CSA Director Frank McIntosh, ZID District Manager Dale McNeal, and NATCA Great Lakes Alternate Regional Vice President and ZID FacRep Marc Schneider were on hand to present the awards to the members of ZID.

“The teamwork and flexibility displayed by the controllers at ZID was nothing short of inspiring,” Schneider said. “ZID NATCA delivered on time, even in the aftermath of the longest federal shutdown in U.S. history. CPDLC is an amazing tool and once all aircraft are equipped and trained, it will change the face of our profession forever.”

NATCA Leadership Meets with Members in Puerto Rico



During the last week of January, NATCA President Paul Rinaldi, Executive Vice President Trish Gilbert, and NATCA Regional Vice Presidents (RVPs) gathered in San Juan, Puerto Rico for the first National Executive Board (NEB) meeting of 2020.

The gathering of NATCA leadership in San Juan presented an opportunity for the local facilities, most notably the San Juan CERAP (ZSU) and San Juan ATCT (SJU) membership, to participate in a solidarity event. A meet and greet dinner was hosted at the Il Nuovo Mercato at the Mall of San Juan. “In true NATCA fashion, members from the various locals were able to introduce themselves, ask questions of the leadership, and make lasting connections,” said ZSU FacRep Woody Camp.

NATCA Hosts FAA Academy Meet and Greet



NATCA hosted its first meet and greet of 2020 for more than 50 trainees at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City. Addressing attendees were NATCA President Paul Rinaldi, Northwest Mountain Regional Vice President (RVP) Alex Navarro III, Southwest RVP Andrew LeBovidge, National Training Representative Jamaal Haltom (Las Vegas ATCT, LAS), Union Synergy Committee Chair Maurice Franklin (Potomac TRACON, PCT), Indianapolis Center (ZID) controller Jeff Wonser, National Professional Standards Committee Co-Chair Josh Cooper (Southern California TRACON, SCT), and Reloaded Committee Representative Kristi Perigo (Kansas City Center, ZKC). The NATCA members gave the trainees suggestions about how to be successful at the Academy and what to do when they arrive at their first facilities. They talked about how our Union will be there to help them throughout their careers. After the program ended, the NATCA members had the opportunity to speak to the attendees and answer lots of questions.

Central Florida Members Host Solidarity Event



Central Florida members gathered for solidarity and golf at Drive Shack in Orlando, organized by Central Florida TRACON (F11) FacRep Ken Scheele. Members from F11, Orlando ATCT (MCO), Daytona Beach ATCT (DAB), Orlando Executive ATCT (ORL), and St. Petersburg/Clearwater ATCT (PIE) were joined by Southern Regional Vice President (RVP) Jim Marinitti, Southern Alternate RVP Jason Arnold, and Alaskan RVP Clint Lancaster.

“It was the height of union brotherhood and sisterhood, and Central Florida was well represented,” Marinitti said. “We are bringing the entire NATCA family together -- spouses, kids, moms, and dads. This is how we grow as one cohesive union. It’s the families who give the biggest sacrifice and we are eternally grateful to them for allowing us to borrow their husband or wife in service to NATCA.”

NATCA Members Attend GFL Winter Championship



NATCA members joined air traffic controllers (ATCs) from across the world in Laax, Switzerland, for the 45th annual Golden Flight Level (GFL) Winter Championship for ATC personnel. GFL was founded in 1976 and has taken place

annually in many beautiful ski resorts. This year in Laax, from Jan. 26 through Feb. 2, was no different. The event brought 43 teams from 28 countries. Team USA enjoyed its largest participation to date and included members from Boston, Dallas, Washington, Denver, Houston, Kansas City, Miami, Salt Lake City, Sarasota, Fla., and Seattle. Besides competitions in skiing and snowboarding during the day, each evening presented opportunities to get together with foreign colleagues and promote the spirit of solidarity and GFL.



NATCA's Safety and Technology Leadership Council



The NATCA Safety and Technology Leadership Council (NSTLC), established in June 2016, serves as the Union's focal point for all safety issues, procedural changes, technology development and implementation, airspace modernization, and all associated training needs. The NSTLC, which recently met at the NATCA National Office, provides recommendations to the National Executive Board

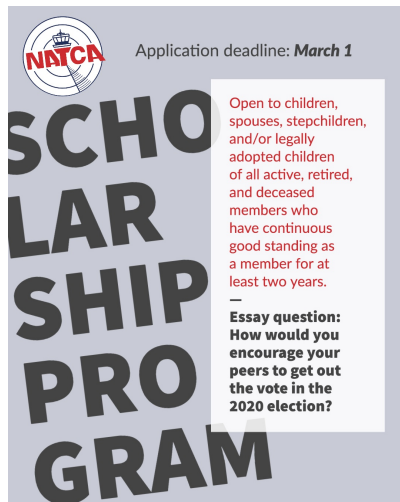
(NEB) regarding organizational safety and technology priorities, identifies the safety training needs of the membership, and takes steps to address those needs.

The NSTLC is made up of the following NATCA employees and representatives:

- National Safety Committee (NSC) Chair
- Director of Safety and Technology
- Deputy Director of Safety and Technology
- National Training Representative
- National Airspace Representative
- National Program Management Organization Office (PMO) Representative
- National NextGen Representative
- National Procedures Representative
- Two NEB Members

Visit the NSTLC's website for more information: <https://www.natca.org/nstlc/>

Apply for the 2020 NATCA Scholarship Today!



NATCA offers an in-house scholarship program that can help pay for college expenses for your spouse and children, for all active, retired, and deceased members who have continuous good standing as a member for at least two years.

The application deadline for the 2020 NATCA scholarship is March 1. This year's application requires an essay about the following topic: **How would you encourage your peers to get out the vote in the 2020 election?**

For details about the NATCA Scholarship Program, including the application,

visit <https://www.natca.org/community/scholarship-application/>. NATCA will notify applicants as to whether they will receive the scholarship by April 30.

18th Biennial Convention and Hotel Registration

NATCA's 18th Biennial Convention in Houston begins in less than four months, May 27-29. We continue to prepare for what promises to be both an important event. It is time to register and make your hotel reservations. Registration for this convention is a TWO-STEP process:

STEP 1: Register for the Convention [here](#).

STEP 2: Reserve your hotel room at the Marriott Marquis [here](#).

Your registration is not done until you have completed both steps.



1
Register to
attend

2
Reserve your
hotel room

May 27-29

Store Item of the Week: Crewneck T-shirt

Features of this product: Slim, classic unisex T-shirt with the full NATCA logo in a shimmer screen print on the front. This lightweight 50% polyester/50% cotton blend is an ultra-soft fabric, with a worn-in feel. Available in sizes S-2XL. Union-made in the United States.

Price: \$14-\$16.

To see the item and how to order: [Click here](#). Select USPS or UPS as your shipping preference on your orders. To check on stock availability or for further assistance, call 800-266-0895 or email natcastore@natcadc.org.



Benefits Spotlight: Theme Park Discounts

Old man winter is still here, but summer is just around the corner. That means it's time to start thinking about your family vacation. What do you have planned for fun with the kids this summer?

[Look no further](#). Disney, Six Flags, and Worlds of Fun theme parks await the kid in all of us, with discounted prices that won't break your vacation budget.

When you're done making your heart race on dry land, take the kids

somewhere to cool off in the refreshing waters of a fun-filled waterpark. With your NATCA benefits, you also get discounts for all Great Wolf Lodge and Schlitterbahn parks across the nation.

Now's the time to have some serious fun, and all while saving money.

[Click here and login](#) with your member account for your NATCA discount codes at these parks:

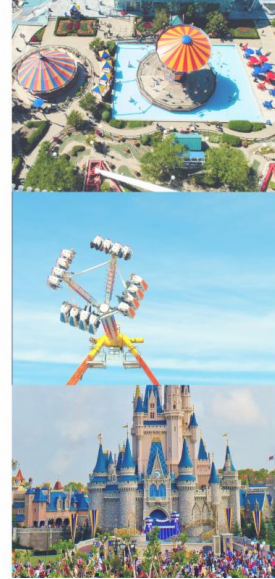
- [Disney](#)
- [Great Wolf Lodge](#)
- [Schlitterbahn Parks](#)
- [Six Flags](#)
- [Worlds of Fun](#)

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