



Rich Santa Speaks with House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chair Peter DeFazio & Ranking Member Sam Graves

Last week, NATCA President Rich Santa held separate phone calls with House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chair Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., and Ranking Member Sam Graves, R-Mo.

During Santa's call with Chairman DeFazio, he thanked DeFazio for his strong support of NATCA throughout the chair's career. DeFazio expressed interest in Santa's background and his new position as NATCA president. Santa updated the chair about how NATCA and our Union's members have persevered during the COVID-19 pandemic and protected the National Airspace System (NAS). The two also discussed the training academy and NATCA's collaboration with the FAA. DeFazio assured Santa that he and his staff will continue to seek the expertise of our Union to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the NAS.

Santa also held a productive call with Ranking Member Graves, where he highlighted the importance of the air traffic controller workforce. The ranking member expressed his understanding that the aviation system cannot operate without the great work of aviation safety professionals. The two discussed their personal interests in aviation and their shared backgrounds as private pilots. Graves encouraged NATCA to reach out and collaborate with him as the FAA reauthorization dialogue begins in the coming months.

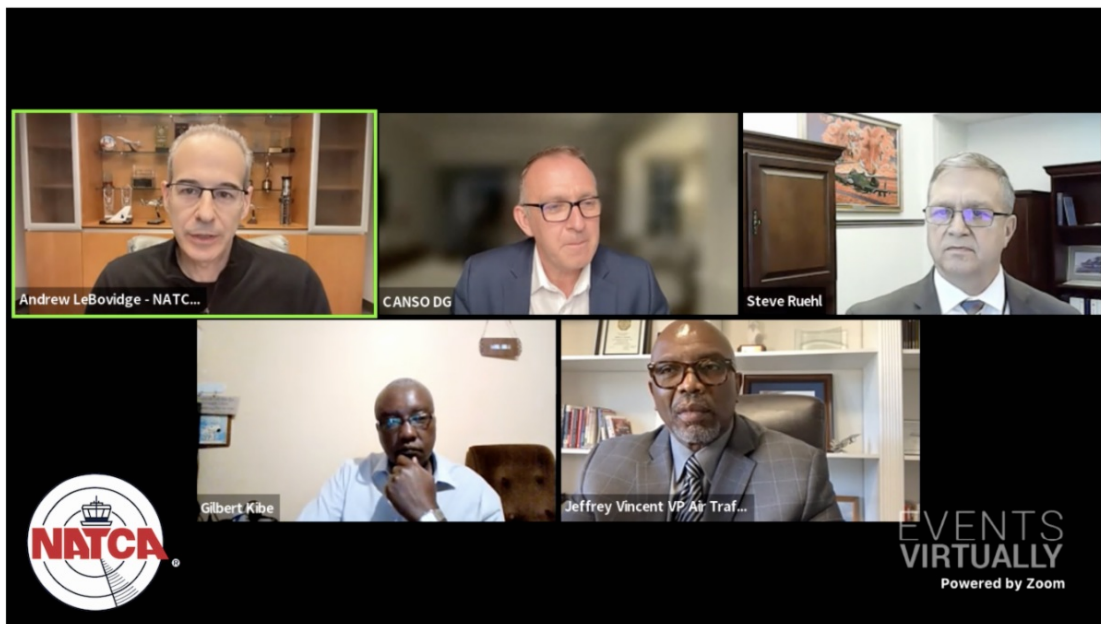


Congressman
Peter DeFazio
(OR-04)



Congressman
Sam Graves
(MO-06)

on the Future of the Aviation Environment



Executive Vice President Andrew LeBovidge participated on The Future Aviation Environment panel during the Air Traffic Control Association (ATCA) virtual annual conference and spoke of the opportunities as well as the challenges of new entrants joining the National Airspace System (NAS). “Everyone shares the exuberance for seeing those new entrants into the aviation community,” said LeBovidge. “But there are several challenges we must meet. One is safe integration into the NAS. It has to be done in a way to inspire the flying public to know that it is being done safely. We do this by ensuring the appropriate number of staff in our facilities that’s highly trained.”

LeBovidge said that another challenge is the lack of stable, predictable funding to sustain the current system and to advance it with new technologies. “Stable, predictable funding is necessary to ensure that the demands of tomorrow are realized,” he said. “Our aviation safety professionals should be given the tools needed to improve the decisions they make to maintain the level of safety that is expected.” LeBovidge concluded that the biggest challenge is to understand how the human element will be incorporated into the new future. “Automation is good,” he said, “but at the moment there is no technology or solution that can replace a highly-trained team of professionals that maintain the safety of the system right now.”

LeBovidge also spoke to the importance of collaboration within the industry, leading to the success of new entrants within the aviation system, stating: “We need to make sure collaboration exists, not only across the industry and with stakeholders, but also with the workforce that is engaged with providing these services.” He said policies, procedures, and practices should all be worked and relied upon by the expertise of individuals that are utilizing the technologies daily. “Without involving these individuals from the developmental stage,” he said, “we run the risk of having ineffective and underutilized technologies, as well as technologies that are not implemented in a manner that’s safe and provides that level of resilience that is necessary.”

OSHA Committee Update



NATCA's Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) Committee recently met and created a training and outreach plan for the committee and NATCA representatives for 2022. The committee now has topics that it will cover each month as member outreach with corresponding OSHA virtual training classes.

The committee is excited to also have NATCA Academy in-person class dates set for OSHA and the

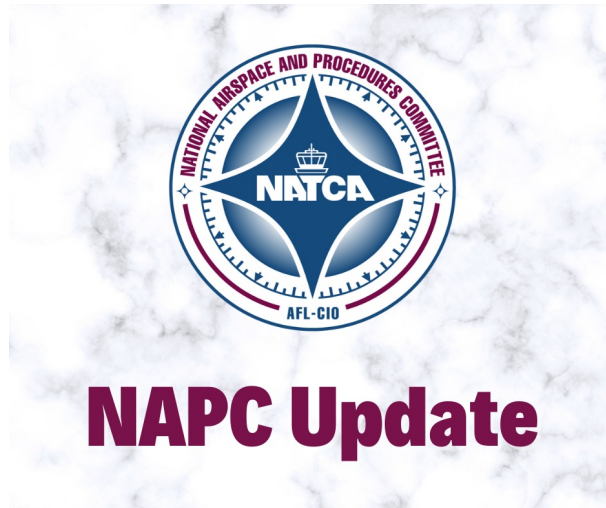
Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) training for April 11-12 and Oct. 20-21. For more information, email the OSHA Committee, OSHA@natca.net, or visit the [OSHA Committee webpage](#).

National Airspace and Procedures Committee Update

The joint Department of Defense (DoD)/FAA effort to optimize the scheduling and activation/deactivation of special activity airspace (SAA) began earlier this month. The core team is co-led by a DoD and FAA representative from the Mission Support Airspace Rules & Regulations Team (AJV-P21). Over the next few months, the team will be meeting with four centers and several of its respective air traffic facilities to

discuss the daily planning, coordination, and operations for SAA. Virtual and on-site visits this year have included Washington Center (ZDC), Potomac TRACON (PCT), Marine Corps Air Facility Quantico, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, and Fleet Area Control and Surveillance Facility Virginia Capes (FASFAC VACAPES).

The National Airspace and Procedures Committee (NAPC) serves as the Union's focal point regarding all aspects of airspace initiatives including development, amendment, and implementation of air traffic and instrument flight procedures and airspace within the National Airspace System.



Information Technology Committee Update



The Information Technology Committee (ITC) continues work on building MyNATCA, the replacement membership database. The committee is now in the process of migrating email mailing lists and grievances into the new system and is working with many members to ensure the process is as smooth as possible.

The demands on members of the committee have continued to grow over the last couple of years and led the ITC to solicit new volunteers to help share the workload. The ITC is excited to welcome Boston Center (ZBW) member Joseph Allen and Anchorage Center (ZAN) member Ryan Durbin as its newest members. "Their IT experience and willingness to work hard will be a great asset to the team," said ITC Chair Jason Doss.

If you have any IT issues, needs, or ideas, please reach out to the ITC at <http://natca.org/support> or via email at itc@members.natca.org.

Check Out the Kids Corner of the NATCA Website

Did you know NATCA's website has a kids corner with educational and fun activities and materials to help spark the imaginations of young aviators in your life? [Check out the kids corner](#) for printable coloring books, activity sheets, a phonetic alphabet learning tool, an ATC historical timeline, and more.



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