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Alaskan Region
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McARTOR Sees TCAS as Priority

Administrator McArtor sees accelerated development of the Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) as one of the agency's immediate research and development priorities. Speaking at the agency's annual RE&D Conference he also said, "We must get on with the application of automation and communication technologies needed to improve safety and en route and terminal airspace." He also cited the need for new airport security systems and continued advances in the area of aircraft flammability.

attention field offices and loyal readers

The Intercom needs you. We need any stories, information, and/or activities dealing with your office and personnel sent to us for publication. Don't be shy. Now's your chance to experience the chills, thrills, spills, and excitement of reading about yourself and those around you in the future editions of the Intercom. Send anything and everything (and I mean anything and everything because that's what keeps the editor employed) to: The Editor, Alaskan Region Intercom, AAL-5, 701 "C" Street, Box 14, Anchorage, Alaska 99513. Thanks!

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If you have questions, suggestions, or complaints, please call the Editor at 271-5293.

MSPB Overturns Removal

The Merit Systems Protection Board has reversed the removal of a controller from the Southwest Region who had been removed for striking in 1981. The employee had initially appealed to MSPB which had sustained the removal. Following his petition to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, the court held that the deciding official had not properly considered information from the employee claiming he was not a striker. The case was remanded back to MSPB and Administrative Judge Walter Orrs issued an initial decision reversing the removal action. While the agency petitioned the full Board, the Board accepted the AJ's finding and overturned the removal. Out of all controllers who were removed for striking, this decision makes a total of 393 who were reinstated by MSPB or the courts.

EEO Update

by: Ken Smith
Civil Rights Officer

Do you want to be an EEO Counselor?
Several have expressed their desire to work in this area and I am always appreciative of such interest.

What does it take to be an EEO Counselor? First, EEO Counselors are good listeners. They are fair and are able to see several sides to any issue. They are helpers. Their desire is to help those with differing views to reach accord. They are facilitators who help people achieve a workable harmony even when there may not be complete agreement. They are ethical. They focus on what is right, and not who is right, and sometimes they are not popular for their moderation. They are empathetic to those who are hurting whether applicant, employee, or supervisor. They are capable people who may not have every answer at their fingertips, but who will work diligently to find answers. They are the lifeblood of the EEO effort. They work as EEO Counselors because they believe what they are doing has value.

How do you become an EEO Counselor?
Take every opportunity for self-development, including college courses in communication and interpersonal relations. The FAA and OPM offer both correspondence and classroom courses which can be useful. Support the special emphasis programs (i.e., FWP, handicap, Black emphasis, Hispanic/American Indian emphasis, etc.). These programs can provide a wealth of experience and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

When the next call goes out for volunteers, we hope to hear from you.

Peace.

30-day notice for DOT random drug testing

Employees who will be subject to the DOT random drug testing program are being issued individual advance 30-day notices advising them of their inclusion in the program. Covered employees are being asked to sign and return a copy of the notice for agency records. Civilian employees in critical safety and security positions where job duties have a direct impact on public health and safety, the protection of life or property, or national security, will be subject to the program. More information on the 30-day notice is contained in ALR-1's memo to HRMO's dated 8/7/87 and in this issue's "Medical Notes" page.

AFOB "RAP"

Since cleanup day
I want to say
I feel real good
Like I knew I would
So keep it up
Keep my hallways clean
Watch those ashes, man
Cause that's so mean
And those fountains, yeah
They need a breather
They don't like plants
Nor coffee grounds either
When I get new paint
And I sparkle and shine
Please keep me neat, yeah
AND DO IT ALL THE TIME!



have you seen the light(ning)?

NASA would like to hear from pilots who have seen vertical lightning strokes which have gone out of the top of storm clouds and continued upward into space.

This rarely reported phenomenon is the subject of studies into frequency of occurrence and possible effects upon spacecraft and the new generation of aircraft which use composite construction materials and are able to fly above storm cells.

Pilots who have seen the lightning should report full details of sightings to Otha H. Vaughan, Jr., Code ED-43, NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, Alabama 35812.

Award for Excellence

Carolyn Walker, AAL-52E, received the DOT Secretary's Award for Excellence in Public Service on September 16 in Washington, D. C. Congratulations to you, Carolyn.

REMINDER

The new Federal Retirement System requires you to fill out a form even if you decided to stay with the old system. If you threw away the form (Gee, nobody I know does that), please obtain another one as the system requires you to say "yes" or "no" in writing regarding your choice.

FAA tests subordinate input

The Office of Organizational Effectiveness is conducting a test of subordinate input on supervisory human resource management practices. The test consists of questionnaires asking employees the extent to which their first-level and second-level supervisors perform specific HRM tasks, such as performance appraisal and communications.

In late September, test site supervisors will receive feedback reports on the consolidation input. With it will be an instructional guide with help on interpreting the data and information on self-developmental activities in each HRM area. Bosses of test site supervisors will be asked if such input would be useful eventually for performance appraisal purposes.

If the evaluation of the test shows the system will work well, agencywide implementation of employee input for feedback to the supervisor only is likely for spring of 1988. Any decision to use employee feedback in supervisory appraisal will only be made after a thorough review of the system is completed, including discussions with employees and supervisors at all levels.

The ten test sites are: Honolulu Center, Oakland Tower, Edwards RAPCON, Riverside FSS, Sacramento AF Sector, Los Angeles FSDO, Airway Facilities Division (Western-Pacific Region), Human Resource Management Division (Western-Pacific Region), Chicago AF Sector, and Chicago GADO.

FEHB Open Season

by: Jean Pershall
AAL-16B

FEHB Open Season will be from November 9, 1987 through December 11, 1987. During this period, eligible employees may enroll, change enrollment within a plan, or change plans. Enrollment and changes during the open season will be effective January 3, 1988.

Because of sharp increases in health care costs and use, the average premium for the Federal employee will rise by 31 percent.

In the Alaskan Region, FEHB individual plan brochures and the new SF 2809 will be distributed upon receipt to administrative personnel in the field stations and the regional office.

Jewel of the Aisle

It wasn't quite the "Jewel of the Nile" so Michael Douglas won't have anything to worry about this time; but, for production costs, Dick Cullen, Position and Pay Policy Manager at Washington headquarters, should receive an Oscar. The Office of Personnel and Technical Training had a need to develop a video tape to clarify pay issues affecting Federal Air Marshals on such matters as overtime and the Fair Labor Standards Act. To get the job done, Cullen rented a camera (nix the financial backers here), drafted his wife (eat your heart out Kathleen Turner, parts like this come once in a lifetime), and filmed it over the weekend (why risk your life in a Bolivian jungle when you can work in D.C.). CUT AND PRINT! That's a wrap kids. Let's do lunch sometime-have your agent call my agent.

unions fight wage hike

Several unions representing Federal workers are scolding the administration's proposed 2% wage hike noting that Federal workers lag over 20% behind in pay for comparable private sector jobs. Congress was called upon to overrule the administration and authorize a 7% pay hike for each of the next 3 years. Unless Congress passes a law specifying an alternate amount, the 2% raise will take effect January 1, 1988.

how many ARTCC's are there?

Although Anchorage and Honolulu ARTCC's are seldom included in Lower 48 statistics, they are indeed Air Route Traffic Control Centers and should be counted as such.

Last month's "Intercom" made reference to 20 ARTCC's when, in fact, there are 22 Air Route Traffic Control Centers. The 22 ARTCC's are: Albuquerque, Anchorage, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Denver, Fort Worth, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Memphis, Miami, Minneapolis, New York, Oakland, Salt Lake, Seattle, and Washington.

My thanks to Steve LeGrand of Anchorage ARTCC for noting this exclusion error in the ARTCC count and bringing it to the editor's attention.

Medical Notes - DOT drug testing program

by: Pat Sanders

DOT has implemented a Department Drug Testing Program and random testing is a part of this program. Employees in the fields selected for random testing (listed below) would have an equal statistical chance of being selected. Why random testing? The goal is to deter and discourage drug abuse, identify employees in need of assistance before critical situations develop, and protect the public interest. The goal is not to punish employees for substance abuse. The following fields are included in the random testing program:

- GS-0856, Electronics Technician
- **GS-2152, Air Traffic Control Specialists
- **GS-1825, Aviation Safety Inspectors
- **GS-1801, Civil Aviation Security Specialists
- GS-2181, Inspection/Flight Test Pilots
- WG-8852, Aircraft Mechanics
- WG-57XX, Transportation Equipment Operators

**Only employees who are required to take periodic physical exams in these fields to retain medical clearance are covered in the random testing program; however, all employees will still be subject to reasonable suspicion testing, accident/unsafe practice testing, and follow-up testing. Any employee may volunteer for testing.

The drugs to be tested for are: marijuana, cocaine, PCP, opiates, and amphetamines. CompuChem will be the drug testing laboratory for the DOT Drug program, and the testing process will be the same as that previously established for the FAA; initial screening for the named drugs and then confirmation with the Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectrometry test. Upjohn Healthcare Services has

been named the contract collector and collection persons will be registered nurses who will have identification to present when visiting a work facility to test selected employees. The collection contractor will work closely with the Drug Program coordinators (Mary and Pat, AAL-300) in scheduling facilities and employees for testing.

The collection will be unobserved, and the procedure will be much the same as the FAA periodic testing which observes a strict chain of custody. To begin the chain of custody, the employee must observe the transfer of the specimen to the collection container and witness the sealing of the specimen container and specimen kit. Should the employee fail to appear for scheduled testing, or refuse to give a specimen, (after review of the circumstances) the supervisor may take disciplinary action. Should the employee be unable to provide a specimen, the employee may be detained for up to two hours and encouraged to drink fluids.

Each employee tested will receive written notice of the results. Urine test results will be protected in accordance with the Privacy Act and other statutory safeguards. Upon reaching a finding that an employee uses illegal drugs, DOT will refer the employee to the Employee Assistance Program. An employee must successfully complete rehabilitation/abatement and remain drug free thereafter to avoid any disciplinary action. The current FAA Drug Testing Program for Periodic Testing with scheduled physical exams remains in effect until otherwise advised.

technical talk

(I am sorry to report that the author of "Technical Talk" has mixed her metaphors, become obtuse, and as a result is in the hospital getting a jargon implant.) In lieu of "Technical Talk" we bring you...

THE BOOK REVIEW

by: Redd Over

Here is a listing of books that I have read to increase my knowledge as well as my vocabulary. I hope you enjoy them too:

"What the Hunter Knows" by Buck Knife

"Heavy Duty Construction Projects for the Whole Family" by Jack Hammer

"Indians, Indians!" by Tommy Hawk

"How to Rule Your World" by Dick Tator

"Sewing Made Fun" by Polly Ester

"Yipes! I Married a Crocodile"
by Al E. Gator

"Do You Know this Snake?" by Anna Conda

"Gardens Galore!" by Pete Moss

"Idiot Book Titles" by I.B. Tryin'



STOP !!



IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY TYPE OF BUILDING PROBLEM...

1. Call the Real Estate and Utilities Branch, AAL-58, at x5868 and report the problem.
2. AAL-58 will log the complaint and report the problem to GSA.
3. GSA will respond and identify problem/corrective action.
4. Call x5868 to indicate nature of GSA response/result.

employees best recruiters

An informal survey has shown that FAA employees turn out to be the best people to encourage an agency career.

Adri-Anne Trammell, Acting Manager of the Aeronautical Center's Special Examining Division, surveyed an incoming controller class at the FAA Academy and found that 145 of the 163 students in the sample had been directed to the agency and job by FAA employees.

Now that the agency is beginning a major new controller recruitment drive with newspaper, radio, and television advertisements, current employees can help by encouraging potential candidates to send a postcard to the FAA Aeronautical Center, Dept. 1C, P.O. Box 26650, Oklahoma City, OK 73126.

You Bet Your Blue Chips!

If stock for the "Dimensional Doormat" company had been available it surely would have doubled and tripled in value. Ms. Jodie Cunningham, president of the "Dimensional Doormat" company, and daughter of the Alaskan Region Director, led 20 fellow students at Dimond High School in an outstanding growth company situation. Operating under the student Junior Achievement Program which is sponsored by businesses worldwide, the students won the "Company of the Year" award for Junior Achievement in Alaska, the Western Region, and finished 4th out of 4000 Junior Achievement companies in the international competition held at the University of Indiana. Jodie plans on starting college next year and majoring in business, economics, and political science. (Small wonder I can hear it now...Jodie: "Dad, can I borrow the car and \$20,000 to start my own company? Frank: Sure, just be home by midnight.")

Cunningham receives medal

Regional Director Franklin L. Cunningham received the U.S. Department of Transportation's prestigious Silver Medal for Meritorious Public Service on September 16 in Washington D.C. The award, given for exceptional leadership in administrating the Nation's airspace system in Alaska, cited Cunningham's innovative leadership and management, improved safety, and better public understanding of aviation issues. Congratulations.

ALCOHOL AND COMMON SENSE

by: Roslynn Reed
Manager, EAP

Alcohol is one of the most common drugs consumed within the United States on a daily basis. It is especially important that we take a look at our drinking habits and remind ourselves of the common sense rules to responsible drinking. The following are 10 points to consider if you plan to consume alcohol:

1. Think in terms of extreme care and considerable moderation prior to and during consumption. Set an example for friends and family to follow.
2. Voluntarily and sensibly restrict the number of drinks you will consume.
3. If you drink daily--stop. Find out if drinking is controlling you.
4. When drinking, never consume straight shots.
5. Drink slowly. If you're thirsty, drink a non-alcoholic beverage first.
6. Eat a good meal prior to drinking.
7. When faced with problems, intentionally do not drink.
8. Learn to comfortably and courteously refuse a drink.
9. Never drink alone and when bored, avoid bars and cocktail lounges, find something else to do.
10. If hosting a party, always provide non-alcoholic beverages for guests.

The Quill User's Guide

by: Pauline Steffy
AAL-61

One of the many criticisms beginning writers get (among the spelling, grammar, and punctuation red marks) is that they use too many cliches. Writing teachers will tell a student, "Avoid cliches, they make your paper dull and uninteresting." This may be so in many cases but, as I argued with my college professors, cliches are sometimes a necessary and essential technique to give the reader a quick, familiar reference point as well as an adequate level of communication with the writer. Consider this:

"It is unwise of us to accelerate at such a speed that the shear velocity of our transport ignites the path behind us and prohibits our return."

A cliché would probably be totally appropriate in this context to establish a rapport with the reader by simply saying:

"It's not smart to burn your bridges behind you."

Cliches, like other familiar words and phrases, should be used with caution. In truth, a reader could become easily bored with cliché after cliché that doesn't really tell him what he wants to know. In many cases, familiarity does breed contempt.

Since the purpose of written communication is to convey a message clearly, specific facts and details about the topic must be included in the communication. Cliches, when used, are like buoys, familiar markers that let the reader know he or she is still on the right heading, or at least in the same ocean as the writer.

Though a writer should avoid those cliches that are worn out and have lost their original jolt (impact), the writer can bring back attention to the cliché's main idea by adding his own "twist" to the phrase. For example, "a chip off the old block" might become, "he's a shaving from the same old plank" or, "as dumb as a door knob" might change to "I've had better conversations with lampshades." Adding a twist to those tired but true expressions will serve two purposes:

1) it will give the reader an immediate understanding of the writer's intent, and

2) it will stimulate the reader's cognitive abilities enough to avoid the boredom associated with repetitive words and phrases.

Admittedly, in government business writing we seldom use the examples above. We do, however, use other tired phrases such as "in regard to your letter," "please don't hesitate to call me," "it goes without saying," "impact," "in this day and age," and many others. We should be aware that after a certain amount of usage, these phrases lose their punch (impact).

Well, just where did all of these tired old phrases come from? There are many, many sources since ours is a "Melting Pot" language. Be sure to read the next edition of "The Quill Users Guide..." and get the low-down on word origins "straight from the horse's mouth."

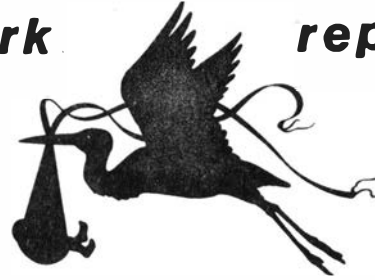
NEWS IN BRIEF

THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SHOTGUN?: The Homer FSS reports a complaint from a resident in that area who apparently wants to declare open season on low-flying helicopters and aircraft. When he registered the complaint, (which was not the first time) seems he mentioned that the use of a shotgun might help eliminate the problem. In keeping with the old adage that "information is a powerful weapon" the resident was sent a brochure on low-flying aircraft...that must have been a blast...I guess he had them over a barrel...it's hard to gauge this one...there must be some holes in this story...Okay, okay, I'll quit while I'm ahead.

FLY ME TO THE MOON, OR JUST TO WISCONSIN: ATCS Lisa Welsh (soon to be Welch-Workman) departed Dillingham FSS bound for Wisconsin. She and her betrothed are flying their PA-28 down and planning a leisurely honeymoon trip on the return leg. Congratulations.

Tonya Shankle of Fairbanks FSSO was married to Timothy Turner August 21 at Fairbanks. Congratulations.

THE ANNUAL PILOT/HUNTER SAFETY CLINIC was conducted at Anchorage Community College August 8, coordinated by Val Aron of Anchorage FSSO. Participants in the clinic covered emergency communications, hand-propping, short field takeoffs and landings as well as weapons handling, survival, and emergency preparedness. No moose or ducks were reported in attendance for the survival skills presentation.

stork report

Congratulations to Michael Simmons of Barrow FSS and wife Penny on the recent birth of their twin boys, Michael William and Steven Allen.

Congratulations also to Accounts Control Manager Dan Goodstein and wife Penny on the birth of their daughter, Esther Lynn.

Nome FSS received a plaque of appreciation for the USAF 343rd Tactical Fighter Wing, Eielson AFB. The plaque was delivered to Nome by pilots flying in two A-10's and presented in recognition of services provided during "Operation Cobbler Gold" held in June of this year.

Tom Wardleigh of the Alaska Aviation Safety Foundation was presented with the annual Anchorage District Flight Instructor of the Year award, and Gary Bennett of Northern Lights Avionics was awarded Maintenance Technician of the Year.

PASS/FAA RECESS: The initial bargaining session on the new PASS/FAA labor agreement has recessed as of August 27, and will resume negotiations on October 19, in Washington D.C. Bargaining proposals concerning the DOT drug testing screening program are now being reviewed by the FAA and DOT.

**** ON-THE-SPOT AWARD ****

Chris Collinson, ATCS Merrill ATCT
Carol Wilson, Secretary, AAL-620a

Howard Smith, Realty Specialist,
AAL-620a

###

**** LETTER OF COMMENDATION ****

Dennis C. Dodd, Homer FSS
Robert L. Moore, Homer FSS
Stanley B. Porter, Homer FSS
Kristin Turnbaugh, Bettles FSS
Richard A. Ericson, Anchorage FSS

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**** SERVICE PINS ****

Franklin L. Cunningham, AAL-1,
35 years

Patti Fox, AAL-55B, 25 years

James Mann, South Alaska Sector,
25 years

###

**ATTA BOY/ATTA GIRL, WE APPRECIATE
YOUR WORK:**

Barry E. Meyer, Homer FSS
Robert O. Mowery, Anchorage FSS
Kaye B. McLeod, Anchorage FSS
Robert D. Turner, Anchorage FSS
John A. Wilber, Anchorage FSS
Lawrence R. Belisle, Anchorage FSS
Mark A. LaChapelle, Anchorage FSS
Carl B. Stiles, Anchorage FSS
Robert A. Stanberry, Anchorage FSS
John L. Haynes II, Anchorage FSS
Raymond C. Christensen, Anchorage FSS
Wilbur M. Smith, Anchorage FSS
Gary J. Paterna, Anchorage FSS

**** TRANSFERS/PROMOTIONS ****

Dorea Swanson, Civil Engineer,
AAL-451 to Fairbanks

Jim Miller, ATCS, from Cedar Rapids,
MI., to Nome FSS

Randy Kline, ATCS, from Bethel ATCT
to FAI

Richard Kutz, Assistant Mgr, ZAN AF

Al George, Assistant Mgr, SA AFS

Dwight Meeks, Evaluation Officer,
AAL-405

Joe Drennan, Tanana FSS, resigned
8/19/87 and is returning to Colorado

Steve Geoghegan to Sitka FSS from
Rapid City FSS

Sayoko Mimoto, special assistant in
Air Traffic Division from Airway
Facilities Division

Rich Sorensen to Anchorage ATCT from
Merrill ATCT

Tom Palma to Sitka FSS from Cedar
Rapids FSS

Jack Schommer resigned 9/11/87
relocating to Kodiak

Nancy A. Lathey, Air Traffic Manager
of the new Kenai AFSS

Theresa Clark, AAL-50, Contract
Specialist

Michael E. Taylor, ATCS/T, ANC TWR

Douglas Stockwell, ET, SAAFS, Juneau

Fred Brown, Const Maint FMN, SAAFS

Stephen L. Denesen, ATCS/S, Trainee

Robert Atkins, Maint Mech, Bethel

JOSEPH WILLIAM ACKERMAN

"Joe"

9/23/86-9/16/87

I am taking this opportunity to express my deepest thanks and appreciation to the many friends and co-workers for their great support during the sudden death of my beautiful son - "Joe."

Joseph died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) which is also referred to as "crib death." Up to 8,000 infants die from SIDS each year nationwide. SIDS is described as one of the most mysterious causes of death that doctors have failed to prevent or cure.

As with many working parents, I was blessed with a marvelous and loving lady who shared in the pleasure of caring for Joe. My loss is shared by Mrs. Gwen Taylor and her family who provided love and joy to Joe's life during the months spent at her home.

My special thanks to Jean Yount and her children, Steve and Kim, who - without hesitation - were ready and willing to assist me. Putting her personal affairs aside, Jean was there to help in making specific arrangements that would have seemed too difficult to handle alone. Dan Goodstein and Judy Whetzel, among a number of division personnel, provided support and understanding that was so deeply appreciated.

Thanks to all who assisted in my time of crisis and need. I shall never forget the "FAA family" for enabling me to honor in death the precious "gift" of the life of Joseph William Ackerman.

Barbara F. Ackerman
Accounts Control Branch, AAL-33