



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Federal Aviation
Administration



Alaskan Intercom

FAA—Alaskan Region
Anchorage, Alaska



June 1993
93-6

Executive Board

Making Decisions That Affect All FAAers

The Executive Board is a vaguely familiar term, but, if asked, most FAAers would have a tough time nailing it down or placing it in the larger scheme of things.

For most employees, if they think about it at all, the Executive Board gets lumped together with the Executive Review Committee (ERC), the Operational Planning Management Team (OPMT), and the Administrator's Management Team (AMT). See definitions of these groups on *page 4*.

The Executive Board has a vested interest in letting FAAers know what the board is about and what it's up to.

As board chairman Monte Belger puts it: "We want to make sure FAA folks up and down the line know what we are doing because they have a stake in this process.

"Many of the issues we discuss and the decisions we make affect their lives. And, by the same token, we can't do our job well without feedback and reaction from employees throughout the agency. The ivory-tower approach has already been tried and been found wanting."

In the next few weeks, FAAers will begin seeing a lot more information on Executive Board activity:

- ☛ Minutes of board meetings, which up to now have been disseminated only to AMT members, will be given wider distribution.

"The ivory-tower approach has already been tried and been found wanting."

- ☛ A synopsis of board activity will be put on electronic mail.
- ☛ Executive Board highlights will be included as a regular feature of Headquarters and regional Intercoms.

The Executive Board has been around since the mid-1980's, but only recently in an environment of shrinking resources has the board's role come into sharp focus as a logical instrument for helping run the agency in a more business-like fashion.

In addition to the Administrator and the Deputy Administrator, members include the three Executive Directors, the assistant administrator for Budget and Accounting, and the assistant administrator for Policy, Planning, and International Aviation.

The Executive Board "provides the forum and structure to address agency policy issues and provides counsel and/or recommendations to the Administrator for decision and serves as the final review authority on issues requiring decisions by the Administrator."

Normally, the board meets twice a week. On Mondays, it deals with strategic policy issues and Thursdays with tactical issues, many of them identified by the ERC or the OPMT as needing the board's review and approval.

continued on page 4

Thrift Savings Plan Open Season

May 15 Through July 31, 1993

What Is An Open Season?

The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) open season is the period during which employees can begin contributing to TSP, change the amount they are contributing to the TSP, and/or allocate the investment of contributions that are made to their TSP accounts each pay period.

When Do Open Seasons Occur?

There are two TSP open seasons each year:

- *May 15 to July 31
- *November 15 to January 31

Why Do We Have Open Seasons?

The 11-week open season allows agencies to distribute TSP materials and explain TSP benefits to employees, thus enabling employees to make informed decisions about their retirement savings.

Who May Participate In This Open Season?

Employees who are covered under either the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), or Civil Service Retirement System



(CSRS), who were appointed before January 1, 1993, may participate in this TSP open season. To participate you may complete Form TSP-1 and submit it to AAL-16B before July 31, 1993. (Form TSP-1 dated September 1990 to the present date may be used to enroll or make changes during this open season. All forms with earlier dates are obsolete.)

Where Can Employees Obtain TSP-1 Forms?

You can get TSP-1 forms from your administrative areas or by calling **Jean Pershall** at 271-5804 or **Barbara Marshall** at 271-5367.



Intercom

Office of Public Affairs
222 West 7th Avenue, #14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513
(907) 271-5296

EDITOR
Ivy P. Moore

Regional Administrator
Jacqueline L. Smith

Public Affairs Officer
Joette Storm

Intercom is published for the employees of the Alaskan Region by the Public Affairs Office. Articles and photographs are welcomed.

The submission deadline is the first Friday of each month.

If you have questions, suggestions, or complaints, please call the Editor at 271-5169.



EEO Nomination For Manager

Grace Davis-Nerney, manager of the Human Resource Management Division, AAL-10, was nominated in FY-92 by the Alaska Chapter of National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees for EEO Manager of the Year. Through an oversight, we failed to recognize her for this honor. The nomination justification follows:

Grace has 33 employees in HRMD of which 11 or 33% are minorities and 27 or 82% are women. Her division leads the Region in representation of Blacks. She has 7 Blacks in the division, three of whom hold leadership positions: a Branch Manager, Region Recruiter, and the Supervisory Identification and Development Program (SIDP) Manager for the Region.

The division has employed an Alaskan Native during this year and provided upward mobility opportunity for other minorities including two Black females, one Hispanic female and two White females.

Grace is an active member of the Regional EEO Committee and is recognized for the tremendous leadership she brings to this group. Her assistance in implementing the Upward Mobility Program and the Sexual Harassment training for the Region are good examples. She recognized the imminent importance of sexual harassment education and provided the funding, from the HRMD budget, to purchase books and materials needed to support the Region's training on Prevention of Sexual Harassment.

In Grace's division, the personnel take a proactive approach to establishing a climate throughout the Region that results in a reality of equal employment opportunity. She insists on having Civil Rights involved on the ground floor of any program or process that will have an impact on EEO.

When there is a special emphasis program function, Grace is there and she has her entire staff there consistently.

Due to extensive recruiting efforts by Grace's division, the Region has exceeded its minority and female hiring for FY-91.

Ruben Jackson, President
Alaska Chapter, NBCFAE



Executive Board (continued from page 1)

Some of the major strategic issues recently discussed by the board are:

- The adoption of new FAA management principles designed to operate the FAA in a more business-like fashion with greater focus on its customers.
- Acquisition reform.
- The OPMT's proposed operational plan.
- The development of a system to measure cost/performance and accountability.

Tactical issues include:

- Staffing goals for the 1994 and 1995 fiscal years.
- Consolidation of regional communications centers.
- Decommissioning of facilities not meeting establishment criteria.
- Proposals to reduce the cost of printing and graphics.

The Executive Board is still getting used to its new, expanded role in helping the agency run more like a business. The months during the interim between Administrators have provided a valuable learning experience.

With businessman **David Hinson** nominated to become the agency's new Administrator, the board is ready to help him sort through and make sense of the many new and unfamiliar issues on his plate.



FAA's Top Management Teams

The Executive Board

- Serves as a mechanism for addressing major policy issues in a logical, ordered manner instead of having them hit the Administrator's desk in helter-skelter fashion from all over the agency.
- Provides a corporate perspective in contrast to the individual perspectives of "stove pipe" program offices, each vying separately for the Administrator's attention and scarce agency dollars.
- In addition to the Administrator and Deputy Administrator, members are the three Executive Directors, the assistant administrator for Budget and Accounting, and the assistant administrator for Policy, Planning, and International Aviation.

The Executive Review Committee (ERC)

- Reviews budgetary matters pertaining to the operations appropriation.
- Resolves issues on its own "where feasible and appropriate" and makes recommendations to the Executive Board.
- Chaired by the Director of Budget Ruth Levenz; other ERC members include: AAF-1, AAT-1, AVR-1, ASU-1, ASF-1, AMC-1, AHR-1, ARP-1, ACS-1, AIT-1, AGC-1.

The Operational Planning Management Team (OPMT)

- Forum for integrating the various

organizational plans of the agency into a corporate operational plan that drives FAA's programs and budget.

- Forwards its recommendations on operational issues to the Executive Board through the customer/supplier group, an informal group of AXO and AXD associate administrators.
- OPMT members must be at the deputy associate administrator level or above in Washington Headquarters. Regional and Aeronautical Center representatives on the OPMT must be regional/center administrators or their deputies.

The Administrator's Management Team (AMT)

- Forum for sharing ideas, issues, concerns, and top-down direction from the Administrator.
- Also provides bottom-up feedback from AMT members. AMT members participate as peers.
- Consists of senior management officials who report to the Administrator directly or through an Executive Director. Members include: chief counsel, chief of staff, executive directors, associate administrators, assistant administrators, regional administrators, director of the Technical Center and the director of the FAA's Europe, Africa, and Middle East office.
- The AMT usually meets as a group on a quarterly basis.



FAA Inspector Responds to China Eastern Emergency

When Walt Zackowitz responded to the Regional Operations Center call for an inspector one April morning, he responded like the professional that he is. Zackowitz, a member of the Anchorage Flight Standards District Office, had a go kit in his truck with emergency rations and extra gear. He grabbed his ski jacket and headed for Elmendorf Air Force Base to board a C-141 to Shemya Island where a China Eastern Air MD11 had made an emergency landing with more than 100 injured passengers.

In the next few hours, Zackowitz would witness the speed and precision with which the Elmendorf medical team reacted to the emergency as they cared for the victims of a bizarre aircraft accident which occurred over the Pacific at 33,000 feet. By Zackowitz's account, the Air Force crews had to unload 37,000+ pounds of freight and upon takeoff set up an "in-flight hospital" to be ready to care for the battered passengers and crew of the foreign carrier once the 141 touched down on "the rock," as the remote island post is known.

"It made me very proud to see how they cared for the people and how well organized the military personnel were," he says. "On Shemya Air Force Base even the cooks were part of the effort to care for the injured and provide for support personnel, FAA, NTSB, and others."

The China Eastern plane reportedly encountered severe turbulence at 33,000 feet while en route from Shanghai, China, to Los Angeles. It dropped 5,000 feet in a minute's time by some reports. The plane was 950 miles from Shemya when the pilot declared an emergency and requested permission to land at the nearest hospital, which was on Adak Island. Almost equidistant from the Aleutian Chain and Midway Island, the pilot was directed to Shemya where weather was more favorable than Adak.



Military and FAA personnel were notified in the early morning hours. The Coast Guard was among the first to respond with an aircraft, followed by the Navy on Adak and a contingent from Elmendorf Air Force Base. The effort to evacuate the airplane took 3 hours, according to Zackowitz, who inspected and video taped the MD11 in addition to interviewing the crew about the mechanical operations during the turbulence.

Zackowitz spent 2 days on the remote radar installation which normally has restricted access. He praised the base commander and troops for their courtesy and hospitality to the Chinese, most of whom spoke little English, and for their thoroughness in responding to the emergency. "They even thought to have Alascom set up phones so that the passengers could call their families and let them know they were all right.

"The base commander made sure his people were hospitable to everyone involved," he said.

More than 150 persons were medevaced to Anchorage in military aircraft. The remaining passengers and crew were transported by a China Eastern MD11 the following day.



Miracles Happen

By Danny Maxwell, UAA student

(This essay portrays the events of March 31, 1993, in Anchorage, Alaska, as I saw them that day.)



It's twelve thirty on a sunny afternoon. Anchorage is a city alive with activity. Children relax at lunch recess. Adults scurry about, struggling to fit two hours of errands into one hour of lunch. Traffic is heavy on the streets, everyone intent on making it to their lunch date. Little do they know, high overhead a frightening drama is unfolding. A chosen few watch, although they didn't pay to see the show, becoming a captive audience to the death-defying acts performed above.

Standing in the UAA parking lot talking to a classmate, I unwittingly become a part of this audience. Shouting breaks my conversation and draws my eyes to the sky. High over Providence Hospital a windowless 747 cargo plane, on takeoff, struggles for altitude. At first it seems no different than other cargo planes I have watched leave the International Airport. However, as I focus in on the plane, smoke is coming from the left wing. The blue smoke mixes in with the exhaust making it hard for me to tell what is wrong.

Suddenly, flames explode from the wing. I gasp in terror. Something is definitely wrong with this picture. Small pieces of the wing hang suspended in midair as if held by invisible thread. The plane shudders. A large object drops from the wing like a bomb in the movies.

Oh my God! It's the engine. I stand riveted watching it lazily fall toward the ground. Unsure of which object to look at, my eyes switch back and forth from the falling engine to the crippled plane. The flames on the wing disappear in a puff of smoke as the plane's engines suddenly scream into full throttle.

Time stands still. I quickly look back at the falling debris. It continues to plummet to the earth, trailing a plume of smoke. Images of the space shuttle "Challenger" appear in my

head. As the engine, the size of a large truck, disappears below the trees, my heart sinks. I just know somebody's life has just been snuffed out of existence. Visions of flattened houses flicker in my eyes.

Meanwhile, the plane flounders. The left wing rises sharply, due to the absent weight of the engine. I wait for the plane to roll over, but miraculously it doesn't. The courageous crew fight desperately to regain control. The plane's left wing sinks as the crew overcompensates. The plane is losing altitude fast as it continues toward the mountains. Once again, I wait for what seems certain.

"They're gonna crash!" I cry. My mind begins flashing mental pictures of my old neighborhood, Muldoon, in a flaming ruin. I know what a thousand tons of 747, fully fueled, will do if it crashes. The crew continue their struggle. The injured plane wobbles violently as the pilot fights against the machine. I move to get a better vantage point. Slowly the plane begins to level out; the pilot is winning. But the fight is far from over. Altitude is becoming critical. The plane is still sinking toward certain destruction. Will the three remaining engines be enough, or will the heavily laden aircraft fall prey to the forces of gravity?

Black exhaust billows from the straining engines. I stare, expecting the plane to either explode in midair or impale itself on the ground, engulfing the surrounding area in a flaming inferno. The nose is beginning to rise. Can they do it? Will they make it safely over the inlet before they crash? I stand there, willing the plane higher. Slowly it rises. Ever so slightly it begins to gain precious feet. It starts a slow turn toward Elmendorf. I have to move again in order to keep the plane in sight. The plane continues its ascent as if by sheer willpower.

As I watch the plane continue



to gain altitude over Elmendorf, my eyes are distracted by small lights to the left. Oh no! fighter jets from Elmendorf are on final approach. I watch horrified as they continue directly into the path of the crippled 747. Can't they see it? Hasn't anyone told them what is going on? Oblivious to the life and death struggle in front of them they continue to land. Has the 747 and its crew survived only to be blown from the sky in a mid-air collision?

Instantly, the F-15's scatter in all directions. The closest fighter to the 747 stands straight on its tail and rockets skyward, fire shooting from its afterburners. The word is out, and these guys know their stuff. In a blink of an eye they fly, like the "Thunderbirds," in all directions, scrambling to avoid a mid-air catastrophe. The F-15 which skyrocketed upward becomes a tiny speck as it enters the clouds. The cargo plane plods along engrossed in its own world, oblivious to all the planes hurrying to get out of its way.

Slowly, the plane moves out over the Inlet. I breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that only the crew are in danger now. How many residents had been going about their tasks unaware of the possible death and destruction hanging overhead? I wonder about the engine which I feel surely rests where somebody's house or school had been. Was anyone hurt? Sirens erupt from emergency vehicles as they speed toward Boniface, leaving little doubt in my mind. I say good-bye to my companion and leave the parking lot. I want to rush home. The radio isn't working in the truck and I want to hear the news. Speeding, I make my way home. I look toward the airport, hoping for a glimpse of the stricken cargo jet.

I arrive home with my explosive news. Everyone is excited as I spill my story. We quickly turn on the

TV, hoping to get some word of the courageous crew's welfare. Moments later the show is interrupted. The announcer states what has happened and, to my extreme joy, that the plane has landed safely. "What about the engine that fell from the sky?" I beg him to tell us. He speaks finally, about the engine that has fallen in a deserted field without causing any injuries.

"Thank God!" I exclaim, sinking in my chair from exhaustion. "Everyone is safe; it's a miracle."

Hours after I witnessed this drama in the sky, the newscaster is on the TV again with more details. They are showing pictures of the shaky landing of the 747. I see a large gaping hole where the engine should be. It looks like a B-17 flying fortress I had seen in a book when I was young. The front of the B-17's wing was missing, shot off in battle, making it look like the 747 I am watching on TV. A woman shows the viewers a hole in her ceiling, made when a piece of debris struck her apartment. Everyone is saying that it is a miracle that nobody was hurt.

If only they had watched the act unfold. They would have seen the courage of the crew fighting to keep the airplane aloft.

These guys deserve a medal. Their training and experience allowed them to get that plane under control and keep it from devastating a heavily populated area—an area where our kids were in school and where people crowd together on their lunch hours.

What about the Air Force pilots maneuvering at the last second to avoid a mid-air collision? These guys deserve a medal, also.

And what about the debris? Hundreds of pieces, weighing up to four tons, hit the ground and yet no one was injured.

The people of Anchorage needed a big miracle today. They got one, from the pilots of the planes and from God.



IN MEMORIAM



→ **FAA** retiree and longtime Alaska resident **Lols H. Shute**, 70, died May 24 at Providence Hospital in Anchorage.

Mrs. Shute was born Dec. 17, 1922, in Potlatch, Idaho. She married Carl Shute and they went briefly to communications school in Seattle. In 1946, they arrived in Anchorage on a DC-3 flight to commence their duties as one of the husband-wife communications teams for the Civil Aeronautics Administration, which was charged with maintaining the air bases that had been opened in Alaska during World War II. She and Carl lived in many rural and bush communities of Alaska with their children until their move to Anchorage in 1971.

While in Sitka, Mrs. Shute worked with Mount Edgecumbe School in connection with the Public Health Service Hospital located there. After her children were raised, Mrs. Shute worked at the Public Health Service Hospital in Anchorage, and later returned to the Federal Aviation Administration, where she was awarded the federal Distinguished Career Service Award for significant accomplishments and sustained excellence in 1987 prior to her retirement.

After retiring, she expanded upon her lifelong interest in horticulture and received master gardener credentials. Her garden was planted prior to her passing and will be tended and enjoyed by family and friends this summer as her last gift to them.

→ FAA retiree and longtime Anchorage resident **Dolores E. Schwankl**, 64, died May 19 while visiting family members in Portland, Ore. Mrs. Schwankl was born Sept. 11, 1928, in Vancouver, Wash. In 1948 a sense of adventure led her and a

girlfriend to Alaska. She met Art Schwankl and they were married in 1949. Mrs. Schwankl was employed by the US Army from 1948 to 1962. She transferred to the Federal Aviation Administration where she worked as a budget officer until retiring in 1970. Mrs. Schwankl is survived by her mother, Mildred Schmid, and sister, Joanne Strunk, of Vancouver; her husband, Art (also a retiree of FAA); children, Carol Meismer, Linda Schwald, Mike and Jim Schwankl, and four grandchildren, all of Alaska.

→ Longtime Alaskan **Janice Beverly "Tilly" Reeve**, 81, died May 4 at her Anchorage home. A private burial was held in the Pioneer Garden of Anchorage Memorial Park Cemetery, next to her late husband, Bob.

Mrs. Reeve was born Sept. 22, 1911, in Muscoda, Wis. At the age of 23, she ventured north, arriving in Valdez via steamship in 1934. In 1936, she married Robert "Bob" Reeve. They lived in Valdez, Nabesna, and Fairbanks before settling in Anchorage in 1942.

Mrs. Reeve served as secretary-treasurer of the family business, Reeve Aleutian Airways, and became chairwoman of the board upon her husband's death in 1980.

Mrs. Reeve is survived by three sons, Richard and Whitham of Anchorage, and David of Cincinnati; two daughters, Roberta Sheldon of Talkeetna, and Janice Ogle of Anchorage; one sister; 13 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

The family requests that memorial donations be sent to the Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum, 4721 Aircraft Dr., Anchorage, AK 99502.

