

## Data Sharing

Government aviation officials from Europe and the United States are pressing for increased sharing of safety data.

Meeting in Prague, Czech Republic, at the annual European Union–U.S. International Aviation Safety Conference, more than 400 aviation safety specialists from around the world examined the safety benefits that would result from an increase in the sharing of information.

The conference, chaired by the European Aviation Safety Agency and the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, is intended to encourage cooperation and mutual recognition of safety standards.



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## Most Wanted

U.S. National Transportation Safety Board Chairman Mark V. Rosenker says he is disappointed with the response from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to the NTSB's list of "most wanted" safety improvements.

In testimony before the aviation subcommittee of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Rosenker said that, of six recommendations on the list that are addressed to the FAA, five have received an unacceptable response. Those five recommendations involve "reducing dangers to aircraft flying in icing conditions, preventing runway incursions, improving audio and data recorders and requiring video recorders on aircraft, reducing accidents caused by human fatigue and improving crew resource management for [U.S. Federal Aviation Regulations] Part 135 (air taxi) operators," the NTSB said.

Rosenker said that the FAA is progressing slowly on the sixth item,

which calls for eliminating flammable fuel/air vapors in the fuel tanks of transport category airplanes.

"The issues on our Most Wanted list tend to be those that are among the most complex and difficult to implement," Rosenker said, noting that the FAA has implemented NTSB safety recommendations in a number of other areas. "While the FAA has made some progress, I am disappointed that there are so many recommendations on this list that are in an unacceptable status."

Later, Peggy Gilligan, FAA deputy associate administrator for aviation safety, told the subcommittee that the FAA takes action on "the vast majority of the NTSB's recommendations" and that FAA officials "always value the intent of the recommendations, even if we are unable to do exactly what the [NTSB] recommends."

"Their recommendations represent the ideal; our consideration of those recommendations must, by law, factor in certain realities."

## Passengers First

Passenger-carrying aircraft will receive priority for safety audits, surveillance and other resources under a new policy adopted by the Australian Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA).

For purposes of safety regulation, the policy creates three classes of aviation activities: passenger transport, including regular public transport and charter flights; aerial work, including emergency medical services, law enforcement and agricultural flights; and general and freight-only, including most private operations, flight training, recreational and sports flights, cargo-only flights and other non-passenger-carrying operations.

"Passenger-carrying flights get the highest priority in terms of safety because the people flying on these air-

craft are not expected to know about or control safety," said Bruce Byron, CASA chief executive officer. "Passengers quite rightly rely on the aviation industry and CASA to manage safety on these flights."

"People who are flying on aircraft operating in the aerial work class ... are knowledgeable about the safety of these flights, as they have assigned in-flight duties. This higher level of safety knowledge and involvement places these

operations in the middle of the safety hierarchy. People flying in the general and freight-only class are involved in aviation as pilots, crew or as participants who understand relevant safety issues."



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### Vortex Measurement

Eurocontrol and French aviation agencies have begun a study of wake turbulence at closely spaced runways with installation of equipment to measure wake vortices generated by aircraft landing at Paris Charles de Gaulle International Airport.

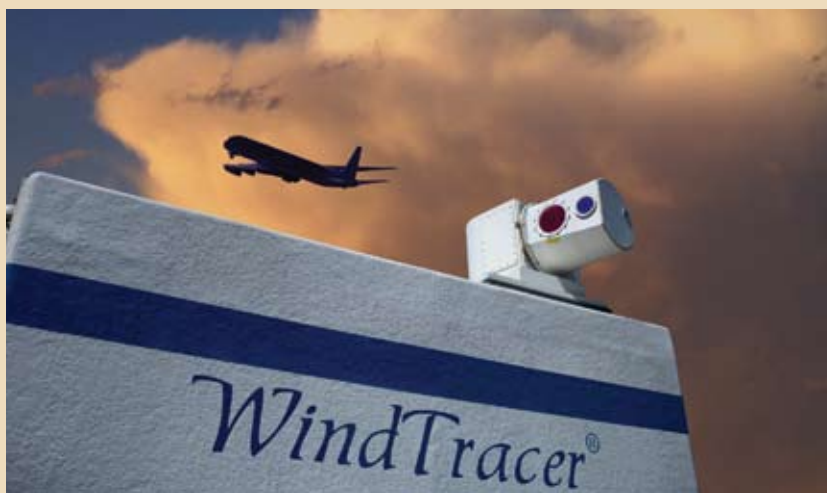
Light detection and ranging (LIDAR) equipment incorporating an infrared laser is being used to measure the vortices and their movement.

“Monitoring of wake vortices is a crucial element to improve safety and increase runway capacity,” Eurocontrol said. “Knowledge of the behavior of wake vortices under specific meteorological conditions could be used to reduce the separation minima recommended by ICAO [the International Civil Aviation Organization] for wake turbulence avoidance. In particular, the safety of

individual flights will be enhanced by reduction of wake vortex encounters via improved prediction and detection.”

Peter Eriksen, head of Eurocontrol airport research, said the study is

intended to yield information that will allow for “practical recommendations that could improve the use of closely spaced parallel runways in Europe.”



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### African Aviation

African governments are establishing a continent-wide aviation safety authority modeled on the European Aviation Safety Agency. The goal of the African Civil Aviation Authority is to aid in development of a unified aviation safety strategy across the continent.

In the East African nations of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, a regional agency is being established to oversee implementation of the International Civil Aviation Organization’s standards and recommended practices. The East African Community Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA) will be the first such agency in any African sub-region.



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### Air Charter Safety

The new Air Charter Safety Foundation (ACSF) — developed by the charter industry and the National Air Transportation Association (NATA) — has been established to work for safety improvements within the air charter industry worldwide.

“The most effective way to raise the safety bar across an entire industry is through the efforts of an independent and dedicated nonprofit foundation,” NATA President James K. Coyne said in announcing the new foundation.

The ACSF will engage in research and education, and will collaborate

with other organizations on some projects, including Flight Safety Foundation (FSF), which will be a partner in presentation of an air charter safety seminar, said FSF President and CEO William R. Voss.

The ACSF will be chaired by Charlie Priester, who is chairman of Priester Aviation in Palwaukee, Illinois, U.S.



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### About-Face on Age Limits

The Executive Board of the Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) has ended its opposition to proposals to increase the mandatory retirement age for U.S. airline pilots to 65.

The board voted in May to end decades of support for mandatory retirement at age 60 — the age limit in effect in the United States since 1959.

Earlier this year, Marion Blakey, administrator of the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), said that the FAA would propose a new rule to allow commercial pilots in two-member crews to continue flying until age 65, as long as the other crewmember is

younger than 60. The change is based on action by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which in 2006 increased the mandatory retirement age for airline pilots to 65 (ASW, 2/07, p. 11).

The ALPA executive board said that the organization opposes — for flights within the United States — the provision calling for at least one pilot in every two-pilot crew to be younger than 60,

“unless the necessity for this mitigation for the long term is clearly shown” by future data analysis.



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### Airspeed Awareness

In response to icing incidents involving Model 208 and 208B Cessna Caravans, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has issued an airworthiness directive (AD) that requires operators of these aircraft to install low-air-speed awareness systems.

AD 2007-10-15 — which took effect June 21, with compliance required by Sept. 21 (*Accident Prevention*, February 2006) — also requires operators to incorporate the S-1 Cessna known-icing equipment supplement into the airplane flight manual.

The FAA said that the low-air-speed awareness systems are necessary because “the accident/incident history of the Model 208 indicates that pilots have not been diligent

in the management of the aircraft when operating in icing conditions, as aircraft performance can decay very quickly.” In addition, the aural stall warning system does not always provide pilots with adequate time to avoid a stall, the FAA said.

“The low-air-speed awareness system addresses each of these concerns by providing an alert with sufficient time to allow pilots to take the proper corrective action,” the FAA said.



U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration

### In Other News ...

The government in **Australia** has allocated funds to provide for mandatory drug and alcohol testing in the aviation industry by the end of the year. Plans call for employers to develop their own testing programs for pilots, flight attendants, air traffic controllers, baggage handlers and ground personnel; the Civil Aviation Safety Authority will conduct random testing of private pilots and contractors. ...

The **International Air Transport Association (IATA)** is urging implementation of the Single European Sky — a plan to unite Europe’s 35 air navigation service providers — within five years. In a letter to German Chancellor Angela Merkel, IATA said that, in addition to increased efficiency and more effective routings, the union would result in a substantial reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. ...

**Sandia National Laboratories** and **Boeing Commercial Airplanes** are working together to assess the feasibility of using hydrogen-powered fuel cells for back-up power in military and civilian aircraft.

Compiled and edited by Linda Werfelman.