



### Adapting the rules

One of the reasons for Bill Voss's message [ASW, 8/08, p. 1] that the aerospace community is getting the point, but that the rest of the world needs convincing, is that the rules as devised by politicians also leave something to be desired. Hence, everywhere around the world rules are bent, because these rules are not perfect.

It is the same with aerospace procedures; usually they are made after the design of a new ATC system or aircraft. Seldom are the procedures made first and then the system designed to meet these procedures. The net result is that we adapt the procedures and hope that the crews around the world will manage the difficulties, and guess what, they do quite admirably.

What fascinates me so much is what happens at an airport that handles, for instance, 60 aircraft per hour on a dual runway system. As soon as ATC handles aircraft "by the book," this capacity drops to, say, 40 aircraft per hour. In my opinion, that means the procedures devised to handle these 60 aircraft per hour were wrong in the first place.

In any case, if politicians and lawmakers, judges, etc. wonder why we do business like we do — ever since these wonderful 1944 ICAO rules (the material coming from accidents can only be used for analysis to prevent the next one from happening, not to prosecute

people) which has made this system so safe and far better — safer than any political system — then tell them that their system is not perfect either, that what is missing are primarily reasonable laws and rules, and sadly more often than not they are definitely not reasonable.

The good news is that aerospace rules are usually reasonable. That's a big advantage.

Rudi den Hertog  
Fokker Services

### More on the great footrest question

Editor's note: *Continuing a discussion that began in Air Mail, ASW 9/07, Mr. Chaney wrote that "it is beyond me why any aircraft manufacturer would put a footrest in the cockpit in the first place, or an operator would allow such a device in the cockpit, especially if it is collocated with any instrument or controls."*

Being a regular reader, from cover to cover, of *AeroSafety World*, I was astonished to read Mr. Mark S. Chaney's letter. I'm wondering if ASW regards this letter as a contribution for safety in aircraft design, concerning cockpit footrests, or to improvement in cockpit procedures, concerning footrest use.

Mr. Chaney's opinion seems to me totally foreign to professional aviation knowledge. This would be just tolerable in the general press, but surely not in a professional publication. Or am I just missing something about flight safety

standards, or the editor's criteria in ASW? The publication of such a letter doesn't favor ASW's credibility.

Manuel Chagas  
Airline pilot (A310)  
Portugal

The editor replies: *When we print a letter, that does not mean we endorse the thoughts expressed in the letter or the letter writer. Mr. Chaney is in charge of a number of airplanes, and we thought it was interesting that someone in such a position would hold this opinion, and we wanted to share that knowledge with everyone else. Knowing the range of thought that exists in the industry on all matters can help in formulating changes and strategies.*



*AeroSafety World encourages comments from readers, and will assume that letters and e-mails are meant for publication unless otherwise stated. Correspondence is subject to editing for length and clarity.*

*Write to J.A. Donoghue, director of publications, Flight Safety Foundation, 601 Madison St., Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314-1756 USA, or e-mail <donoghue@flightsafety.org>.*