

SPRING 2021

THE WATCH

WOMEN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER'S HOTSHEET

TMU CORNER

Weather Re-routes | p. 6

PLANE LANGUAGE

Shortcuts | p. 10

LEADERSHIP

Spotlight: Annie Andrews | p. 14

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 **VIEW FROM THE TOWER**
Christina Calvert, PWC President

5 **MEMBERSHIP UPDATE**
Jenny Rubert

6 **TMU CORNER**
Jenny Shepherd

10 **PLANE LANGUAGE**
Adrienne Johnson Krunich

14 **REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP**
spotlight: Annie Andrews

9 **SUPPORT PWC'S SCHOLARSHIP**
Laura Anderson



Professional Women Controllers, Inc.

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Purpose

Encourage women to enter the air traffic control profession; assist in professional and personal development; maintain accountability, responsibility, and professionalism; and promote a better understanding, cooperation and coordination among individuals toward the continual improvement of aviation safety.

VISION

Professional Women Controllers, Inc. (PWC) vision is to achieve a balanced workforce that reflects the demographics of society and creates a safe environment where all air traffic professionals have passion for their career, can excel, and feel a sense of community at work.

MISSION

Professional Women Controllers, Inc. (PWC) is a resource that provides support, training, encouragement, and camaraderie for all air traffic professionals. PWC advocates balancing work and family life, recruiting and retaining excellent employees, developing people, enjoying work, and maintaining a positive sense of community.

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VIEW FROM THE TOWER

Christina Calvert
PWC President

Happy Spring PWC members,

I have realized that this is the last President's column I will be writing. I have been a member of the PWC Board of Directors, in one role or another, for over ten years now. It has been a wonderful experience and I have learned so much by volunteering for this organization. The connections I made are invaluable and I will always cherish my lifelong PWC friends. The conclusion of my term as President is bittersweet for me but it is time to pass this on to the next generation of amazing PWC leaders. Please consider being a member of the board of directors. We are all busy and we all have full time jobs but the mission and vision of this organization is important.

Our focus right now is planning and promoting our first virtual National Training Conference. It is very important to us that this virtual conference have the same level of exceptional training that we provide at all conferences. We did not want it to just be a regular Zoom meeting so we contracted with a company that specialized in virtual conferences. We will be able to interact with each other as we would in person. Yes, it will be different but it is going to be so much fun! Get your Star Wars outfit ready for our opening reception on May 4! A special thanks to Diana Eldridge, Patti Wilson, Samirah Abdelfattah and Vanessa Shinnors for putting together an excellent agenda. Please join us May 5th-6th, 2021. I look forward to seeing you again! Take care PWC family!

Christina

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Lori Fisher

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Joan Borrero

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TMU CORNER

By Jenny Shepherd, PWC New England Regional Director

Understanding Weather Re-routes

We all know about Severe Weather Avoidance Plan (SWAP) routes. People typically think of them as structure that is put out so a flight can move from point A to point C while avoiding a thunderstorm sitting right in the middle over point B. But there is more to SWAP routes than just avoiding a storm.

We often hear controllers and pilots ask, "Why is this one getting a reroute? There's no weather in the way!" Or, "You're rerouting this flight right into an area of small popup thunderstorms! Why, TMU, WHY??" Trust me, people working in TMUs and ATCSCC are not out there rerouting planes for the fun of it. There's always a reason. Here is how we approach it.

First, traffic managers plan ahead for convection. We analyze weather forecasts and use the National Severe Weather Playbook (<https://www.fly.faa.gov/PLAYBOOK>) to select reroutes. There's negotiation involved between various centers as a play is picked and modified. We try our best to issue the chosen SWAP route early so flights never encounter the severe weather. The reasons for these reroutes are straightforward, and not usually questioned by pilots or far-away controllers.

Rerouting some planes can allow others to get off the ground.

Traffic Managers may put out reroutes to distribute delays better. Imagine a sector that handles PHL flow (we will call our imaginary sector Eagle High). Eagle High typically handles a certain number of PHL arrivals, but because of SWAP Route #1 through their sector they are now working twice the volume to PHL and there is not much room to space them all.

ZBW TOOK APPROXIMATELY 100 OFFLOADED FLIGHTS FROM ZBW TO THE NY METRO MARKET ON AUGUST 7, 2020. THE FLIGHTS WOULD HAVE NORMALLY GONE THROUGH ZNY. THIS IMAGE ALLOWS YOU TO VISUALIZE WHAT DISPLACED VOLUME LOOKS LIKE.

PICTURE COURTESY OF ZBW TMO STEVE SCHMIDT.



They have an underlying airport that wants to launch a few aircraft to PHL, but there is no gap in the flow where that plane can fit. Those aircraft could take hours of delay on the ground waiting for their chance to fit into Eagle High's stream. To avoid this, the traffic managers may implement SWAP Route #2 to take PHL arrivals that would normally go through Eagle High into an adjacent sector that does not have as many PHL arrivals. Now that Eagle High is only working the SWAP#1 PHL arrivals, there are gaps in the stream; this means that the underlying airports will have room to launch their Philadelphia bound aircraft. You can picture the confusion of the controllers who issue SWAP#2 or the pilots who receive it, because the flight was originally filed through Eagle High, which has no adverse weather that would normally impact their routing. It isn't about the weather, it's about delay distribution: we are rerouting some aircraft so others may depart.

Reroutes can keep transcontinental flights running.

"Can Routes" are volume mitigation routes created when a virtual domino effect of reroutes is expected. Here's an example of how a westbound Can Route can happen. A thunderstorm line is forecast in a place like Indianapolis Center. This is expected to push a lot of eastbound and westbound volume north, through Chicago and Cleveland Centers.

The added volume of displaced aircraft in addition to the normally scheduled flights in ZAU and ZOB could be too much. To get ahead of the situation, ATCSCC will put out Can Routes to take planes departing from the New York metro area and Boston Center, and take them up through Canada to reenter the NAS through Minneapolis Center's airspace.

This bypasses ZAU and ZOB completely so they can handle their offloaded volume from ZID. It also is often a best option available, because without accepting the Can Route a flight might have to decide between a very long route through Atlanta Center or many hours of delay on the ground that could result in cancellation.

On those days, as planes depart the NY area and head north towards Canada, there could very well be scattered thunderstorms in their way over New England. The airline may opt to have planes deviate through and take the Can Route, rather than wait or take a longer route to the south.

On these nights we often get questioned by frustrated enroute controllers who do not understand the big picture; they see a plane they think is forced onto a bad reroute that puts them close to severe weather when their normal route had no weather on it. During shifts like that, I try to show them an overview by using the traffic situation display (TSD) of the whole NAS with weather and airborne volume depicted. This helps them visualize why their normal route of flight is too busy to use.

Reroutes around weather on the Atlantic coast can be felt on the other side of the country.

The Atlantic coast is a busy corridor where flights pass between Miami to Boston Center. It can be disrupted when there are thunderstorms on any area of the coast; we will use a storm line around Washington, DC as an example. Aircraft from Florida to the NY Metro area get pushed way out over Indianapolis Center using a fix called ROD to keep clear of weather. Aircraft headed to the NY Metros from Texas and the Southwest filed down J42 also have to shift north, because ZDC shuts off arrivals from ZID. The northern half of ZID now has to work volume to NY from FL and the Southwest in addition to their normal NY Metro volume. Not only do they have to blend streams, but they also have to provide ZOB with spacing. It can be nearly impossible, so ZID TMU will reach out and shift the flows of the west-to-east NY Metro traffic north into Chicago Center. Those planes were originally filed absolutely nowhere near the weather near Washington, DC, but they are getting rerouted to avoid volume in ZID that could be unmanageable. But pilots and controllers that do not understand the ripple effect of SWAP routes may question why a plane is being rerouted to NY when there is absolutely no weather anywhere near their route of flight.

TMU is happy to show you how these routes work.

I hope this article brings some clarity when it comes to reroutes. There are just a few examples of many reasons why a plane might be issued a reroute that seems random. When you have a question about why a plane is issued a reroute, I recommend you find a computer depicting the NAS and weather and zoom out to see the whole country. Imagine what initial route changes are happening for weather. Then picture how the surrounding areas are impacted, and what assistance they may need due to volume. When the TMU isn't busy after the weather has passed, stop by and describe the reroute in question. TMCs can use their Traffic Situation Display computers to help show you what happened.

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AMAZONSMILE: HOW TO SHOP AND DONATE TO PWC SCHOLARSHIPS AT THE SAME TIME!

With two toddlers running around, I have found much comfort in being able to shop online for essentials. As convenient as this was before the pandemic, it is even more useful now. At the last PWC conference, I learned about AmazonSmile, a program created by Amazon in which Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to a charity of your choosing. PWC is one of the many charity organizations participating in the program.

Login

To set up your AmazonSmile donation, simply log in to your account via the Amazon mobile app or your web browser on your computer.

Amazon mobile app setup:

1. On your phone app: Open Amazon app and select the bottom right menu icon.
2. Scroll down to "Program and Features," then select the down arrow that says "see all" under it.
3. Scroll down and select "Amazon Smile"
4. Select your charity organization by typing "PWC Scholarships Inc." or any charity of your choosing into the text bar.

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1. Visit smile.amazon.com and click "get started."
2. Sign in with your amazon username and password.
3. Type "PWC scholarships Inc." or any charity organization of your choosing into the text bar.

Note:

On your computer, you will need to make sure you visit smile.amazon.com in order for your purchases to be eligible for AmazonSmile. If you use Subscribe & Save, you have to sign up for your subscriptions from smile.amazon.com and then the donation will happen in the future every time it ships. I recommend either creating a new favorite/bookmark for this webpage or downloading the extension AmazonAssistant, a useful tool that is available on Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Internet Explorer and Opera web browsers.

Done!

That's all there is to it! From now on, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases at no extra cost to you. On the mobile app you will need to re-enroll every 6 months to keep your donation activated. You will receive a reminder via email or app notification depending on your settings.

PLANE LANGUAGE

Bridging the Communications Gap Between
Pilots and Controllers

By Adrienne Johnson Krunich,
PWC Watch Editor
Aviation Safety Inspector

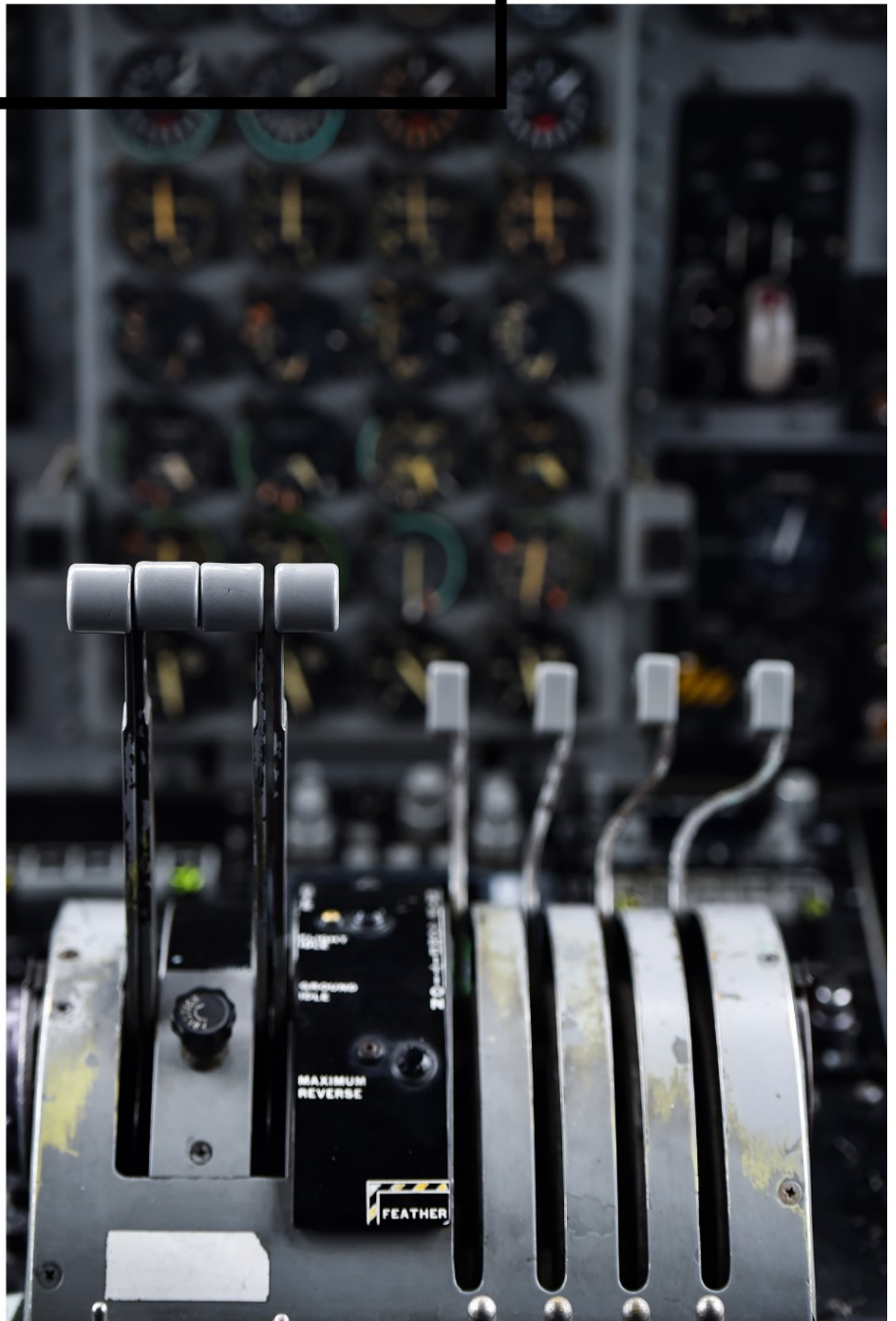
This column is devoted to bringing clarity to the everyday operational issues we as aviation professionals deal with when communicating on frequency. We'll try to understand what is really happening on the other side of the frequency. I bring my experience as both an air traffic controller and commercial pilot when addressing communication breakdowns. Through perspective shifting, we gain a more complete understanding of a situation. Mutual trust and understanding is essential for the controller-pilot partnership, so it's critical we understand each other and speak the same language.

Today's Topic:

Shortcuts - When to use them and when to avoid them.

Have a question you'd like to see discussed on Plane Language?

Email it to pwcinc.watch@gmail.com



PLANE LANGUAGE

BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP BETWEEN
CONTROLLERS AND PILOTS

Controller/Pilot guide to using shortcuts strategically

Shortcuts can be useful to both controllers and pilots, but they can also be a stumbling block as well. Read on to learn about how to best use them for good, not evil. I've worked with some controllers that automatically ask "would you like direct FIX?" upon check in. While these controllers might think they are doing pilots a favor, they may actually be penalizing the pilots and/or their fellow controllers if there is not some additional thought put into their actions. Additionally I've seen some controllers use direct routing in amazingly creative ways to help avoid corner cutters and unnecessary point outs, route pilots clear of weather, and route-separate tied aircraft.

Aircraft routes are carefully planned by trained dispatchers based on winds aloft at altitude, forecast weather, fuel consumption and arrival routes for the destination airport. Additional factors include alternate airports, turbulence reports, and status of navigational aids and aircraft equipment compatibility along the route of flight.

When shortcuts aren't helpful for pilots:

Some pilots will happily accept a shortcut but there are times when it doesn't benefit them. A shortcut could take an aircraft through severe weather downstream, it could take them through an area of turbulence, or it could remove them from their wind optimized routing, essentially causing a longer flight time when flying into the wind even if the route itself is shorter. Additionally, an aircraft's gate is planned for them based on their arrival time, and if that arrival time changes too much, their gate may be occupied when they arrive. This causes the aircraft to have to wait on the ground (in a waiting area on the airport surface) which can be frustrating for passengers and also for the terminal controllers that need to accommodate this extra aircraft.

One additional concern may be that if a route is wiped out of an aircraft's FMS, it may cause additional workload if a controller down stream asks the crew to return to a previously filed or cleared route.

When shortcuts aren't helpful for controllers:

A one size fits all approach to offering shortcuts to pilots can negatively affect your fellow controller across the hall or in an adjacent facility. Offering a direct may seem beneficial based on the information we have, but we don't have all the information for all the sectors that this aircraft will now transit. We aren't familiar with each sector's FSOPs and routing requirements and unique aspects of their airspace layout. Routing an aircraft direct may cause additional point outs, it may cause traffic conflicts, and it may actually route aircraft into active military airspace or airspace that will become active by the time the aircraft reaches it. Although we have the GPD to help avoid these problems, it has its own limitations.

Using Shortcuts Strategically

My technique was to leave most aircraft on course unless a direct route would offer me or the pilot a very specific advantage or if the pilot requested it. One example would be if a route has a sharp dog leg corner that was in place due to special use airspace near me that is currently inactive. I would also use shortcuts if they offered an advantage such as to breaking a tie or preventing a conflict (higher speed aircraft gets a short cut that puts her in front of slightly lower speed aircraft to place and maintain her position in traffic flow). What are some of your best practices when using shortcuts? How have you seen creative solutions used strategically?

PLANE LANGUAGE

BRIDGING THE COMMUNICATION GAP BETWEEN
CONTROLLERS AND PILOTS

Pilots:

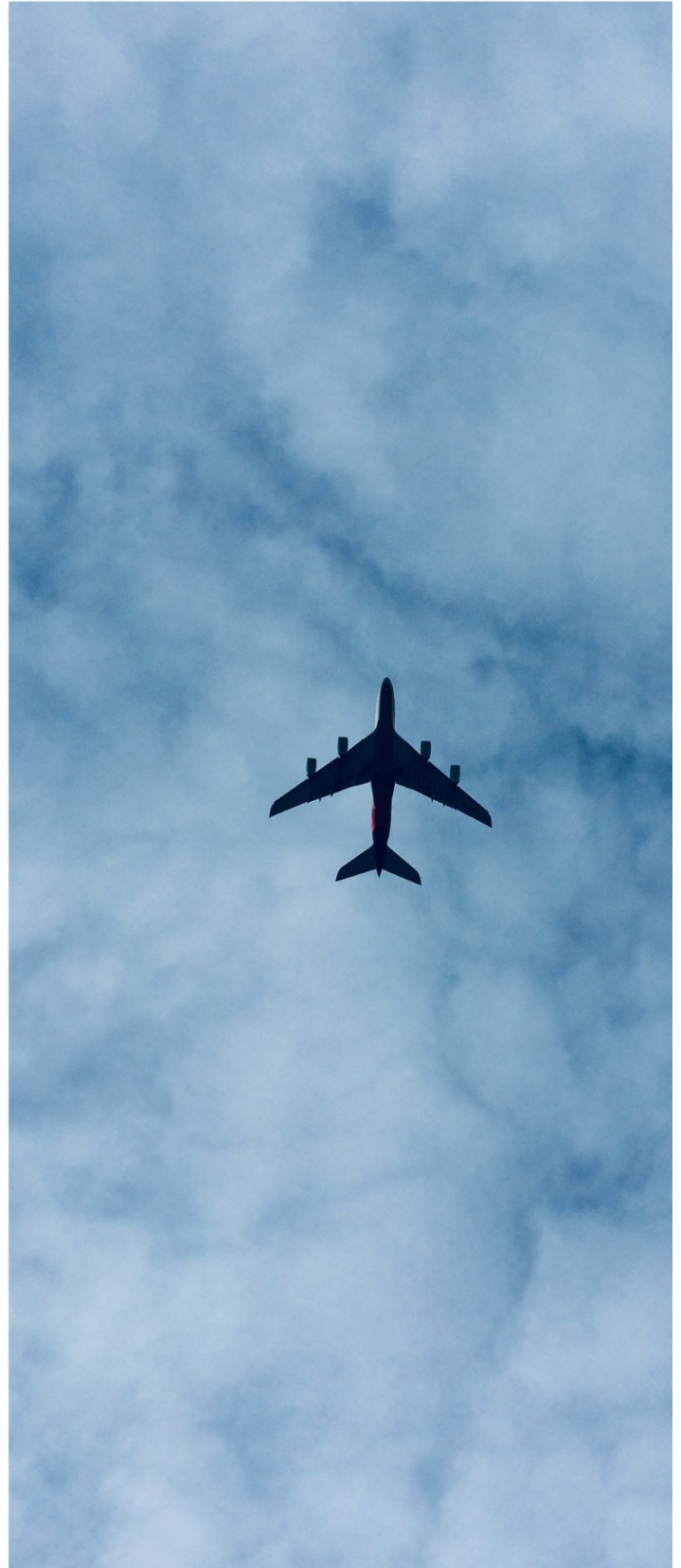
What to say: “Los Angeles Center, aircraft call sign request direct FIX.” That’s all. There is no need to mention a reason such as passenger request, running late, or tell a story about why you deserve it. Simply make your request. We don’t need to know the reasoning and it just adds to frequency congestions. Simply put, if we can accommodate the request, we will.

When to ask: (enroute environment):

Wait a few minutes after checking in before making your request. The reason for this is that when you check in you have had your communications transferred, but you will not be in the next sector’s area of control yet. Therefore even though you are talking to the new controller, you are still within the old controllers’ airspace. A request that is made too soon would require the new controller to call the previous controller on our ground to ground communication system (pilots sometimes refer to this as a land line), to “request control” of the data block to adjust a clearance. The best practice is to check on, wait a few minutes, then make your request. Have a specific fix in mind, and don’t add any reason.

Weather Deviations:

This is a large topic, but for the purpose of this discussion, when requesting a deviation left or right to avoid weather, consider requesting direct to a specific fix instead. Choosing a fix farther ahead that will essentially clear you (the pilot) of weather instead of a requesting a blanket left or right deviation helps the controller plan ahead. This way the controller can more accurately project your route out for conflict avoidance while also avoiding mistakes such as forgetting to route you back to your original fix. It also helps avoid frequency congestions as you don’t need to check back in saying you are done with your deviation.



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PROFESSIONAL WOMEN CONTROLLERS, INC.

Reflections on Leadership

Featuring Annie B Andrews

The past year has tested our expertise and resolve at the FAA to fulfill our mission to serve and support the nation's aerospace industry. I commend our leadership and employee workforce for the tremendous work accomplished throughout this COVID-19 public health emergency.

As leaders across the FAA, we have learned many important lessons through this pandemic. Near the top of the list is the need to fully support, understand, and empathize with a workforce stretched and stressed through months of uncertainty. How we understand and provide this support is being transformed as we speak. By identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement across the enterprise, we're learning how to equip our employees to better excel at work while staying motivated, nimble, and responsive to new processes and technical challenges. Within AHR, helping to ensure our teams' ability to quickly pivot to a maximized telework environment, shift to

online and digital platforms, and creatively carry on FAA-wide hiring, training, policy-making, and other mission-critical programs remotely has caused us all to grow as leaders.

Along with our leadership team, I've personally gained deeper insights into the best tools, services, and policies needed to empower the FAA's executives and our diverse workforce. I see even greater opportunities to grow and refine a range of professional support services to help employees strike a healthy work-life balance. While pandemic-related challenges will continue to test and prove our mettle, I believe the past year has taught us invaluable lessons moving forward. It gives me great hope for the FAA's future and its critical role in serving this nation.

Childhood years

To share a bit of my leadership journey and how I came to serve at the FAA, I'll start from the beginning. I'm a native of Liberty



County, a small community near Savannah, Georgia. I attended schools in both Georgia and Pennsylvania and came from a very strong matriarchal family, where I was greatly influenced by my great-grandmother, grandmother, and mother. In this environment, I was able to see the strength and fortitude of women active in roles in the household, community, or the work environment. I attended an all-girls high school, and I developed an early appreciation that girls could excel in leadership roles and were much more flexible and adaptable to change than many boys I knew at that time.

My mother, Captain Electa Andrews, is a retired law enforcement officer and is my heroine and confidante. She taught me the value of service and how important it is to help others and to recognize their value. She said that a life truly worthwhile is one in service to others. She is the strongest, most selfless, compassionate person, I know.

She also taught me the value of hard work, self-discipline, and honesty. She taught me that negative thoughts were a waste of time and always told me that no matter how hard the road, we should face challenges head-on and then put the results behind us. It didn't matter what confronted us, we should always focus on the positive, persevere, and never avoid tough situations or challenges because of apprehension or fear. My mother worked tirelessly to make sure my sister and I had what we needed to prepare for our future.

My sister, Deborah Andrews-Dawson, is another strong, caring woman in my life. She is a registered nurse in the healthcare profession in Southeast Georgia, providing hospice care for the terminally ill. She continues to be a pillar of the community, volunteering her services and always putting others before herself. She is always encouraging me and providing solid advice.

Earlier years of service

I joined the military through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at Savannah State University. I liked the regimented, disciplined environment; it just felt like home to me. I proudly served for 32 years in the United States Navy, rising from the rank of Ensign to Rear Admiral, becoming only the third African-American female Admiral in the Navy's 245-year history. As a human resources officer, I served primarily in the areas of manpower, personnel, training, education, and recruiting. Career highlights for me included the privilege of commanding the Navy's only basic training facility, the Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Illinois, where I oversaw the training efforts of over 100,000 sailors for assignments worldwide. I completed my career as the Commanding Officer of Navy Recruiting Command, recruiting over 62,000 young men and women and commissioning over 4,000 officers into service to our Navy and the nation.

There wasn't a great deal of female leadership or presence around me when I began my career. The culture had been male-dominated for a long time. But I learned even then that it wasn't about someone's gender; it was about people seeing and believing what you can achieve if you were confident and capable in

your job.

As I progressed in my Navy career, one of my mentors was Admiral Michelle Howard, who in 2014 became the first woman in the U.S. Navy to be promoted to four-star Admiral. She also had the distinction of becoming the first female graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy promoted to flag officer. She was also the first African American woman to achieve two-star admiral rank and the first African American woman to command a U.S. naval warship (the USS Rushmore). She is a great leader and continues to be a role model and teacher for me and women everywhere.

As you can see, my 32-year journey in the Navy broadened my horizons tremendously and allowed me to meet some incredibly inspirational people who taught me how to lead and overcome challenges.

I have overcome my fair share of challenges through the years, but I prefer not to dwell on them. Frederick Douglas once said, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress." We all face obstacles in life that must be overcome. When we do, I believe it's best to learn from them, put them behind us, and remain positive. These experiences make us stronger and even more determined to succeed.

Current career efforts and milestones

I have been with AHR for more than five years now, and in that time, I have adopted some key leadership principles and traits that I believe have helped me be a successful leader. These include Being Approachable, Having Courage, Having Integrity, Having a Vision, Being Self-Aware, and always Collaborating.

I think leaders should be **approachable** and able to foster professional relationships with people who are very different from ourselves. Those differences can be biological, physical, functional, political, cultural, and socio-economic.

Despite our differences, we should be able to come together in order to connect, build trust, and achieve our shared goals. We all have our differences of opinions and beliefs, yet even if we disagree with one another, we must still treat one another with dignity and respect. My experience has taught me that you can usually find common ground. Here at the FAA, our common ground of working toward keeping the National Airspace System (the NAS) safe is what makes us successful. As leaders, being approachable allows us to listen and learn from others.

Courage is another important trait. We must be courageous enough to take risks, and act decisively. Rosa Parks said, "I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up, this diminishes fear; knowing what must be done does away with fear." Great leaders dare to be different. They don't just talk about risk-taking, they actually do it. I also believe we must always at least try to use the platform we are given to confront

important issues that need to be addressed. Anyone who has attempted that knows it takes courage.

Another essential leadership characteristic is **integrity**, or simply doing the right thing even when no one is watching. It is the moral fiber of who we are and is the one thing I believe no one can ever take away from us. A good leader exhibits integrity by exercising fairness, honesty, and compassion that comes from within. It's a quality that builds trust and respect because if others see us serving with dignity and being fair, they will follow. Everything in life, including our freedom, can be taken away from us, but not our integrity, our character, or our self-respect.

Leaders must also be able to define and share their **vision** -- or knowing where you are, where you want to go, and how to get there. Rita Dove, the first African-American poet laureate of the U.S., said, "You have to imagine it possible before you can see something." But even having a strong vision sometimes means adjusting with alternatives to our original plans. So seek your vision, have a goal, but make sure you have a good backup plan.

Being **self-aware** of who you are, knowing your strengths, and addressing your weaknesses are also crucial leadership traits. Be confident in the things you can do well, and consider the areas where you know you can improve. The best leaders admit and learn from their mistakes and aren't afraid of being corrected. Because of my upbringing, I was self-aware from a young age that service and helping others is important. Today, many years later, that early awareness has led me to live a life of service and helping others. It is part of my life's blueprint, and I hope one day it will describe my legacy.

As for the importance of **collaboration**, it was Ruth Bader Ginsburg who said, "Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you." It's difficult to lead a team to a common goal unless every team member is engaged and feels represented. For this reason, great leaders *must* collaborate.

I believe every voice on the team is important. Listening to others and welcoming their suggestions makes people feel trusted, valued, and supported. Empower them to speak up and take risks. Encourage open and honest discussion and focus on effective conflict resolution. Being in human resources at the FAA, I truly believe everyone matters, and it's important that everyone has equitable access to opportunities to grow and excel.

I am proud of the leadership roles I have had in my life. I've had success, but I've had a lot of help along the way. From the strong women who raised me and taught me discipline and generosity, to the many I served with during my 32 years in the U.S. Navy and my five years here at the FAA, these leaders made me a better person and taught me to never let trial or hardship define or deter me.

More importantly, they taught me to do whatever it takes – at work and in my life – to treat people equally, fairly, and with kindness and compassion.

Advice to FAA employees

I believe if you work hard to develop these attributes, no one will ever be able to take them from you. Learn self-discipline and how to appropriately relate to and interact with others. Learn to be a responsible person in all matters that come before you. Learn the value of hard work, learn to set goals, and put yourself on a track for success in everything you do.

To women, I would say this: All people want to be given a chance, an opportunity to excel. Seek new opportunities and always do your best. Of course, we'd like to see more women in underrepresented fields across the agency, and across America, and efforts like the FAA's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Aviation and Space Education ([STEM/AVSED](#)) program are great ways to encourage this. Getting involved with organizations like [Women in Aviation](#) is also a great avenue for exploring new opportunities and maximizing your potential in the aerospace industry. So get a good education, seek a mentor and surround yourself with positive influences.

Hopefully, someday we can get to the point where we value a person's contribution regardless of gender. We've made many improvements in these areas, and I'm sure there are many yet to come.

Words to Remember

I would like to leave you with two quotes that have inspired me through my life. The first is from St. Francis of Assisi in the 13th century: "Remember that when we leave this earth, we can take nothing with us that we have received—only what we have given: a full heart enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage."

Finally, in a memorable speech in the 1960s, the Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. advised young students that, no matter what trials or obstacles they faced, to: "keep moving, keep going. If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk. If you can't walk, crawl, but by all means, keep moving."

We are all confronted with trials, challenges and changes, but whatever we do, let's remember to keep moving forward, refusing to quit. Whatever your goal, just keep moving forward. To me, that is the true heart of leadership.

Considering FEPLI? Here Are Five Things You Need to Know

As a federal employee, you know that any mistake can lead to serious consequences. Even baseless accusations can put your career and your finances at risk. But there is a solution. Federal Employee Professional Liability Insurance (FEPLI) provides the insurance protection you need. Here are five things to know about the coverage.

1. Your policy will include key coverages for federal workers.

Federal employees are subject to certain risks, and FEPLI coverage can provide protections for these risks.

Different plans are available to meet the unique level of risk that comes with different positions. Depending on the plan option you select, your FEPLI policy can provide coverage for the following:

- Disciplinary actions or investigations
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- Failure to perform professional duties
- Defense against administrative proceedings to revoke a security clearance
- Baseless accusations of discrimination, harassment or retaliation
- Liability arising out of acts, errors or omissions under the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act

2. Claims can happen to anyone.

To err is human. No matter how careful you are, you can't guarantee that you won't make a mistake. You forget something, you misjudge something, and that's it – you're facing an investigation.

And even if you don't do anything wrong, accusations are still possible. An action you believe is reasonable may result in a claim of harassment or discrimination. In some cases, false accusations may be made by disgruntled workers as a form of revenge. You may know that you're not responsible, but proving it is a different matter.

3. Your employer might not defend you.

As a diligent federal employee, you may assume that your federal agency will have your back if anything happens. Don't be so sure. Liability issues can get complicated, and your agency may decide to terminate or otherwise discipline you if anything goes wrong.

This is true even if you're part of a union. Although your union has a duty to protect the rights of its members, this does not guarantee that the union will give you the representation you desire during a dispute.

4. Your insurer can organize your defense.

If someone filed a baseless discrimination claim against you, would you know how to proceed on your own? Many people wouldn't even know where to start.

FEPLI provides more than a payout if you're sued. After a covered complaint is filed against you, Starr Wright USA will assist you in accessing the legal resources to plan your defense. This will help you avoid negative outcomes and protect your career. FEPLI obtained through Starr Wright USA also assists with legal defense costs for covered claims.

5. You may be reimbursed for your premiums.

FEPLI coverage provides a good value. Depending on the policy you select, a FEPLI policy can cost under \$300 a year - an average of only about \$1 per day.

Even better, qualified federal employees are eligible for reimbursement of up to 50 percent (or up to \$150) of their Starr Wright USA FEPLI premium. Talk to your HR department to see if you qualify for reimbursement.

And if you're on the fence about whether you need FEPLI coverage, think about this – the federal government considers coverage important enough to provide reimbursement for qualified employees. Shouldn't it be important to you as well?

As a Bronze Sponsor of PWC, Starr Wright USA offers all members 10% off the regular cost of FEPLI!

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NATCA and Congress: Working Together to Protect the NAS

Last year was tumultuous. With so much out of our control in 2020, for NATCA members the incredible solidarity of our Union remained steadfast. In a recent issue of the PWC magazine, we shared how NATCA members joined together to support hospital and other health care workers in their communities.

In the last year, our Union's members also overcame the obvious challenges in conducting grassroots activism. Despite COVID-19, they still made our collective voice heard loud and clear, proving that together in solidarity, we can accomplish anything. The pandemic altered the way we conduct traditional activities that normally require personal contact. The normal in-person events and face-to-face communication with congressional members were replaced with various virtual communications. The dedication and passion for legislative activism that our members demonstrate furthers our Union's best interests, helps protect the National Aviation System (NAS), and supports the larger aviation sector.

Secured 12 Weeks Paid Parental Leave for FAA employees

As you may recall, there was a loophole within the Federal Employee Paid Leave Act in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for fiscal year (FY) 2020. Specifically, the leave provisions, which entitled federal employees to up to 12 weeks of paid parental leave and was intended to cover all federal employees, was not applicable to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) employees, including air traffic controllers and other aviation safety professionals.

The path to this legislative fix was not easy. There were many hurdles and roadblocks along the way. More than a year-long effort by NATCA staff and member activists was required to achieve this important legislative victory. These efforts involved extensive outreach to members of Congress and their staffs. But NATCA never wavered in its support of this outcome. NATCA was able to secure a provision in the bicameral, bipartisan FY 2021 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that was passed by Congress in December to fix this loophole and extend paid parental leave to FAA employees. The measure passed and now is the law.

Achieved Improvements to FAA Certification Process

The omnibus appropriations bill that funds the government through September 2021, also contained important bipartisan legislation, titled "The Aircraft Certification, Safety, and Accountability Act." NATCA members and staff, including NATCA subject

matter experts within the Aircraft Certification Service (AIR), worked closely with congressional committee leadership in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to ensure that this bill improved aviation safety and resolved concerns specific to aircraft certification, while also protecting the rights and interests of employees that NATCA represents. NATCA strongly supported both versions of the legislation that were drafted separately in the House and the Senate and, as a result, we are very happy with this version in the omnibus, which included provisions from each chamber's version.

NATCA worked to collaborate with the FAA to improve recruitment and retention of AIR personnel and ensure our members receive recurrent training related to aircraft certification. Specifically, the bill appropriates \$27 million to improve recruitment and retention incentives for engineers and other aviation safety professionals who oversee and certify transport aircraft and engines, prioritizes professional development of skills required to perform AIR's functions, and requires the FAA to collaborate with NATCA in developing future recruitment and retention programs. The bill also appropriates \$10 million for the continuing education and recurrent training of AIR personnel.

NATCA also wanted to ensure more communication and transparency between ODA holders' frontline workers and the AIR frontline workforce. This bill accomplishes this by prohibiting the FAA or an ODA holder from restricting the communication between FAA AIR employees and ODA unit members within industry.

Additionally, the bill directs the FAA to finalize a new confidential Voluntary Safety Reporting Program (VSRP), which will enhance the current safety reporting program that is jointly administered by the FAA and NATCA. Recently retired NATCA Safety Committee Chairman Steve Hansen, who has been one of the leading developers and proponents of the successful ATSAP program for controllers as well other VSRPs for NATCA's other represented professions, was instrumental in educating congressional staff on what makes a VSRP effective.

Secured Critical Funding for the Airport and Airway Trust Fund

NATCA was successful in obtaining a critical technical correction to address a shortfall in the Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF) in a 2020 continuing resolution. The technical correction, which NATCA aggressively advocated for, transfers \$14 billion from the general fund to the AATF, allowing it to continue to meet the FAA's obligations.

The AATF funds operations of the NAS as well as facilities and equipment, research, engineering, and development, and grants-in-aid to airports. The trust fund had been at a critical level due to reduced demand for airline tickets, and the aviation excise tax holiday that began in March 2020 with the passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and the Economic Security (“CARES”) Act. Without a fix, the FAA would have been forced to cancel or delay programs or activities, and potentially furlough employees.

-month extension of a government assistance program to fund payroll costs. Airline workers would be paid retroactive to Dec. 1 and could not be furloughed through March 31, 2021, as a condition of the assistance.

Helped Secure Payroll Support for Airline Workers

Throughout the duration of the coronavirus pandemic, NATCA has stood in solidarity with our aviation union sisters and brothers as thousands of furloughs and layoffs went into effect earlier this month in the absence of a coronavirus relief deal. Congress passed a bill for a coronavirus relief package, to assist our aviation brothers and sisters who work for U.S. airlines and the contractors who support the airline industry. The bill provides a four

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The SAIC logo is displayed in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a blue triangular background that points towards the bottom right.

PWC CELEBRATES



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Conquering Retirement Challenges for Women

Looking ahead can help you conquer these unique obstacles.

Provided by Glenn Livingston & Michael Livingston

When our parents retired, living to 75 amounted to a nice long life, and Social Security was often supplemented by a pension. The Social Security Administration estimates that today's average 65-year-old woman will live to age 86½. Given these projections, it appears that a retirement of 20 years or longer might be in your future.^{1,2}

Some women face obstacles when it comes to retirement, that can make saving for retirement a challenge. Women typically earn less than their male counterparts and often take time out of the workforce to care for children or other family members. Added to the fact that women typically live longer than men, retirement money for women may need to stretch even further.³

Despite these challenges, there are a lot of reasons to be hopeful.³

Are you prepared for a 20-year retirement? How about a 30-year or even 40-year retirement? Don't laugh; it could happen. The SSA projects that about 33% of today's 65-year-olds will live past 90, with approximately 14% living to be older than 95.⁴

Review your existing situation. Do you want to spend your years traveling together, or do you envision staying closer to home? Are you seeing yourself moving to a retirement community, or do you want to live as independently as you can? Sit down with your spouse, if you're married, to discuss your visions for retirement.

You can't see if you're on track for your goals if you haven't defined them. And if you find you're falling short of where you want to be, you can work together to strategize about how you can either get to where you want to go or to adjust your strategy so that it fits your existing situation.²

Invest strategically. If you are in your fifties, you have less time to make back any big investment losses than you once did. So, protecting what you have may be a priority. At the same time, the possibility of a retirement lasting up to 30 or 40 years will likely require a growing retirement fund.

Get creative. These challenges don't have to stop you from saving for retirement if you're willing to get creative. If you plan to or have taken off time from the workforce, try and increase your contributions to your retirement accounts while you are working.

Under the SECURE Act, once you reach age 72, you must begin taking required minimum distributions from a Traditional Individual Retirement Account and other retirement plans in most circumstances. Withdrawals from Traditional IRAs are taxes as ordinary income and, if taken before age 59½, may be subject to a 10% federal income tax penalty. Under the CARES Act, the 10% penalty may be waived in 2020. Traditional IRA may be fully or partially deductible, depending on your adjusted gross income.

Enlist a financial professional. The right person can give you some good ideas, especially one who understands the challenges women face in saving for retirement. These may include income inequality or time out of the workforce due to childcare or eldercare. It could also mean helping you maintain financial equilibrium in the wake of divorce or death of a spouse.

If you're caregiving for an elderly relative, there are ways to be paid for your time. According to AARP, the Veteran's Administration or Medicaid may be a potential source of income. Working with a professional who has expertise in this field can help you navigate the complicated medical structure while also helping you earn income for work that you're doing.⁵

Consider extended care coverage. Women have longer aver-

age life expectancies than men and can require significant periods of eldercare. Medicare is no substitute for extended care insurance; it only covers a few weeks of nursing home care, and that may only apply under special circumstances. Extended care coverage can provide a huge financial relief if the need arises.^{2,4}

Get involved. One of the best things you can do is to get involved in conversations about finances. Many women undervalue their knowledge in this area and having regular conversations with your spouse, family, and financial professional can help ensure that you always know where things stand.⁵

While women may face additional challenges, careful preparation with your financial professional may help you to live a fulfilling retirement.

Claim Social Security benefits carefully. If your career and health permit, delaying Social Security can be a wise move. If you wait until full retirement age to claim your benefits, you could receive larger Social Security payments as a result. For every year you wait to claim Social Security, your monthly payments get about 8% larger.⁶

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Five Reason to Plan Ahead for Long Term Care

Looking ahead can help you conquer these unique obstacles.

In today's world, planning is essential, particularly when it comes to retirement. People are living longer and need a long-range care plan that can sustain them throughout their lifetime.

Regardless of the setting—home, assisted living facility, or nursing home—long term care can be expensive. And the need for long term care can happen at any time, not just in your later years, so making decisions about this type of care be difficult. The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP), the group long term care insurance program that only members of the federal family can apply for, can help.

By starting the conversation with your spouse or loved ones now, you can relay your care preferences and communicate who will make decisions on your behalf if the need arises.

Here's a list of five important reasons to start planning for long term care now.

1) Cost and financial security

The cost of long term care can be expensive and vary greatly depending on the type of care you receive, the place it's provided, and where you live. For example, the national average cost for a semiprivate room in a nursing home is \$92,710¹ per year. The FLTCIP helps protect your income, including pensions and annuities, plus your savings, or other investments, from being exhausted by long term care costs.

2) Insurance coverage

Many people think that long term care is covered by traditional health insurance plans. It's important to know that long term care expenses are generally not covered by the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, TRICARE, or TRICARE For Life. While Medicare covers some care in nursing

homes and at home, it does so only for a limited time and is subject to restrictions. The FLTCIP pays for long term care services in your choice of settings (at home or in a facility, such as an assisted living facility, an adult daycare, or a nursing home) and your choice of caregiver.

3) Family

Long term care is most often provided at home by adult children, other family members, and friends. Even though they may be the first to step in and want to help, being a caregiver for someone who requires ongoing assistance can be a time-consuming commitment and often takes a toll on a caregiver's health and well-being.² Informal care provided by friends and family members is covered under the FLTCIP, as long as the caregiver isn't your spouse or domestic partner and doesn't live in your home at the time you become eligible for benefits. (Benefits for care provided by family members are limited to 500 days.)

4) Home care

Most people prefer to get the care they need in the comfort of their own home. The FLTCIP has a stay-at-home benefit that includes a range of services that support care in your home once you are benefit eligible—such as care planning visits, home modifications (such as installing wheelchair ramps), emergency medical response systems, durable medical equipment (such as wheelchairs, walkers, or hospital-style beds), caregiver training, and home safety checks—to help you main-

tain your quality of life in familiar surroundings.

5) Lifestyle

Many people wish to maintain their independence so they won't have to rely on family members. Long term care insurance coverage under the FLTCIP can provide the means necessary to help pay for your care and allow you to spend your nest egg the way you want. Additional standard features include respite care, international benefits, and consumer protections, such as guaranteed renewable coverage and portability.

Plan Ahead with the FLTCIP

Visit [LTCFEDS.com](https://www.ltcfeds.com) to learn more about the FLTCIP's comprehensive benefits and features and find a plan that's right for you.

The Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program is sponsored by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, insured by John Hancock Life & Health Insurance Company, under a group long term care insurance policy, and administered by Long Term Care Partners, LLC.

FLTCIP20673

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LOOKING FOR A FUN

SPRING CUPCAKE?



we've got you covered.

VANILLA CUPCAKE

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 3/4 cups flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup unsalted butter room temp
- 2 large eggs
- 1/3 cup full-fat sour cream
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
- 2/3 cup whole milk

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F
2. In a stand mixer, mix together sugar, flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.
3. Add butter and mix on medium-low speed for three minutes, until a fine crumb texture.
4. In a smaller mixing bowl, whisk together eggs, sour cream, oil and vanilla until smooth.
5. Add the egg mixture to the flour mixture and beat on medium speed until just combined.
6. Slowly add milk and mix on low speed until just combined.
7. Fill cupcake liners just over 1/2 full.
8. Bake for 18 minutes and test to see if they are done. They are done when the toothpick comes out clean.
9. Remove immediately from the tin and set on a cooling rack.



♥ *Nicki Johnston*

ZBW Traffic Management Coordinator

VANILLA BUTTERCREAM

- 1 cup unsalted butter room temperature
- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon water

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Beat butter on high for 3 minutes until light and airy.
2. Mix in powdered sugar a little at a time.
3. Add vanilla, salt and water and beat for another minute.
4. Ice cupcakes and decorate with toasted coconut flakes and Cadbury Mini Eggs!



Making Sense of the FAA's Data

By Elethia Singletary, Infinia

The FAA collects and shares large volumes of complex data every day in the NAS. And, since data-driven risk-based decision making is an FAA strategic priority, understanding performance data is critical for the safe operation of the U.S. airspace.

But in its raw form, this data is meaningless. Flooded with its own potentially valuable data, the FAA is getting help to gain a better understanding of the information it collects to improve aviation safety.

Infinia, Ltd. is working with the Air Traffic Organization to develop data intelligence solutions to capture data, expedite analytics, and present it in a user-friendly form to enhance operational decisions.

Infinia has developed unique techniques to capture and transform massive amounts of publicly available data into digital products and learning tools for the FAA and industry. These tools create pictures, charts, and graphics to make data readily accessible and easier to understand.

One method includes cutting-edge dashboards to give meaning and structure to data.

Dashboards present a visual overview of the information that allow users to drill down deeper into more specifics of the data being analyzed. This is especially valuable for FAA executives who can see visualizations on their laptops, iPads, or mobile devices. Using the same dashboard, users can also dive into the numbers behind the visualizations if necessary.

To build the dashboards, Infinia applies predictive analytic methods that use statistical algorithms and machine learning tools to examine current and past data to predict future outcomes and occurrences. The process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion, enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes.

To take one example, Infinia is working with the Runway Safety Group using the Runway Safety Action Team (RSAT) and Pilot Simulator tools. The RSAT tool is a dashboard developed specifically for the Runway Safety team. It enables data collected from different sources to be uploaded into one central location then organized and downloaded into reports. The tool makes it easier for facilities and executives to drill down into more specific layers of data. With data coming in from all airports, Infinia is helping the

FAA see issues no one saw before.

The Runway Safety Pilot Simulator tool is a public training web-app that is used for outreach to pilots, student pilots, and certified instructors. Infinia collects data to let the FAA know how many people are using this tool, where they are using it, and how they are viewing it.

The FAA has been very successful in producing data. But data without meaning is useless. Infinia is showing that the FAA's data can be turned into useful knowledge that enables data-driven risk-based decision making. As the FAA makes more of its data accessible, better tools can be developed.

The goal for Infinia, as for the FAA, is improved aviation safety.

Figure 1 Interactive Data Cards for Mobile Devices

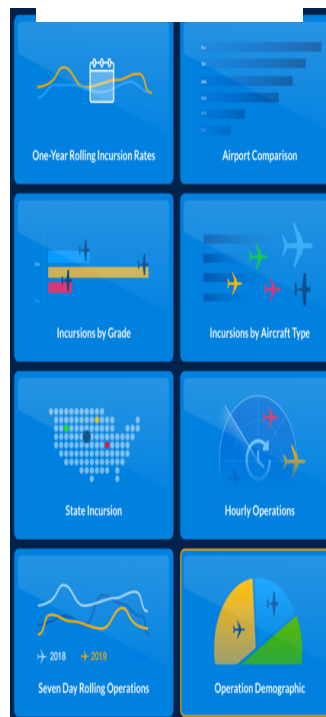


Figure 3 Relative Incursion Rate BNA vs OpsNet 45

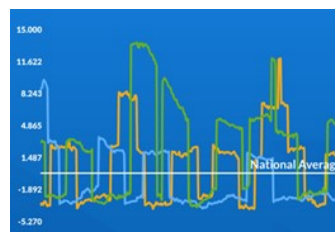


Figure 2 Incursions by Hour DEN vs CORE 30

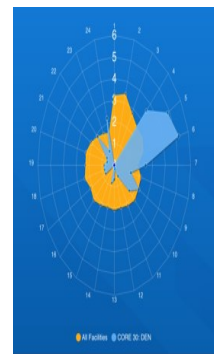
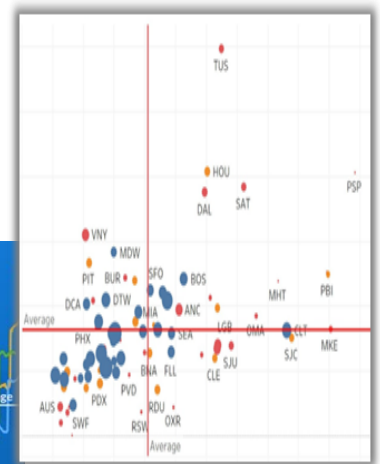


Figure 4 ASPM 77 Incursion Quadrants



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