



PLANE TALK

Publication of Statewide Aviation



Winter 2012

AVIATION IS ALASKA'S LIFELINE

Aviation is a vital component of Alaska's transportation system. Whether you live in Anchorage or the smallest community at the tip of the Aleutians, air service is the lifeline that connects all Alaskans to other communities in the state, the Lower 48, and the world.

Alaska's airports serve the transportation needs of the state's residents, support the movement of materials and goods, contribute substantially to the economy, and enable delivery of critical medical services. There are over 700 FAA registered airports in the state of Alaska, and the State of Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) owns 254 airports statewide. Nearly 82% of Alaska communities are not accessible by road, making aviation more than a convenience or a luxury - aviation is essential to the Alaskan way of life.

The Alaska Aviation System Plan (AAS) is a tool that Statewide Aviation uses to promote safety and efficiency within Alaska's aviation system. Through this plan we are able to identify ways to meet the needs of our expansive aviation system.

The first annual executive summary of the AASP has been released providing a snapshot of current and completed projects and highlighting future goals. We are currently working on a video describing the importance of aviation as a lifeline for Alaskans with a release date in early 2012.

The AASP website (www.AlaskaASP.com) is a valuable resource housing reports, fact sheets, and the aviation facility information directory. The fully evolved website will become a one-stop-shop for pilots and airport enthusiasts to find mapping, photos, data, and interactive reporting features.



*Medevac at rural airport
Photo courtesy LifeMed Alaska*



*Mail delivery at Hooper Bay, Alaska
Photo courtesy Rich Sewell*

Message From Deputy Commissioner



Greetings and best wishes to all! This edition of *Plane Talk* will be hitting your mailbox as we ramp up for the 2012 Legislative Session. I look forward to interacting with many of you as we move Governor Parnell's priorities and budget forward.

This year DOT&PF will be socializing a new term to describe a shift in our management philosophy and approach to ongoing maintenance and operations of DOT&PF owned facilities. This term is Service Based Budgeting (SBB). Here is a short "Service Based Budgeting 101" intended to help explain where we are headed with this initiative:

SBB is a maintenance and operations (M&O) management system that sets mission accomplishment, fiscal responsibility, and risk management as fundamental goals. One major long-term aim of SBB is to eliminate the practice and backlog associated with what has been referred to in recent budget years as "Deferred Maintenance."

A key component of DOT&PF's mission is the *safe* movement of people and goods. In terms of transportation infrastructure owned and operated by the State of Alaska, this means that in order to accomplish our DOT&PF mission, there must be objective and agreed upon standards against which mission accomplishment can be measured. Absent such standards, it is difficult to accurately assess the amount of resources needed to optimally maintain and oper-

ate current infrastructure. Without specific standards, "acceptable" is realized in the eye of the beholder, which can quickly lead to friction between users and owner (the State).

DOT&PF acknowledges some standards currently exist and we are measuring organizational performance and budgeting annually against those standards. However, in other areas, such as winter road and rural airport maintenance and operations, clear objective standards are lacking or in need of refinement. As we develop these standards, we will engage stakeholders to ensure we get them right. Once we have objective standards SBB will help us seek funding for maintenance and operations so that we can continually meet our standards. We will do maintenance so that mission essential work is rarely delayed or deferred.

Instituting SBB will improve service levels for DOT&PF's infrastructure. SBB will also save the state money over time. Finally, the risk of either users or operators experiencing substandard infrastructure will be reduced.

DOT&PF is in the beginning phases of instituting SBB with early emphasis on developing standards for winter highway maintenance and rural airports. As the department gains experience with SBB, budget decisions will be based increasingly on objective needs and results that are quantified, measured, and objectively evaluated.

All Alaskans will benefit from SBB. Our transportation infrastructure literally enables the health and welfare of all Alaskans on a daily basis.

Thank you all for all that you do to promote and support aviation in our great state.

Fly Safely,

Steve Hatter

FAA Associate Administrator for Airports Tours Alaska Airports

DOT&PF and local FAA officials welcomed Associate Administrator for Airports Christa Fornarotto on her first trip to Alaska last October. The four day Alaska Field Inspection began with tours and briefings at Merrill Field and Anchorage International Airports. The Northern Alaska inspection included visits or flyovers of 16 airports from Kivalina to Amble to Unalakleet. The trip crossed the Arctic Circle many times. The Southeast Alaska inspection began with a tour and briefing at the Juneau International Airport followed by visits to Gustavus, Hoonah, Tenakee Springs, and Angoon Airports.

Official visits from FAA Headquarters are an excellent opportunity for DOT&PF to show the importance of Alaska's aviation system, and the remote nature and mobilization difficulties associated with constructing rural airports.

It was especially impressive that the Associate Administrator made her inaugural visit to Alaska in the dead of winter and we look forward to seeing her up here again soon.



(L to R) FAA Associate Administrator of Airports Christa Fornarotto, FAA Alaska Airports Division Manager Byron Huffman, and Deputy Commissioner of Aviation Steve Hatter, with an official Arctic Circle certificate (Photo courtesy of Bill O'Halloran, DOT&PF)



(Back row L to R) FAA Alaska Airports Deputy Manager, Jim Lomen, FAA International Liaison Officer Charlene Derry, Deputy Director of the General Aviation Division of the CAAC, Jin Junhao, and DOT&PF Deputy Commissioner of Aviation, Steve Hatter with delegates from the Civil Aviation Administration of China.

Civil Aviation Administration of China

A delegation from the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) visited Alaska last fall for an overview of general aviation (GA) in Alaska. CAAC recently received approval to develop uncontrolled airspace for general aviation.

The program for this visit was designed to discuss and demonstrate the highly robust GA system in Alaska. The program was also designed to support potential export of NextGen technologies and procedures that are particularly relevant to developing the infrastructure necessary to support the new GA sector being created, as well as for enhancing pilot decision-making, aircraft surveillance, and aviation safety.

Representatives from the general aviation sector participated in nearly every briefing and activity. Their presence added significant value in demonstrating the importance of including the GA community in the development and organization of GA programs and procedures. For every briefing and discussion, the delegation participated in activities that correlated with the topics discussed. Special thanks to Charlene Derry, FAA International Liaison Office for facilitating the very successful briefing and Alaska's GA community.

Airport Spotlight

Bethel Airport—2nd Busiest Cargo Airport

Bethel is the largest town in Southwest Alaska and is the regional hub for 56 surrounding villages in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. The villages are not connected by road to one another, nor to the rest of Alaska. The state-owned Bethel Airport is the regional transportation center, and is served by seven passenger carriers and five cargo operators.

Bethel airport is one of the busiest airports in our state and is essential to all the Y-K Delta communities, citizens, and businesses. The airport ranks second in the state for cargo activity and third for total number of flights.

Dave Cummings was hired in 2009 as the Bethel Airport Manager, a newly created position. It's an important position that supports the hard working airport team and customers at this busy airport.

The level of activity at this airport also dictated the need to increase hours of operation in order to increase safety and smooth cargo and passenger traffic flow. The expansion of operating hours to 24 hours a day, seven days a week was approved by the Governor and Legislature and went into effect in 2011.

DOT&PF opened a new 4,000-foot, parallel runway in 2009 to help move passengers and cargo more efficiently. The new runway allows for more operations, meaning more hourly takeoffs and landings and it also reduced winter runway closures. Other improvements included expanding and converting the general aviation apron into a new air taxi/cargo



Ralph Ramey, HD Equipment Operator and Airport Firefighter took time away from snow-plowing and ice control to give the Girl Scout Brownie Troop #14 a tour of the Bethel M&O facility. The troop enjoyed learning about the duties of operators that includes the safety of the runway and the Bethel highway.

apron, expanding the north air taxi apron and improving the air taxi access road.

In addition to the airport being a vital link to villages it also plays an important role in the local and state economy. A recent study highlighted the total economic activity of the Bethel Airport:

- 1 in 14 jobs attributable to the airport
- \$45 million in statewide economic output + \$40 million out-of-state economic contribution
- \$108 million in enplanement, mail, and cargo expenditures.

Complete report available here:
(www.AlaskaASP.com)

Bethel Airport - new 4,000 ft. parallel runway opened in September 2009.

DOT&PF and FAA Safety Team Promote Aviation Safety

Last summer a Cessna 206 departed Merrill Field and crashed a few blocks away. The NTSB noted that the aircraft was overloaded by more than 600 pounds. Several witnesses stated that this operation appeared to be unsafe, but they did not know who to call.

It's hard for people in the aviation industry to believe that others would not know who to call, to prevent an accident. The Alaska Regional FAA Safety Team went to work to create a solution. Out of this effort a new toll free number was established and new signs were produced and installed at Merrill Field.

DOT&PF/Statewide Aviation welcomed the opportunity to partner with the FAA and promote aviation safety. More than 300 signs have been made and are being posted at all State airports.

Special thanks to Maurice Hendrickson and the FAA Safety Team for initiating this effort. As we continue to work together we can improve safety in Alaska.



Mr. William (Bill) J. Bassett, pilot/permittee for Lake Slip 142, Lake Hood Seaplane Base, Anchorage, Alaska. Mr. Bassett owns a Cessna 185 (N850WB) located at his float slip behind the Millennium Hotel

Upcoming Events

FEBRUARY

1 Aviation Advisory Board Meeting (Baranof Hotel, Juneau)

21-23 Alaska Air Carriers Association Conference and Trade Show (Fairbanks Princess Hotel)

MARCH

14 Airlines/Airport Affairs Committee Meeting (Fairbanks)

24 Alaska Transportation Careers and Airport Job Fair (North Terminal)

APRIL

AASF Spring Float Flying Seminar (Lake Hood)



(Photo courtesy Andy Hutzel, LHD Airport Mgr.)

DeHavilland Otter on floats departs from frozen Lake Hood Seaplane Base!

Lake Hood Seaplane Base (LHD) sees lots of float plane activity during the summer months and occasionally even during the winter. R & J Leasing Corporation used the frozen ice surface of LHD for a takeoff in their very versatile DeHavilland Otter.

Aviation Stakeholder Spotlight

Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation

“To promote aviation safety through education and advocacy”

The Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation (AASF) is a membership driven organization with one primary goal for it's members and that is to “promote aviation safety whenever and wherever we can.”

Members of the AASF are actively involved with safety programs that improve aviation in Alaska. They participate in many meetings where aviation issues are discussed and solved, and they do so as volunteers.

The AASF holds several Safety Seminars each year around Alaska to help pilots make better choices when they take to the sky. Speakers cover topics ranging from flight operations and weather tools to engine and airframes in winter. Operating an aircraft safely in remote Alaska or flying a category III ILS safely are all concerns that our volunteers have worked on. As aviation technology improves, seminars are one method of transferring knowledge to Alaskan aviators. The AASF works with other groups participating in safety seminars include the Civil Air Patrol, Medallion Foundation, and Ninety Nines.

Another of our communication tools is the weekly *Hanger Flying* show on public television. This weekly show has been continually broadcast for nearly 30 years. It is widely viewed throughout Alaska.

In October 2011 AASF sponsored their most recent safety seminar focused on safe winter operations. Topics included ski flying, survival, and taking care of your engine and airframe.

Plans are underway for the annual Spring Float Flying Seminar to be held in April. Call (907) 243-7237 for more information. The Foundation would love to have more seminars throughout Alaska to support its members. So if you are not currently a member, please consider joining. As mentioned earlier, they are a member driven organization.

The AASF also provides scholarships to aviation students each year to help them achieve their dreams of an aviation career. Scholarship applications are due each May, and winners are announced in time for them to plan for schooling the next fall. To secure a scholarship application, please visit the AASF website (www.aasfonline.org)



Erin Meade (left) Chair of AASF Scholarship Committee presents Danielle Bassler with a scholarship in 2010. Danielle is currently a student in the UAA Aviation Technology professional piloting program.



Kristen Labrecque (L) is a past scholarship winner who now flies commercial fixed and rotor wing and is a CFII.

East Ramp Entrance Dedicated to Cliff Everts

About 100 people gathered for a surprise ceremony to honor long-time Alaska pilot, Cliff Everts. The Greater Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce and aviation community felt it was time to recognize Cliff for his commitment to the aviation community and surprised him with a dedication of the new East Ramp at the Fairbanks International Airport. Cliff Everts, 89, has been involved in aviation since 1943 when he first came to Alaska to be a bush pilot. He flew for Wien Airlines for 35 years and during that time acquired one of their C-46's and DC-6's which he then leased for fuel hauling. Today there are five family members involved in Everts Air businesses.



Cliff Everts (3rd from left) and family at the dedication of a plaque in his honor at the entrance to the East Ramp at the Fairbanks International Airport.



Aviation artifacts that adorn the East Ramp entrance were donated by Cliff Everts.



A Beautiful Terminal!

What all Fairbanksans and most Alaskans have known for quite a while just became national news—the Fairbanks International Airport has a beautiful terminal!

The *Atlantic Cities* magazine which covers innovations and issues in global cities, recently showcased nine airports that “stand out as some of the best a traveler could experience.” Fairbanks International had received numerous design awards and international press in the design community but this new recognition comes from the traveling public.

Completed in 2009, the airport’s design provided Fairbanks with an efficient passenger facility while enhancing the visitor experience. The airport boasts state of the art facilities and services but is uniquely Alaskan; utilizing many local products and works of art.

“The idea was always to have a gateway, the visitor’s first impression that truly reflected the frontier spirit of Fairbanks, that when you arrived here, you knew you had arrived in the far north, with its wonderful light, broad landscapes, wilderness..adventure land,” said Charles Bettisworth, Principal Architect on the project.



Our mission is to:

“Get Alaska Moving through

service and infrastructure.”

To learn more visit our website: www.dot.alaska.gov

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
Division of Statewide Aviation
4111 Aviation Ave.
Anchorage, Alaska 99502

Return Service Requested

TO: