



# INTERCOM

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## “The Air Traffic Organization Must Succeed”

Mineta, Blakey and Chew jointly announce creation of the ATO

By Stan Ciurczak

Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta established a new performance-based Air Traffic Organization (ATO) within the FAA on November 18, and made clear that its main focus will be on containing costs. "Today is the first phase of creating a true, performance-based air traffic organization." "The ATO will be a global leader in responding to customer needs and in delivering the safest, most secure air traffic services," according to Mineta.

"The ATO will bring about lasting change in how we manage our air traffic services, systems and resources," said FAA Administrator Marion C. Blakey. "We are building the ATO to align with the FAA's overall strategic performance objectives in aviation safety, capacity, international leadership, and organizational excellence." According to Blakey, the new ATO has strong, high-level direction in the person of the Secretary of Transportation; and more importantly, it has his support. In addition, under the recently released FAA Flight Plan, the FAA will become more performance-based.

ATO Chief Operating Officer Russell Chew stated that, "We're passionate about costs." He went on to say that, "The performance-based Air Traffic

Organization will enable the FAA to plan, build, and operate the aviation system that our nation's economy -- and our quality of life -- need in the second century of aviation." "My clear expectation is that although defining

**"The performance-based Air Traffic Organization will enable the FAA to plan, build, and operate the aviation system that our nation's economy - and our quality of life - need in the second century of aviation."**



the performance-based focus of the Air Traffic Organization starts at the top, the new senior executives must build their new departmental service units from the bottom-up, not the top-down." He added, "I'm honest and direct and I expect the same from others."

Chew said the new ATO organization would be service oriented and will

listen to and involve the users of the system, who he said are the ATO's customers. The new organization is structured like a private industry organization. Safety oversight of the ATO will be conducted by a separate organization within the FAA.

The ATO, which comprises about three-quarters of the employees of the agency, will be held accountable for results based on clear objectives and specific goals. "If any of these attributes - performance... results... customer service... accountability - sound familiar, it's because they appeared in a report by the National Civil Aviation Review Commission in 1997, which was chaired by Norm Mineta," Blakey stated. The 1997 Civil Aviation Review Commission first suggested a new air traffic organization headed by a chief operating officer.

"Our mission throughout each level of the ATO is clear - to provide the highest value and quality air traffic services that our customers, the aviation community, should rightly expect," said Chew. "With Secretary Mineta's vision and support, Administrator Blakey and I are putting together an organization that delivers on this mission by putting a premium on our employees and accountability for our performance." ☺

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## Russ Chew Visits the Technical Center

By Pete Castellano



Chief Operating Officer Russ Chew was welcomed to the FAA Technical Center by Dr. Anne Harlan, Technical Center director; John Wiley, managing director, Office of Innovations and Solutions; and Dennis Filler, acting deputy director and chief scientist for technology.

On November 4, FAA Chief Operating Officer Russ Chew visited the Technical Center. Dr. Chew became chief operating officer (COO) in August. He has been tasked with creating a performance-based organization, the Air Traffic Organization (ATO), for the nation's air traffic control system. This new organization primarily encompasses the former Air Traffic Services (ATS), Research and Acquisition (ARA) and Free Flight organizations.

This visit was a terrific opportunity to meet with our new COO, and to show him some of the great things that we do at the Technical Center. The day was a busy one. Center Director Anne Harlan, Acting Deputy Director Dennis Filler and John Wiley, managing director, Office of Innovations and Solutions were on hand to greet Dr. Chew when he arrived on the shuttle, and escorted him through tours and demonstrations in a wide variety of areas. These included Human Factors / Virtual Reality, Air Traffic, Weather, Enhanced Traffic Management System (ETMS), Advanced Technologies and Ocean Procedures (ATOP), Standard Terminal Automation Replacement

System (STARS), Display System Replacement (DSR), Next Generation Communications (Nexcom II) and the Satellite Test Bed.

Dr. Chew met with managers and employees throughout the day. He spent quite a bit of time talking through his philosophy and plans for the ATO, as well as answering questions. He said he was very impressed with the facility and the services provided to all of our partners on base.

At an all-hands meeting that afternoon, which was held in the Technical Building atrium, Dr. Chew said that coming to the Technical Center was a real treat for him since he comes from a technical and operations background and is a "techie" at heart. He had heard great things about the Technical Center and

appreciates all the hard work that goes on, both here and in the FAA in general. Although he is a product of the private sector, he is very impressed with the FAA's dedication to public service and teamwork. He values honesty, integrity, and transparency, believing everyone should know what we are doing and why. He believes that the FAA is comprised of two distinct parts: the regulatory side and the service side. The focus of the ATO is on service; the focus of the regulatory side is on safety. That doesn't mean the ATO doesn't care about safety - in fact it is the most important characteristic of our service. However, it isn't the only characteristic.

Dr. Chew spoke of a triad of stakeholders for any service organization, saying that there had to be a balance among the needs and expectations of all three: (1) Employees provide customers with needed service and pro-

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## Orville and Wilbur, We Salute You

By Stan Ciurczak



Aviation history was made 100 years ago, on December 17, 1903, when Ohio brothers Orville and Wilbur Wright unlocked the secret to powered flight. Their success that morning, a single pilot flying 120 feet in 12 seconds, has been followed by extraordinary achievements over the first century of flight. The Federal Aviation Administration has been a key contributor to those achievements. When we mark the anniversary of the Wright Brothers' miracle this month, each of us should take a moment to remember their great accomplishment - by looking upward and outward as they did.

## ATO Organization - A View From the Top

By Stan Ciurczak

The top-down view of the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) includes ten units - five line and five staff - each to be headed by a vice president who reports directly to Russ Chew, the chief operating officer (COO) of the ATO. It is important to distinguish between line and staff personnel. Line personnel are directly involved in operational activities, such as air traffic control, while staff personnel are involved in work, such as communications, that support line personnel.



Chief Operating Officer Russ Chew addressed Technical Center employees on November 4. "The performance-based Air Traffic Organization will enable the FAA to plan, build and operate the aviation system that our nation's economy - and our quality of life - need in the second century of aviation ... My clear expectation is that although defining the performance-based focus of the ATO starts at the top, the new senior executives must build their new departmental service units from the bottom-up, not the top-down ... I'm honest and direct and I expect the same from others."

### The five ATO line organizations are:

- En Route and Oceanic Services, which will handle all higher-altitude and over-the-ocean flights, plus implementation of new oceanic and en route capabilities, will be headed by Charles E. Keegan, currently the associate administrator for research and acquisitions.

- Terminal Services, which will handle traffic in terminal airspace around major airports, plus implementation of new terminal capabilities headed by Bruce Johnson, currently the director of the air traffic service.
- Flight Services, which will handle the flight service station system for general-aviation aircraft, plus implementation of new flight service capabilities, will be headed by James Washington, currently the director of the air traffic system requirements service.
- System Operations, which coordinates all air traffic flows and runs the FAA command center in Herndon, headed by Linda Schuessler, currently the deputy director of the air traffic service.
- Technical Services, which handles air traffic facilities and navigation services, plus communication and maintenance support services to operating service units, will be headed by Steven Zaidman, currently the director of airway facilities.

### The five ATO staff organizations are:

- Safety includes responsibility for quality assurance and the safety management system; no vice president has been named.
- Operations Planning includes responsibility for strategic planning, operating performance for the ATO, NAS architecture, the Joint Program Office and liaison to international aviation. Steve Brown, currently the associate administrator for air traffic services, will head this organization, which includes the ACT and AAR parts of the Technical Center.



- Finance is responsible for financial planning and analysis, capital budgeting, manpower planning and analysis; no vice president has been named.
- Acquisition and Business Services is responsible for acquisition policy, shared business services, and liaisons with human resources, legal and other FAA entities. Dennis DeGaetano, currently the deputy associate administrator for research and acquisitions, will head this organization.
- Communications is responsible for implementation of a robust internal and external communications system; no vice president has been named.

Peter Challan, currently the deputy associate administrator for air traffic services, has been named senior vice president and will oversee the entire transition to the new ATO.

Additional information regarding the ATO organization can be found on the ATO website: <http://ato.faa.gov>.

# Organizational Profile: Real & Virtual Environment Division (ACB-800)

By Stan Ciurczak

*This is the third in a series of stories about the technical side of the Technical Center.*

"Mike is back!" Mike who, you say?

After working in the Operational Support Directorate (AOS) for the past four years, Mike Greco has returned to ACT as manager of the Real and Virtual Environment Division (ACB-800) in the Office of Innovations and Solutions. This puts him in charge of a William J. Hughes Technical Center division that is a focal point for the FAA's laboratories, supporting numerous National Airspace System (NAS) modernization efforts.

According to Greco, "The strongest and most cherished asset of ACB-800 is its people. The engineering and aviation corporate knowledge residing within these professional employees (approximately 160 federal employees and 240 contractors) is second to none."

ACB-800 is comprised of seven groups. The groups include Lab Administration (810), Systems and Hardware Engineering (820), Software Engineering (830), Research and Development (R&D) Labs (840), Lab Maintenance (850), Simulation (860) and the R&D Flight Program (870). The division's primary function is to handle overall lab management and maintenance activities for the Center, which includes the equipment in the Human Factors Research & Development (R&D) Laboratory, the R&D aircraft labs and the R&D Range Technical Facilities in Buildings 300 and 316. The division also works in cooperation with the Enroute Integration and Interoperability Lab and the Airway Facilities Tower



Integration Lab to provide fully integrated service to its customers.

## FAA FLIGHT PLAN SUPPORT

The Center's labs provide employees the unique capability to perform and participate in the many research, engineering, test and development activities that are required to answer critical aviation questions in support of the NAS Modernization Program and the newly issued FAA Flight Plan. The activities include advanced concepts exploration, human in-the-loop simulations, real-time simulations, operational and integration testing and field support. The labs include numerous test beds that can be configured to replicate the most desired field configuration or traffic scenarios, so that air traffic controllers can see how upgraded systems will respond prior to operational deployment. They also are used to provide direct field support for problem resolution.

ACB-800 also ensures compliance with Configuration Management and Process Improvement standards. This was evidenced by its recent certification to the ISO 9001:2000 quality management system standard.

## PROVIDING SEAMLESS, END-TO-END WORK

Technical Center engineering integration and evaluation play a key role in determining whether a new or upgraded system can be brought to life in the National Airspace System (NAS). Very enthusiastic about leading his division to meet the present and future needs of its customers, Greco stated that "No place, but the Technical Center, can provide all the diversified equipment,

services, corporate know-how and expertise in solving aviation problems. The benefit to customers is that they can get seamless, end-to-end work accomplished here."

Greco knows that in order for the Technical Center's labs to be at the forefront of meeting the FAA's goals of increased safety, greater capacity, international leadership and organizational excellence, our lab capabilities will have to evolve to meet our customers' needs. One tool he will use is to align the future strategic vision for the laboratories with the new FAA Flight Plan (2004-2008). "Our overall long-term goal is that when anyone from government or industry wants an aviation problem solved, or a question answered, that they will want to use Technical Center services," he stated. Between the corporate knowledge and facilities that the Center has to offer, Greco is certain that this is a goal that will be achieved. 



*Aviation history was made 100 years ago, on December 17, 1903 with Orville and Willbur Wright's first flight. The journey that began at Kitty Hawk continues in ways unimaginable to the Wright brothers. One small piece of their Flyer was carried by another flying machine, Apollo 11, all the way to the Sea of Tranquility on the Moon.*

## The Road to the ATO

By Stan Ciurczak

- The FAA received permission to engage in employment and procurement reform in 1996.
- The 1997 Civil Aviation Review Commission, headed by now transportation secretary Norman Y. Mineta, suggested a new air traffic control organization and a Chief Operating Officer (COO).
- Congress created and approved the position of COO in 2000.
- The FAA recruited former American Airlines executive Russ Chew to become the COO in 2003. Chew reports directly to FAA Administrator Marion C. Blakey.
- Blakey said the move to a performance-based Air Traffic Organization (ATO) is necessary because the agency has been challenged to control costs and adhere to development schedules in an era of tight budgets.
- Chew conducted a detailed analysis of the current FAA air traffic organization and reached a "good news-bad news" conclusion. He stated the FAA has lots of hard-working, dedicated people "who don't know who they are or what their mission is." The whole organization is "murky," Chew said.
- Chew announced a new ATO on November 18, 2003, and said he hopes to have the new organization ready by the end of January 2004.
- The ATO will establish new performance standards for safety, service, cost and productivity -- and will hold managers accountable for meeting them.
- The ATO will be divided into five "line" functions and five "staff" functions, each headed by an ATO vice president who will report directly to the COO.
- The current FAA offices dealing with Air Traffic Services (ATS), Research And Acquisitions (ARA) and Free Flight are being folded into the ATO.
- The ATO is expected to give airline passengers faster and safer flights through quicker development and deployment of new safety and navigation equipment. It also should save taxpayer dollars through more efficient operations while saving airlines money by moving toward greater capacity and more fuel-saving routes.
- About 38,000 of the current 53,000 FAA employees will be in the ATO, including more than 11,000 controllers. The balance (about 15,000 employees) will work for the FAA but not the ATO, including 15,000 employees who work in FAA safety and regulatory functions.
- The new organization will bring no direct changes to the unionized controller workforce, according to Blakey and Chew.

**With Sincere Appreciation For All Your Hard Work**

**and**

**Wishing You Happy Holidays and A Happy New Year!**

**Anne Harlan  
Technical Center Director**

## Russ Chew Visits the Technical Center

*Continued from Page 2*

vide value; (2) Customers consume the services we provide; for the ATO, these include commercial airlines, general aviation and sometimes the military; and (3) Owners are those who oversee us, such as Congress, and the public who support us through taxes.

He spoke of the need for establishing meaningful cost metrics through the cost accounting system and the need to know the true cost of our operations, projects and programs. "We should look after the Government's money as if it

were our own. That means knowing the value of what we buy, keeping track of what we spend, and not being wasteful." Finally, he reiterated that he was very proud to be part of the FAA. Chew indicated that he will give his undivided attention and commitment to make the ATO work, and he is counting on the Technical Center's support to achieve this goal.

Dr. Harlan, speaking about Dr. Chew, said that "My own take on Russ after having spent the day with him, is that

he continues to amaze me with his grasp of the FAA culture and organization. Russ has picked up what we do and how we do it, in record time. That means that he can begin quickly shaping and focusing the organization to do the important work ahead. And he wasn't kidding about being a "techie" - there wasn't a program we talked about or lab visited where he didn't have at least a dozen really good, insightful questions. He has an amazing command of the technical work of the FAA. We can't do much better than that for our COO!"

## Tom Ridge Visits the Technical Center



Technical Center Director Anne Harlan recently welcomed Tom Ridge, head of the Department of Homeland Security, and others from the Homeland Security Department to the William J. Hughes Technical Center. They were here for a tour of the extensive Federal Air Marshal facilities located at the Technical Center.



*Dedicated in 1932, the Wright Brothers Memorial is a 60-foot granite monument which stands upon Kill Devil Hill at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.*

### Interested in writing for the Intercom?

If you are interested in writing stories for the Intercom, either every month or on an occasional basis, please contact **Stan Ciurczak on x54789**.

## Remembering

We honor the passing of our former colleagues. Rest in peace.

**William (Bill) Filling**, who retired from the FAA after working for NAFEC and the Technical Center, died on November 20, 2003 at the age of 69.

**Thomas G. Shack**, who retired from the FAA after working for NAFEC and the Technical Center for more than 30 years, died on November 23, 2003 at the age of 71.

## Regional Impact of the Technical Center

By Stan Ciurczak

In July we marked the 45th anniversary of the William J. Hughes Technical Center. Thousands of people have worked much, or most, of their adult lives at the FAA National Aviation Facilities Experimental Center (NAFEC) and the FAA Technical Center. Many have watched their children and even their grandchildren follow in their footsteps. The Technical Center today employs about 3,000 federal and contractor employees, yet not everyone may be aware of the true financial impact of the Technical Center on this region.

The ramping up of security projects at the Technical Center since September 11, 2001, including federal air marshal training and other programs, have helped the regional economy. Three new indoor and outdoor firing ranges, and two new training facilities, have been built. In addition, the Technical Center is in discussions with the Transportation Security Laboratory (formerly AAR-500) and the Federal Air Marshals about other additional building expansions.

The tremendous impacts on the economy and the quality of life of this region are well documented. However, while payroll and purchasing costs are easy to quantify, not all economic impacts are easily quantified. There are benefits to surrounding communities that result from the Center bringing high-quality employment opportunities to this region, and from attracting talented people to work here. Besides economic contributions from direct expenditures, such as local employment and locally produced goods and services that are purchased by Center employees and contractors, the region benefits from something economists call a 'multiplier effect.' The multiplier effect results from money being re-circulated in the regional economy by Center employees and the local businesses

that sell goods and services to the Technical Center.

A study conducted in 2001, the most recent data that is available, showed the impact of the Center on the southern New Jersey gross regional product to be \$353 million in 2001, and projected it to be \$3.27 billion over the next 10 years. The South Jersey region includes the counties of Atlantic, Cape May, Ocean, Cumberland, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem.

The Technical Center directly employed 1,656 people, not including contractor employees, with a payroll of around \$129.6 million. An additional \$319 million was spent on Center-related activities (contracts, construction, operations and maintenance, etc.), with \$158.6 million (49.7%) being spent with firms located in this region.

The Southern New Jersey region is more prosperous with more high-quality jobs and a larger inflow of population because of the Technical Center's presence. The impact of the Center is magnified or mul-

tiplied by the spending and re-spending of dollars in the economy. The Center contracts for locally supplied services, further increasing the multiplier beyond what normally would be the effect of a government operation. Center employees and contractors largely spend their personal resources on locally produced services. This strengthens the local educational and construction sectors, among others. The economic effects are larger than would be estimated by simply counting Center employees and their incomes, or the combined incomes of Center employees and contractors, due to the multiplier effects from all Center expenditures and the re-spending of this money within the South Jersey economy. 

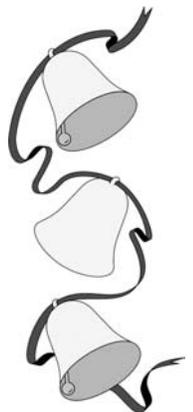
**HAPPY NEW YEAR**

**FELIZ AÑO NUEVO**

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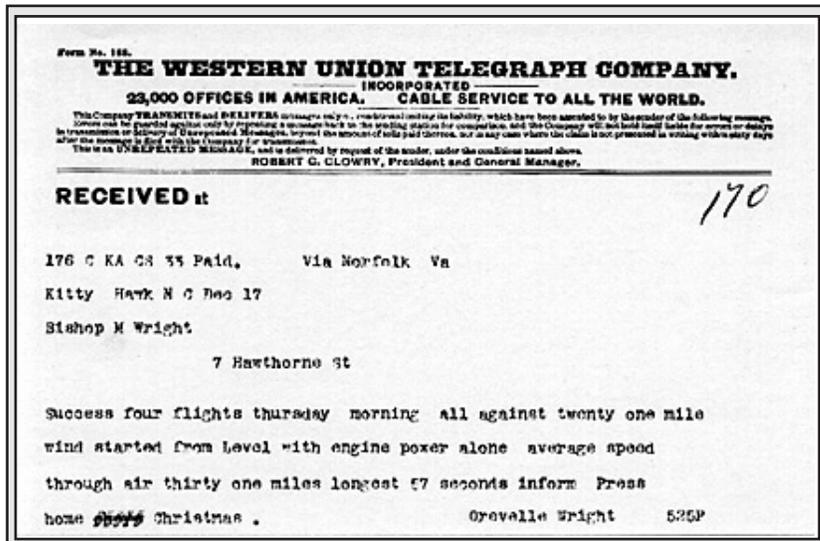
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### Business News Brief

#### Sheairs Associates Wins Air Traffic Control Award

Joseph Sheairs Associates Inc. (JSA) was awarded the annual Air Traffic Control Association's Small and Disadvantaged Business Award for 2003. The award is presented annually to a small business that is owned and controlled by a socially and economically disadvantaged individual for outstanding achievement or contribution that has added to the quality, safety or efficiency of air traffic control. This is the second time JSA has been given this honor. They also won this award in 2001.



A copy of the original telegram sent by Orville Wright after his historic flight, December 17, 1903.

## The Latest on the ATO

By Stan Ciurczak

At press time, Russ Chew, the chief operating officer, announced some new details about the structure of the Air Traffic Organization. He distributed a list of ATO service units and the existing organizational units in headquarters, the Technical Center and the Aeronautical Center that will go under them, stating, "This is a critical early step to start aligning around the services we provide."

Here are some of the highlights that pertain to people who work at the Technical Center.

- The Office of IOT&E, ATQ-1/2, will report to the Vice President for Safety (vacant).
- The Airport and Aircraft Safety Division, AAR-400; the Innovations and Solutions Program, ACB-1; the Enterprise Performance Program, ACF-1; the Human Capital Strategies Program, ACH-1; the Knowledge Management Program, ACK-1; the William J. Hughes Technical Center, ACT-1/2; the Communications Staff, ACT-4; and the Operations, Technology and Acquisition Program, ACX-1, will report to Steve Brown, Vice President for Operations Planning.

- The National En Route Automation Division, AOS-300, will report to Charles Keegan, Vice President for En Route & Oceanic.
- Terminal Automation, ATB-200, and Terminal Facilities, ATB-300, will report to D. Bruce Johnson, Vice President for Terminal.
- NAS Engineering Division, AOS-200; the Communications, Flight Services, Weather and IRM Division, AOS-500; and Aviation System Standards, AVN, will report to Steve Zaidman, Vice President for Technical Operations.

Chew emphasized that "this is only a starting point" and that it is "crucial that we do the follow-on activity value analysis." Activity value analysis will provide the ATO the opportunity to look at its mission, activities, end products and services to determine what brings value to the organization. The analysis will begin in January 2004 and will examine every function, service and work flow process in the ATO headquarters organization, which includes Washington, the Technical Center and the Aeronautical Center.

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