

NACA

Washington Wire

8 December 2021



Fundraiser for Chairman DeFazio

On November 16, NACA and Atlas Air co-hosted a fundraiser for House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.). We discussed the industry's nascent recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and our legislative and regulatory policy priorities to ensure the economic viability of our member carriers, including sustainability initiatives and holding the line on new taxes, fees and unnecessary regulations. While Chairman DeFazio will be retiring at the end of his term, NACA will continue working with him on airline COVID relief funds, mitigation of unruly passenger incidents, and releasing a completed FAA study on the impact of commercial airline seat dimensions on cabin evacuation times.

5G/Radio Altimeter Issue Advocacy

In response to concerns expressed by the White House and FAA regarding the adverse impact of 5G wireless networks operating in the C-band on aircraft radio altimeters, AT&T and Verizon are proposing to voluntarily adopt additional precautionary measures for six months, including minimizing energy coming from 5G base stations around public airports. NACA is continuing to work with a group of aviation and GPS stakeholders on this issue, and FAA is actively working with the FCC on possible mitigation measures.

Congress Passes Short-Term Budget Resolution, Avoiding Government Shutdown

Since Congress has yet to pass annual appropriations bills to fund federal government programs for Fiscal Year 2022, it passed a short-term, stopgap resolution through Feb. 18, 2022, on Thursday to avoid a government shutdown. In the event of a future shutdown, we do not expect any impact on the National Airspace System since all critical FAA functions, including air traffic control services, safety oversight and the FAA Registry, will continue to operate.

Omicron Brings New CDC Action

With the recent rise of the Omicron variant, the Biden Administration is taking steps to slow its spread. CDC announced this week that ALL inbound passengers to the United States, regardless of vaccination status, must have a COVID test within one day of their departure. Additionally, the mask mandate for flights will be extended through March 18, 2022. Finally, the vaccination mandate issue continues to be litigated; ultimately, its fate is still unknown.

Contact Tracing

NACA worked closely with FAA/DHS/CDC on development of the contact tracing order which went into effect November 8. Many NACA carriers had already implemented substantial work on the known elements of contact tracing. This made meeting the deadline easier for most of our carriers. Our understanding is there have been few, if any, problems.

(next page)



NACA Washington Wire is a publication of **National Air Carrier Association, Inc.**
1735 N. Lynn St., Suite 105, Arlington, VA 22209 USA.

© 2021 National Air Carrier Association, Inc.
www.naca.aero

State Resuming Multilateral Discussions

The Department of Transportation and the Department of State have notified industry of an upcoming ICAO Air Services Negotiations (ICAN) event scheduled for December 6-10. This will be a discussion among 9 countries from around the world, reviewing air service agreements as related to issues with doing business. We hope to see a larger resumption of bilateral and multilateral talks as we head into 2022 and recover from COVID impacts.

DOT Meeting Regarding Wheelchairs on Single Aisle Aircraft

DOT will be holding a virtual public meeting December 16 to discuss a potential rule making regarding onboard wheelchairs for single aisle aircraft. Depending on stakeholder input, this effort could eventually lead to DOT performance standards for onboard wheelchairs. NACA will consult with our passenger airlines in developing any comments.

FAA Technical Matters

NACA has been working with FAA to develop a process to allow all reports to go directly into each airline's *Safety Management System (SMS)*, preventing numerous duplicate reporting requirements. We hope to launch a trial with three NACA members in January, pending FAA agreement to the procedures. The FAA understands both that they need to support this relationship and that all FAA offices are not yet on board.

The *Air Carrier Training-Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ACT-ARC)* is close to finalizing the de-escalation training, best practices after two years of work with NACA participation. After the recommendation is finalized, it will be submitted to the FAA for consideration and publishing.

NACA will be encouraging our members to join *FAA free portals* for collecting and annualizing data. All NACA members have joined and are participating in the CAST portal. However, several members have not yet joined two additional portals: the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing program (ASIAS), and a program for fusing the data with other information sources called FUSION.

The FAA is working closely with the telecommunications industry on mitigation of interference with aircraft radio altimeters from the *5G roll out*. The key concerns are the power levels and the location of 5G transmitters. FAA has already issued an Information for Operators (InFO) message on this matter.

We fly for you™



NACA Washington Wire is a publication of **National Air Carrier Association, Inc.**
1735 N. Lynn St., Suite 105, Arlington, VA 22209 USA.

© 2021 National Air Carrier Association, Inc.
www.naca.aero