

# NACA

## Washington Wire

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### House Approves FAA Reauthorization, Senate Markup Postponed

The House of Representatives passed FAA reauthorization legislation (H.R. 3935) with overwhelming bipartisan support on July 20. NACA policy priorities fared well, including raising the mandatory retirement age for commercial pilots; no increase in the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) cap; directing the FAA to hire the maximum number of controllers that it can train on an annual basis; and repealing DOT's Full Fare Advertising Rule. In addition, the House refused to apply flight and duty time limits to commercial cargo pilots and imposed no new mandates on seat dimensions for commercial passenger aircraft.

Unfortunately, a provision allowing an additional 150 hours of training on advanced flight simulators toward the 1,500-hour ATP threshold was stripped out of the final bill despite strong support from T&I Committee Chair Sam Graves (R-Mo.).

The Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee Chair Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) decided to postpone markup of the Senate reauthorization bill until partisan disagreements over measures to address the pilot shortage can be resolved. Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) has stated he will not allow the Senate to vote on the bill if changes to R-ATP training are adopted by the committee.

We expect Congress to pass a short-term extension of the FAA's operating authority by the September 30 deadline to allow time for Senate consideration and for House and Senate conferees to work out differences between the bills.

### FAA Administrator Nominee Update

We understand that the White House plans to nominate former FAA Deputy Administrator Mike Whitaker to be the next FAA Administrator. His nomination apparently has been held up over objections from ALPA, prompting the administration to vet other candidates, including NTSB Chair Jennifer Homendy and current Deputy FAA Administrator Katie Thomson.

### TSA Cybersecurity

The aviation industry has been able to work out a compromise with TSA on a cybersecurity requirement that carriers transmit critical systems information to TSA. Carriers were uncomfortable with TSA holding the information and asked to be allowed to keep the information at corporate headquarters for inspection upon request by TSA. TSA recently agreed to permit this practice as a means of compliance and will allow carriers to change their initial option. TSA would then destroy previously transmitted information.

### DOT Disability Working Group

Paul Doell is representing NACA carriers on a working group tasked with developing a path forward for communicating the rights of disability passengers as a part of the ACAA Advisory Committee's recommendations. DOT, industry, and disability groups met to discuss the scope of work; the next meeting is scheduled for August 21. The Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights will likely be the focus of communications across various networks.

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## **U.S./Mexico Bilateral Consultations**

U.S. and Mexican governments will meet next week to discuss the decision to move cargo carrier operations out of Mexico City Airport. This is the first formal step towards mitigating the impacts of this unilateral action by the Mexican government. While we do not expect the Mexican government to fully reverse the decision, we do believe the U.S. government intends to seek a compromise solution.

## **New NACA Council Policy and Procedure**

NACA has established a new policy to capture and distribute high-level summaries of the discussion at each council meeting. Summaries will consist of lists of attendees from NACA Members, NACA staff, and Government guests; topics for discussion; and action items. The summaries will be shared with their respective council and the Board of Directors.

## **NACA Security/Cyber Security Councils**

NACA will host a joint meeting of the Security and Cyber Security Councils at our headquarters on October 10-11. We are planning to meet with representatives from the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), various departments of TSA, and the Department of Homeland Security.

## **NACA Safety, Operations, and Maintenance Council meetings**

The NACA Safety, Operations and Maintenance Councils met separately on July 25, 26, and 27, respectively. Each of the councils received a Washington Update with the latest on FAA Reauthorization and TSA items of interest; a briefing on Commercial Aviation Safety Team updates safety enhancements and Infoshare; and an opportunity to discuss top concerns in a roundtable format. All three Councils will meet again on October 18 for a joint session.

The *Safety Council* also received a briefing on the Blue Lightning Initiative addressing human trafficking on airlines. FAA AFS-200 briefed the *Operations Council* on their top issues, including a briefing on the current status of 5G deployment issues and an update on the Pilot Record Database to help resolve issues and questions. The *Maintenance Council* received a high-level brief from FAA's AFS-300 manager and staff, including technical details of the Alternate Means of Compliance (AMOC) one member procured to operate in the 5G environment, along with instructions on how to apply for an AMOC to operate within the 5G AD that becomes effective February 1, 2024.

## **Commercial Aviation Safety Team**

CAST met at Boeing's Eastern Headquarters in Crystal City, Va., on August 3. Discussions focused on moving CAST to a more future predictive process when evaluating risk in the National Airspace System, and included briefings from the newly formed TIGER teams (SMS, Governance, Metrics and Communications). NACA is represented on several of the TIGER teams.

## **Pilot Fatigue Working Group (PFWG)**

After a four month pause, an agreement was reached on structural and charter issues, and the PFWG will resume work.