

MAAC/NJ REPORTER

Mid-Atlantic Aviation Coalition – NJ's Aviation Newsletter

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A New Era in Trenton?

The following is a summary of the thoughts and suggestions from a diverse group of aviation professionals and advocates including members of the NJAA Board. This material has been presented to Governor-elect Christie's Transportation Transition team with the firm hope that it influences policy decisions in the new Administration. As always, MAAC encourages debate and further thought on these topics. But don't just tell us what you think. Speak with your Assembly Member and State Senator!

State leaders will have to employ every tool available to help restore prosperity to New Jersey. A capable transportation system serves a critical role in creating and supporting economic activity. People and goods must be able to move freely, safely and efficiently within the state and to other regions. Renewal of the Transportation Trust Fund must be one of the new Administration's highest priorities. Note that aviation generates billions of dollars in economic activity for New Jersey, returning more on every invested State dollar than any other mode of transportation.

For many decades the administration of New Jersey's air transportation system has suffered from a lack of effective advocacy. Consequently, some airports are overburdened with traffic and delays while others have excess capacity. The NJDOT Office of Aviation now serves mainly as a regulatory and licensing body that allocates funding for maintaining and improving public use airports. The Office has played only a limited role in promoting aviation as a critical element of our transportation connection to the rest of the country.

A number of specific problems of the State's air transportation system are identified in detail in the report of the New Jersey General Aviation Study Commission [PL 1993 – Ch 336. That report also made recommendations to remedy the systemic ills that burden air transportation in New Jersey. These problems remain:

- . There exists a lack of regional airport capacity planning consistent with Smart Growth principles;
- . inadequate investment in airport safety, improvement and aircraft parking capacity;
- . negative public perception of aviation and public use airports;
- . a failure to uphold existing airport zoning law, ceding the Commissioner's authority to permit needed safety and capacity improvement at airports.
- . New Jersey is 50th out of the 50 states in the return of Federal dollars and that relationship holds for Federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding.

New Jersey aviation has not been able to grow and adapt to satisfy the demand for the convenience, security and efficiency afforded by modern aviation. Presently, Newark Liberty and Philadelphia International airports lead the country in travel delays and congestion.

Trenton-Mercer and Atlantic City International Airports are capable and contemporary air carrier facilities. They are currently underutilized because little has been done to promote these airports and attract reliable commercial airlines that could serve millions of Central and South Jersey travelers.

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A New Era in Trenton (continued from page 1)

The Federal Aviation Administration governs air traffic flow. FAA looks to Morristown and Teterboro Airports to relieve traffic congestion at Newark Liberty. But due to Instrument Flight Rule procedures, these general aviation airports are presently so congested that business aircraft operators and passengers suffer enormous ground delays. The 'land side' of these airports is also crowded due to NJDEP regulations that prohibit companies from locating new hangars. As a result, corporate employers are seeking sites in other states that have airports better suited to their aircraft operations. This encourages an out-migration of high paying executive and middle management jobs from New Jersey's mobile, high value, high tech economy. One solution lies in building capacity at other North and Central Jersey airports.

These issues call for elevating the oversight and management status of aviation within NJDOT. One recommendation is to reinstate the Division of Aeronautics and restructure its function to reflect a mission suited to the current needs of our air transportation system. The mission of the Division of Aeronautics must incorporate new roles. The first of these is to actively seek additional Federal dollars for airport infrastructure improvement. Federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants can supplement the State's investment in aeronautical facilities. Expanding funding sources outside the Transportation Trust Fund should be a priority.

Another much needed role for the Division is to incorporate airport advocacy and public outreach for aviation as a critical core mission. As recently witnessed in bruising public

battles, the State did virtually nothing to thwart a hostile municipal condemnation of a public use airport. Additionally, the State made no effort to assist a privately owned, public use airport in basing a N.J. State Police Medivac helicopter near a critical highway intersection. Refusing to interfere in these matters was the default position of ineffective policy and leadership at a level well above the Office of Aviation.

There are technological solutions to many problems of the system that are not given sufficient support. New communication and air navigation equipment and procedures ('NextGen') are being developed at the FAA Tech Center in Atlantic City. New Jersey will be an immediate and direct beneficiary of enhanced air traffic management capabilities that allow more aircraft to operate safely in the air traffic control system. New Jersey should strongly support this initiative. Embracing NextGen technology will create jobs right now and go a long way toward reducing the local congestion that plagues business aviation.

Lastly, a volunteer General Aviation Advisory Council was eliminated in a prior Administration. That group provided a meaningful role as consultant to NJDOT for air transportation planning. The reconvened Council should meet quarterly with the Commissioner and include the Director of the Division of Aeronautics as one of its members along with representatives of Commerce and a Deputy Attorney General.

All of these points have been presented to the Christie Administration transportation transition team. The new administration has shown its concern for preserving and creating jobs in New Jersey.

Stoddard to be Inducted!

MAAC President Mike Stoddard has finally received his due. Mike will be inducted into the NJ Aviation Hall of Fame at the annual AHOF dinner in May, 2010. Mike was notified at a holiday gathering of MAAC Directors and friends before Christmas. It took some convincing before he began to believe it was true, But it appears that Mike will accept acclamation without protest.

MAAC Directors Bill Leavens and Mary Sullivan serve as AHOF trustees with Mike and were champions of the nomination. Ms. Sullivan made the announcement to a stunned Stoddard and a jovial audience of MAAC friends.

AHOF doesn't grant induction lightly. A candidate must have solid credentials to be enshrined in the Hall. Stoddard qualified on his first nomination. His career includes flying combat liaison on Okinawa and training to land a military Cub on a 'Brody' tether hanging off the side of a transport ship. Mike trained as a mechanic but was later able to demonstrate enough proficiency to serve as a pilot through the latter part of the Second World War.

He has always been involved in flying light aircraft, but Mike also worked on behalf of commercial carriers. At one point in his career, Mike helped start a 'non-sked' airline operating out of Teterboro.

After a brief career as a research assistant at Princeton's Aeronautical Engineering Department, Mike quit trying to make money with aircraft and moved to Florida where he ran an airport and developed his skills as a journalist. That paid enough bills to permit him to

buy an L-17 (Navion) which he still owns. He honed his writing skills enough to make money and win awards as a reporter for the Morristown Daily Record

Mike served for years on the Newark Airport advisory committee, defending that critical transportation resource from attacks by those who would limit or close the airport on 'environmental' grounds.

He came to MAAC some time in the 1990s after leading an individual battle on behalf of the pilots who flew out of Morristown Airport. At one point Mike assumed the Presidency of Morristown Airport Pilots Association. He also serves as AOPA's Airport Support Network volunteer at MMU.

AHOF recognized that Stoddard had been on the leading edge of every fight for general aviation in New Jersey for the past forty years. He had extensive background as a reporter, and that served him in good stead as publisher of the late, lamented State Aviation Newsletter which was killed under the McGreevey regime. That publication served to put all of New Jersey's pilots on the same page about state aviation issues. One can only hope that the publication resumes in the near future to serve the same function.

Stoddard was elected President of MAAC in 2005 and continues to be the principal spokesman. He has also been a part of the NJ Aviation Conference Committee since MAAC began putting those on late in the last century.

We salute you, Mike, and look forward to seeing you hanging on the wall at AHOF!

President's Message

Let me wish you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year before we get down to business. That takes care of the good news, so let's look at what has been happening and try to predict what we will be contending with in 2010. For openers, the last terrorist scare has thrown national security into full panic mode. Based upon past performance, we can safely predict much tighter and more nonsensical security regulations and, I suspect, more attention to small aircraft like the ones we fly.

Of course using traditional airlines will be more aggravating with the promise of back scatter x-rays that show our bodies to whomever. If the direction of TSA policies continue, they will achieve a level of stupidity we can't begin to imagine. Unless Israeli protocols are adopted, our recourse is to use our machines to fly those longer distances at greater expense. But I long ago I lost any hope that the FAA would intervene to bring any sense to the insanity.

We are still waiting for FAA to do something about its ill-conceived proposal to expand the Class B airspace around the New York and Philadelphia airspace. Every organization and group that was involved in the deliberations - including the 'Ad hoc' review committees - unanimously agreed it was bad idea and recommended the expansion be dropped. So what happened?? Nothing—not a word out of the FAA. But it appears that the proposal may be implemented anyway. The Newark Runway 11 corridor, while not officially adopted, is still holding up releases from Morristown Airport and it is not surprising to meet the big guys at 2,000 to 3,000 feet south of the airport.

For now the good news is we can still fly without filing VFR flight plans and getting clearances from TSA - someone has christened it the Transportaton Suppression Agency. That says it all.

On the home front, MAAC's Board is delving into planning our upcoming events., so stay tuned and remember, **dues are due. \$15.00 for individuals. \$50.00 for groups. Figure out which you are and mail in your check to the address below. Please send in questions or comments to maacmembers@gmail.com and check the website now and then - www.njaviation.com**

Fly safe! Mike Stoddard



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