

What's Up

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FAA

By the middle of the year, officials hope to know more about the effects of the Airport Movement Area Safety System (AMASS) on the runway incursion threat. By that time AMASS will have sufficient operational history—including nine to twelve months of full-commission use at Detroit, Los Angeles, and San Francisco—to make such an analysis meaningful. FAA runway safety office director Bill Davis said, “By then, we should have enough operational time to have a sense of how As and Bs are impacted by AMASS.” The rate of Category A and B events, which the FAA defines as accidents or near-collisions, declined last year, compared with 2000. Launched a decade ago, but burdened with technological hurdles and other delays, AMASS alerts controllers to potential collisions by using radar data to track aircraft and vehicle movements and issuing warnings based on predictive modeling.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 29)

The National Air Traffic Controllers Association last week asked the U.S. Court of Appeals in Cincinnati to set aside a lower court ruling and order the FAA to cancel its contract tower program. The court was told that President Clinton’s issuing an executive order in December 2000 that established a Performance-Based Organization at the FAA “reaffirmed our main argument” that air traffic control is inherently a government function. FAA attorney Thomas Bondy asked the appeals court to uphold the ruling by a district court in Cleveland permitting the privately run program involving about 210 towers to continue.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 28)

Industry

ARINC and RQuest Development Corporation introduced what they called an advanced cockpit security system for commercial aircraft that creates a “safe zone” for flight crews. The security system, which has several components—a bullet-resistant cockpit door with a secondary webbed door, a retractable security curtain barrier to allow access to lavatories and galley, and bullet-resistant seat backs for pilots—permits crewmembers to open the cockpit door and move about safely.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 30)



The White House has ordered the creation of an interagency working group (IWG) under the auspices of the National Science and Technology Council to review and develop national aviation and intermodal transportation system-level policy to “ensure safe, secure and efficiency mobility for all Americans.” The directive stated that “. . . aviation alone cannot solve the nation’s mobility problems. It should be connected to an efficient, cost-effective, market-based ground transportation system or the benefits of moving rapidly by air will be lost on the ground.” The IWG, which will help develop and coordinate presidential decision directives (PDD) for aviation and intermodal transportation, will be chaired by the Office of Science and Technology Policy in coordination with the Domestic Policy Council, National Economic Council, National Security Council, Office of Homeland Security, and the Office of Management and Budget.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 23)

Continental CEO Gordon Bethune singled out United and US Airways as carriers unable to survive the current market due to their high costs. “Both are scrambling to do something,” he said. “Either the market needs to change or they need to change. They can’t continue to operate under current market conditions for long.”

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 22)

Bill Swelbar, managing director of Eclat Consulting, told the ESI-Sloan Aviation Forum that the financial difficulties facing major carriers could offer opportunities for low-fare/niche airlines. He said that although the network carriers saw operating profits drop \$5 billion before September, the low-fare/niche segment grew 13 percent, or by nearly \$34 million, because of underlying strength and a relatively good result in a difficult macro-economic environment. Swelbar added that the industry likely will have to come to grips with a new pricing model, and ultimately, there will probably be mergers and consolidations.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 22)

AirTran

The airline will launch daily nonstop service to Rochester, NY, on March 14. Besides two daily nonstop flights to Atlanta, AirTran will introduce two nonstops between Rochester and Baltimore. On February 2, the carrier will start daily nonstop BWI-Fort Myers service, and will add a second flight on February 14. AirTran will begin nonstop BWI-Tampa service on March 14.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 23)

Alaska

The carrier anticipates saving \$200,000 yearly by removing little-used seatback phones from its fleet during scheduled maintenance visits. Much of the savings will come from reduced fuel burn, as each system includes about 150 pounds of equipment.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 28)

America West

The airline plans to add capacity at Las Vegas with flights to two new cities. On February 27, America West Express will launch a daily nonstop flight to Colorado Springs, followed by a daily nonstop to Salt Lake City on May 1. The new service will be offered on 50-seat regional jets operated by Mesa Air and Chautauqua Airlines.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 30)

America West will recall at least 75 of its 179 furloughed pilots by March, according to an airline official. Flights had been pared down by about 20 percent in the aftermath of September 11. The carrier restored about a third of its flights in December and plans to reinstate more flights beginning in February through April. "As demand for air travel continues to increase, we are responding by adding flights back to our schedule," said Jeff McClelland, executive vice president of operations.

(Associated Press, Jan. 25)

American

The airline said it will add 41 flights to routes it already serves from its home base of Dallas-Fort Worth. Karen Watson, a spokeswoman for American, said the additional flights would not require rehiring laid-off pilots. The new flights will operate to 37 destinations, increasing service on some late-evening connecting flights and to nearby destinations. Some will start on January 31, but the bulk will begin March 2.

(Associated Press, Jan. 29)

American will launch two daily nonstop flights between Oakland and New York JFK on March 2. The new service, which will be offered on 176-seat B-757s, will complement flights to New York from Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Jose.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 30)

The Allied Pilots Association proposed to the carrier that all 70-seat regional jets be flown by its member pilots. The union said that this would remove the primary job-security issue, the outsourcing of American's flying. APA President John Darrah said that the move would "prevent American Eagle from reaching the contractual cap on regional jets," and that this would "reduce the likelihood that management will trigger" the capacity and block hour limits on American Eagle's operations while any AA pilots are on furlough.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 18)

American plans to inaugurate daily nonstop service between New York JFK and Tokyo on April 19. The new service to American's 19th international destination from JFK will be offered on B-777s.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 18)

American Eagle

The regional carrier will resume flights between Washington National and New York JFK on March 2. The service, suspended after September 11, will offer five daily roundtrips on 37-seat Embraer ERJ-135 regional jets. On January 31, Eagle will also launch service from Raleigh-Durham to National, which had originally been scheduled to begin on September 17.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 18)

American Trans Air

The airline has exercised options for two more B-757-300s to be delivered next year. ATA, the North American launch customer for the plane, said that it is the only operator of the "performance enhanced" Rolls-Royce RB 211-535-E4C engines. ATA, which already operates five of the aircraft, signed agreements last March for 39 B-737-800s with 40 options and ten B-757-300s with 10 options.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 28)

**Atlantic
Southeast**

The Delta Connection carrier will expand regional jet service on April 7, as it replaces some 50-seat Canadair Regional Jet and turboprop service with 70-seat CRJs. ASA will begin operating CRJ service to six markets from Atlanta: Augusta, Ga.; Fort Wayne, Ind.; Huntsville, Ala.; Sarasota and Tallahassee, Fla.; and Toledo, Ohio. On May 1, ASA will add CRJ-700 service to Daytona Beach, Fla., Long Island/Islip/N.Y., and Mobile, Ala. ASA also will increase daily nonstop regional jet service between Atlanta and Allentown/Bethlehem, Pa., Grand Rapids, Mich., Huntington, WV, and Toronto in April.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 25)

Atlas Air

Pilots, represented by the Air Line Pilots Association, have reached a tentative agreement with management on a contract after 21 months of negotiating. The four-year deal, which covers Atlas's 621 pilots and flight engineers, includes higher pay rates and improvements in work rules, retirement, and other areas.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 29)

Continental

Continental Express will furlough another 250 pilots, beginning in April at the rate of 50 per month. This came just ten days after an announcement by Continental that it is furloughing 100 pilots. According to Patrick Burke, chairman of the ALPA unit, the combined number of pilots let go from both the mainline and Express operations will reach 1,176 by August. Continental noted that only 539 of the 826 pilots furloughed are actually without jobs, with the others moving to Express to fly small jets.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 29)

Pilots of Continental and Continental Express, in reports on their Aviation Safety Action Programs (ASAP), listed air traffic control events as the dominant factor. ALPA units at major and regional carriers reported that "crew reporting was excellent" on ASAP "with the majority of the reports submitted concerning events in which crew actions could be questioned." According to Chris Hart, safety chief at the FAA, this is the attitude that the agency and the airlines have attempted to foster in the programs, which are aimed at discovering trends that could lead to incidents or accidents and correcting them before they happen.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 22)

Continental and Amtrak signed a deal to launch a domestic air/rail code-share partnership, hoping to follow similar agreements in Europe. Travelers will be able to transfer between Amtrak's northeastern rail service in four major cities—New Haven and Stamford, Conn.; Philadelphia; and Wilmington, DE—to air service via Continental at Newark. As part of the pact, which should start in mid-March, members of Continental's frequent flyer program may earn miles when traveling on Amtrak's Metroliner and Acela Express services between New York and either Washington or Boston. "Travelers in America may now enjoy the benefits of plane-to-train partnerships that those in Europe have realized for years," said Continental President Larry Kellner.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 18)

**Continental
Connection**

The carrier has opened a "micro hub" at Albany, NY, in an effort to shorten flight times and double the number of connections between New York City and 12 regional business centers. The company said that the hub, with flights operated by CommutAir, "reverses the traditional approach of routing all regional flights through major hubs, which often requires travel outside the region." The micro hub, operating much like the larger hub with peak arrival and departure banks and multiple daily flights to spoke cities, eliminates layovers and reduces overall flying time by avoiding circuitous routes to distant hubs and making faster connections.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 18)

Delta

The airline will start nonstop service between Atlanta and Milan Malpensa with a B-767-300ER on April 1. On March 15, Delta will add a second New York JFK to Paris flight with a B-777. This spring will also see a resumption of seasonal service to Barcelona, with daily flights from JFK starting April 1 and four times a week service from Atlanta beginning May 1.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 25)

Hawaiian

The carrier will resume daily nonstop flying between Los Angeles and Maui on June 15. On the same day Hawaiian will add another daily nonstop between Maui and San Francisco. Hawaiian is also adding a fourth daily flight between Honolulu and Los Angeles from June 15 to September 2.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 29)

According to reports, Hawaiian and Aloha will acquire more B-717s for interisland travel, replacing 18 B-737-200s. Greg Brenneman, who will head the merged carrier, has also reportedly said he wants to order up to 12 B-757s or B-767s for flights to the mainland. Spokesman Keoni Wagner could not confirm the reports, but said that the two airlines are moving forward with their merger, which should be completed in the spring.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 23)

JetBlue

The airline plans to launch service to at least two new cities, but may have to raise fares this year to cover higher airport costs. In an employee letter, CEO David Neeleman said the focus this year will be on building flight frequencies and beginning to “connect the dots” rather than boosting the number of destinations. Since short-haul flying will be affected more by higher landing fees, the opportunities for JetBlue to add new short-haul destinations, such as Washington Dulles to New York JFK, “appear unlikely at this time.”

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 31)

JetBlue will add a third New York JFK-Oakland flight on March 10. The carrier said it is the only one offering nonstop flights between New York and Oakland, and CEO David Neeleman noted that the average one-way fare has dropped 39 percent since JetBlue entered the market.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 18)

National

The bankrupt discount carrier, with its reorganization plan approved in court, is now operating at a profit and is eyeing the target of going public, said a company spokesman. The final confirmation hearing is set for February 14, said spokesman Dik Shimizu, and the plan includes renegotiated leases with the owners of all 15 planes in National's fleet. Shimizu noted that the new financing and leases, combined with lower fuel prices, should make National a viable concern going forward.

(Reuters, Jan. 30)

Southwest

The carrier will add four parked B-737s—two in March and two in April—to its fleet as it “cautiously” resumes growth plans. On March 10, Southwest will launch twice-daily service between Chicago Midway and Seattle. It will also add a fourth daily roundtrip from Midway to Phoenix. Southwest will inaugurate service between Midway and Oakland with three daily roundtrips on April 7.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 23)

Southwest plans to introduce new boarding procedures over the next three to six months, partially in response to new security rules. Chief Financial Officer Gary Kelly said that the airline will “peruse other technological advancements very quickly,” and confirmed that the airline will drop its signature plastic boarding cards.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 22)



Sun Country

Aircraft lessors for the carrier have moved their petition to force Sun Country into involuntary liquidation from Delaware bankruptcy court to Minnesota. According to the carrier's attorney, John McDonald, Sun Country has not yet filed for Chapter 11 protection, but may do so in a week or two.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 28)

United

The airline said it will be furloughing fewer pilots than anticipated through spring. United would not comment on its flying schedule other than to voice hopes to add back capacity as demand for travel returns.

(Reuters, Jan. 30)

United will resume nonstop B-777 service between Chicago and Beijing in April. The airline expects to add a second Chicago O'Hare-Tokyo flight, operated with a B-747-400, and to upgrade its second San Francisco-Tokyo flight to a B-747-400 from a B-777.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 29)

A spokesman said that UAL's Avolar business jet subsidiary "is open and doing business," adding that efforts to reach a deal with outside investors this quarter are on track. An article in the January 25 issue of *USA Today* caused a stir about the prospects for the new venture, with comments by union leaders, who attended recent meetings with United CEO Jack Creighton, indicating that the company is prepared to close the business if an investor is not found within the next few months.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 28)

United plans to move its daily nonstop service to Dusseldorf from Chicago O'Hare to Washington Dulles on February 14. The new flight will be operated with B-767-300 aircraft configured for three classes of service.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 23)

Vacation Express

The charter operator recently launched a hub-and-spoke route system through Orlando Sanford Airport and is anticipating further expansion. Vacation Express plans to operate six dedicated B-737s with their own logo and livery to link six cities—Atlanta, Charlotte, Cincinnati, Louisville, Nashville, and Washington—with Orlando and beyond to Caribbean destinations, including Aruba, Cancun, Costa Rica, Jamaica, and Punta Cana.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 24)

Vanguard

The airline will resume service to Myrtle Beach, SC, on March 28. Vanguard will offer three weekly nonstops from Kansas City.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 31)

World Airways

The company said it is seeking mediation assistance from the National Mediation Board in contract talks with its flight attendants, who are represented by the Teamsters. CEO Hollis Harris said that World is "committed to reaching an agreement that will be fair for the flight attendants while allowing the company to reduce costs." The current pact was amendable July 1, 2000.

(Aviation Daily, Jan. 23)