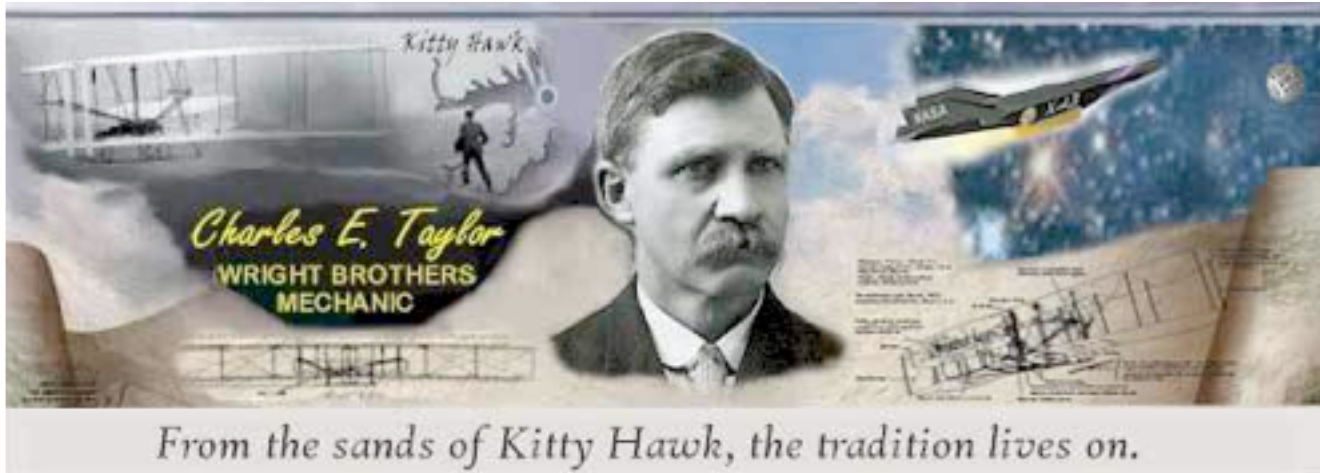


Aviation Human Factors Industry News

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Hello all,

In this weeks edition of *Aviation Human Factors Industry News* you will read the following stories:

★**Report Critiques FAA Oversight Of Aviation Safety Action Program**

★**Remember Flight 191**

★**Woman excels in man's world of aircraft mechanics**

★**Clogged fuel filter and poor inspection causes of fatal Millville airplane crash**

★**Worker falls to his death at Miami International Airport**

★**And much more!**

Report Critiques FAA Oversight Of Aviation Safety Action Program

The FAA is not making good use of the benefits that could be provided by the **Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP)**, according to a by the **Transportation Department's Office of Inspector General** that was released last week. "ASAP, as currently implemented, is a **missed opportunity** for FAA to enhance the national margin of safety," the OIG report says. The program allows airline employees to report safety violations to their employers and to the FAA **without fear** of reprisal. To realize the full benefits of ASAP, the FAA needs to clarify which incidents should be excluded from the program and emphasize to employees that ASAP **is not an amnesty program**, the OIG said. The agency also should develop a central database of ASAP reports and use it for trend analysis. "While ASAP is a potentially valuable safety tool, we found that FAA's ineffective implementation and inadequate guidance have allowed **inconsistent use and potential abuse** of the program," the report says.



Currently, 73 airlines participate in ASAP, which has been a thorny issue between airlines and pilot unions. American and Delta dropped out of the program last year after union leaders complained that pilots who voluntarily disclosed problems were unfairly punished. Comair, which had also dropped out, rejoined last week. "Reinstating this important program reaffirms Comair's commitment to continue developing a strong safety culture," said Comair President John Bendoraitis. "Programs such as ASAP are designed to help provide a safe and reliable work environment for our employees and travel experience for our passengers."

<http://www.oig.dot.gov/>

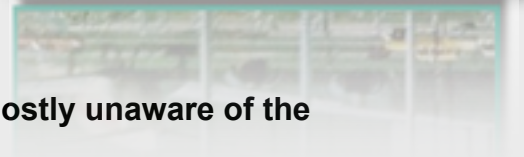
Remember Flight 191

This Memorial Day weekend marked once again the anniversary of the **deadliest single airline crash** in our nation's aviation history. On the afternoon of Friday, May 25, 1979, Flight 191 crashed with the loss of all onboard shortly after takeoff from O'Hare International Airport. Passengers and crew totaled **271 souls** and there would be **two more** casualties on the ground. Miraculously the loss of life that day was only 273 in total.

But sadly, despite the passage of 30 years, **there is still no memorial, marker, plaque or even roadside cross** at the crash site to remember or commemorate. The crash site is on land used for training Chicago's K-9 dogs, located in Des Plaines.

Today motorists drive past on busy Touhy Avenue mostly unaware of the significance of this **hallowed spot**.

Why doesn't some local or regional government, or aviation agency or corporation, **honor the memory** of that brave crew and ordinary citizens who perished that day?



Woman excels in man's world of aircraft mechanics

In the **male-dominated** world of aviation mechanics, Mayte Almeida can put many of her co-workers to shame. "She was the toughest one out of them all," said her boss Joel Valle, who owns J.V. Air Maintenance. When the guys slack off, Valle uses Almeida as a motivator, telling them "If you can't do it, I'll get Mayte. . . . She'll do it for you."

Almeida, 32, has been an aircraft technician, specifically an Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) Mechanic and Avionics Technician, for five years.



She is currently a **lead technician** on Valle's team.

"I do not think gender is an obstacle to anything in life," she says. "I am an example for male mechanics because nothing stops me from doing what I need to do. I complete jobs that men do not think they could do."

A native of Havana, Cuba, Almeida first became fascinated with airplanes at 19, after being unable to travel from Venezuela to Cuba to see her family for 12 years.

"With airplanes, the distance does not exist anymore. It is something that fascinates me. You can be wherever you want to be and nothing can stop you," she said.

Almeida is **one of only 6,524 active female airplane mechanics** in the United States, according to the Administrator's Fact Book, the Federal Aviation Administration's source of data and statistics. With 322,852 nationwide, this means that women account for **only about 2 percent** of the workforce.

According to Valle, Almeida and other women working in aviation mechanics often have an advantage over their male counterparts. "Female knuckles and hands in general are a lot smaller," making it easier to correctly position tiny instrument panels and window frames, he explained.

Despite that advantage, **the competition is fierce.**

"Unfortunately, this industry is dominated by men, so the females have to really excel and try even harder than the guys," Valle said. "They end up doing it better and faster than the men."

Almeida sees a connection between her passion for airplanes and her limitless passion for life.

"Being a female in aviation is not a big deal because, from my perspective, I am simply a person, **a human being not defined by gender**," she says.

"The only limitations I have, **I put on myself**. We make our own limitations."

Clogged fuel filter and poor inspection causes of fatal Millville airplane crash

The plane crash that killed two Gloucester County men shortly after they took off from Millville Airport in May 2008 was caused by a **clogged fuel filter** and the **pilot's inadequate preflight inspection**, according to a federal agency. The National Transportation Safety Board on May 6 released its findings following a year-long investigation into the accident, in which a single-engine plane lost total engine power and crashed into a wooded area a mile southwest of the airport in Lawrence Township.



The board found that, upon examination, fuel drained from the plane's fuel filter had been contaminated with **"black sediment"** and appeared **"extremely cloudy."** Investigators discovered the fuel filter itself had been contaminated, restricting the flow of fuel to the engine.

"A total loss of engine power due to fuel starvation as a result of a clogged fuel filter that was not identified due to the pilot's inadequate preflight inspection," read the report detailing the cause of the crash.

According to the NTSB, the pilot, 65-year-old William Crean, of Washington Township, purchased the rebuilt 1972 L-29 Delfin jet military trainer approximately one year before the crash. Federal investigators **could not locate any maintenance records for the aircraft.**

Review of a **preflight inspection checklist** for the plane revealed that it included discharging two liters of fuel from the fuel filter drain to check for contamination.

Delaware River and Bay Authority spokesman Jim Salmon said his office is aware of the findings and described the crash as an **"unfortunate accident."**

"It's especially sobering when taking into account that lives were lost," he added.

According to Salmon, it is the **responsibility of the pilot** to perform preflight inspections, as well as **keeping up proper maintenance** on any private aircraft.

Worker falls to his death at Miami International Airport

An American Airlines worker died recently when he **slipped from a ramp** in heavy rain while loading luggage on a plane in Miami, an airline official said. The man **fell to the tarmac** at Miami International Airport while loading a Boeing 777 destined for Brazil, airline spokesman Steve Schlachter said.

The man, a ramp supervisor, was not publicly identified. Passengers aboard Flight 995 to Sao Paulo were interviewed by police and the flight was canceled, the South Florida Sun-Sentinel reported. The passengers were put up at a hotel and rescheduled for a flight later in the day.

The accident occurred **just after midnight** amid heavy rain and thunder, The Miami Herald reported.



Big Bucks: FAA Wants To Fine Gulfstream International Airlines \$1.3M

The FAA is attempting to exact a \$1.3 million civil penalty from Florida-based Gulfstream International Airlines, Inc. **for violations** of the FAR's. Gulfstream has been making some news of late for also being a former employer of the Captain of the ill-fated Continental Connection 3407 flight.

The alleged violations include **improper scheduling of flight crew duty time**, and the **installation of unapproved air conditioner compressors** and **improperly maintained vent blowers** on the airline's fleet of 27 BE-1900-D aircraft. An FAA review of the airline's electronic record-keeping system for tracking crew duty and rest time revealed that Gulfstream International **did not accurately input the proper data** from its manually generated hard-copy aircraft logbook records into the electronic system. The discrepancies resulted in scheduling crew members in excess of daily and weekly flight time limitations.



During a June 2008 inspection, the FAA determined that the airline had installed **unapproved automotive air conditioner compressors on its aircraft** between September 2006 and May 2008. Following the FAA inspection, the airline grounded all of the affected aircraft and replaced the units with **approved aircraft** air conditioner compressors.

In the course of a July 2008 inspection of Gulfstream International avionics and component shops in Fort Lauderdale, the FAA discovered that the airline had **installed improperly maintained vent blowers** on six planes between January 2008 and June 2008. Following that inspection, the airline replaced the blowers with properly maintained units.

Gulfstream International Airlines has 30 days from the receipt of the civil penalty letter to respond to the FAA.

Great Eyes -- USAF Airman Spots Aircraft Fuel Leak At FL350

One More Reason/Excuse To Ask For A Window Seat The Air Force notes that many of us occasionally hear stories of Airmen saving lives in combat, but in this case, an Airman who saves the lives of more than 300 airline passengers is definitely a story worth hearing.

A fuel leak on a civilian aircraft caught the attention of Staff Sgt. Bartek

Bachleda, 909th Air Refueling Squadron boom operator, during a flight from Chicago to Narita airport, Japan. After alerting the pilots and aircrew, the ranking pilot made the decision to divert the flight to San Francisco.



"I noticed the leak on the left side of the aircraft right behind the wing earlier during take-off," said Sergeant Bachleda. Sergeant Bachleda continued analyzing the outflow of fuel to be 100 percent sure it was a leak while the plane was reaching cruising altitude. Almost an hour into the flight, he told a stewardess of the possible leak, but **was given an unconcerned response**.

Sergeant Bachleda then began to capture the possible leak on video. He then got the stewardess' attention by saying, "Ma'am it's an emergency." He identified himself to her and showed her the leak on video.

"She was completely serious and was no longer handing out drinks," he said. "I told her you need to inform your captain before we go oceanic." The captain came from the cockpit to where Sergeant Bachleda was sitting to see the leak and view the video footage. Sergeant Bachleda said the captain and the crew were trying to figure out how the aircraft was losing 6,000 pounds of fuel an hour and then they knew exactly what was going on.

The captain made a mid-air announcement the flight would be diverted back to Chicago, but then changed it to San Francisco so passengers could catch the only existing flight to Narita airport. Once the flight arrived in San Francisco, Sergeant Bachleda and a coworker were asked to stay back while the aircraft was deplaned. They waited for the arrival of investigators, the fire chief, and the owner of the airport to explain what went wrong.

"When we got off the airplane **everyone was thanking us**," said the sergeant. While conversing with the captain, the sergeant said he was **hesitant** at first to inform them about the leak, but **he knew it was abnormal**. The captain said they would have never made it to Japan if it wasn't for him.

The two Airmen were placed in a hotel overnight and flew back to Japan the next morning. The airline company showed their appreciation by seating them first-class.

Aircraft door yanks off at Mumbai airport

The Mangalore-bound Air India aircraft that was involved in the accident at the Mumbai airport last Tuesday. Mumbai: A door of a Mangalore-bound Air India flight IC 179 (BOM-IXE) **yanked off just after boarding** at the Mumbai airport at 11.10 a.m. on Tuesday. All 172 passengers on board were safe.



The incident happened while the aircraft was stationary, with the **aerobridge still connected** to it. The AI pushback operator allegedly **pushed the craft back for about 1.5 meters**, due to which the door yanked off. As both the plane and the aerobridge were damaged, the passengers were shifted to another aircraft. No case has been registered so far.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered a probe into the incident and two Air India **pilots have been grounded and an aircraft maintenance engineer was taken off it** following the damage to the door, DGCA chief S N A Zaidi said in New Delhi.

Air India also **de-rostered one technician and suspended one push-back tractor operator involved in the incident**, an Air India statement issued in Mumbai said.

"The aircraft was pushed back while it was attached to the aerobridge," he said.

FAA To Hold First-Ever International Runway Safety Summit

Aviation **safety professionals** including pilots, air traffic controllers, researchers, aviation executives, government leaders and labor officials from around the world will convene in Washington, D.C., Dec. 1-3, 2009, for the **premier International FAA Runway Safety Summit** hosted by FAA and co-sponsored by AAAE and MITRE Corp. The three-day event will take

place at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street NW, Washington, DC 20008. The International Runway Safety Summit is aimed at bringing together important operational elements of the world's aviation community to discuss, review and assess hundreds of runway safety initiatives -- past, present and future. Representatives from airlines and other pilot groups, airports, governments, regulatory agencies, labor organizations, air traffic management organizations, engineering and manufacturing companies, and other key industry participants will come together for the event.

"By bringing these individuals together, we will not only be able to evaluate our progress to improve runway safety to date, **but also will set a course for the future of runway safety worldwide**," said Wes Timmons, FAA's director of the Office of Runway Safety, which is hosting the summit.

"Runway safety is a key focus of airport operators everywhere," said AAAE Senior Executive Vice President Spencer Dickerson. "The airport community welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this important gathering of aviation safety experts and industry stakeholders."

More than 500 attendees are expected to attend this first-ever, FAA-led international gathering of the runway safety community, which will engage in and contribute to **one of aviation's most challenging objectives**--the substantial reduction and eventual elimination of runway incursions and excursions worldwide.

Panelists will discuss runway safety initiatives around the world from the perspectives of all industry stakeholders. An exhibit hall showcasing the latest services and technologies being used to enhance **runway safety** will augment the educational sessions.

