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Editor's Forum

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Editor's Forum

Welcome to another year of the *Journal of Aviation and Aerospace Education and Research*. As we start the academic year, we again face the challenges of an ever-changing industry. As the air carrier industry is finally making its way back to numbers that are similar to pre-September 11, 2001 however, we certainly cannot sit back and be happy with the status quo. The only constant is change.

I want to share with you some of the highlights of the Industry/Educator Forum (I/E) that occurred at the summer meeting of the Council on Aviation Accreditation (CAA). The forum was divided into two panels.

The first panel focused on future maintenance safety and the economic environment. The most obvious change in this arena is the different types of aircraft that are starting to dominate and that of course is the Regional Jets. These smaller, high tech, computerized aircraft have changed the face of the air carrier industry. This prompts a lot of questions. How is the flying public accepting this new, smaller, less frills, mode of air travel? Does the general public feel as safe in an RJ as they do in a Boeing 777? Is the lack of service in the air going to have an impact on air travel, or are people just interested in the bottom line, cost? These topics would be interesting to research or perhaps some of my colleagues are already focusing on these issues. The Forum would be very interested in your input on this new concept of air travel.

A new concern is facing the air carriers that comes along with the high technology aircraft. The industry is in need of highly sophisticated, well-educated mechanics to keep these aircraft in the air. Speakers at the I/E forum this summer asked the educators to give them mechanics that can not only turn a wrench, but also can read and write with the skill level of college educated person. As aircraft technical manuals are transitioning from paper documents to computer-based documents, a higher level of technical expertise is required for today's aircraft mechanics. Can the education industry supply these talented individuals? Is the air carrier industry willing to help support the educational expenses associated with these high demands? Are the young people of today interested in pursuing such a career? All good questions that I present to our readers and encourage you to address in your contribution to the Forum section of the *JAAER*.

New technology is rapidly moving into the general aviation industry (GA) as well. Some forecast that within the next ten years all GA aircraft would be equipped with glass cockpit concepts similar to those in the transport category aircraft. Several companies are offering this concept today. Are they ahead of their time, or the leaders in the paradigm shift? Can GA afford this transition? Will the General Aviation pilots and owners be accepting and open to the expense of such instrumentation? Voice your thoughts in our Forum.

The second panel at the I/E forum of the CAA summer meeting dealt with the future industry "working together" environment. The air carrier industry is changing rapidly to an environment that requires a "team spirit" concept. No longer can employees focus on their own areas of specialization. All employees must be willing to pitch in and help wherever help is needed. Just look at the financial status of today's air carriers. The financial successes are falling on those carriers that promote the "all for one and one for all" concept. These streamlined, no frills carriers are perhaps the new paradigm in today's industry. Employees have to be motivated by the success of their company and not so much by financial rewards. A "passion" for aviation must be the prime mover for the economic situation dictates a change in the financial structure of our industry. Will this new approach work? Will we lose some of the talent that is attracted by the dollar bill? What will our industry look like ten years from now if these trends come true or we revert back to the way it was? I am confident our readers will research these ideas and report to us all in the Forum of the *JAAER*.

In the fall edition of the *JAAER* we have two interesting forum articles for your educational enjoyment and inspiration. Mr. Randy Reynolds conducts "An Overview Of The Demise Of NASA'S High Speed Research

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Program". With the 1998 cancellation of NASA's research and development of high-speed civil transport project, our industry will stay within the subsonic realm in the foreseeable future. Mr. Reynolds explores the factors or lack of factors that affected this change. His paper discusses the technical objectives of the HSCT research that were in progress and the potential breakthroughs that would have made supersonic transport a possibility. I think you will find his research interesting and inspire our readers to continue the dreams of high-speed travel.

Our second article, presented by Mr. Tomas Kirton addresses "Collision Avoidance in Traffic Patterns – Time, Flying Tasks and Visual Scanning". His approach is to take a hard look at the challenges of Flight Instructors and Students in the training environment. Although this area has been explored in the past, the challenges continue and the potential for disaster has not been minimized. As professional aviation educators our readers will find this information useful and hopefully you will, through your own research, be able to help address this long standing issue.

Remember that the non-refereed Forum section of the *Journal of Aviation and Aerospace Education and Research* is the venue for expressing your opinions, presenting your research, and providing our industry with your expertise on issues concerning the state of today's aviation industry and the future of aviation and aerospace. We strive to provide our colleagues with a place for professional dialog through writing.

Fly safe.

William A. Kohlruss
Editor