

VAA NEWS

LASP: The Next Steps

Working toward a 'reasonable' approach

February 27, 2009, signaled the end to the comment period for the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA's) Large Aircraft Security Program (LASP), but not to the industrywide effort opposing the TSA plan. More than 4,200 comments were submitted to the docket.

EAA continues to work closely with TSA and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials toward a more reasonable approach to general-aviation security through the use of a negotiated rulemaking committee. EAA is also meeting with members of Congress on the proposal, including an invitation to attend a roundtable discussion in March hosted by House Aviation Subcommittee Chairman Rep. Jerry Costello (D-Illinois), to further press the issue.

Comments to the docket include letters opposing the LASP from congressional representatives Tom Petri (R-Wisconsin) and Sam Graves (R-Missouri).

Petri is the ranking member of the House Aviation Subcommittee and also represents Wisconsin's 6th District, which includes Oshkosh and EAA headquarters. In a letter addressed to DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, he writes, "...the TSA's actions related to the proposed LASP are extreme and unnecessary.... The TSA has lost sight of the important balance between security and the free flow of commerce." Petri also called the proposal "an enormous invasion into the private lives and affairs of citizens of a free country."

Graves, also a member of the House Aviation Subcommittee, represents Missouri's 6th District. In his 23-page letter to Erik Jensen, TSA's chief of policy, plans, and stakeholder affairs for general aviation, Graves warned that if the TSA stayed on its current path and disregarded the near unanimous opposi-



Hooper Harris of the Federal Aviation Administration discusses accident rates for homebuilts and light-sport aircraft.

EAA/FAA Summit Addresses Issues

Throughout the year, EAA's advocacy team meets with government officials in Washington, D.C., in state capitals, and in local municipalities, representing EAA members' interests and concerns. They also meet twice each year in Oshkosh—during AirVenture and also in the winter, when FAA leaders travel to EAA headquarters for two days of face-to-face meetings to identify issues and ensure that previous action plans, objectives, and benchmarks are being fulfilled.

Several top FAA officials were in Oshkosh February 23-24. Front-and-center issues included amateur-built aircraft and the 51 percent rule, vintage and aging aircraft, flight safety, sport pilot/light-sport aircraft, the future of aviation fuels, aerobatic flight, and warbirds.

Participants included EAA headquarters staff and division heads and officials from the FAA's Aircraft Certification and Flight Standards offices. A FAA/EAA Winter Meeting report was published on pages 102-103 of the April issue of *EAA Sport Aviation*.

tion to LASP, it could face legal challenges or congressional obstacles to the program, such as a resolution of disapproval under the Congressional Review Act.

"Or TSA can heed the advice in these comments and select a flight path that will lead to a more reasoned decision-making process," he writes. Graves also urged formation of a negotiated rulemaking committee involving affected groups. Graves' letter was also signed by Rep. Nathan Deal (R-Georgia), Rep. Lynn Westmoreland (R-Georgia), Rep. John Duncan Jr. (R-Tennessee), Rep. Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-Missouri), Rep. W. Todd Akin (R-Missouri), and Rep. Todd Tiahrt (R-Kansas).

EAA encourages its members to continue contacting their congress-

sional representatives seeking their support of general aviation and opposition to LASP. Read EAA's official comments at www.EAA.org/news/2009/lasp_comments.pdf.

User-Fees Language in Budget Proposal . . . Again

The Obama administration's proposed budget includes aviation "direct user charges," in other words, user fees. Page 129 of the White House budget proposal suggests user fees to replace some repealed aviation excise taxes.

It's a notion heard before: Dismantle a fuel-tax system *that is already in place and working*, and replace it with a new system of user-fee collections requiring more expensive bureaucracy.

Like some previous user-fees proposals, this one specifies, "The user charges are considered discretionary and offset discretionary budget authority and outlays." This means there's no guarantee that proceeds from these user fees would apply toward national airspace modernization, the aviation trust fund, or other special aviation needs. Rather, they would simply offset the general deficit.

EAA has contended that a user-fees system would draw disproportionately from general aviation to fund the FAA and air traffic control operations. EAA's government relations staff has maintained a dialogue with key members of Congress and their staff on the user-fees issue. With this revelation in the administration's budget proposal, EAA is accelerating this outreach work while continuing to forge relationships with the new administration, legislators, and new agency staff appointees.

The strength of EAA's 160,000 members is integral to this effort. Your preparedness to take grassroots action when called upon is a potent tool in combating this threat.

FAA Funding Bill Introduced in House

A new FAA funding bill, nearly identical to the 2007 House version, was introduced by House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman James Oberstar (D-Minnesota) and House Aviation Subcommittee Chairman Jerry Costello (D-Illinois). The previous bill was backed by EAA and most of general aviation because it retained the current funding method of fuel and passenger seat excise taxes and did not impose user fees.

The Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2009 authorizes nearly \$70 billion for the FAA for the next four years (fiscal years 2009-2012), including \$38.9 billion for FAA operations, \$16.2 billion for the Airport Improvement Program, nearly \$13.4 billion for FAA Facilities and Equipment,



Sun 'n Fun Set to Open the Fly-In Season

It's April, and the 35th Sun 'n Fun Fly-In, April 21-26, at Lakeland Linder Regional Airport in Lakeland, Florida, is days away. EAA will be there, with special offerings at the EAA Welcome Center, admission discounts, forum presentations, and more.

If you're planning to attend, please note one major change from past years at the main admissions gate: There will not be a separate EAA area. Instead, EAA members may enter at the main gate and receive their weekly or daily member discount by showing a membership card.

Several EAA members and staff will present a variety of forums and workshops. Subjects include aircraft insurance, sport pilot/light-sport aircraft, homebuilding (featuring EAA's Joe Norris, EAA homebuilders' community manager), and more. (See a complete forums schedule at www.Sun-N-Fun.org.) A special EAA chapter event will be announced soon.

See you in Lakeland (and don't forget to bring your EAA membership card).

and \$1.35 billion for Research, Engineering, and Development.

The House bill was introduced on the same day that a letter signed by associations representing virtually the entire aviation community was sent to key members of Congress, stressing the importance of passing a comprehensive, long-term FAA reauthorization bill as soon as practical. Also included in this bill are provisions allowing for the release of data related to abandoned type certificates of some vintage aircraft. Passage of this provision will be a first step in ensuring that critical data is available for the restoration and maintenance of vintage airplanes.

AirVenture Site Improvements

Every construction project requires a solid foundation incorporating essential systems and utilities

as the starting point from which to expand. The same is true for the comprehensive, multi-year project to upgrade the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh grounds and facilities. Much of the work accomplished since last fall has focused on essential underpinnings: site design and configuration; drainage systems; roads and pathways; electricity, water, communications, and other utilities; and relocations of buildings and other structures.

Some observers of EAA's work have wondered how EAA will ensure that the digging, hauling, stockpiling, and paving currently under way will not disrupt the visitor experience at AirVenture 2009. "The site enhancements that we'll have made in time for AirVenture 2009 will provide yet another good reason to come to the event. The



1909 Wright Model 'B' Replica to Fly at Oshkosh

A replica of the Wright brothers' 1909 Wright "B" Flyer will make its North American public flying debut during AirVenture 2009. The replica, dubbed the Silver Bird for its silver-painted frame and white fabric, was built by Dayton, Ohio-based Wright B Flyer Inc. It was the Wrights' first production airplane and helped ignite the air-racing era 100 years ago.

The aircraft is scheduled to begin flight testing in the coming months and may participate in aviation festivities this summer in Europe before coming to Oshkosh. One tentative event in Reims, France, would commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Gordon Bennett Cup, often regarded as the first major air race in history.

"It will truly be a global ambassador for Dayton," says Amanda Wright Lane, the Wright brothers' great-grandniece and a trustee of Wright B Flyer Inc. "There is not a single artifact you can hold, or place you can visit, or document you can read that equals seeing a Wright Flyer in the air."

Other activities commemorating 100 years of air racing will be held during EAA AirVenture 2009. These and additional details of the Wright B Flyer's appearance will be announced as they are finalized.

For more information on the Wright B Flyer replica, visit www.Wright-B-Flyer.org.

through the grounds. This year, that same trek will be a 1/4-mile straight shot.

One major part of this thoroughfare project incorporated storm water drains so the grounds dry properly. Storing drainage water on airport grounds is a safety issue because lakes, ponds, and reservoirs attract waterfowl. Consequently, site designers and engineers looked underground—turning to state-of-the-art "green" technology—to create geogrids/geoblocks to absorb and treat runoff water. This underground reservoir naturally drains into the groundwater system, eventually making its way to Lake Winnebago.

The commitment to environmentally friendly practices also included the use of recycled asphalt and recycled roofing shingles to create the porous asphalt that covers the new thoroughfares and allows for underground water drainage.

The retention of trees was also prioritized. As new construction called for clearing, the site crews transplanted 61 mature trees into new shade and rest areas that will be a feature of the reconfigured grounds.

While the new thoroughfares, trees, and relocations of some buildings and facilities will be conspicuous, other major elements of the infrastructure work will not. Just as the cutting-edge new water treatment and drainage system is invisible, so too are all the new utilities. Buried electrical lines have been reconfigured throughout the site to match the new exhibit layout. Likewise, newly upgraded shower and flush-toilet facilities in the campgrounds must be supported by underground electricity, water, and drainage systems.

Taylor noted that EAA's work on the physical infrastructure of the site is based on an underlying philosophical "infrastructure" of sorts. "The major principles of this site-enhancement program drive every

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infrastructure changes will be accomplished, several new amenities will be introduced, and site navigation, wayfinding, and transportation will be improved," says Steve Taylor, EAA facilities manager.

• "As we move into summer, we'll suspend heavy construction projects to wrap up, clean up, and ready the site for members' and visitors' arrival. Our guests won't have to navigate around barrels, step over rubble, or be otherwise inconvenienced by an 'under construction' site," he adds.

One of the most visible infrastructure changes is the relocation of the main gate approximately 400 feet west of its previous location. This

required an extension of the main aircraft display taxiway and a course diversion of Forest Home Drive.

From the main gate, two new thoroughfares will branch out diagonally, one cutting its way to the northeast toward the forums area and the other making its way to the southeast to a point behind Hangar D ending at the "Paul's Woods" neighborhood of Camp Scholler. These thoroughfares form a "V" overlaying the site's otherwise north/south and east/west grid of pathways to offer a more easily navigated site. For example, previously the most efficient route from the Warbird area to the main gate entailed a 3/4-mile zigzag

construction decision that we make," Taylor says. Those principles, delineated in EAA's site-enhancement planning document, are:

Culture—Continue to reflect the core values and attributes of EAA members.

Safety—Enhance attendees' safety by incorporating restricted-vehicle zones and thoroughfares that separate pedestrian and vehicle traffic.

Quality—Improve amenities such as camping facilities, restrooms, shade, and relaxation areas in keeping with modern-day expectations.

Convenience—Make the site easier to navigate using better site layout, roadways, wayfinding aids, and tram services.

Fun and interesting—Provide participants a wider array of evening-activity venues, more opportunities for social interaction, and expanded educational exhibits.

Growth—Address current and future demand for additional exhibit space and upgraded visitor amenities.

Look for continuing updates on www.AirVenture.org and in EAA publications.



Last Month's Racers

In the caption for last month's back cover identifying the racers shown on the ramp at Cleveland, two racers are missing from that list. Here is the full list:

The racers pictured on the back cover are (by race number/CAA registration number, and from left to right): 40, N1210M, Thompson, *Screaming Meany*; 39, N24C, Keith Sorensen, *Dearfly*; 63, N5541N, *Ace of Diamonds*; 97, N9059H, Denight Special, *DDT*; 94, N68732, Al Foss Special, *Ginny*; 51, N2E, Johnson, *Betty Jo*; 4, N21C, Cosmic Wind, *Minnow*; 20, NX14855, Wittman, *Buster*; 35, N10E, Coonley, *Little Toot*; 67, NX5111H, D. Long, *Midget Mustang*; 29, N138C, Lawrence Tech, *L.I.T.*; 3, N20C, Cosmic Wind, *Little Toni*; 92, N60089, Bill Falk, *Rivets*; 10, N1E, Kensinger-Corkill, *Tater Chip*; 47, N66317, Pack Model C, *Lil Rebel*; 1, NX1292, Wittman *Bonzo*; 5, N22C, Cosmic Wind, *Ballerina*; 34, N44183, Williams, *Estrellita*; 14, N74J, Miller, *Little Gem*.

VAA Hangar Project Moves Ahead

March 16 saw the erection of the first walls for the new Vintage Hangar being built to host the type clubs, workshops, and other events during EAA AirVenture Oshkosh. The prolonged winter weather that set in after the foundation footings were poured prevented the construction crews from building the walls for the building on-site, so they were put together in a warehouse in Ripon, Wisconsin. When the weather finally broke, the pieces were trucked to the site and assembly began. The building is scheduled to be ready for volunteers to perform interior finish work by April 30. Look for regular updates on the VAA website at www.VintageAircraft.org.



PHOTOS H.G. FRAUTSCHY

