



# ALASKA AIR CARRIERS ASSOCIATION

2301 Merrill Field Drive A-3, Anchorage, Alaska 99501 907-277-0071 [www.alaskaaircarriers.org](http://www.alaskaaircarriers.org)

## Board of Directors for 2021-2022

January 31, 2022

Matt Atkinson  
President  
AIR ARCTIC &  
WARBELOW'S AIR  
VENTURES

Stephen Dickson,  
Administrator Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
800 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20591

Susan Hoshaw  
Vice President  
EVERTS AIR

Scott Habberstad  
Secretary  
ALASKA AIRLINES

RE: FAASI Progress

Wilfred Ryan  
Treasurer  
RYAN AIR

Dear Mr. Dickson,

Dan Owen  
AK AIR TRANSIT

Tom Soderholm  
SMOKEY BAY AIR

Bryan Miller  
DASH

Dan Knesek  
GRANT AVIATION

Brien Salazar  
TAQUAN

Gideon Garcia  
NAC

Eric Zentler  
MCGRIFF

Alan Larson  
TRANSNORTHERN

Scott VanValin  
ISLAND AIR EXPRESS

The Alaska Air Carriers Association (AACAA) sincerely appreciates and supports the conversations you cultivated throughout the FAA for the Alaska commercial aviation community through the Alaska Aviation Safety Initiative (FAASI) project. Because of this effort, the aviation community is better positioned to improve the infrastructure and safety than ever before. We truly understand how difficult it is to maintain project momentum within such a large and complex organization. We respectfully submit this letter because, at this juncture, we sense an ebbing of momentum on this project and know how easily planning efforts can become dust-collecting volumes on forgotten shelves. We ask that you re-commit every relevant organizational unit of FAA to seize this well-positioned moment and *follow through with* the infrastructure needs the operators spoke to during the FAASI listening sessions.

During the FAASI meetings, AACAA met with FAA leadership in Alaska and discussed issues that are important to commercial operations and safety. As we have for many years, the AACAA spoke to the need to resolve issues related to the following topics:

- Aviation weather (VWOS/noncertified weather programs/AWOS),
- Improving Communication Facilities (RCAG, RCO, and telco)
- Increasing the development of new WAAS Instrument Flight Procedures (IFPs) including the development of new special procedures for airports that can't support standard TERPS design.
- Revising TERPS standards to allow for AK Fixed Wing Point in Space (PinS) Procedures
- Expanding the availability of current Southeast AK R-route structure to modern navigation equipment
- Developing new standards to allow AK operators to utilize RNP-1 enroute scaling (as implemented by Capstone)
- Adding new coverage for NEXRAD, ADSB, and more.

## Executive Director

Jane Dale  
ALASKA AIR  
CARRIERS  
ASSOCIATION

To fund new infrastructure, the industry expected FAA would develop a funding strategy with support from each of the program offices and Western Service Center. Unfortunately, that has not happened. We are now under the impression that progress is *years away* as FAA plans new working group listening sessions on issues that have long existed and are well understood by FAA. Funding is available in the FAA 2022 appropriations bills, but those have not been

finalized, and planning for the FAA Reauthorization will commence soon which can provide additional funds. We believe it is time to stop talking about what we might want and start building what we already have agreed we need. FAA should be including funding in its proposed submissions to Congress for Alaska to fund new infrastructure and repairs to existing infrastructure as was anticipated by the final FAASI report.

Far too many commercial air operators fly VFR when they have the equipage and aircraft to fly IFR. AACA, FAA, and NTSB all understand that it is time for a generational shift in how Alaskan commercial air travel is conducted. Alaska requires improved infrastructure to achieve this. We believe this is truly the foundation for improving commercial aviation safety in rural Alaska. Through our collective efforts, now is the time to do it.

We understand that each of the functional FAA units relevant to this effort has its own priorities, commitments, and challenges. We also know that a coordinated commitment from those units is necessary to reach our safety goals. For that commitment, we ask your continued help. We understand for some of the topics there is no FAA requirement supporting our need and suggest either each discipline draft the requirements or perhaps waive the need for requirements since Alaska doesn't meet FAA standards as applied in the CONUS.

If you have questions, please don't hesitate to call Jane Dale at 907.717.6724.

Sincere regards.



Matt Atkinson  
President, AACA



Jane Dale  
Executive Director, AACA