

Air Safety: It's been the government's job for nearly 80 years and that's the way we ought to keep it!

In 1926, the government accepted its responsibility to ensure aviation safety with the creation of the Aeronautics Branch of the Department of Commerce. This predecessor of today's Federal Aviation Administration was created by Congress at the urging of the aviation industry to improve and maintain air safety standards. Over the next 76 years, the functions of the FAA have evolved to include the nation's air traffic control system, standards and certification processes for pilots and mechanics, safety rules, aviation communications, airport operations and noise regulation.



Change Brought on by Crisis

Often, Congress added new responsibilities to the FAA's duties after a tragedy or accident crystallized public opinion. Such was the case in the 1950s when—following a series of mid-air collisions—Congress acted to give the FAA authority to write and enforce aviation safety rules and to develop a common system of air navigation and air traffic control over both civilian and military flights.

In the 1960s, the FAA's responsibilities were broadened again to embrace air security following a rash of hijackings.

Privatizing Air Safety Would Turn Back the Clock on Progress

By the 1990s, the aviation industry had experienced a significant decline in serious and fatal accidents. 1998 was the best year ever for the industry with no fatalities and no major aircraft accidents anywhere in the world involving U.S. aircraft.

Of course, September 11, 2001 will long remain the darkest day in aviation history—with the death of some 3,000 victims on the ground and another 257 passengers and crew in the four hijacked aircraft. A month later, on November 12, 2001, American Airlines Flight 587 crashed on takeoff, with 305 fatalities. These events riveted the attention of all Americans on the issue of airline safety and security.

Ironically, in view of the horrible tragedies of 2001, today the FAA wants to turn back the clock and hand over many sensitive and critical air safety functions to private corporations.

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PROFESSIONAL AIRWAYS SYSTEMS SPECIALISTS (PASS)

Every day, 1.7 million Americans are in the air, traveling in 24,000 commercial and charter airplanes. They're confident that their pilots meet the highest standards of professionalism and safety...that the aircraft they're in has been thoroughly checked out and properly maintained...and that the complex web of equipment and technology that keeps their flight on course and in contact with air traffic controllers works flawlessly.

We'd like you to meet some of the 11,000 men and women behind it all—the Professional Airways Systems Specialists (**PASS**).





PASS Members:

- ◆ Install, repair, maintain and certify more than 50,000 facilities and equipment used in air traffic control and national defense.
- ◆ Ensure aviation safety through the certification, surveillance, and oversight of all private and commercial aircraft, air agencies, air carriers, airmen, and repair facilities.
- ◆ Assure the safety and quality of aircraft and associated products through certification of aircraft and parts suppliers on their capability to maintain quality.
- ◆ Oversee the design and development of flight procedures and perform flight inspection services for ground and air navigation at more than 3,000 airports in the U.S. and abroad.

Some politicians want to “privatize” air safety—relying on private corporations to perform the sensitive and crucial functions that **PASS** members employed by the FAA now carry out. Last year, Congress decided that privatization of airport security was a bad idea and ended the practice of private security firms operating passenger check-in.

The safety of our skies is a fundamental government responsibility. **PASS** members are hard-working, dedicated public servants who provide a crucial protection against corporate corruption by reporting directly to Congress. Without the unfiltered, objective services that **PASS** members provide, the nation would depend solely on corporate executives to report deficiencies in the system.

PASS is sounding an alarm now, before it is too late. You can help:

Write, e-mail or call your congressional representatives. Let them know that you want America’s air transportation industry to remain the safest in the world.

Check our website: www.passnational.org.



A Few of the **PASS** People Who Help Keep America Flying

George Gunn is a 40-year veteran of the aviation industry. A pilot with some 14,000 flight hours, George founded a pilot screening service. Before he accepted his appointment with the FAA some 13 years ago, George worked as a pilot examiner for Oak Aviation for eight years.



Today, George is president of **PASS** Chapter 538 in Atlanta. He is an Aviation Safety Inspector and Training Center Program Manager with responsibility for monitoring aviation training centers in the Atlanta region. He is married with two daughters and nine grandchildren. George also volunteers on the board of his community association.

George earned his BS degree from the University of New York in Albany, where he majored in Aviation. He holds an Associate degree in Applied Policy studies and holds pilot and mechanic certifications from several technical institutions.



Joan Matthiesen is a Marine Corps veteran currently stationed at the FAA’s Pacific Operations Control Center (POCC) in San Diego where she is a Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS)

operator. A 12-year employee of the FAA, she received her technical training in the Marine Corps. Joan serves as a **PASS** representative for Free Flight.

Carolyn M. Ware of Wichita, Kansas, is an 11-year veteran of the FAA. As a computer specialist Carolyn works the Help Desk and as a hardware and software installer.



Carolyn earned a BA in Fine Arts, majoring in Secondary Education and worked for four years as a programmer before joining the FAA in 1991. Active in the community, she participates in Black Women’s Studies and the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees.



Bob Abbott came to work with the FAA in June 1995 after retiring from the Air Force. Bob had more than 23 years of service in the Air Force, 20 of those as an Air Traffic Controller. When he signed on with

the FAA, Bob picked up where he left off with the Air Force, designing flight procedures and processing aeronautical information.

Today, Bob is assigned to the FAA’s Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, National Flight Procedures Office, a unit of the Aviation System Standards office.

In addition to his work with **PASS**, Bob is an active member of the Disabled American Veterans and a strong advocate of veterans issues.