

SUMMARY REPORT OF THE  
GENERAL AVIATION COMMITTEE

Wallace C. Goodrich  
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association

The General Aviation Committee consisted of the following:  
Wallace C. Goodrich (Chairman), Aircraft Owners and Pilots  
Association;

Bertha M. Ryan            Naval Weapons Center

James C. Pope            FAA, Office of General Aviation

The committee reviewed and discussed the list of suggested questions provided in conjunction with the members of the floating committees. It was agreed that the format of the meeting was unique and that the atmosphere created was extremely conducive to open discussions on the problems addressed.

National Transportation Safety Board Special Studies entitled "Fatal Weather-Involved General Aviation Accidents" (NTSB-AAS-76-3), and an AOPA study conducted by Mr. Samuel V. Wyatt entitled "Criteria for Weather Observations at General Aviation Airports", coupled with several recent serious wind shear landing accidents, were the cornerstones of committee deliberations.

It was generally agreed that:

- (1) Weather information in the system today is not readily accessible to the pilot for proper preflight decisions or in-flight considerations and that forecasts tend to be pessimistic, thus tempting the pilot after several false alarms to ignore the forecast.
- (2) Meteorologists generally do not seem to have sufficient understanding of general aviation requirements.
- (3) There is a wealth of weather data available within the Department of Defense which is not available in the system for civil use.
- (4) Pilots are not aware of the meteorological services and publications which are available to them.
- (5) There is an urgent requirement for weather information on many more general aviation airports. Automatic weather observation equipment appears to be the long-term solution.
- (6) Student pilots are not sufficiently indoctrinated in the area of in-flight adverse weather.
- (7) Unicom capability is not being utilized to the degree possible.

- (8) Pilots tend to be intimidated by controllers and tower operators who are not necessarily pilots and thus not always cognizant of the pilot's problems.
- (9) Pilots do not always meet their responsibility for the submission of in-flight weather reports on significant weather and/or unforecast conditions. In this regard development of airborne sensors appears appropriate.
- (10) Mass dissemination broadcasts such as PATWAS AND TWEB are not current.
- (11) Preflight briefings are not always complete and lack standardization. Current programs to automate the retrieval of data for use by the FSS briefer (AWANS/MAPS) and the Weather Forecaster/Briefer (AFOS) appear to be the solution. Further, the ongoing program for use of computer generated voice briefings via telephone and possibly via the standard television receiver is a promising solution to the general aviation problem.
- (12) Pilots on IFR flights have difficulty in obtaining weather information on uncontrolled airports which are their final destination.

In light of the above, the committee recommends the following actions.

- (1) Student pilot training programs include actual in-flight weather experience accomplished through instructor training.
- (2) FAA publish a bibliography of available meteorological services and publications in AIM Part I.
- (3) The priority for **PATWAS** and TWEB update in the functional responsibilities of the flight service specialist be increased.
- (4) FAA publish a "Good Operating Practices" circular for Unicom operators.
- (5) NWS review its quality control procedures and criteria.
- (6) NWS participate in more general aviation activities such as air shows and industry annual conferences to give the meteorologist a greater understanding of the pilot's problems and vice versa.
- (7) Efforts be made to make real time weather data available to the pilot from all sources to include military installations, Unicom operators, tower and approach controllers and air traffic controllers.
- (8) Emphasis be placed upon the establishment of weather observations at general aviation airports particularly where an instrument approach exists.

The initial capability to be met with trained observers to be replaced with automatic observation equipment when available. The program should be supported with monies from the Aviation Trust Fund.

In addition to the above, the committee feels that the workshop was a great success and should be repeated periodically in the future. Suggested improvements are:

- (1) Circulate proposed discussion questions to conferees in advance to permit study and consideration.
- (2) Schedule at initial and periodic intervals for the fixed committees to meet as a unit separate from the floating committees.
- (3) Schedule plenary sessions of the fixed committees.
- (4) Encourage participation by representatives of the aviation manufacturers.
- (5) Encourage representation by air traffic controllers and flight service specialists.