

TESTIMONY

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International Air Transport Association

Before the Transportation and Public Assets Subcommittee
of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee

Wednesday, February 25, 2015

Chairman Mica, Ranking Member Duckworth, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the 250-plus members of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) on the very important issue of aircraft tracking.

IATA's mission in the 70 years of its existence has been to represent, lead and serve the global air transport industry. Our members account for 84 percent of global air traffic.

IATA and its member airlines are committed to maintaining a safe and efficient international air transportation system. IATA member airlines have an exemplary safety record, with 0.3 accidents per million flights in 2013. Aviation is safe and remains safe because its culture is one of seeking continuous improvement.

In 2003, IATA advanced global aviation safety with its introduction of the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) program, an internationally recognized and accepted evaluation system designed to assess the operational management and control systems of an airline. All IATA members are IOSA registered and must remain registered to maintain IATA membership. From 2009 through 2013, the accident rate for airlines on the IOSA registry was 2.5 times better than that for non-IOSA-registered airlines. As such, IOSA has become a global standard, recognized well beyond IATA membership. As of October 2014, 154 (38 percent) of the 402 airlines on the IOSA registry were non-IATA member airlines.

In 2014, commercial aviation experienced tragedies that remind us that we cannot rest on our safety record and that we must do our best to anticipate the unanticipated, even if the possibilities are deemed extremely remote. We are nearing an infamous first anniversary of the unexplained loss of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370—a state-of-the-art commercial aircraft operating in radar controlled airspace.

Soon after the disappearance of Flight 370, IATA brought together partners from across the aviation industry including airlines, air navigation service providers, pilots, manufacturers, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and many other key stakeholders to undertake a critical review of current and future aircraft tracking capabilities and identify near-term options to improve those capabilities.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2014, this task force reviewed today's technologies, procedures, and best practices in terms of aircraft tracking. The task force found that most airlines track their fleets through a variety of means, including the vast majority who track through air traffic surveillance services—where they exist. We also verified that there are existing technologies, services, and procedures that can enhance aircraft tracking in the near-term and that a performance-based approach must be employed—there is no “one size fits all” solution. Established procedures must be followed and, where needed, improved to ensure clear, consistent, and timely communications between air navigation service providers and airlines. While the focus of the industry group was on the near term, it was recognized that emerging technologies will create new capabilities in the global air navigation infrastructure, including an improved ability to track aircraft.

The task force report was provided to ICAO in early December. ICAO incorporated its findings into their Global Aeronautical Distress Safety System (GADSS) document. GADSS is a concept of operations for routine, non-routine, emergency, and search and rescue situations. While these various stages are well defined in the GADSS document, IATA is concerned with suggestions that our industry should implement unnecessary solutions in the near term that will be more effectively addressed as more effective technology solutions are implemented over the next several years. For example, any deployment of Automatic

Deployable Flight Recorders would be redundant for airlines that implement real time data streaming.

On February 2-5, 2015, ICAO held a High Level Safety Conference. The agenda from that Conference addressed several key areas, including aircraft tracking, risks to commercial aviation in conflict zones, and sharing and protecting safety information. ICAO Member States concluded that (1) international standards for aircraft tracking are needed; and (2) that a performance based approach was appropriate when implementing those standards. IATA, along with other key stakeholders, will participate in an “implementation initiative” that will evaluate the feasibility of these proposed standards and provide guidance to both government and industry in terms of procedural gaps that may exist. IATA called on ICAO and its member States to move forward in such a way that does not result in premature, redundant, or unnecessary regulation.

There are some who believe that new equipment is needed on board aircraft today to enhance aircraft tracking. IATA believes that the immediate focus should remain on leveraging equipment already installed on aircraft. More importantly IATA believes that there is an urgent need to ensure adherence to the existing clearly defined roles and responsibilities of air navigation service providers and airlines.

Airlines are responsible for safely and efficiently carrying passengers. Air navigation service providers (ANSPs) are responsible for maintaining safe separation and monitoring their airspace at all times. Furthermore, the ANSP is the controlling authority managing routine and non-normal situations. As an example, an aircraft may deviate off track for a number of reasons, such as weather avoidance, vectoring for traffic, or for situations far more serious. In all cases, this responsibility and resulting timely actions remain with the ANSP. Air navigation service providers are also responsible for initiating alerts and search and rescue activities.

We believe that strict adherence to these roles and responsibilities will advance aviation safety more effectively and efficiently than layers of overly redundant mitigation. We will underscore the importance of these roles and responsibilities and procedural compliance not only throughout the implementation initiative but as we continue to work with governments and other stakeholders to ensure the safety of global aviation.

IATA and its member airlines recognize that commercial aviation is not sustainable if the public does not have confidence in the safety of the global air traffic system. The credibility of our industry is at risk when a modern commercial aircraft vanishes while under air traffic control and that, in the absence of facts, speculation defines the incident.

What the airline industry will never allow is speculation about its number one priority: the safety of passengers and crew. Airlines remain committed to ensuring the safe and efficient operations of some 100,000 flights every day and IATA will remain a vocal leader and strong voice in taking whatever steps are needed to honor this commitment.

Chairman Mica, Ranking Member Duckworth, distinguished members, on behalf of IATA, thank you again for the opportunity to speak to you today.

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In February of 2014 Kevin joined IATA as the Senior Vice President of Safety and Flight operations. In that position he is responsible for six divisions and over 100 team members worldwide providing safety, data support, operational, audit, quality, air traffic, and commercial product information.

Prior to joining IATA he was the President and CEO of the Flight Safety Foundation. He originally joined the Foundation in July 2010 as Executive Vice President. Prior to coming to FSF, he served as Vice President of Safety and Security at World Airways, Inc., where he led the Corporate Safety and Security Department. In his role at World Airways, Kevin was responsible for flight, ground, technical operations and administrative safety, security and compliance.

Prior to joining World Airways, he served as Captain and Chief Pilot, International Operations for Delta Air Lines, Inc. During his 26 years at Delta, he was an integral part of the safety department, holding the positions of Flight Safety Coordinator, and Manager of Line Operations Safety for a total of 8 years. Prior to his career at Delta, he flew for a regional carrier in the Midwest, and a corporate aviation department, for a total of 38 years of professional aviation experience.

He is the recipient of several Aviation Safety Awards to recently include the Flight Safety Foundation's President's Award, the SAFE Industry's General Spruance award for outstanding safety education program, and the Aircraft Firefighting International Working Group outstanding contribution to aviation fire safety. Kevin is a graduate of Purdue University's Professional Pilot Aviation Technology program.

Kevin brings over four decades of aviation experience to IATA, and will build on the rich legacy of the IATA Safety and Operations division.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Witness Disclosure Requirement – "Truth in Testimony"
Required by House Rule XI, Clause 2(g)(5)

Name:

KEVIN L. HIATT

1. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) you have received since October 1, 2012. Include the source and amount of each grant or contract.

NONE

2. Please list any entity you are testifying on behalf of and briefly describe your relationship with these entities.

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3. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) received since October 1, 2012, by the entity(ies) you listed above. Include the source and amount of each grant or contract.

NONE

I certify that the above information is true and correct.

Signature:

K L Hiatt

Date:

02/22/2015