BUSINESS AVIATION: A SNAPSHOT AT YEAR'S END

News / Business aviation

Each year, NBAA's Business Aviation Convention & Exhibition is where we view **business aviation**'s products and services all in one place.The event also is an opportunity to network with peers, learn new skills at education sessions, and reflect on the state of the industry as we move toward a new year.

During NBAA2015 – which will be held Nov. 17 to 19 in Las Vegas, NV – I will once again have the opportunity to brief the membership on the policy challenges facing business aviation. Two issues top our agenda: FAA reauthorization and avoiding a possible federal government shutdown. (Fortunately, a shutdown was temporarily averted in September when Congress passed a resolution to continue to fund government operations through Dec. 11.)

Avoiding a shutdown is important for business aviation because our industry is more regulated than most, so these disruptions have a disproportionately negative impact on us. As you remember, during the shutdown of 2013, many vital FAA services were suspended, greatly harming the aviation community.

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For example, the FAA Aircraft Registry in Oklahoma City, OK was closed. Use of the registry is required for the import, export, maintenance and, in some cases, use of general aviation aircraft and parts – all of which ground to a halt when the registry was shuttered. An Office of Management and Budget report indicated that the delay in aircraft deliveries caused by the 2013 shutdown held up $1.9 billion worth of aviation assets.

The second major challenge for business aviation is the need for Congress to reauthorize the FAA. The debate surrounding the agency's long-term program goals and funding levels has generated proposals for the creation of a privatized ATC system funded by user fees.

This poses an existential threat to business aviation because we know what becomes of general aviation in countries that have privatized ATC systems. General aviation suffers because those systems are not operated with oversight from elected officials who keep aviation policy decisions focused on the broad public interest. Instead, privatized ATC systems often are governed by a small group of self-interested parties that have the power to determine who gets to fly, when and where they will fly, how much it will cost to do so, and what type of payment will be required (including user fees).

As with any threat to business aviation, NBAA has responded forcefully. I have testified repeatedly before Congress to outline the association's concerns, and NBAA's call to action on the issue prompted individuals and business aviation groups to send thousands of e-mails and letters to Capitol Hill.

As the FAA reauthorization and government-funding debates continue, we all must be vigilant, proactive and resilient in advocating for business aviation, making clear to everyone how important our industry is to citizens, companies and communities across the nation. NBAA will continue this work, and I'm confident we will be able to count on your support.

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