Economic Solutions for United States Aviation and NAPA/FAA Involvement

The current economic situation in the United States which involves both general aviation and commercial aviation are both in unique situations. Currently with fuel prices are soaring and congested airports are creating real problems for airports and airlines. In the midst of the situation at hand there are several solutions that can both grow the aviation community and also save users money. The National Asian and Pacific American Association and the Federal Aviation Administration can serve as think tanks for solutions for the issues at hand. Some of the solutions include airline competitiveness at major airports that are slot controlled, alternative fuels to reduce dependency on fossil fuels, and finally advanced technology that will improve the efficiency of the system and further reduce cots to both the controllers and users of the system.

One major area of study is to increase competition in slot controlled airports. Some of these airports include Orange County (SNA), New York (LGA), Newark (EWR), and finally Washington DC (DCA). Currently many airlines have shown interest in serving these airports, but the current structure doesn't have enough room for these airlines to enter these vital markets, with this said current air fares in these markets remain very high with current legacy airlines making up a large portion of the market share. The real question at hand in this discussion is how organizations like NAPA and also the FAA support growth without restricting the system. The solution is both technology and also working with community leaders to extend hours of operation to select airports, where each airport is different. In the case of Orange County where a night curfew restricts aircraft early in the night, an extension of an hour or maybe two could increase slots to this airport. This is tough due to noise restrictions, but education of how new aircraft engines including aircraft like the Boeing Next-Gen and Airbus IAE engine could show how recent developments in technology have reduced noise and the noise restrictions could be loosened in order to support aviation development at the local airport. The discussion of New York La Guardia and Washington DC Reagan include a new plan to extend the perimeter rules and also use technology like RNAV to increase the system by adding distance served from the airport and also creating more slots. The recent plan by both Delta Airlines and US Airways could be considered where both airlines increase market share, where Delta gain slots from a trade from US Airways, where US Airways gains slots in Washington DC. The FAA in this case could again support the cause by again supporting both airlines shedding minimal slots to new entrants, specifically low-cost carriers. The community also has a role in supporting this, where local citizens can write congressionals in support of this idea. This is important since Congress has a vital role in either approving or not approving the plan.

Alternative fuels in recent times continue to be a major study in the aviation community. Algae in this discussion continue to be a major source of a potential energy source. In the last year the first successful test using this kind of fuel was demonstrated. To further create an environment where this kind of fuel can be successful requires a full plan. Research grants could be used to help support the development, global education on fuels could also be used to demonstrate the need of new alternative fuels. Creating new support the engine manufacturers like Rolls-Royce, IAE, and General Electric could also enhance studies and produce results. Resource distribution is also major issue when the fuel has

been tested and proved to be successful and this topic can be addressed locally at the airports. The major topic includes distribution from the fuel farm and to providers of fuel such as Swissport, AGS, and other contractors. This can be accomplished by NAPA and FAA working with the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) and it's sub-organizations on developing a fuel distribution network for airports. Communication and also working with local airport authorities and also airport management groups will be vital in order to get this fuel moving in the right direction.

The current situation on fossil fuels can be addressed on how to better use current strategies in order to reduce costs. Fuel hedging has proved successful in commercial sectors; this model could be used at the Federal level also. Where Federal aircraft could use the program to further save money, this could have both Military and also Government uses. The States could also use this for their aircraft as well. Every day the Government has vital aircraft operations all over the country and also the world and using proper fuel forecasts could save the systems millions of dollars with proper studies.

Technology is also major discussion in the system and new technologies like RNAV can provide further efficiency to the system by providing users more direct routes. The FAA in this case as well as NAPA could become marketers for this kind of technology and serve as resources, where operators could ask questions of how this kind of technology can save their operation money. This kind of technology also has a vital role in the air traffic community since it will reduce potential hand-offs in the air traffic areas, where a more direct approach and also path could be used. This could reduce the older system which requires numerous transitions when the user navigates its way through the air. Fuel savings are also benefit where more direct routes mean better fuel saving, where a shorter time in the area reduces costs.

The current aviation system can benefits from all of the ideas and NAPA as well as the FAA could serve as a vital resource for making these ideas come true. The current economic conditions of the community suggest new ideas need to come about in order to provide users a better cost-efficient structure. Making current slot controlled airports more efficient is one solution, another is moving in the direction of alternative fuels, and finally using better technology that can improve the system.