

All other flying is conveniently (and confusingly) lumped together under the term "general aviation," treated all too often by press and in Congress as a nuisance activity carried on by untrained, incompetent, unequipped, unregulated, rich, and probably drunken pilots. The lack of comprehension of the impact of both airline and general aviation operations on our national economy is a basic problem which must be attacked first. Until aviation in its every form is defined clearly and its requirements are recognized and understood, it is impossible to make any of the decisions for which these hearings were called.

AVIATION TRANSPORTATION—THE BIG PICTURE

It is convenient but erroneous to separate and segregate arbitrarily the certificated air carriers and general aviation. The development of a national air transportation system must provide for both. Otherwise there is no system.

THE AIR CARRIERS

Although the press writes about the crowded skies and about traffic jams aloft, comparing them with the 5 p.m. rush on the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, this is simply not the situation. The Air Transport Association, representing the major carriers commonly called "commercial" airlines, has 40 members operating passenger carrying airplanes under Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity, issued by the Civil Aeronautics Board.² These should be properly referred to as "certificated air carriers" or "certificated carriers." Excluding the aircraft operated by the six Alaskan lines, two Hawaiian, two Caribbean, and two helicopter airways which do not operate in the contiguous 48 states, fewer than 2,000 airplanes are operated in the U.S. by the certificated carriers.³ Obviously not all of these air carrier airplanes are flying at any one moment, nor do they serve all the country equally. The air space over all the 48 states is certainly not crowded with air carrier airplanes as some people would have us believe.

AIR CARRIER AIRPORTS

There is a general misunderstanding concerning the coverage of air service in the U.S. and the facilities used by the airlines. Some people tend to treat public airport facilities served by certificated airlines as if they *are* for air carrier use only, and a recent trend of thinking is that general aviation should not be permitted to use any such airport facilities. The reason professed is safety. Is it valid?

For the record, the certificated airlines do not own any airports. Carrier airports are not private facilities. They are public facilities paid for by public funds, frequently matched by federal funds. Their use by all users should never be restricted arbitrarily and should not be discussed without a thorough understanding of the situation.

STATISTICAL REFERENCES

Consideration of this situation can be confused unless the various types of statistics used by the air carriers are placed in perspective. Furthermore there must be a clear distinction made between the problems of handling aircraft movements in the air traffic control system (including the airport approaches and landings) and the problem of handling mobs of people on the ground in the terminals.

Distinctions must be made between:

1. Aircraft movements, both on the airways and on airports;
2. Available passenger seats;
3. Load factors;
4. Number of passengers originated at airports;
5. Passenger miles en route; and
6. Revenue passenger miles.

These statistics have valid specific management uses for the airlines but can generate erroneous conclusions unless assessed in their proper frames of reference.

² P.L. 85-726, 85th Congress, S. 3880, Title 3, Sec. 401.

³ 1967 *Air Transport Facts and Figures*, p. 34.