

Mr. DINGELL. Would it be beneficial for the subcommittee to have the benefit of the cost estimates not only on these recommendations but also on such other recommendations as the subcommittee will receive in the course of the testimony?

Mr. FRIEDEL. Well, we will try to get the figures. I want to say this: I am greatly impressed with the shortage business, the need for more men. I wonder if we can get 2,000; but at least we ought to get a start on it.

Mr. BURTON. Mr. Chairman, I had a little experience on this about 10 years ago. I was then a division chief in CAA and I had air traffic control and communications. At that time I urged quite strongly that they hire at least 25 percent more personnel for on-the-job training, pointing out the rapid increase in traffic that has then—that was then forthcoming and that we would be caught shorthanded and with a low experience level.

This happened, and suddenly CAA started hiring people off the streets and getting from well, wherever source they could. So I think the total cost to the taxpayer was far greater by waiting and then accelerating the program that was if they had hired these people at the time. The mood was evident.

I think the same situation exists today that eventually the taxpayer and the public will benefit by getting these people on the job as quickly as possible.

Our great fear is that the job is getting too strenuous and so difficult that it is not attractive any more. We are not getting the right kind of bodies into the pipeline. We have recommendations before the Civil Service Commission today and to the FAA to do something about it.

So whether or not they are given the authority and funds, I think they will still have a very, very difficult time in getting the proper kind of material into the pipeline for training purposes.

Mr. FRIEDEL. Mr. Devine?

Mr. DEVINE. Mr. Burton, the previous witnesses said the turnover was running high in air traffic control. Can you give me any specifics on that? Are you losing a lot? Are the oldtimers dropping out or what?

Mr. BURTON. I do not believe the turnover rate is high, I do not have the specific figures. But when we were conferring with the FAA, during the past year, this was pointed out.

We attacked the morale problem, and one of the responses that we got from the agency was that the turnover rate in the service was quite low. We accepted their figures. I don't remember what that figure was.

Mr. DEVINE. You suggested on page 2 that when an air traffic controller reaches age 40 his proficiency decreases—I suppose that is everybody, not just the aircraft controller.

Do you have quite a few in that category?

Mr. BURTON. I don't know what the average age is, probably 37 to 45, but one of the FAA's own studies indicates that their peak efficiency in this field wherein split-second decisions are needed, that they begin to go downhill at about age 45.

It is a safety business and we are talking about increased safety. I think it is different than sitting behind the desk.

Mr. DEVINE. Have you had any tower experience yourself?