

on the important subject of air safety and would like first to acquaint the Committee with the origin and growth of the Association. It was formed in 1956 and is composed of approximately 5,000 of the FAA's 12,000 air traffic controllers. ATCA is an independent nonprofit professional organization dedicated to advancement in the science of air traffic control. Although composed principally of active air traffic controllers, its membership also includes pilots, private aircraft owners and operators, aviation industry organizations, engineers, and manufacturers. The Association is also a Corporate Member of the International Federation of Air Traffic Control Associations.

Mr. Chairman, we listened with great interest when General McKee and Mr. Thomas, together with members of the National Transportation Safety Board, testified before this Committee on air safety. The questions posed by members of this Committee to these witnesses raise many issues on air safety and, in particular, stressed the possible need for radar and control towers at all locations served by air carrier aircraft. Comments of the Committee indicated to us that if the agency would just come forward and present a case for what it needs, sympathetic consideration would be given to these requirements. However, press reports now indicate that the agency is encountering great difficulty in obtaining funds even to maintain the present system. We understand that the agency's F.Y. 1968 budget request sought no new towers or radar, but nevertheless was cut by the House Appropriations Committee. A discussion of air safety becomes academic in the light of the economy pressures that are being exerted on the agency.

Air safety, in the next decade, cannot be provided merely by maintaining the present air traffic control system. The Committee will undoubtedly hear the same general tenor of statistics repeated by many people. They show that generally, by any standard of measurement, air traffic has more than doubled in the period of less than the 10 years that the FAA has been in existence. They show further that it is expected to more than double again by 1975. Air carriers anticipate a future annual growth rate of approximately 12%, compounded FAA Annual Reports for past years all repeat the same fact, that the number of aircraft handled by air traffic control facilities have increased at a yearly rate of approximately 15%, and were handled at no increase in the size of the controller work force. The controller work force today handles more than twice the number of aircraft annually than it did when the FAA was created in 1958. Today the system is stretched to the limit of its endurance.

The Civil Service Commission Classification Standards for controllers created in 1958 contemplate that the busiest towers and centers are those which will handle more than 100,000 instrument operations annually. Today, there are some that have 500,000, and FAA estimates that by 1975 there will be 12 ARTC centers that will handle one million operations per year, while seven others will hit the 600,000 mark. The pressure and tensions which this increased work volume is causing to controllers has become an increasing concern to FAA. The agency last year subjected all controllers to a psychological evaluation and found 200 to be suffering from tension sufficiently severe to require a full psychiatric examination. Of these, 15 were retired for disability and an additional number were required to obtain treatment. A recent FAA medical report discloses that a controller's proficiency commences to decrease at age 40, and shows that the average controller age will exceed 40 by 1972.

Controllers are not the only ones affected by air traffic growth. Air carriers and their passengers are also affected by it. At one time passengers could expect delays during bad weather. But in recent years probably every member of this Committee has experienced air traffic delays at the Nation's larger airports even in the best of weather. These delays derogate from the one principal advantage of this mode of transportation—speed, and are estimated by the air carriers to cost them \$50 million per year in added costs.

But the most important consequence of the increasing saturation of the airspace is not delay or inconvenience, it is the effect upon air safety. The Nation's growing air traffic volume simply cannot continue to be handled with safety with existing airports, existing ATC facilities and equipment, and the existing size of the controller work force.

We suppose that all witnesses before this Committee will agree that the Nation urgently needs more airports. Some persons propose more air carrier airports at larger cities; others propose the segregation of small aircraft to new satellite airports. Whichever is done, new airports are urgently required to reduce the present saturation at larger cities. The Federal Aid to Airport Act authorizes the