

NATA - THE VOICE OF AVIATION BUSINESS FOR 80 YEARS

The National Air Transportation Association (NATA) represents nearly 3,700 aviation businesses across a broad cross section of the industry, including FBOs, Part 135 air carriers and fractional ownership companies, flight training, maintenance, airport sponsors at over 330 general aviation airports, air medical operators, and others. The Association serves to elevate the safety and professionalism of its members by convening industry thought provoking leadership on its policy committees, examining contemporary issues, and pursuing solutions that prioritize safety and economic viability. To that end, the Association's ongoing major policy initiatives include a campaign to educate and end the practice of illegal air charter, efforts to reform outdated hangar foam fire protection standards, elevating the professionalism of the air charter broker industry, and promoting a consistent regulatory framework that collectively maximizes safety and viability.

Since its establishment in 1940, NATA has not only focused on advocacy, but also on elevating the safety and professionalism of the industry. NATA's Safety 1st program is the industry standard for training general aviation support personnel. Since 2008, Safety 1st has trained over 40,000 individuals. With Safety 1st, organizations and training administrators are empowered with flexible tools allowing them to customize learning pathways to meet the specific needs of their operations and the specific learning requirements of their team members.

AVIATION BUSINESS INDUSTRY

General aviation businesses are primarily considered small businesses, which support 1.2 million jobs and provide over \$247 billion in economic output in the United States alone, and contribute to the nation's competitiveness, growth, and continued innovation.

An essential lifeline to rural America, general aviation companies operate at nearly 4,500 airports and thousands of cities that are not served at all by the airlines but are nonetheless impacted by major changes in industry activity. The aviation activity in these cities and towns supports good paying jobs, economic activity, and connectedness.

In times of need, aviation businesses provide vital transport of medicines, specimens, testing supplies, medical personnel and patients in need of specialized care (including transporting patients with compromised immune systems), staging areas for critical supplies, repatriation flights, access to research, and other critical functions such as organ transplants.

Without these crucial businesses, the essential roles that GA fulfills will cease, leaving a serious void in disaster relief capabilities and diminishing the support of growth and prosperity in many cities.

The following are key priorities for General Aviation Businesses:

(1) ENVIRONMENT

NATA and its members actively participate in initiatives related to sustainable aviation fuels, solar power and battery storage systems, eliminating PFAS, 100LL alternative fuels, FBO and aviation facility infrastructure efficiencies for aircraft operations, and aircraft noise mitigation technologies. NATA is working with its membership and through industry coalitions to highlight the achievements of aviation businesses in building on efficiency gains, sustainability, and other efforts to reduce its environmental impact. NATA recently established an Environment Committee to support the industry's long-held goal to expand access to aviation, while embracing technological advancements and sound policies that promote a cleaner future.

Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF): General and business aviation have made tremendous progress toward integrating sustainable fuels, but difficulties remain in production capacity. A \$2/gallon blender's tax credit for sustainable aviation fuels would provide parity with biodiesel for SAF, eliminating the "competition" for production and supply between the two.

Eliminating the use of toxic PFAS foam in aircraft hangars: Business and general aviation share the goal of eliminating the use of toxic PFAS firefighting foam in their hangars, but these systems are mandated by state and local fire officials as a condition of occupancy/construction and are set forth in NFPA 409. Their use is not regulated by the FAA and thus the federal government currently has no ability to preempt their installation. A few states have banned the use of PFAS.

Tax credits for solar farms at airports on hangar roofs: The FAA's VALE program has historically been undersubscribed, despite improvements in the 2018 reauthorization. Eligibilities should be reexamined that could leverage public-private partnerships or unique partnerships with businesses located at airports to transition to renewable and solar energy.

(2) WORKFORCE

NATA and other aviation associations in Washington are collaborating on Capitol Hill and regionally with members to close the gap between supply and demand for skilled pilots, maintenance technicians and other aviation professionals. NATA launched a Workforce Development Committee as a means to provide information and find solutions to help aviation businesses remain competitive in hiring and inspiring the next generation of aviation professionals. The committee is comprised of regional representatives with boots on the ground insight and access to educational programs in under-served communities and initiatives that support the skilled technical workforce shortage.

The Trump Administration has never published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the workforce development programs authorized by §624,625 of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, for which Congress has appropriated funding. These programs will train the next generation of aircraft mechanics and pilots. Any forthcoming NOFO should emphasize grants to participants that can improve participation with at-risk and minority populations. Increased funding is needed and this is a great opportunity to work with at-risk youths and provide training.

(3) PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

NATA and its members support public-private partnerships at general aviation airports as a means to provide benefits to airport sponsors, users and operators, while creating high-skilled, high-paying jobs in the community. A business-friendly environment attracts public-private partnerships to the airport, including those that advance green technology and neighborhood compatibility.

Business and general aviation traffic has seen a 90% year-over-year reduction in some locations. For many general aviation businesses, lease and minimum annual guarantees represent one of the largest fixed costs. Providing funding for the abatement of leases as the pandemic subsidies will ensure a full resurgence of this important industry.

(4) SAFETY CONCERNS

NATA is in a leadership role in working with the FAA, members, and industry stakeholders to address the pervasive risks of illegal air charter operations. Illegal air charter operations continue to be a significant risk for the traveling public, as air carriers playing by the rules continue to be adversely impacted by low hourly rates and a market that doesn't understand the regulatory intricacies of operational control and the risks to safety.

Illegal air charters are a black-market industry that have resulted in a series of fatal accidents, but enforcement is difficult. While FAA may identify such operations, IRS should be enforcing the simultaneous tax evasion these operators are also engaged in, and authorize the FAA to seize and ground the airplanes used in willful activity.



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