

FOREWORD

Maintenance operations for every U.S. air carrier will change significantly over the next decade. The forces impacting the maintenance industry today will make such change inevitable. Aircraft under development now for service in the late 1990's include on-board systems to provide diagnostic data and the full range of maintenance information. New aircraft increasingly will use composite structural materials and will incorporate advanced flight control and avionics systems. Aircraft size will increase. Some aircraft may carry as many as 650 passengers. By every measure, maintenance will be even more demanding and will require new capabilities and skills of the aviation maintenance technician.

The air carrier industry will place heavy demands on its maintenance support in the year 2000. Increasing passenger loads per airplane make it mandatory that careful attention be given to every item affecting flight safety. While concern for flight safety and the quality of maintenance will remain unabated, concern for maintenance efficiency will increase. Cost control is becoming more and more important.

The above challenges for future air carrier maintenance are quite demanding. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the forces impacting air carrier maintenance today, to predict how these forces might affect maintenance a decade from now, and to consider strategies of change that will ensure that maintenance contributes to continuing U.S. leadership in commercial aviation.

This meeting was attended by representatives of all segments within the air carrier industry, including airline operators, manufacturers, maintenance managers, union representatives, regulators, information management and computer scientists, and others. Presentations highlighted issues that air carrier maintenance is facing now and is likely to face in the future. Other presentations described information management technologies that could be employed to considerable benefit in future maintenance programs. I wish to thank all of you who attended the meeting and especially those who gave presentations. The presentations and the group discussions will be of great value to us as we move toward the year 2000.

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