

FOREWORD

The safety and operating efficiency of the U.S. air carrier fleet depends on a dedicated and productive maintenance workforce. Can maintenance productivity be affected by features of the maintenance work environment? The answer is an unqualified "Yes."

Ample evidence demonstrates that workplace improvements can produce significant pay-off. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 mandated a number of safety improvements in American industry. The result was a three-fold reduction in the occurrence of work-related fatalities in less than 20 years. Just as safety benefits from workplace improvements, so does productivity. Efforts in which better working conditions and better work equipment have been introduced show comparable improvements in organizational productivity. Obviously, the work environment is important in determining how well work is done.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the air carrier maintenance community are very interested in seeing that the work environment for maintenance is as good as can be provided. The FAA and industry are in agreement that workplace improvements can lead to enhanced safety and to a more efficient maintenance workforce. From the perspective of either outcome, the American public and American industry are beneficiaries.

This meeting brought together representatives of airline maintenance departments, aircraft manufacturers, employee unions, the Federal Aviation Administration, safety and health organizations, academic institutions, and others concerned with air carrier maintenance. Their expertise and contributions concerning the many features of the work environment are greatly appreciated. I wish to thank all of you who attended the meeting and especially those who gave presentations. A range of topics was discussed and information of real value for maintenance operations was provided.

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