AERO 2

July marks the first anniversary of the Boeing FLEET TEAM™ Digest, a web-based information resource that provides current status on significant technical and maintenance issues for all Boeing- and Douglas-designed commercial airplanes.

Available through MyBoeingFleet.com, the FLEET TEAM Digest contains information similar to that previously provided in the in-service activity report, fleet issues summary report (FISR), technical focus report (TFR), and in-service occurrence (ISO) report. The big advantage of the digest, aside from consolidating publications, is that it can be available in hours — and to a much wider range of airline personnel than those who received paper or disk copies.

When Boeing launched FLEET TEAM Digest a year ago, the site contained 134 articles. It now has more than 1,200 articles available for research and viewing. Approximately 12 new articles or revisions are added each business day. To further enhance the capabilities of the digest, we introduced a new home page last March. The page provides a quick list of recently published articles and a much faster search engine to find other articles.

In addition, later this year, the FLEET TEAM Digest will be included in a search engine found on the Maintenance Documents site of MyBoeingFleet. The digest also will be included in the Maintenance Documents’ automated e-mail notification process, which notifies airlines when new information is published.

The FLEET TEAM Digest is one of the five most frequently visited sites on MyBoeingFleet. We appreciate all the usage the site receives and are proud of the site’s high quality and varied content. If you do not already have a MyBoeingFleet account, you can obtain access to the digest by contacting MyBoeingFleet at DDCS@boeing.com. We welcome your comments or suggestions for improvement. Use the Contact Us selection on the site, or send an e-mail to FTC@pss.boeing.com.

Earlier this year, the air transport industry completed the most comprehensive study ever undertaken into the effects of aging on aircraft systems, with a primary focus on electrical systems.

From that study, recommendations are being developed to further enhance the safety of air transportation. For operators of Boeing airplanes, I’m pleased to report that The Boeing Company has already done a considerable amount of upfront work to enable those recommendations to be readily integrated into airline practices and procedures.

The landmark two-year study was conducted by the Aging Transport Systems Rulemaking Advisory Committee, which was established by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in January 1999.

Committee members were drawn from the airplane manufacturer, supplier, airline, and regulatory sides of the aviation industry. The committee focused on jetliners 20 or more years old, which include about 3,700 Boeing- and Douglas-designed airplanes worldwide. Five key tasks were undertaken:

- Inspection of electrical systems of almost 100 older jetliners of various makes and models,
- Review of electrical systems’ fleet history in light of service bulletins and airworthiness directives,
- Evaluation of maintenance criteria to identify and correct any aging systems issues, review and updating of standard wiring practices, and review of training programs to ensure that they address aging electrical systems.

The committee uncovered no immediate fleet-safety-related issues, nor did it find any conditions in the wiring or other systems that were not already known by the industry. This is a strong validation of existing processes that call for regulators, manufacturers, and airlines to work together and share information for the benefit of aviation safety.

But the committee did not simply endorse the status quo. Instead, it took the key learnings from this exercise and developed a set of recommendations to enhance wiring installation, maintenance, and design; improve training programs; and provide better documentation. The FAA has asked the aging systems committee to continue working with the agency to develop implementation plans that will further refine the industry’s approach to the maintenance of electrical systems in older aircraft.

Boeing already has taken a number of steps that will make it easier for our customers to integrate the recommendations into their maintenance practices. For example, our engineers applied the latest Maintenance Steering Group Level 3 (MSG-3) analytical process to the development of new maintenance plans for older jetliners, with more emphasis on wiring systems. In addition, Boeing has developed its industry’s first complete five-day course focused on maintenance and installation of wiring through FlightSafety/Boeing Training International.

We’ve also disseminated airline best practices in electrical systems maintenance, improved the reporting of wiring concerns, and improved the documentation of wiring design, installation, and inspection criteria. We’ve also undertaken aggressive research and development, such as arc-fault circuit breakers for incorporation into current and future designs, new wire testing methods, and further studies into the effects of aging on wiring.

These and other initiatives are a direct result of our long-standing commitment to fleet safety. We at Boeing are fully supportive of industry task forces such as the aging systems committee. Such industrywide cooperative efforts are in the best interests of the entire air transport system and the traveling public.

RAYMOND MARZULLO

DIRECTOR OF SERVICE ENGINEERING
COMMERCIAL AVIATION SERVICES
BOEING COMMERCIAL AIRPLANES

Wayne Maxey
DIRECTOR OF REGULATORY LIAISON
COMMERCIAL AVIATION SERVICES
BOEING COMMERCIAL AIRPLANES


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