



121 North Henry Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-2903
T: 703 739 9543 F: 703 739 9488
arsa@arsa.org www.arsa.org

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Media Contact:
Matt Hallett
T: 703 739 9543
matt@arsa.org

ARSA's MacLeod touts contact maintenance safety at BTC/Teamsters summit

Alexandria, VA - Emphasizing the pivotal role of foreign repair stations in the aviation industry, Aeronautical Repair Station Association (ARSA) Executive Director Sarah MacLeod addressed attendees today at the "Aircraft Maintenance Outsourcing Summit". The summit, sponsored by the Business Travel Coalition and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, explored the expanding role of contract maintenance providers in the aviation industry.

MacLeod drew attention to the robust safety record of the aviation industry, which increasingly relies on independent contract maintenance and alteration services. In the past ten years, network carriers have increased their reliance on contract maintenance from 37 percent to 53 percent. It is no small coincidence that the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) revealed that civil aviation safety continued its trend of improving safety numbers in 2006, with general aviation posting its best safety record in the 40 years of NTSB data tracking. "We are in an unprecedented period of safety. We are here because we are committed to continuing this safety record," MacLeod stated.

The summit also explored the role of overseas contract maintenance providers in the aviation business community. "Although the location of work may differ, quality does not," MacLeod added. While the reputation for quality, safety, and security enjoyed by overseas aviation maintenance entities has been called into question by select interest groups, the "numbers don't lie" - a 2005 survey conducted by ARSA revealed that the average FAA-certificated repair station located abroad is audited more than *74 times* each year by a variety of oversight authorities and such stations maintain a strong safety record.

In addition, MacLeod echoed ARSA's support for improvement in current oversight mechanisms and urged rational rulemaking by Congress and federal agencies. "Contract maintenance is here to stay...thus concerns have to be carefully vetted and based on analysis."

ARSA has a distinguished, 20-plus year record as an international trade association whose primary members are companies that hold part 145 repair station certificates issued by civil aviation authorities. ARSA's members include leading aviation maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) companies, aviation manufacturers, airlines, and businesses that serve the repair station industry. More information about ARSA is available at <http://www.arsa.org>.

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