

Gary Fortner, President

Aeronautical Repair Station Association Annual Report – Prepared Remarks

March 15, 2024

The Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City

Good morning. This Annual Meeting of the Members of the Aeronautical Repair Station Association will come to order.

My name is Gary Fortner, and I am carrying the tradition of my family by serving as the President of the association for at least the third, if not the fourth time. Since you can find all you need to know about me with a Google search, let me take this time to introduce the full Board of Directors and Officers who I ask to stand as I introduce you and stay standing until I give the all clear.

The association's Vice President is Bob Mabe, Director of Regulatory Compliance for HAECO Americas.

The treasurer is John Riggs, Director of Airworthiness for Chromalloy
Board members representing small and large businesses working on aircraft, engines, propellers, and components are—

Josh Krotec, Senior Vice President, First Aviation Services

Rainer Lindau, Vice President of Quality Management, Lufthansa Technik

Alison McHugh, Vice President of Safety & Quality from FEAM AERO

Rob Roedts, Vice President of Aircraft Solutions for Columbia Helicopters

Terrell Siegfried, Assistant General Counsel of NORDAM

And finally, Jon Silva, President & CEO of AeroKool Aviation

Thank you for serving....and you may be seated.

The Board's full commitment is shown through every member being a sponsor for this year's event—and speaking of sponsors—without whom the association would

be in trouble, let me personally thank not only my fellow board members but Aircraft Electric Motors, COOPESA, MRO Holdings, AAR, ST Engineering, Turbine Controls, Component Repair Technologies, Lynden Air Cargo, EARP Aviation, Little Wolf, Sunvair, and our full team at Obadal, Filler, MacLeod, & Klein.

Speaking of the management team, thank you for everything to Sarah, Christian, Brett, Kimberly, and Marshall Filler (the man who's "part-tirement" has made him a better golfer without drainer ARSA of his knowledge) with behind the scenes help from Michael O'Born and Maiké [pronounced "MIKE-ah") Denda. Please give them a round of applause.

The financial health of the association continues to depend upon membership. This obligates every one of us to become a champion for ARSA, bringing your suppliers, business partners, and even customers into the association. Our renewal rate remains above 90 percent, the ability of the association to do more can no longer depend upon less. The Annual Conference sponsors help produce cash flow that helps the team represent us internationally, but it's not enough to sustain long-term growth of the benefits on which we all depend. Please get free dues by referring other members...that's part of the direct benefit to you...and make the most of ARSA's experience by participating in or sponsoring training sessions or advertising in its communications. Align yourself with ARSA's quality and ensure its continued financial health and growth.

Database developments have entered the transfer stage after several years of extremely hard work, the new database was specifically designed in-house and will simplify the management of member data and contacts.

Bringing periodical production of the *Daily Intelligence*, *Dispatch*, and *the hotline* in-house has increased control of member and ally contacts and is netting more income than received from advertising sales in years past: Every dollar of advertising investment made now comes directly to the team running our association – thank you to those six companies that transitioned to us after the separation from our previous vendor and the one that has newly committed. In 2023, ARSA published 247 *Daily Intelligences*, 12 issues of *the hotline* and 52 *Dispatches*. Advertisers get notice in all and on the association's website.

Training sponsorship is active, and we look forward to more sessions being produced with support from members. Please consider sponsoring training; in just a little bit you will see the value of the content.

While regulatory change is slow (except when it isn't) persistence does pay off. We still have controversy over the need for an FAA Form 8130-3 on every new part used in dual release maintenance, but we have positive developments. It looks like the burden of having to maintain current manufacturer data, which the agency does not require be provided, may be lifted. The association petitioned for a similar change in 2019, so some things do come to pass: The agency's current proposal to amend § 145.109 has an April comment deadline and ARSA encourages members to take notice.

On the negative side, there is the foreign drug and alcohol regulation that also needs attention—ARSA is developing comprehensive comments focusing on the more legal aspects of the proposal, but those that will be negatively impacted must comment. There is nothing more persuasive than company comments containing financial and practical hardships.

The legislative wheels grind slowly. The U.S. Congress' effort to reauthorize the FAA has just entered its fourth extension, but both the House and Senate are now actively working towards a long-term bill, so progress is progress. Most of the maintenance industry's priorities, as championed by ARSA, are included in one or both bills and our Legislative Day attendees helped to make the case for turning them into law. Those priorities include international cooperation, regulatory consistency, and workforce investment: Themes that should sound familiar to this audience and that we'll continue to sound for years.

Career development continues to be not only an industry imperative, but the point where ARSA's many initiatives converge. The association has long pushed its members, allies, and government partners to acknowledge the broad pathways that can bring professionals into and through our industry. The careers created along these pathways depend on education and training rooted in regulatory knowledge, technical competency, and professionalism. The

I started this speech with a review of ARSA's financial health. While our members' investment is the backbone of our current strength, our future depends on how we grow the other tools that produce value for members and revenue for the

association. My fellow directors and I can see the team's effort to build these resources and you will notice how they are interwoven into all ARSA does in its advocacy and operations. Through the training sessions I've already mentioned, model manuals and tools, communications efforts, and overall commitment to regulatory knowledge, the association protects our businesses, serves our shared goal of safety, and leads on our behalf.

I may hate to speak in front of anyone, but I take a lot of pride in my family being part of this organization since its inception. We have watched it grow from six people discussing – of all things – the FAA Form 8130-3, into a world-recognized organization for both its regulatory and legislative activities.

Take advantage of the resources built for your benefit:

Use the tools provided on the website, especially the training. It is essential to the business of aviation safety and provides a return on investment.

Become politically active—as painful as that is for me to say, I have learned that taking 4 or 5 hours a year to engage with local and federal lawmakers is worth the time effort and Christian can make it even easier.

Help build this event. If you did not appoint an ambassador this year so your folks at home could partake in this Conference, do so next year. Even better, identify someone from your team to come here and join us. Spread the word, the work, and the knowledge.

Thank you for supporting the association—are there any questions from the floor? From the ceiling? The doors?

Gary Fortner
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OPEN FLOOR FOR QUESTIONS

I hereby adjourn the 2024 annual membership meeting.