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## Proposal to limit air travel inequities

(Reprinted from The Forum, Fargo-Moorhead Dec. 16, 1982)

By ED MAIXNER  
Staff Writer

An airline passenger boarding at Fargo's Hector Airport for a trip to New York pays 46 cents per mile to travel to Minneapolis, and then pays as little as 13.5 cents per mile for the rest of the excursion.

Disparities in air fares have proliferated since the federal Civil Aeronautics Board began lifting its regulating hand from commercial airlines a year ago, U.S. Sen. Mark Andrews of North Dakota said Wednesday. And, he said he wants the new Congress to consider some limits on the inequities when lawmakers reconvene in January.

Andrews presented his views recently to an international convention of airport managers meeting in Philadelphia. His proposal is to restrict the range of fares an airline could offer to a certain percentage. No airline could offer a fare which was, for example, more than 30 percent more or less, on a per mile basis, than any other fare offered by the same airline.

Andrews said he knows of a congressman from St. Louis, Mo., who buys a ticket for a flight from Washington, D.C., to San Francisco on a super-discount rate. "Then, when the flight stops at St. Louis, he gets off the aircraft and throws away the rest of the ticket — and it's cheaper than buying a ticket for a Washington-to-St. Louis trip," he said.

"That is crazy," Andrews said. The senator said what is unfair is that airline passengers who are not flying among the major hubs where the discounts are offered are forced to subsidize the super discounts.

"All I'm saying is 'let competition work,'" Andrews said. "If a lean, well-run airline can offer cheaper rates than the next airline — fine," he said, but passengers should not be forced to pay an airline's costs for fare wars in other markets.

Also, Andrews said, deregulation was

intended to result in free competition among airlines. But, the largest airlines are taking deregulation as an opportunity to drive other airlines out of business by duplicating the smaller airlines' routes at cheaper rates. The predatory air fares are far below the airlines' cost of service, and the airlines' customers on other routes are paying for the cheap rates between selected cities, he said.

Andrews said he has no plans to author legislation curbing predatory air fares, but has talked to airport operators and others who are disturbed by the direction the fares are taking. He said he has

addressed the problem with Sen. Nancy Kassenbaum, R-Kan., who heads the subcommittee on air transportation for the Senate Commerce Committee.

Andrews' position is supported by Harold Vavra, executive director for the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission. Vavra said deregulation has sparked a growing disparity between fare rates between major hub airports, such as New York, Chicago or Los Angeles, on the one hand, and fares for passengers boarding at smaller airports.

He found some fares being offered by

major airlines, such as the \$99 one-way fare between New York and Los Angeles or San Francisco, amount to less than 4 cents per mile. Meanwhile, a Fargoan pays 11 cents per mile to Los Angeles; a passenger boarding at Bismarck, 13 cents per mile.

Vavra said the disparity is going to worsen because the CAB is still phasing out its control over airline rates. After Dec. 31, he said, the fares will be subject to no CAB influence, and the war among airlines for the major hub passengers is expected to intensify.

Vavra said the legislation proposed by Andrews recognizes the traditional variances in fares between major hubs and small airports. It would allow a 30 to 40 percent variance in recognition that the airlines' cost of service are greater on short flights, or for flights with fewer passengers.

Andrews said the 30 percent variance is liberal. Airline officials themselves have claimed in the past that the difference in cost between short and long flights is about 10 percent. That is, a stop adds about 10 percent to a flight's cost.

And, Vavra said airline officials themselves have acknowledged fares are not even covering costs for routes between major hubs where super discounts are offered.

That means most of the nation's airline passengers, boarding at small and medium-sized airports, are subsidizing the \$99 fares between the East Coast and West Coast Vavra said.

Joe Parmer, executive director for the Fargo Airport Authority, said air fares charged passengers out of North Dakota cities are "really exorbitant when compared to the cut rates people can get out of Minneapolis."

The air fare structure is keeping passengers on the ground between Fargo and Minneapolis, Parmer said. A survey of local travel agents, conducted by the airport manager's office, found many travelers are driving to Minneapolis to board flights at discounted rates, rather than boarding at Hector Airport, Parmer said.

### NDAAA annual meeting set

The program for the upcoming annual meeting was set by the board of directors at the last board meeting held on December 3.

The format for the upcoming meeting will be considerably different from those in recent history.

President Larry Linrud issues a special request for the members and potential members of NDAA to get out in force for this annual meeting.

The issues facing NDAA are many and varied and the membership must participate.

At 6:30 p.m. Jan. 19 there will be a no host, cash bar, social hour. This will be an opportunity for the airport managers, and airport authority groups to come together and determine how they would like to see their interests represented.

On Thursday, Jan. 20, 1983 at 9 a.m. the general membership of record for 1982 will hold a business meeting, ratify the action of the board of directors and any other business to come before the general membership.

A luncheon is set following the morning session to allow opportunity to visit and discuss the forming of a new NDAA.

At 2 p.m. on Thursday those in attendance who qualify for membership in the new association will be asked to join the association for 1983. After the membership has been established, it will be called on to elect its officers. Following this reorganization activity, so that the positions can be developed on the issues facing the aviation industry, the membership will be asked for input on the issues of aircraft registration fees increase, replacement of sales and use taxes with an excise tax, air ambulance standards and licensing procedures, adoption of a new constitution and by-laws, as well as any other business to come before the membership.

It is assumed at this time that the meeting will adjourn by 5 p.m. and the balance of the evening will be on your own.

## Airport funding may be cut

The Director of the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission says Gov. Allen I. Olson's budget proposals would cut state-aid to airports to about one-third of the present level to major North Dakota cities for airport projects.

Harold G. Vavra says that, for the coming biennium, the executive budget is recommending about \$1 million less in general fund appropriations for the Aeronautics Commission than it received for this purpose during

this biennium.

About 95% of the cut would be in general fund block grants for airports at Bismarck, Fargo, Grand Forks, Minot, Devils Lake, Jamestown and Williston, Vavra said. In the next biennium Dickinson will not be involved in this cut, since it no longer has scheduled air service.

For instance, Vavra said, the Aeronautics Commission during the current biennium paid the

Bismarck airport over \$412,000. That would be reduced to about \$136,000 and the others accordingly, he said.

The 1979 Legislature adopted a policy of having the state assist local taxpayers in supporting their major airports, Vavra said. He added that he believes that's a good policy and expects city and airport officials to lobby the 1983 legislative session to continue the funding.

# 1982 sets record for state projects

In eleven months to December 1, 1982, the N.D. Aeronautics Commission provided 50% state matching funds totalling \$589,000 for 60 general aviation airport improvement projects throughout North Dakota, according to Harold G. Vavra, director. General Aviation airport improvements combining state and local airport funds was in excess of \$1,178,000 in 1982. General Aviation airport projects were spread to airports in 28 out of North Dakota's 53 counties, or 53% of all counties had at least one or more projects sponsored by either a municipal, county or a regional airport authority, Vavra said.

State share of the 50% funding level on these projects was generated 100% by a 4 percent excise tax on the sales price of aviation gasoline and jet motor fuel, Vavra said.

There are a total of 50 general aviation airport improvement projects which have been granted funds by the Aeronautics Commission which have been carried over to 1983 for final completion such as asphalt runway painting of centerlines and numerals and runway lights which could not be completed in 1982.

In addition the State Aeronautics Commission paid out in 1982 a total of

\$750,000 in state airport block grants, which were divided up among the air carrier airports, for improvements at Bismarck, Devils Lake, Dickinson, Fargo, Grand Forks, Jamestown, Minot and Williston. These funds came from the state general fund.

Total state dollars granted or paid to both air carrier and general aviation public airports for improvements totalled \$1,339,000 in the first eleven months of 1982, Vavra said.

Improvements at general aviation airports ranged from constructing new paved runways, taxiway and aprons at New Town and Lakota to major extension of a paved runway, apron and taxiway at Tioga to overlay pavements, runway crack sealing and seal coating of runways, taxiways and aprons to maintain the existing system of airports in North Dakota.

Taking into account both air carrier and general aviation public airports, the Aeronautics Commission in eleven months in 1982 granted or paid state funds to 68 public airports in 34 out of North Dakota's 53 counties for airport improvements or 64% of all counties in the state had some improvements in 1982. 1982 was an all-time high for airport improvements with funding on a joint state-local level, Vavra said.

## Tax tips for free

Information about how air taxi companies can obtain exemptions from the new federal aviation excise taxes passed by Congress this summer is being offered free of charge by the National Air Transportation Association.

NATA says its material includes a breakdown showing which taxes apply to air taxes; tips on how air taxis can get exemptions from aviation fuel taxes and the IRS forms required to do so; fuel tax exemption certificates for air

taxi pilots; and the forms the companies need to file tax returns.

The material is designed, NATA says, "to help air taxi operators understand tax procedures more quickly and incorporate them into their financial systems smoothly."

To receive the material, call NATA's Washington, D.C. office at (202) 965-8880.

## FOB/air taxi group invited to meeting

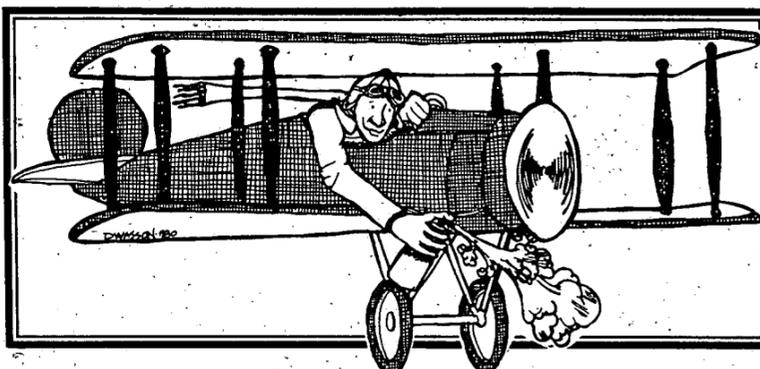
A major portion of the FOB/AIR TAXI of North Dakota membership met in the meeting room of the general aviation terminal in Bismarck on December 20 to discuss their future.

Nine out of a possible 20 ATCO certificate holders attended the meeting called by NDAA secretary Jack Daniels for the purpose of discussing the future of the FOB/AIR TAXI group and its relationship with the NDAA.

The current effort by NDAA to form a

single association of aerial applicators has set the stage for the group to seek a new home.

Depending on what happens at the upcoming annual meeting of NDAA with an attempt to merge the two associations, the FOB/AIR TAXI group along with the Airport Manager/Airport Authorities interests will have to take action to put together some sort of an association, elect some leadership and move forward with the business of representing their collective interests.



## Recertification set

Pesticide recertification and update sessions for commercial-ag applicators (both aerial and ground) and for dealers for use or sale of restricted pesticide chemicals and for initial certification of commercial applicators who have never been certified before, will be held as follows:

Recertification Only	
Dates	Location
March 28, 1983	Fargo at N.D. State University (NDSU) Ballroom. Begins at 9:00 a.m. with evaluation of applicants taking place between 3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. the same day. (One day for recertification only)
March 29, 1983	Mandan, N.D. at Seven Seas Motel. Begins at 9:00 a.m. with evaluation of applicants taking place between 3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. the same day. (One day for recertification only)
March 30, 1983	Minot, N.D. at Ramada Inn Motel. Begins at 9:00 a.m. with evaluation of applicants taking place between 3:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. the same day. (One day for recertification only)
Two-Day Session for Those Who Have Never Been Certified Before	
Dates	Location
March 28, 29, 1983	Fargo at N.D. State University (NDSU) Ballroom. Beginning at 9:00 a.m. each day.
March 29, 30, 1983	Mandan, N.D. at Seven Seas Motel. Begins at 9:00 a.m. each day.
March 30, 31, 1983	Minot, N.D. at Ramada Inn Motel. Begins at 9:00 a.m. each day.

The recertification and certification courses will be conducted by representatives of NDSU and the N.D. Department of Agriculture. Evaluation and written examinations will be given by Mr. Adolph Gross, Area Pesticide Representative.

## Registration

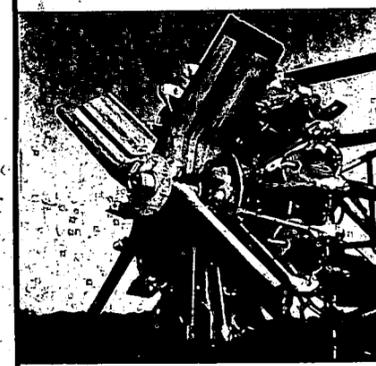
Aircraft and helicopters registered with the Aeronautics Commission in 1982 have set a record high, according to Harold G. Vavra, Director.

A total of 1,813 aircraft and helicopters have been registered in 1982 compared with 1,724 last year, an increase of 89 or 5.2%.

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## Around the State

**MADDOCK** . . . recent airport inspection shows the runway shoulders are soft and dangerous. The center 25'-30' of the asphalt runway is firmer. They also have trouble with the wiring so the runway lights are inoperative. The airport authority is challenged with searching for financial sources to repair the airport. Snow is plowed irregularly.

**GARRISON** . . . has a new airport authority chairman, Lynn Boots. He has informed me that the airport has been using 15 watt 130 volt light bulbs for their low intensity light fixtures because these last a lot longer and cost approximately 88¢ each. Possibility of an FBO in a few years increasing aviation activity for their community.

**MOHALL** . . . has a new airport authority chairman who is also the airport manager. They will be installing an NDB next spring and planning for a crack filling project. Airport managers across North Dakota are noticing that in the cold season the cracks are really opening up and are quite numerous. So start planning for later winter or early spring crack sealing while they are still opened up. Contact the North Dakota Aeronautics commission on crack filling information and application for a grant for 50% cost sharing basis pending the approval of the Aeronautics Commission.

**LANSFORD** . . . has a dual purpose airport also being used for a golf course. The surface is fair since golf courses tend to be watched over and given tender-loving care. Local CETA workers repaired the runway edge markers and painted them. Sunday breakfast fly-ins occur frequently in the summer.

**GLENBURN** . . . has no snow removal available and confirm winter conditions with manager. Caution is advised to notice the obstructions on both runway ends before using. In order for runway lighting, a new site should be developed and hopefully the airport authority will be successful in selecting a new site.

**GLEN-ULLIN** . . . will be doing some preliminary planning this winter for realigning a longer runway. Highway 49 south of town may be overlaid next year and coordination with this contractor may produce a substantially lower bid for an asphalt runway.

## NDAAA meeting agenda

Wednesday, January 19	6:30 to 8 p.m.	No host social hour, snacks by NDAAA
Thursday, January 20	7:30	Continental breakfast, purchase tickets as you enter
	9:00	Annual Meeting
		The future of NDAAA President's report Treasurer's report General business
	12:00	Luncheon, purchase tickets as you enter
	2:00	Formation of the future. Report on legislation Appointment of lobbyist Discussion of by-laws, dues, membership

## FAA OKs funding

The Federal Aviation Administration announced that it has signed grant agreements for 1982 fiscal year federal-aid airport funds with a number of airports in North Dakota for improvements. Federal funds pay 90 percent of project costs as follows:

1. Grand Forks International Airport	\$2,628,127	for parallel GA runway.
2. Bismarck Municipal Airport	442,650	for improvements
3. Minot International Airport	234,735	for improvements
4. FARGO - Hector Field	448,404	Carried over to Fiscal 1983 (Enplanement funds)
5. Dickinson Municipal Airport	678,380	Overlay pavement on runway, taxiway and apron.
6. Williston (Sloulin Field International)	268,164	for improvements
	<b>\$4,700,460</b>	<b>Total</b>

### Linrud to chair meeting

President Larry Linrud, formerly of Wahpeton and now operating from Velva, will chair the annual meeting of NDAAA, the state's recognized commercial aviation association.

President Linrud, who played a major role in the development of Relative Wind, has set the next annual meeting of NDAAA for 9:00 A.M. January 20, 1983 at the Kirkwood Motor Inn in Bismarck.

### North Dakota Aviation Association Officers

**President:** Larry Linrud, Wahpeton, ND.  
**Vice-President:** Fred Andersen, Aviation Services Inc., Minot, ND.  
**Treasurer:** Arnie Widmer, Widmer Flying Services, Crete, ND.  
**Secretary:** Mike Hohl, Mayport Aviation, Mayville, N.D.

**Immediate Past President:** Bill Beeks, Central Flying Service, Washburn, ND.

**Executive Secretary:** Jack Daniels, Serv-Air Accessories, Inc., Williston, ND.

**Delegate to National Agricultural Assn.:** Dan Thompson, Thompson Aerial Spray, Wyndmere, ND.

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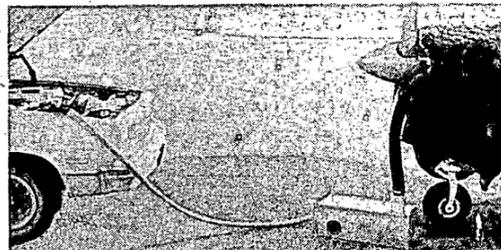
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