

# ELECTION 2008 ISSUES

KEEPING AMERICA STRONG



**civil aviation**



national security



space

## **The Environment and Civil Aviation**

**Ensure environmental standards and policies that are global in development and application**

### **Issue:**

Aviation is a global enterprise that requires uniform international product acceptance and operating procedures. However, recent European actions threaten the ability of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to establish global standards and practices that foster continued growth while reducing the impact of aviation on the environment.

The United States provides strong leadership to ICAO through an ambassador-level representative and a technically competent U.S. mission. Regional and local efforts, however, are undermining ICAO's leadership and the global aviation community's cohesiveness in identifying and implementing solutions to environmental issues. A weakened ICAO would lead to a multitude of conflicting standards driven by competitive advantage or political action that will disadvantage U.S. interests and hamper economic growth.

### **Background:**

The United States provides 25 percent of ICAO's budget, which enables U.S. specialists to fill a large number of ICAO technical leadership and staff positions. U.S. leadership in ICAO, combined with the technical expertise of the Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection (CAEP), provides a framework to ensure that U.S. aviation environmental issues are well represented in the global aviation community.

There is international consensus that environmental concerns could limit future aviation growth. While aviation is responsible for only two percent of global carbon dioxide emissions, aviation is a high-profile target during the ongoing global warming debates. This will intensify in the future, and aviation's projected growth will be in jeopardy because without continued technological and operational advancements that percentage could increase significantly.

ICAO, through CAEP, is the global agency charged with addressing international aviation environmental issues. The committee focuses extensively on the impact of aircraft noise and engine emissions and is examining the issues surrounding the development and use of alternative fuels. It has recently expanded its activities to include the impact of airport congestion and en route delays on emissions. Covering other areas of aviation, the ICAO Air Navigation Commission develops the organization's standards and recommended practices that provide a framework for global and local aviation regulations and policies.

Acting responsibly in concert with ICAO, international aviation has demonstrated a history of reducing aviation's environmental impact. For example, over the past 40 years, carbon dioxide emissions have been reduced by 70 percent. An international approach remains critical; and, because of ICAO's leadership role, national, regional, and local solutions have not been successful.

Contrary to its aggressive aviation industrial policy, the European Union imposes a myriad of operating restrictions, taxes, and charges on airlines and consumers to limit aviation growth. Europe is also attempting to mandate charges in their emissions trading systems from non-European airlines, including those from the United States. This is a detriment to the development of global solutions to environmental issues and can impair aviation and economic growth. The United States must remain vigilant to avoid worldwide imposition of these practices.

In the United States, the Next Generation Air Transportation System, or NextGen, developed by the Joint Planning and Development Office (JPDO) will pull together operational and technological advancements to reduce the environmental effects of aviation. Successful deployment of NextGen is key to U.S. leadership in the global aviation community and ICAO.

ICAO provides a framework to ensure interoperability between NextGen and other international air traffic modernization efforts, such as Europe's SESAR initiative. The environmental benefit of NextGen and other international modernization initiatives will be reduced fuel burn and carbon dioxide emissions through the elimination of airport congestion and en route delay through an evolving system that is safe, secure, and efficient.

### **Recommendations:**

AIA urges the candidates to:

- Continue U.S. commitment to ICAO as the preeminent global body responsible for all aviation environmental matters.
- Appoint a knowledgeable ambassador-level representative to the ICAO Council and provide robust support resources to the economic, environmental, legal, safety, and security activities of ICAO's bureaus and standing bodies.
- Fill all U.S. mission positions with highly capable individuals.
- Ensure sufficient FAA and JPDO resources to provide technical assistance and support in ICAO and to ICAO member states.
- Ensure strong public-private partnership engagement in the definition and execution of U.S. international aviation programs within the ICAO framework.