

ABX Air, Inc.
FAA PMI Statement

Interview: Robert Dorn, Principal Maintenance Inspector – ABX Air, Inc.
Location: Via Telephone
Representative: Roland Standring
Time/Date: 0900 EST, 9 February 2009
Present: Cruz, Ward, Glenn, Tremback, Zitney, Soucy

During the Interview Mr. Dorn stated the following:

According to Mr. Dorn, he had been with the FAA for the past 19.5 to 20 years. Prior to joining the FAA, he was a Chicago Maintenance Foreman for United Airlines. Mr. Dorn has been the ABX Air, Inc. Principal Maintenance Inspector since about 2001. He also stated that ABX Air, Inc. was the only Operator he was overseeing.

According to Mr. Dorn, he has a team (13) of assistants that help him with the surveillance of the ABX Air, Inc. operating certificate. Further, Mr. Dorn states that his team is busy implementing and overseeing the FAA's Air Transportation Oversight System (ATOS)¹ to the carrier's maintenance operation. He estimates that approximately 60-65% of the elements have been completed but he further stated this was an ongoing process. Occasionally, he delegates additional tasks as needed to the assistants.

According to Mr. Dorn, his biggest challenges seem to be supporting the aggressive ATOS schedule forecasted for the next 5 years. He mentioned his team may be reduce to 3 assistants since ABX Air, Inc. may no longer be considered a "Mega Carrier". He further stated that he gets the full support from his FSDO management. Mr. Dorn could not recall a time when FSDO management denied a request he made regarding ABX Air, Inc..

Mr. Dorn could not recall when the last time he visited the operator both prior to and after the accident. He states that his team of assistants are constantly at the operator doing surveillance and attending meetings on a weekly basis. He further states his team debriefs him once they have returned to the office regarding their surveillance. If further action needs to be taken, such as letters of corrections, they are agreed upon by the team with Mr. Dorn having the final authority.

Mr. Dorn was asked about visits to ABX Air, Inc. major maintenance facilities. He stated that ABX Air, Inc. sends their aircraft to TIMCO (Greensboro, North Carolina), Avborne (Miami, Florida) and Israel Aviation Industries (Israel) for major/substantial maintenance. According to Mr. Dorn, his team found minor procedural issues during their visits to the facilities.

¹ ATOS assesses the safety of air carrier operating systems using system safety principles; safety attributes, risk management, and structured system engineering practices. Three major functions further define the oversight system: design assessment, performance assessment, and risk management. Design assessment is the ATOS function that ensures an air carrier's operating systems comply with regulations and safety standards. Performance assessments confirm that an air carrier's operating systems produce intended results, including mitigation or control of hazards and associated risks. Risk management process identifies and controls hazards and manages FAA resources according to risk-based priorities.

When asked about his impressions on the maintenance of the airplanes, Mr. Dorn stated that the airplanes were properly maintained with the use of all approved manuals and procedures. He states that ABX Air, Inc. management quickly rectifies any discrepancies highlighted by his FAA assistants. Furthermore, Mr. Dorn states that ABX Air, Inc. management is also very receptive to suggestions from his team.

Mr. Dorn was asked how ABX Air, Inc. examines maintenance trends in its operation. He stated that the Quality Assurance and Engineering departments gather and analyze the data. The data is then presented in both the Reliability and CASS meetings. The FAA assistants are invited and regularly attend these meetings, which occurs once a month. ABX Air, Inc. also holds weekly meetings (Advisory Notice meetings) to discuss action items for chronic aircraft. According to one of Mr. Dorn's FAA assistant, they attempt to make these meetings to be informed about chronic issues with the fleet. If the FAA does not make these meetings, they do receive copies of the meeting minutes and Reliability and CASS reports to review.

When asked if the ABX Air, Inc. trend analysis procedures were adequate, Mr. Dorn stated that the procedures were adequate and need not be revised. However, further questioning regarding the chronic oxygen system on the accident airplane, revealed the FAA was unaware of the four previous Advisory Notices.

According to Mr. Dorn, the FAA and ABX Air, Inc. have a very good working relationship. They are cooperative and compliant. Mr. Dorn was asked about the company culture, he stated the operator was supportive of a high safety culture in lieu of the recent economic challenges.