Air Transportation

William E. O'Connor

Recommended Citation
https://scholar.smu.edu/jalc/vol40/iss2/7

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Book Review


Since the last edition of Dr. Frederick's Commercial Air Transportation in 1961, no true textbook has been published on the air transportation industry. There is a need for such a text for college courses in air transportation. Moreover, a good text in this field would be a boon to a managerial trainee in an airline or any aviation enterprise as well as to a lawyer moving for the first time into the field of air law.

To a degree, sometimes a disappointing degree, the book under review seeks to fill this need. It appeared originally in 1967 and has now been reissued in its fourth edition.

Many books have appeared recently which study one aspect of this subject—e.g., Eads on local service airlines, Schneider on air freight and Straszheim on international airline economics. But only Kane and Vose seek to cover the whole field as a textbook should.

The authors divide their work into three major parts. The first deals with the history of the airline industry in the United States and the social, economic, and political importance of air transportation. The second deals with the structure and functions of the regulatory agencies—Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, Civil Aeronautics Board, National Transportation Safety Board. The third part, entitled "Administration of Air Transportation" concerns itself with the organization and management of airlines, the economics of air carrier operations, airline accounting and financial analysis, and (very briefly) certain legal aspects of air transportation.

Over one third of the book consists of an appendix containing the full text of the Federal Aviation Act, the Department of Trans-

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portation Act of 1966, and the twin acts of 1970 dealing with Air-
port and Airway Development and with Airport and Airway Reve-
nu. To these, which were in previous editions, has been added the
text of the Hague Convention on hijacking and the Montreal Con-
vention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety
of Civil Aviation. Other changes in this new edition are some up-
dating of figures and a considerable expansion concerning the eco-
nomic characteristics of air carriers and the organization and func-
tions of the International Air Transport Association.

Since, as noted above, this is the only current textbook on this
subject, a reviewer hesitates to be too critical. It is necessary to
state, however, that a reader seeking precision of thought or lucid
prose style will be disappointed. Moreover, there are important
gaps in the updating of information. The text of the Federal Avi-
ation Act includes only amendments through October 15, 1970,
which means that significant amendments, such as that of 1972 re-
specting CAB and Presidential power over international rates, are
omitted. A one-sentence reference to the CAB's new power is in the
text on page 137 but the Presidential authority is not mentioned.

The number of air freight forwarders is given (page 136) as
"approximately 150," whereas the actual number today is over
300. The revision in the maximum permissible size of air taxi air-
craft from the 12,500 pound standard to the 30 seat/7,500 pound
standard is correctly stated when discussing the scheduled "Com-
muter air carriers," but incorrectly stated on a later page with re-
spect to air taxis who do not operate on a scheduled basis. The dis-
cussion of supplemental air carriers on pages 133-134 is many
years out of date in stating that the supplementals conduct individ-
ually-ticketed flights between any pair of cities up to a limit per
month, and that the supplementals' authority is not a "Certificate of
Convenience and Necessity" but is issued under the exemption
powers of the CAB.4

The Warsaw Convention is discussed without any mention of the
Montreal Agreement or the Guatemala Protocol, leaving the im-
pression that the low liability limits of Warsaw are currently effec-
tive.

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4 See subsections 101 (35) and (36) of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958.
Despite the foregoing criticism, the strength of the book lies in its being a compendium of information crossing the whole spectrum of air transportation—historical, regulatory, and economic. Future editions would be made more useful for the classroom by including more analytical material and by seeking to show controversies among schools of thought. For example, IATA's organizations and functions are well described but there is no mention of the criticism of IATA as a "cartel" which may be injurious to consumer interests. An airing of this controversy, showing both sides, and of many other current controversies might enhance the book's usefulness as a textbook.

William E. O'Connor*

* Ph.D., American University, Washington, D.C.; Assistant Professor, Aviation Management, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Formerly with the Civil Aeronautics Board.