AUG 2 2004

Mr. Phil Boyer  
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association  
421 Aviation Way  
Frederick, MD 21701-4798

Dear Mr. Boyer:

Thank you for your letter concerning the interagency communication problems associated with the flight of Kentucky Governor Ernie Fletcher. Feedback from your organization continues to assist the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in making the appropriate decisions regarding procedures within the National Airspace System.

We agree that the problems of June 9 were obviously a breakdown in communication between the Federal agencies within the national capital region and the lack of the appropriate equipment that could have prevented this incident.

On July 8, a congressional hearing was conducted with the FAA and the Transportation Security Administration to explain to the United States Congress the events that led to the evacuation of the Capitol. The testimony of Ms. Linda M. Schuessler outlined the FAA's role in this event. The FAA and other Federal agencies have taken steps to correct the problems identified during the hearing. Specifically, the following areas were addressed.

A. The radio detection and ranging feed from the Potomac Consolidated Terminal Radar Approach Control facility was installed into the National Capital Region Coordination Center.

B. A six-point plan to improve the communication and coordination between FAA personnel and pilots flying into the Washington, D.C., Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) was developed.

C. Clarification was provided for the requirement for an operable transponder for aircraft flying within the ADIZ.

The events of June 9 identified problematic issues within the security structure for the national capital area. These identified issues have been addressed. We hope to continue working with your organization and other aviation users, as well as FAA facilities and other Federal agencies, as we collectively improve the security and safety within this airspace.
If I can be of further assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Robert Sturgell
Deputy Administrator