Kyser

              The Chicago Convention or Convention (“the Convention”) on International Civil Aviation is an agreement signed presently by 190 state parties (ICAO, 2009). The Convention contains a series of articles, specifically nine total editions or “Freedom(s)”. Each Freedom generally addresses different rights and arrangements created to ensure the safety and orderly growth of a nation’s air carrier transportation economy. Each Freedom has varying level of adherence; however, most developed countries grant these rights to foreign airlines.

              As the world continues to make advancements in the way we travel, and not to mention how we travel; it begs the question – What changes could we see in global aviation regulations? Well, for one, the Federal Aviation Administration (2010, FAA) has been working on the Next Generation Air Transportation System, or “NextGen” for short. Described by the FAA as *“…Not one technology, product, or goal. Rather, it is a series of interlinked programs, portfolios, systems and policies, and procedures.”.*The United States has already seen major changes in regulations with the NextGen system. More specifically, the introduction of mandating Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast Out (“ADS-B”) equipment. Virtually, all aircraft operating in the National Airspace System must equip and comply with ADS-B requirements set forth in 14 CFR Part 91.225 (2017, FAA). The ADS-B requirement was a direct and proximate result of NextGen. Whilst the mandate was looked at with some negative outlooks; the FAA looked to soften the financial “blow” with the inception of a rebate program for aircraft owners operating a fixed-wing, piston-engine airplane. Still, the estimate burden to operators in 2009 was $4.3mm (Dillingham, 2019). ADS-B is just one facet of NextGen. Another integral component of NextGen is Performance Based Navigation, or “PBN”. PBN at it’s core, allows aircraft capable of utilizing shorter more effective flight paths simultaneously reducing fuel consumption and exhaust emissions (FAA, 2021). The use of PBN has been prevalent as of late, the introduction of “Descend-Via” and Climb-Via” instructions/procedures has allowed airlines to standardize procedures across the board, as appropriate. Similarly, the standardized use of these procedures help Air Traffic Control facilities increase safety while simultaneously reducing traffic delay programs at some of the busiest airports in the United States. For example, it’s estimated that delays have been decreased by 17.6% with the implementation of NextGen so far (Spurduto, 2014).

              As the aviation industry continues to evolve, we will continue to see major technological changes. Unmanned Aerial Systems, known as “UAS” have become the topic of some very heated debate. As these systems start to get larger, and more capable I believe we will see them enter the commercial markets more rapidly. With the testing being conducted by Amazon and UPS, there is no single doubt that systems will eventually scale and become global. When and if that happens, ICAO and it’s 190 parties will surely have to re-visit the Convention.

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