

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE/ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL COORDINATOR FOR
METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES AND SUPPORTING RESEARCH

A photograph of a volcanic eruption with a large plume of ash and smoke rising into the sky. In the foreground, the wing and tail of an airplane are visible, flying through the lower part of the ash plume.

**PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
2nd International Conference
on Volcanic Ash and
Aviation Safety**

**June 21-24, 2004
Hilton Alexandria Mark Center Hotel
Alexandria, Virginia (USA)**

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FOREWORD

In February 1997, the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security recommended a national goal for government and industry of reducing the fatal aviation accident rate by 80 percent in 10 years. The National Aviation Weather Program Council adopted the 80 percent reduction goal and in February 1999 the *National Aviation Weather Initiatives* document was published as the next major step in coordinating the many federal and nonfederal programs relevant to improving aviation safety. Because of the serious threat posed by volcanic ash and other airborne hazardous materials, these were identified as one of the principal service areas for the aviation weather program.

Although there have been no fatal accidents caused by encounters with volcanic ash, there have been close calls with aircraft experiencing in-flight engine failures. Fortunately, these aircraft were able to land safely, but in some instances the cost to repair the aircraft was in the millions of dollars. The fact that there have not been recent incidents or accidents speaks to the work of the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centers around the world but there is more we can do to ensure that encounters are reduced to zero and that there is never a fatal accident resulting from a volcanic ash encounter.

This document summarizes the proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Volcanic Ash and Aviation Safety and provides a roadmap for building on our successes in aviation safety over the next decade. I wish to thank the U.S. Geological Survey, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Smithsonian, the Air Line Pilots Association, the Meteorological Service of Canada, the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior, and the Tenix Corporation for their sponsorship of this conference. In addition, I want to thank the Director of the National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, for his warm welcome at our reception and private viewing of the museum. Special thanks goes to the Working Group for Volcanic Ash, the conference planning committee, and to the colleagues from the 21 countries, 15 airlines, 12 universities, 6 private corporations and other participants who were instrumental in making this conference a huge success.

Sincerely,

Samuel P. Williamson
Federal Coordinator for Meteorological
Services and Supporting Research

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