THE WEATHER COMPANY COLLABORATES WITH GOGO BUSINESS AVIATION TO HELP IMPROVE TURBULENCE SAFETY

News / Business aviation

Each year, turbulence incidents cost airlines approximately $100 million due to crew and passenger injuries, unscheduled maintenance, operational inefficiencies, and revenue lost while planes are out of service. In fact, studies have shown that aircraft encounters with turbulence are the leading cause of non-fatal injuries in the commercial airline industry.

Dedicated to improving aviation safety, The Weather Company, an IBM Business has announced a groundbreaking deal with Gogo Business Aviation that will enable the delivery of real-time turbulence reports and alerts directly to pilots, dispatch and other operations personnel.

Mark Gildersleeve, president of business solutions at The Weather Company, announced today at The Weather Company Aviation Conference that Gogo will be implementing Weather's patented Turbulence Auto PIREP System (TAPS), a turbulence detection algorithm, on their aircraft-based communications server. The TAPS software will reside on Gogo's server, which provides access

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to the necessary data generated by the aircraft to create reports of turbulence intensity. Gogo's US-based air-to-ground and global satellite communication network is used to send the reports for immediate action in flight operations and weather forecasting. This is the first time a non-traditional system on the aircraft will be used to help enhance flight safety.

Traditionally, flight operations personnel, pilots and aviation meteorologists received coded verbal reports with limited information on flight conditions, also known as PIREPS. Due to multiple reasons, including a lack of cockpit data connectivity, pilots were not able to get real-time updates. Using the Gogo network, pilots in the cockpit will now be able to access real-time turbulence reports and forecaster created alerts through Weather's flight planning and operations applications like WSI Fusion and WSI Pilotbrief, and aircraft communication displays.

"Leveraging Gogo's expanded fleet of aircrafts, The Weather Company can quickly share real-time turbulence data directly with pilots and dispatchers, thereby improving crew and passenger safety," said Gildersleeve. "It is a great example of the Internet of Things in action, where we are collecting massive amounts of data very quickly and then using that insight to provide guidance to all flights that will be traveling through impacted air space."

"In this increasingly connected world, it's no longer just about passenger connectivity, we have to consider all the other ways we can leverage the available technology to enhance the overall flight experience and improve safety - such as a connected aircraft," said Andrew Kemmetmueller, vice president of connected aircraft services, Gogo. "Our ability to provide access to real-time data through our network will help pilots and operations teams improve flight planning, and ultimately, help airlines deliver the best in-flight customer experience throughout a flight."

In addition to real-time alerting, Weather will be able to leverage the TAPS reports to continually improve turbulence forecasts, the skill of Weather's overall forecast model, and the WSI Total Turbulence solution. Some customers of WSI Total Turbulence have seen a reduction in turbulence injuries and unnecessary turbulence-induced maintenance inspection by about 50% each. The reports will also empower Weather's team of 40 aviation meteorologists to alert clients of weather-related safety risks globally.

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