

Interview ...

Chevron's Tracy Boval Moves On From Aviation

Boval was a key leader among the fuel technical and operations sectors of the aviation industry.

In July 2007, **Tracy Boval** left Global Aviation as Product Quality Manager to lead Chevron's efforts in deploying



bioethanol in motor gasoline. During her five-year tenure, Boval was a key leader among the fuel technical and operations sectors of the aviation industry. She was

praised by airlines as a leading advocate skilled in diplomacy to generate consensus among various stakeholders. This resulted in improvements in fuel handling and

safer operations.

Boval is a graduate of the University of Hawaii with a degree in chemistry. She has spent 23 years with Chevron working in technical support, operations, emergency response, leadership development, new business development, and corporate staff. She also did advocacy work on sustainability for non-governmental organizations. She is succeeded by **Linda Gallaher**.

On her departure from aviation, at least for the present, Boval has provided JFR with her insights into key achievements in the aviation industry's fuel technical sector, current

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Spotlight on the Regions ...

Airlines From Southern Africa Meet To Discuss Their Regional Issues

Next month, more than 100 senior executives will be gathering at Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe to discuss current regional issues facing the industry at the Annual General Meeting and Conference of AASA, the Airlines Association of Southern Africa. While benefiting from sustained strong growth, profitability of its members has been low, and the airlines face high costs of government-owned monopoly infrastructure. Also, progress on liberalization is slow, as is the privatization of the airlines. So delegates face a challenging few days.

Originally formed in 1969, and renamed in 1995 with an updated

charter, AASA now represents the interests of 15 airlines and 23 associated companies that operate in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean. Collectively, the member airlines carry around 14 million domestic passengers in the region, plus over 8 million passengers to destinations around the world, with a healthy recent growth of around 12% per annum. They operate a wide range of aircraft, from small domestic commuter equipment, right up to the A340-600 and B747-400 aircraft.

John Morrison, Chief Executive, heads up a full-time staff of

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projects and their importance, and future issues and challenges.

JFR: What do you consider your greatest achievements during your tenure with Global Aviation?

Boval: My technical colleagues among airlines, fuel suppliers, engine manufacturers, and airframers have recognized me for providing leadership, giving direction to key issues, and challenging the *modus operandi* to create positive change. Balancing rich opinions while driving outcomes won support and recognition, which resulted in my appointment as Vice Chairman of the International Air Transport Association's (IATA's) Technical Fuel Group, which is a position typically reserved for airline representatives only. I was honored to have served in that capacity.

Several achievements come to mind during my tenure. Five years ago, the airline industry was not very healthy with the aftermath of September 11th, the SARS scare, and higher oil prices. Many airlines were restructuring and many major international oil companies were still in the midst of dealing with the outfall of acquisitions and new alliances. Travel to meetings and airline participation on industry issues were limited. I was tasked with helping IATA identify if it could take more of a leadership role and become more effective in the industry. I led a small task force that was responsible for creating a framework for decision-making to ensure that each work item provided true benefit and its task force members had the right Direction, Competence, Opportunities, and Motivation (DCOM). Work plans had to be compared against a catalog of industry group activities to make certain there were no redundancies. In addition, outreach and communication of the group's work was deemed a key output so information and good work could be shared.

Another example of joint industry collaboration was on the topic of aircraft microbiological contamination. An IATA task force completed a guidance document, and road shows presented to other airlines

were coordinated and sponsored by private industry, including Chevron and the U.K.'s Trade & Investment. These road shows were taken to Malaysia, the U.S., Singapore, China, and Panama. They helped the commercial interests of testing kit suppliers and imparted knowledge from microbiological fuel experts, fuel suppliers, airframers, airlines, and maintenance organizations. What is the value of this collaboration to the industry? We estimate that the cost of taking an aircraft out of commission is approximately US\$50,000 per day and even more importantly, safety, which is invaluable.

JFR: Did you ever face conflicts in your role at IATA and your technical responsibilities at Chevron?

Boval: Not really, since the common focal point is safety, a value that is paramount to both entities and rooted in our professional DNA. At times, as a fuel supplier, I may not have always agreed as to how to achieve the end results, but I knew that not being a player and getting red-carded (to use a soccer analogy) would not be healthy and would have pre-empted the opportunity to help shape the outcome. My view was that the airlines, whether they belong to IATA, ATA, or another airline association, essentially face the same industry risks, and that technical knowledge spreading throughout the industry has no hard boundaries. There were areas where technical issues became intertwined with competitiveness. This is when other fuel suppliers and I knew there were hard boundaries to draw amongst ourselves, but until then, using the mix of perspectives to develop technical industry solutions was the best approach.

The Technical Fuel Group ensures appropriate industry action on safety, environmental, and technical aspects of jet fuel. Keeping that purpose at the forefront, we were able to tackle a wide range of issues for the industry and, ultimately, for our individual companies.

JFR: You've been on the speaking circuit at many international technical conferences. Was this

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One of the best ways to help drive change is to encourage participation.

important to the technical groups and if so, why?

Boval: Absolutely. One of the best ways to help drive change is to encourage participation. Speaking at forums and conferences served as an excellent medium for this. It promoted dialogue and helped move our agenda forward, making substantial progress on a number of issues.

I made every effort to take key topics to non-fuel related airline audiences and fuel manufacturing audiences. Jet fuel is a product that is sandwiched between two major products in a refinery: Gasoline and diesel fuel. Process changes that affect these two surrounding products directly or indirectly affect the production of jet fuel. Consequently, keeping a watchful eye and having timely dialogues are both critical in managing unintended consequences.

One of my key messages was that jet fuel specifications are performance specifications, so minimizing unnecessary change will often result in less risk to supply reliability, including crude oil selections. It typically takes two to five years for a jet fuel specification to change. The conservatism of aviation industry experts is rightly justified, but justification for specification change must not come from trending historical refinery production fuel quality alone. The aviation experts must take a forward view and include in their models the impact and probable constraints from future petroleum crude oil or other feedstocks to make jet fuel. The crude oil found today will be transported to a refinery in 10 to 15 years. The impact on jet fuel quality and aircraft emissions must have already been anticipated with respect to required equipment investments, which typically need a five- to seven-year lead time.

Another key point is Chevron's view of jet fuel as "not just another commodity". We consider it as similar to a critical aircraft component, with the major exception of no built-in redundancy. It's certainly not like having two engines, where if one goes down, the pilot can still fly on the other engine.

A fuel's product quality is

paramount. Most non-jet technical audiences envision themselves on a plane and take for granted that the jet fuel quality "just happens". My main message is that the aviation technical community takes stewarding changes to other transportation fuels and its impact on jet fuel quality seriously, resulting in a number of people mobilized to "make quality happen". After all, it is about safety since, unlike an automobile, you can't park the aircraft on the side of the road if it's giving you trouble.

JFR: From a technical perspective, what has significantly changed over the last five years?

Boval: Discussions about various technical procedures and equipment, including alternative fuels, always evolve or recycle over time. But it is not so much the hard core technical aspects as much as the human interactions that have made a shift and affect how things progress.

It appears people are much more willing to work together to help develop solutions to the technical challenges facing the industry. Although it is a competitive world, it can also be inclusive of each person's views while maintaining effective relationships. It is the professional respect of each other's opinions that provides a common platform for resolution. Five years ago, stakeholders would often hold to their opinions as if they were undisputable. This attitude closed the door to exploration and dialogue to establish common ground. Today, strong opinions are expressed with as much passion, but also with a willingness to explore diverse views and make progress towards shared goals. Numerous examples exist of the industry's dynamics causing progress on a wide range of issues.

JFR: What's the greatest challenge still facing the industry?

Boval: To a large extent, we must start taking action to build the long-term view of the industry. If we don't, who will? Incremental changes are acceptable, but that won't lead to a major shift. Major shifts that focus on end-goal future scenarios need people to make it happen. Ageing

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