

## **OPENING REMARKS**

**AEA 52<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION & TRADE SHOW  
THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2009**

## **AIRCRAFT ELECTRONICS ASSOCIATION**

**PAULA DERKS, PRESIDENT**

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Ladies and gentlemen....welcome to Dallas! The presentation on the screen showcased your Association getting business done since we met last year in Washington, DC. We wanted to show you AEA's new headquarters, new staff members, and new programs we have built, added and created in the last 10 months.

Never before have we had the ability to host large industry meetings at our facilities, including the Small Airplane Directorate and FAA Washington working groups, large and small training classes, and since last August, more than 200 AEA members from around the globe were welcomed through the doors of AEA's new home.

Right Here, Right Now....AEA is working for you!

And that will continue now and into the future....no matter how uncertain that future may seem right now.

I have to be right up front with you....

This year's state of the association address is probably the hardest one I have ever had to deliver to you. The United States, and countries around the world are facing turbulent times.

It's a fine line to walk to know whether to stand here this morning and keep a smile on my face and tell you everything is fine, or to focus on the negative and commiserate with each other about how bad business is right now.

Never before in my lifetime, and I know in many of your lifetimes, have we experienced such an economy in turmoil. Our industry is hurting.

Disparaging remarks about the business aviation industry from our leaders in Washington and in the media has caused undue harm in the last several weeks.

Pilots are holding on to their cash and delaying the purchase of airplanes, delaying the retrofit of their cockpits, delaying even putting fuel in their planes.

And, AEA's members are feeling the effects.

As our member-companies are struggling with declining sales, decreasing prospects of new customers, a tightening credit market, and tumbling investment portfolio values, keeping the faith becomes even more critically important to all of us.

That's why I have decided this morning to set the tone of this convention for the rest of this week to POSITIVE.

Right here, right now...POSITIVE.

Am I wrong to do so? Am I kidding myself? Am I coming off as disingenuous to those who are struggling? I don't think so....and my proof is standing here at this podium and looking out into this ballroom at each and every one of you.

*What are you doing here?*

You are not here this week in Dallas because you think the world is ending and our industry is evaporating.

I think you are here because you, too, like me, choose to think positively, you choose to spend these slow times by investing in yourself and your business....

learning, training, networking, exploring new revenue streams, creating exciting new avionics technologies, and growing your business.

AEA thinks the same way....that's why we are developing new training products, and continually searching for new services to offer you to enhance your businesses and your bottom line.

We're designing new classes to take advantage of in the Derby Center for Professional Development at the AEA's new headquarters throughout 2009,

And, as the presentation just showed, we're debuting a new look and feel to our website with easier navigation to popular areas on the site,

Your board of directors has made it our mission to work in developing stronger relationships with airframe manufacturers to spread the word of the importance of AEA service centers and the role they can play in the aftermarket arena,

And we are planning for 2010 and beyond....with the promise of NextGen and the opportunities that brings the avionics community.

Right here, right now....with AEA beside you all the way. We are an industry of doers....with the guts and determination....much like our aviation pioneers before us.... We don't give up easy.

We have to depend on ourselves — to get the job done. We've done it before... and we will do it again....

Let's choose to stop lamenting about how awful the market is...and instead use that valuable time to focus on your company's true expertise.

It may be slower than usual, but now we all have a few extra moments to spend time on projects that have languished while money was being made,

relationships with local legislative figures can now be built....get involved with your local chamber of commerce; introduce yourself to your city council members; let your community know the importance of the business aviation community.

Why not write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper defending the right for corporations to use business aircraft as a smart economic business tool? SPREAD A POSITIVE MESSAGE THAT WE ARE ALIVE AND KICKING...

And it starts right here, right now....

with the 31 new products and services set to be introduced in a few minutes....with the cutting of the ribbon into an exhibit hall this afternoon bursting at the seams with new technologies... with more than 75 hours of training courses to choose from this week, and with the opportunity to socialize with industry colleagues at the social functions planned for your enjoyment.

The AEA staff and the board of directors are glad to be here this week. We thank each of you for making the commitment to be here, too.

Here's to a successful convention week...  
RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW.