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What About All The Things That Go Right?

It seems like every article I write (and just about all other articles on aviation safety) has an understandable bias toward the “what went wrong” aspect of some accident or incident. But I think that once in a while we need to acknowledge “the things that go right.” Millions and millions of aviation operations (both on the ground and in-flight) are conducted every year. I’m not going to regurgitate all the statistics, but you know that flying is safer than all other forms of transportation, and your chances of being killed in an airplane accident are minuscule.

Every single day there are pilots, mechanics, ramp personnel, cabin attendants, air traffic controllers and many others safely performing their jobs in a professional, prideful manner. If not, there would be hundreds of incidents and accidents every day. But it’s not like that. Overall, we are doing an outstanding job, and careless transgressions and consequential violations are relatively rare. Aviation, fortunately, is a loosely coupled system, i.e., there are a multitude of backups, checks, standard operating procedures (SOPs), and redundancies built into the system. Thus, if there is a failure or breach, there is a good chance that the failure or breach can be detected and corrected/mitigated before becoming consequential. When there is an accident or incident, then someone or something in the system failed. Fortunately, these are rare occurrences.

So, this short article is to acknowledge everyone in the business that performs their job in a safe and professional manner every single day of every single year. Kudos to you for continuing to keep aviation the safest form of transportation in the world!