



Aeronautics Director Celebrates 20 Years at Mn/DOT

Raymond J Rought, Director of Aeronautics celebrated 20 years with Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT), Tuesday, February 7, 2006. At a meeting attended by the entire Aeronautics staff, Ray displayed a soaring Eagle art print he received from Mn/DOT to recognize his 20 year milestone.

“Sometimes I can’t imagine that it has been 20 years,” said Rought, “but then I look at the many great experiences and the progress we have made with aviation in Minnesota and I can see the 20 years. I am proud of what we have accomplished and I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with and for so many fantastic people.” Rought continued, “I am fortunate to work in a job and industry where a vast majority of the people involved, truly enjoy what they do. It isn’t just a job, it is their passion.”

Rought, a certificated pilot, has been involved in aviation for more than 30 years. In June 1970, he began working in aviation with the Michigan Bureau of Aeronautics, immediately after college. In February 1986 he was selected for the job of Director of Aeronautics at Mn/DOT, where he currently remains. Ray Rought holds the unique distinction of being the longest serving Aeronautics Director for Minnesota, having completed 20 years. The previous record was held by Rought’s predecessor Larry McCabe, at 19.5 years.

Under Rought’s leadership Minnesota continues to be recognized as a world leader in aviation, with some of the finest navigational aids, the fastest, most accurate weather gathering and dissemination systems, and 146 top quality public airports and seaplane bases. Aviation officials from many other states and countries including Russia, China, Sweden, Finland, and France, have come to Minnesota to study how aviation works from the smallest singular item all the way to the grand planning for the future.

Ray Rought has been an active participant in aviation on a national level. There he has held the position of President of the National Association of States Aviation Officials (NASAO) and other top level positions in NASAO for a number of years. He has held active positions with the Transportation Research Board (TRB), and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. Rought has been, and continues to be very active in state aviation. Most weekends he can be found attending meetings in support of recognized aviation groups and organizations, including the Civil Air Patrol. He is also the current Vice President of the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame.

“I am always busy, and never bored,” says Rought. He added, “The value and importance of aviation to our society and to our world is a driving factor to me. Without aviation our state, region, and world would be drastically different. *With* aviation, even the smallest city in the state that has an airport, has their ‘front door’ open to the world!”

