Happy New (Forum) Year! This is my first column as Forum Chair, and I would like to start by thanking our Immediate Past Chair, Andrea Brantner, for her outstanding leadership of the Forum and recognize some of her significant accomplishments, including the addition of the General, Business and Charter Aviation and Airports practice committees and her focus on our governance and planning for the future. And, thank you to all of our other Past Chairs who have paved the (run)way for the long-term success of the Forum.

I’m excited for what lies ahead as we build upon our past accomplishments. We continue to be the one-stop-shop for aviation and space lawyers to learn and network as we work together to increase engagement, embrace and foster development of young lawyers, actively promote diversity, and provide resources to all of our members across our many various practice areas.

Under Andrea’s leadership, we launched the Forum’s first strategic plan to take a fresh look at the Forum’s mission, offerings, membership, diversity, pipeline, and governance. I’m thrilled to report that we have completed the first phase of the process. This milestone would not have been possible without the commitment and engagement of our Strategic Planning committee—David Heffernan, Leslie Abbott, Steve Taylor, Andrea Brantner, and Brian Friedman, and our consultant, David Tabak, as well as all of you who provided input via our survey, interviews, or otherwise. Thank you.

The strategic planning report confirmed much of what we know, but also what we cannot take for granted—that the Forum is fundamentally strong, with excellent programs, quality publications, and a stellar reputation. Our plan focuses on how we can build on our strong foundation to make the necessary changes to better serve our current and future members.

From here, we plan to engage with our Governing Committee on further refining our goals around content, governance, finances, and communications, as well as develop a working group to help with its implementation. We plan to use the results of our strategic plan as a living road map for the next few years and beyond.

During the upcoming year, we will continue to update you on the goals and implementation of the strategic plan road map. Its implementation will not be possible without your help, so if you are interested in getting involved overall or in any one of these areas, please drop me a line anytime.

Finally, we hope you enjoy this issue of The Air & Space Lawyer, which discusses the complicated issues around local labor law preemption in the aviation sector and conflict preemption for aircraft manufacturers. We also learn more about Kyle Levine, Vice President-Legal and General Counsel of Alaska Airlines, and his tips on what to do in Seattle before or after (but of course not during) this year's Annual Meeting and Conference. I look forward to seeing you in Seattle.

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