3.2 General Aviation Revitalization Act (GARA)

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On August 17th, 1994, the then-President Bill Clinton put pen on paper signing General Aviation Revitalization Act (GARA) into law. GARA was aimed to grant protection to the general aviation industry and manufacturers from the product liability by reducing the timeframe of their liability for the aircraft they have manufactured (Kovarik, 2007). GARA is a statute of repose which grants manufacturers of small aircraft and their parts from product liability for almost all accidents which involve their products that are 18 years old or older. GARA is termed as a watershed in the history of the modern general aviation industry. However, the effects of GARA are still widely debated among aviation experts.

According to many experts, GARA helped to revitalize the aviation industry. On the other hand, many experts believe that GARA did little to help the aviation industry and it encouraged the production of high-risk aircraft. During the 1970s, the general aviation aircraft production was at its all-time high. However, due to an increase in prosecution cases following accidents against the manufacturers decreased this number. Five years after the passing of the GARA, the production of general aviation aircraft almost doubled (Kister, 1998). However, this number did not come close to the staggering numbers of the 70s (Kister, 1998). Among many goals of the GARA, bringing down the prices of general aircraft was one of the most crucial goals. However, the prices of general aviation aircraft continued to increase. The reason for this hike in the prices of general aviation aircraft was that the manufacturers shifted their focus towards manufacturing high-end turbine luxury and business aircraft (Rice, 2004). At the same time, general aircraft manufacturers kept the production of piston aircrafts relatively smaller to what they were achieving in the 1970s. In this way, the general aircraft manufacturers made fortunes with small numbers of high-end business and luxury aircraft. Another reason for the increased cost in the general aviation industry was due to the liability diffusion which saw a surge in costs in other areas of the industry such as pilots and owners (Rice, 2004).

Taking into account the discussion above, the GARA did little to bring down the cost of the general aviation industry which made it so expensive.

**References**

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