



Memorandum

**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: **INFORMATION:** Audit Announcement – Air
Carrier Flight Delays and Cancellations
Project No. 12A3010A000

Date: April 16, 2012

From: Jeffrey B. Guzzetti
Assistant Inspector General
for Aviation and Special Program Audits

Reply to
Attn. of: JA-10

To: Associate Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration
Acting Administrator, Research and Innovative Technology Administration

The causes and impacts of flight delays and cancellations continue to be a key concern for Congress, the Department of Transportation, the airline industry, and the flying public. Although delays and cancellations have lessened in recent years, such improvements may not be long lasting once the demand for air travel increases, as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has forecasted.

In the recently enacted FAA Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-95), Congress directed us to update our 2000 report on the impact of flight delays and cancellations,¹ as well as examine various delay statistics, air carrier scheduling practices, and airport capacity benchmarks (i.e., the number of hourly flight operations that a major airport can handle safely). Accordingly, our audit objectives are to: (1) analyze recent flight delay and cancellation trends, (2) examine air carrier scheduling practices and their relative impact in causing flight delays and cancellations, and (3) assess FAA's use of capacity benchmarks to help manage air traffic at the Nation's busiest airports.

We plan to begin this audit in 2012, and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact me at (202) 366-0500, or Darren Murphy, Program Director, at (206) 220-6503.

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cc: Martin Gertel, M-1
Pierre McLeod, AAE-100
Paul Sanchez, RTC-1

¹ OIG Report No. CR-2000-112, "Air Carrier Flight Delays and Cancellations," July 25, 2000. OIG reports are available on our Web site: <http://www.oig.dot.gov>.