



Memorandum

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Announcement - FAA's
Revised National Airspace Certification Procedures
Federal Aviation Administration
Project Number 10A3001A000

Date: October 21, 2009

From: Lou E. Dixon 
Assistant Inspector General
for Aviation and Special Program Audits

Reply to
Attn. of: JA-10

To: Assistant Administrator for Financial Services and Chief Financial Officer

At the request of the Chairmen of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and Subcommittee on Aviation, we plan to review the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) safety certification process for air traffic control systems and services related to the Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) system. ADS-B is a cornerstone of FAA's Next Generation Air Traffic System and FAA is relying on a service-based contract in which it will own the data transmitted, but not the hardware, software, or ground infrastructure. The Chairmen expressed concern that FAA's recent decision to limit its certification procedures to FAA-owned systems may reduce the Agency's visibility into the performance of key systems such as ADS-B.

Accordingly, our audit objectives are to examine FAA's revised certification procedures, as applied to ADS-B, to (1) determine the impact on FAA's statutory responsibility to maintain the safety and integrity of air traffic control systems and (2) identify the challenges and risks associated with the private sector operating and maintaining key air traffic control systems.

We plan to conduct work at FAA offices in Washington, DC; Oklahoma City, OK; and other locations as needed. We will begin audit work in October 2009 and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 366-0500 or Barry DeWeese, Program Director, at (415) 744-0420.

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cc: FAA Deputy Administrator
ATO-E SBS

Program Manager, FAA Certification
Anthony Williams, ABU-100
Martin Gertel, M-1