




Memorandum

U.S. Department of
Transportation
Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Announcement—Review
of Potential Controller Fatigue Factors at Chicago
Air Traffic Control Facilities
Federal Aviation Administration
Project Number 08A3006A000

Date: January 7, 2008

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

Reply to: JA-10
Attn. of:

To: Assistant Administrator for Financial Services
and Chief Financial Officer

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has cited air traffic controller fatigue as a potential contributing factor to controller operational errors—a significant aviation safety issue. On December 12, 2007, Senator Richard J. Durbin wrote our office expressing his concern that staffing shortages, longer hours on the job, and a growing shortage of certified controllers may be causing controller fatigue at the major air traffic control facilities in the Chicago metropolitan area. He therefore requested that we review factors that could potentially cause controller fatigue at those locations.

Accordingly, the Office of Inspector General plans to audit controller workload factors at the major air traffic control facilities in the Chicago metropolitan area. Our audit objectives are to (1) evaluate key factors that could contribute to controller fatigue at Chicago O’Hare’s Air Traffic Control Tower and Terminal Radar Approach Control facility and Chicago Air Route Traffic Control Center and (2) identify what measures FAA has taken to mitigate potential controller fatigue at those locations.

We will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If you have any questions, please contact Dan Raville, Program Director, at (202) 366-1405 or Angela McCallister, Project Manager, at (202) 366-1451.

#

cc: Acting FAA Administrator
Anthony Williams, ABU-100
Martin Gertel, M-1