



---

# Memorandum

Date: March 04, 2020

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Announcement | FAA's System Security Re-Categorizations | Project No. 19F3016F000  
Federal Aviation Administration

From: Louis C. King *Louis C. King*  
Assistant Inspector General for Financial and Information Technology Audits

To: Director, Audit and Evaluation, FAA

---

The Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Publication 199, Security Categorization Ratings, defines three levels of impact—low, moderate, and high—on organizations or individuals when a security breach of an information system causes a loss of confidentiality, integrity, or availability. Such a loss in a system categorized as high impact is expected to have a severe or catastrophically adverse effect on organizational operations, assets, or individuals.

In August 2017, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) informed program managers in its Air Traffic Organization (ATO) that it was re-categorizing 61 ATO systems from low or moderate impact to high. In January 2018, many system owners appealed the re-categorization to an FAA-convened adjudication board. After the completion of the appeal process, 50 of the 61 systems had been re-categorized as high impact.

Due to the importance of ATO's information systems to the security of air traffic control and traveler safety, we are initiating this audit. Our audit objectives will be to assess (1) FAA's information system categorization process and (2) the security controls that FAA has selected for its systems recently re-categorized as high impact.

We plan to begin this audit in March 2020. We will conduct our work at the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center in Oklahoma City, the William J. Hughes Technical Center in Atlantic City, NJ, and at Department of Transportation (DOT) and FAA headquarters in Washington DC. We will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (202) 366-1407, or Abdil Salah, Program Director, at (202) 366-8543.

cc: FAA Chief Information Officer  
FAA Audit Liaison, AAE-001  
DOT Audit Liaison, M-1