



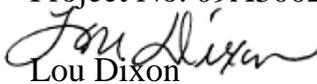
Memorandum

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Initiated of FAA's Call to
Action Plan for Improving Runway Safety
Project No. 09A3002A000

Date: January 5, 2009

From: 
Lou 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 Office of Inspector General (OIG) plans to audit the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) recent actions to improve runway safety. This audit is in response to an April 11, 2008, request from Senator John Rockefeller and Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee to conduct a comprehensive review of the current state of aviation safety, including runway safety issues.

Runway incursions (potential aircraft collisions on the ground) are a primary indicator of National Airspace System safety, and reducing these is a key performance goal for FAA. Over the past 5 years; the total number of runway incursions has increased, reaching a high of 1,012 in fiscal year 2008—a 39-percent increase since fiscal year 2004.¹

In August 2007, FAA and airline and airport officials created the FAA's "Call to Action Plan," a short-term plan for improving runway safety that focuses on (1) upgrading surface markings, (2) reviewing airports with high runway safety risk, (3) disseminating information and training, (4) improving cockpit and air traffic procedures, and (5) establishing an air traffic voluntary safety reporting system. FAA also established a Runway Safety Council as a joint government and industry body to take a systemic approach to improving runway safety.

¹ Effective October 1, 2007, FAA began categorizing runway incursions using the International Civil Aviation Organization definition. The new definition of runway incursions includes incidents that were previously defined by FAA as "surface incidents" (where a potential conflict did not exist).

Our audit objective is to evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken in response to FAA's "Call to Action Plan" for improving runway safety.

We plan to begin the audit in the final week of January 2009 and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Dan Raville, Program Director, at (202) 366-1405 or Mary (Liz) Hanson, Project Manager, at (404) 562-3778.

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cc: FAA Deputy Administrator
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