



Memorandum

U.S. Department of
Transportation

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: **INFORMATION**: Audit Announcement –
Audit of FAA’s Flight Service Station Program
Project No. 15A3004A000

Date: June 4, 2015

From: Matthew E. Hampton 
Assistant Inspector General
for Aviation Audits

Reply to
Attn. of: JA-10

To: Director, Audit and Evaluation

Flight service stations (FSS) provide general aviation pilots with aeronautical information such as weather briefings, flight planning assistance, and notices such as runway closures at airports and temporary flight restrictions. Employees at FSSs do not control traffic, but provide in-flight support to pilots who are lost or in need of assistance. These services are provided at no charge to users and are intended to help promote safe flight operations.

On February 1, 2005, FAA awarded a 5-year, fixed-price incentive contract with 5 option years to transition its 58 FSSs to contractor operations. By outsourcing these facilities, FAA anticipated cost savings of approximately \$2 billion over the 10-year life of the contract. To achieve the savings, the contractor reorganized FSS operations, modernized facilities, completed technological improvements, and implemented operational changes. In 2007, we reported that FAA had implemented effective controls over the initial transition of the FSSs to contractor operations. However, we noted that FAA needed to improve controls for items such as monitoring contractor staffing levels, training, and customer complaints.¹

The current contract will expire on March 31, 2016, and FAA intends to competitively bid a new contract. We are initiating this audit to determine whether the Agency achieved the original contract’s anticipated cost savings and avoidances and instituted effective controls to oversee the program. Our objectives are to (1) determine whether FAA achieved the original contract’s anticipated cost savings, and (2) assess FAA’s oversight of the program.

¹ *Controls Over the Federal Aviation Administration’s Conversion Of Flight Service Stations To Contract Operation*, OIG Report Number AV-2007-048, May 18, 2007.

We plan to begin the audit this month and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. We will conduct our work at FAA Headquarters in Washington, DC and at contractually-operated FSS facilities.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 202-366-0500, or Robin Koch, Program Director, at 404-562-3770.

#

cc: DOT Audit Liaison, M-1
FAA Audit Liaison, AAE-100