



Memorandum

**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: **INFORMATION:** Audit Announcement –
Review of FAA’s Efforts To Address Runway
Incursions
Federal Aviation Administration
Project No. 13A3006A000

Date: May 15, 2013

From: Jeffrey B. Guzzetti
Assistant Inspector General
for Aviation Audits

Reply to
Attn. of: JA-10

To: Director, Audit and Evaluation

The prevention of collisions between aircraft or vehicles operating on a runway is a key performance goal of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). To measure progress in this area, FAA’s Runway Safety Program Office¹ tracks all reported unauthorized intrusions onto a runway—known as runway incursions—and categorizes them in terms of risk. The most serious incursions—events in which a collision is barely avoided—are designated as Category A and B.

As we noted in our July 2010 report,² the number of Category A and B incursions decreased after FAA implemented initiatives from its August 2007 Call to Action Plan for Runway Safety. However, this trend is reversing. Reported serious runway incursions increased substantially from fiscal year 2010 to fiscal year 2012, tripling from 6 to 18. Additionally, the total number of all runway incursions increased 21 percent between fiscal years 2011 and 2012, from 954 to 1,150. More concerning is that this increase occurred during a period when total air traffic operations declined slightly. In addition, FAA has recently reorganized its Runway Safety Office, and has changed the way that the Agency reports and evaluates runway incursions.

¹ The Runway Safety Program Office resides under FAA’s Air Traffic Organization’s (ATO). However three FAA lines of business are responsible for implementing specific runway safety actions: ATO (Terminal), Aviation Safety (Flight Standards), and Airports Division.

² *Review of FAA’s Call to Action Plan for Runway Safety* (OIG Report No. AV-2010-071), July 21, 2010. OIG reports are available on our Web site at <http://www.oig.dot.gov/>.

On April 12, 2013, the Ranking Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Aviation Subcommittee, requested that we examine FAA's Runway Safety Program and the Agency's actions to improve safety. Accordingly, our objectives are to evaluate FAA's (1) progress in implementing initiatives to prevent runway incursions, and (2) effectiveness in reporting and evaluating runway incursions.

We plan to begin our audit next week and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If you have any questions, please contact me at (202) 366-0500 or Robert Romich, Program Director, at (202) 366-6478.

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