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# *Office of Inspector General*

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## **Management Advisory on Aviation Inspection Program**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

**Report Number AV-1998-005  
Date Issued: November 4, 1997**





**U.S. Department of  
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary  
Of Transportation

Office of Inspector General

# Memorandum

Subject: **ACTION:** Management Advisory  
on FAA Aviation Inspection Program  
Report Number: AV-1998-005

Date: November 4, 1997

From:

  
Lawrence H. Weintrob  
Assistant Inspector General for Auditing

Reply to  
Attn of: JA-20

To: Federal Aviation Administrator

## INTRODUCTION

This Management Advisory is the final report on our audit of Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Aviation Inspection Program. On August 29, 1997, FAA provided comments to our May 5, 1997, draft report. All but one issue addressed in our draft report are currently under review as part of the Office of Inspector General (OIG)/FAA joint effort assessing implementation of recommendations made by FAA's 90-Day Aviation Safety Review Task Force. Since the OIG/FAA assessment will reflect the current status of FAA's Aviation Inspection Program, we have deleted from this report those issues included in our draft report that were identified as needing attention by the Task Force. The results of the current assessment will be reported by November 30, 1997. This report addresses the one issue not currently being assessed.

## RESULTS-IN-BRIEF

### Airworthiness Inspector Training

In our testimony before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on May 21, 1997, we presented eight attributes which, in our opinion, are essential for an effective safety inspection program. One essential attribute is a well-trained cadre of inspectors. In this audit, we found FAA airworthiness (maintenance and avionics) inspectors were not routinely provided basic technical training, or recurrent training, for the aircraft systems they were assigned to inspect. This occurred because

FAA had not established specific training requirements. We judgmentally selected and reviewed 39 inspectors at 2 of FAA's 96 field offices. We found 15 of 39 FAA inspectors reviewed had not attended an aircraft systems course since starting their employment with FAA. Seven of the fifteen inspectors had no prior systems training on the primary aircraft they inspected. We also found 16 of the 39 FAA inspectors had not received technical training involving aircraft maintenance or avionics in the most recent 3 years. With rapid changes in technology, inspectors' effectiveness is diminished without current training in the aircraft they are assigned to inspect.

In its response to our draft report, FAA concurred with our recommendation to establish specific requirements for providing airworthiness inspectors with systems and recurrent training. FAA stated it anticipated implementation of its "training development tool" by the end of calendar year 1998.

### ACTION REQUIRED

The recommendation in our draft report regarding training is considered resolved, pending routine followup. The remainder of our recommendations will be addressed in the current OIG/FAA assessment. However, we request a reply to this report reaffirming corrective action and providing anticipated dates of corrective action.

Please provide your response to this report in 30 days. I appreciate the courtesies and cooperation extended by FAA representatives. If you have any questions, or wish to discuss this report, please call me on (202) 366-1992, or John Meche on (202) 366-1496.

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