



Memorandum

**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
Of Transportation

Office of Inspector General

Subject: ACTION: FAA's Actions to Expand
the Controller-in-Charge Program

Date: October 13, 2000

From: Kenneth M. Mead
Inspector General 

Reply to JA-10:X60500
Attn of:

To: Jane F. Garvey
Federal Aviation Administrator

The purpose of this memorandum is to bring to your attention a disturbing development in the expanded Controller-in-Charge (CIC) Program that, if allowed to continue, could jeopardize the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) efforts to successfully implement the plan to reduce the number of operational supervisors.

On February 10, 2000, the Director of Air Traffic Services signed a memorandum that allows all air traffic controllers under the previous CIC Program to automatically become CICs under the expanded program. This action is contrary to FAA's new selection process established to ensure that only the best qualified air traffic controllers would be selected for the expanded CIC Program and our understanding of discussions with your staff that the CIC designation would not be looked at as an entitlement.

In August 2000, my staff was notified of recent actions in one air traffic facility that resulted in 100 percent of the air traffic controllers being designated as CICs under the expanded program. We understand, through discussions with Air Traffic Services Headquarters staff, that it anticipates other air traffic facilities are likely to take the same action.

The determination that all air traffic controllers in a given facility will be designated CICs under the expanded program is not reasonable. The expanded CIC Program requires controllers to assume duties previously performed by operational supervisors and to assume additional authority and responsibility

over air traffic operations. This expanded role for CICs requires that only the most qualified air traffic controllers be selected. Without going through the required CIC selection process to ensure that only the most qualified controllers are selected, safety of air traffic operations may be impacted. In addition, if the selection process is by-passed, the expanded CIC Program then becomes an entitlement.

We urge you to rescind the Air Traffic Services memorandum dated February 10, 2000, and issue new guidelines that will ensure that all air traffic controllers who wish to become CICs under the new program will be evaluated under the designation and selection guidelines (FAA Order 7210.3R). In addition, Air Traffic Services should develop criteria that facility managers must follow to determine the appropriate number of CICs each facility will require. The criteria should consider the number of operational supervisor positions that may be eliminated by attrition at each facility, and the potential cost of training CICs under the new program.

Should you have any questions or need further information, please contact me at (202) 366-1959, or my Acting Deputy, Todd J. Zinser, at (202) 366-6767.