




Memorandum

Date: January 25, 2024

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Announcement | FAA's International Aviation Safety Assessment Program | Project No. 24A3001A000
Federal Aviation Administration

From: Nelda Z. Smith 
Assistant Inspector General for Aviation Audits

To: Director, Audit and Evaluation

Safety in the National Airspace System is a top priority for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Since 2013, four accidents and incidents at U.S. airports involving international aircraft¹ have emphasized this priority. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)—an agency of the United Nations focused on international aviation—sets safety standards that must be met when foreign aircraft fly into the United States or codeshare² with a U.S. air carrier. FAA's International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) program assesses foreign civil aviation authorities' (CAAs) compliance with ICAO standards. FAA produces a written report and safety rating for CAAs using preliminary research, a standardized checklist, and an in-country evaluation. Following the assessment, FAA assigns the CAA a safety rating and continues to monitor it for continued compliance with ICAO standards.

FAA has recently made changes to IASA program policies, including clarifications intended to promote greater transparency and enhance engagement with CAAs through pre- and post-IASA assessments. However, it remains uncertain how these changes impact the program's ability to oversee foreign CAAs' policies and verify that the foreign CAAs are in continued compliance with ICAO standards. Accordingly, we are initiating an audit of FAA's IASA program. Our audit

¹ Past accidents and incidents at U.S. airports include: a Dominican air carrier landing gear collapse (2022); British air carrier uncontained engine failure (2015); Canadian air carrier near collision (2017); and South Korean air carrier crash (2013).

² Codesharing is a marketing agreement in which an airline uses its code on a flight operated by another airline and sells tickets for that flight. Both U.S. and foreign air carriers must obtain authorization from DOT to operate these services.

objectives are to evaluate FAA's 1) policies and procedures for the IASA program and 2) ability to monitor foreign CAAs for potential safety concerns.

We plan to begin the audit next month and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. We will conduct our work at FAA Headquarters and FAA regional offices as appropriate. If you have any questions, please contact me or Marshall Jackson, Program Director.

cc: DOT Audit Liaison, M-1
FAA Audit Liaison, AAE-001