



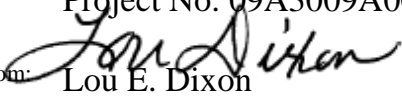
# Memorandum

**U.S. Department of  
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary  
of Transportation  
Office of Inspector General

Subject: **INFORMATION:** Audit Announcement –  
Commercial Aviation Accidents, Pilot Experience,  
and Pilot Compensation  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Project No. 09A3009A000

Date: October 16, 2009

From:   
Lou E. Dixon  
Assistant Inspector General  
for Aviation and Special Program Audits

Reply to  
Attn. of: JA-10

To: Assistant Administrator for Financial Services  
and Chief Financial Officer

Large, commercial air carriers have maintained an unprecedented safety record over the last several years, but regional carriers are still a safety concern as they have been involved in the last six fatal, commercial accidents. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has cited pilot performance as a potential contributory factor in four of these, including the Colgan Air crash on February 12, 2009. While the Colgan crash has not called into question the overall safety of air travel, the NTSB during hearings on this accident highlighted pilot training, fatigue, qualifications, and compensation as potential safety issues.

On May 18, 2009, the Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security requested that our office review these issues. Specifically, we were asked to examine the Federal Aviation Administration's regulations governing pilot training and fatigue and any relationship between commercial aviation accidents, pilot experience, and pilot compensation.

Accordingly, we plan to begin a review to identify and assess trends in commercial aviation accidents including any correlations between pilot experience and compensation. We will announce our work on pilot training and fatigue separately.

We will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference for the week of October 19, 2009. If you have any questions, please contact Scott Macey, Program Director, at (415) 744-0434 or Kim P. Tieu, Project Manager, at (415) 744-0441.

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cc: FAA Deputy Administrator  
Anthony Williams, ABU-100  
Martin Gertel, M-1