



**U.S. Department of
Transportation**
Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Memorandum

Subject: **INFORMATION:** Audit Announcement—Review
of FAA's Process for Investigating and Reporting
Operational Errors
Federal Aviation Administration
Project No. 08A3002A000

Date: November 5, 2007

From: David A. Dobbs 
Principal Assistant Inspector General
for Auditing and Evaluation

Reply to
Attn. of: JA-1

To: Assistant Administrator for Financial Services
and Chief Financial Officer

The Office of Inspector General plans to audit the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) process for investigating and reporting operational errors. We are initiating the audit in response to an October 2, 2007, request from Representative James L. Oberstar, Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Representative Jerry F. Costello, Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Aviation.

The Congressmen expressed concerns about a complaint made to the Office of Special Counsel that personnel at the Dallas/Fort Worth terminal radar approach control (TRACON) facility are not properly reporting operational errors. The complaint alleges that TRACON personnel are intentionally misclassifying operational errors as pilot deviations to deflate the number of errors attributed to the facility. Based on those allegations, the Congressmen requested that we conduct a review to determine whether similar problems are occurring at other Air Traffic facilities throughout the Nation.

The objectives of our audit are to: (1) determine whether FAA has adequate policies and procedures in place to ensure the accuracy and consistency of operational error reporting and (2) review the roles and responsibilities of the Air Traffic Organization and FAA's Aviation Safety line of business in reporting and investigating operational errors.

We plan to begin the audit the week of November 13, 2007, and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Dan Raville, Program Director, at (202) 366-1405 or Mary E. (Liz) Hanson, Project Manager, at (404) 562-3778.

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