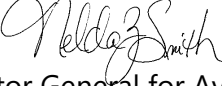




Memorandum

Date: May 9, 2024

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Announcement | FAA's Oversight of United Airlines' Maintenance Program | Project No. 24A3003A000
Federal Aviation Administration

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

To: Director, Audit and Evaluation

Commercial aviation in the United States continues to be one of the safest forms of transportation in the world. This longstanding safety record is due in part to a series of overlapping safety controls developed by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the airline industry to ensure air carriers maintain the highest standards when operating and maintaining their aircraft fleets. However, recent safety events with United Airlines—such as flight diversions that can be traced to mechanical problems—serve to remind us that FAA oversight of maintenance programs is paramount.

Over the past 5 years, we have issued a series of audit reports and recommendations related to FAA's oversight of air carrier maintenance at Allegiant Air, Southwest Airlines, and American Airlines.¹ Currently, we are conducting a similar review at SkyWest Airlines. Our next audit in this series will be of United Airlines. Accordingly, our objective will be to assess FAA's oversight of United Airlines' maintenance practices. Specifically, we will evaluate FAA's actions to address maintenance non-compliances and violations at the air carrier.

We plan to begin the audit later this month and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. We will conduct our audit work at FAA Headquarters in Washington, DC, and at the FAA offices responsible for oversight of the carrier. We will visit United Airlines' maintenance hubs in Chicago, IL;

¹ *FAA Needs To Improve Its Oversight To Address Maintenance Issues Impacting Safety at Allegiant Air* (OIG Report No. AV2020013), December 17, 2019; *FAA Has Not Effectively Overseen Southwest Airlines' Systems for Managing Safety Risks* (OIG Report No. AV2020019), February 11, 2020; and *FAA Lacks Effective Oversight Controls To Determine Whether American Airlines Appropriately Identifies, Assesses, and Mitigates Aircraft Maintenance Risks* (OIG Report No. AV2022004), October 20, 2021. OIG reports are available on our website: <https://www.oig.dot.gov/>.

Houston, TX; and San Francisco, CA. If you have any questions, please contact me or Tina B. Nysted, Program Director.

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