



General Aviation Safety Assurance: FSDO Operations

Presented to: 141 Modernization Meeting

Date: June 10-11, 2025



**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Flight Standards District Offices (FSDOs)



FSDO Operations

- Operating offices of the Flight Standards Service, organized into the Office of General Aviation Safety Assurance
- Provides 24/7 oversight and safety assurance services to the National Airspace System
 - Accident/incident scene response and investigation
 - Surveillance of certification holders engaged in aviation activities
- Geographically defined districts, though each office supports needs throughout the country
- Staffed by Aviation Safety Inspectors in the Operations, Maintenance, and Avionics specialties and by support staff



FSDO Operations

- Applications, requests, and reports are received and assessed by the management team
- Assignments are made based on qualification and availability
- Risk-based prioritization, which is assessed and reordered continually
- Work related to CHs with an assigned CMT will generally be assigned to that team (can vary)
- Many requests require multiple specialties



FSDO Operations

- Local management teams work to align assignments to support efficient service delivery
 - Certificate Management Team assignment of Principal Inspectors to CH
 - Ad hoc assignment of non CH associated work
- When resource constraints exist, FSDOs request support from other offices when available



Functions

- Approximately 180 discrete technical functions (operations and airworthiness) supported by offices
- Performed in accordance with published agency policies, for example:
 - FAA Order 8900.1: Flight Standards Information Management System
 - FAA Order 8020.11: Aircraft Accident and Incident Notification, Investigation and Reporting
 - FAA Order 8130.2: Airworthiness Certification of Aircraft
 - FAA Order 2150.3: Compliance and Enforcement
- Available publicly through the Dynamic Regulatory System:
 - <http://drs.faa.gov>

Certification: Organizational

- Air Carrier and Commercial Operators
 - Part 133: Rotorcraft External Load Operations
 - Part 135: On Demand and Commuter
 - Part 137: Agricultural Operators
- Air Agency
 - Part 141: Pilot Schools
 - Part 145: Repair Stations
 - Part 147: Aviation Maintenance Technician Schools



Certification: Approvals and Authorizations

- Air Carriers and Commercial Operators (133, 135, 137)
 - Addition of Aircraft
 - Operation Specification amendments
 - Training Program
 - Maintenance Programs (AAIPs, CAMPs)
 - Additional of authority (Single pilot, 9 or less, 10 or more)
 - Additional Programs (MELs, EFBs, SIAPs)



Certification: Approvals and Authorizations

- Air Agencies (Part 141, 145, 147)
 - Training Course Outline Approvals
 - Chief Instructor Observations
 - Certificate Renewals
 - Manual reviews



Certification: Approvals and Authorizations

- Aircraft Certification (recurrent)
 - Field Approvals
- Airman Certification (e.g., pilots, flight instructors, mechanics)
 - Name Changes, Limitation Removal (e.g., ATP-R, SOE), Mechanic Authorization to Test, Medical Flight Tests
- Part 91 Letters of Authorization
 - Minimum Equipment Lists (MEL)
 - Reduced Vertical Separation Minimums (RVSM)
 - Enhanced Flight Vision Systems (EFVS)
 - Special Instrument Approach Procedures
 - North Atlantic Operations (NAT)
 - Data Link Communications (CPDLC)



Certification: Approvals and Authorizations

- Aviation Events: waiver and surveillance
- Parachute Jump Authorizations
- Congested Area Plans: authorization and surveillance



Surveillance

- Monitoring safety performance of certificate holders (individual and organizational) to ensure the Continuing Operational Safety (COS) of the National Airspace System
- Performed on a risk-based, data-supported basis
- Activity Examples
 - Ramp Inspection
 - Flight Observations; Designee Observation, Line Checks
 - Base or Site Inspections
 - Aviation Event or Waivered Activity



Surveillance: SAS

- Safety Assurance System: program used by Flight Standards ASIs to prioritize work on a risk basis
- Details available in FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 10

Res. Order	SRC	Specialty	Criticality	API	25		FY2026				FY2027			
					Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	COS	OP	M	203 ↑+3				P ₁				P ₁		
	COS	OP	M	203 ↑+3				P ₁				P ₁		
23	COS	OP	H	198 ↑+12	P ₁		P ₁		P ₁		P ₁		P ₁	
24	COS	OP	H	106 ↓-60	P ₁		P ₁		P ₁		P ₁		P ₁	
48	COS	OP	H	181 ↑+15		P ₁		P ₁		P ₁		P ₁		P ₁
25	COS	OP	H	184 ↑+22	P ₁		P ₁		P ₁		P ₁		P ₁	
26	CC	OP		212 ↑+83	E ₁									
27	CC	OP		212 ↑+83	E ₁									
	COS	OP	M	134 ↑+4			P ₁				P ₁			
28	COS	OP	M	193 ↑+76	P ₁				P ₁				P ₁	
29	CC	OP		193 ↑+76	D ₁									
30	CC	OP		193 ↑+76	E ₁									
	COS	OP	M	122 ↑+3				P ₁				P ₁		
	COS	OP	M	122 ↑+3				P ₁				P ₁		

Surveillance: NPG

- Requirements for conducting non-SAS oversight activities in each offices area of responsibility
- Revised annually to incorporate changes in industry potential risks identified in the NAS



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
National Policy

**ORDER
1800.56Y**

Effective Date:
8/27/24

SUBJ: National Flight Standards Work Program Guidelines (NPG)

- 1. Purpose of This Order.** This order restates current Flight Standards Service (FS) policy for personnel to use as they develop and execute annual surveillance work programs; incorporates organizational changes and policy division changes; and updates previous guidance work activities, National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recommendations, Inspector General (IG) recommendations, and congressional mandates. This order contains guidance that is pertinent to Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) parts 61, 65, 91, 91 subpart K (part 91K), 105, 125, 129, 133, 137, and 183 Airworthiness Organization Designation Authorizations (ODA).
- 2. Audience.** This order pertains to FS personnel who use the annual work program to conduct surveillance oversight for parts 61, 65, 91, 91K, 105, 125, 129, 133, 137, and 183 Airworthiness ODAs.
- 3. Where You Can Find This Order.** You can find this order on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices and the Dynamic Regulatory System (DRS) at <https://drs.faa.gov>. Operators and the public can find this order on the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) website at https://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_no



Investigation

- Accident and Incident Events
 - Each office maintains 24/7 on call for event assessment and response
- Occurrences
 - Laser Reports
 - UAS Reports
- Pilot Deviations
- Complaints



Compliance

- Our primary goal is safety of the NAS and the public.
- In a case of non-compliance, isolate and mitigate risk and return to compliance as quickly as possible

- Compliance Program
 - Counseling, remedial training
 - Facilitates information sharing
- Reexamination
- Enforcement Process

the FAA uses to ensure correction of regulatory noncompliance arising from flawed systems and procedures, simple mistakes, lack of understanding, or diminished skills. A compliance action does not involve adjudication and is not a finding of violation.


A compliance action is intended to resolve noncompliance using an open and transparent exchange of information between FAA personnel and you. The purpose is to restore compliance and to identify and correct the underlying causes that led to the deviation. Examples of corrective actions taken as part of a compliance action include revising procedures, on-the-spot corrections, counseling, and additional training (including remedial training).

A compliance action may be used if you are both willing and able to regain compliance with regulatory standards. However, a compliance action will not be used if the deviation was intentional, reckless, resulted from a failure to complete corrective action, posed an unacceptable risk to safety, or required legal enforcement action as a matter of law.

Compliance action also includes the FAA's sharing of safety concerns or recommendations when no regulatory deviation occurred.

feedback on how aviation systems are working, and allow system improvements to occur on an ongoing basis, rather than as a result of a major mishap or investigation. Through safety efforts such as the Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST), General Aviation Joint Steering Committee (GAJSC), Aviation Safety Information and Sharing (ASIAS), Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS), Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP), and Safety Management System (SMS) concepts, we've seen the benefits of a non-blaming, collaborative approach to solving safety problems.

The FAA hopes to work with you to resolve any noncompliance without the need for administrative or legal enforcement action. We prefer to work with you to correctly identify and fix the root causes of a deviation. In all cases, the FAA investigates the matter on behalf of the public's safety interest. Working together, we in the aviation community have achieved a safety record that is unsurpassed. We will continue to improve safety with this data-informed approach that is shaping global standards. We must focus on the most fundamental goal: find problems in the NAS before they result in an incident or accident, use the most appropriate tools to fix those problems, and monitor the situation to ensure compliance now and for the future.



THE FAA'S COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

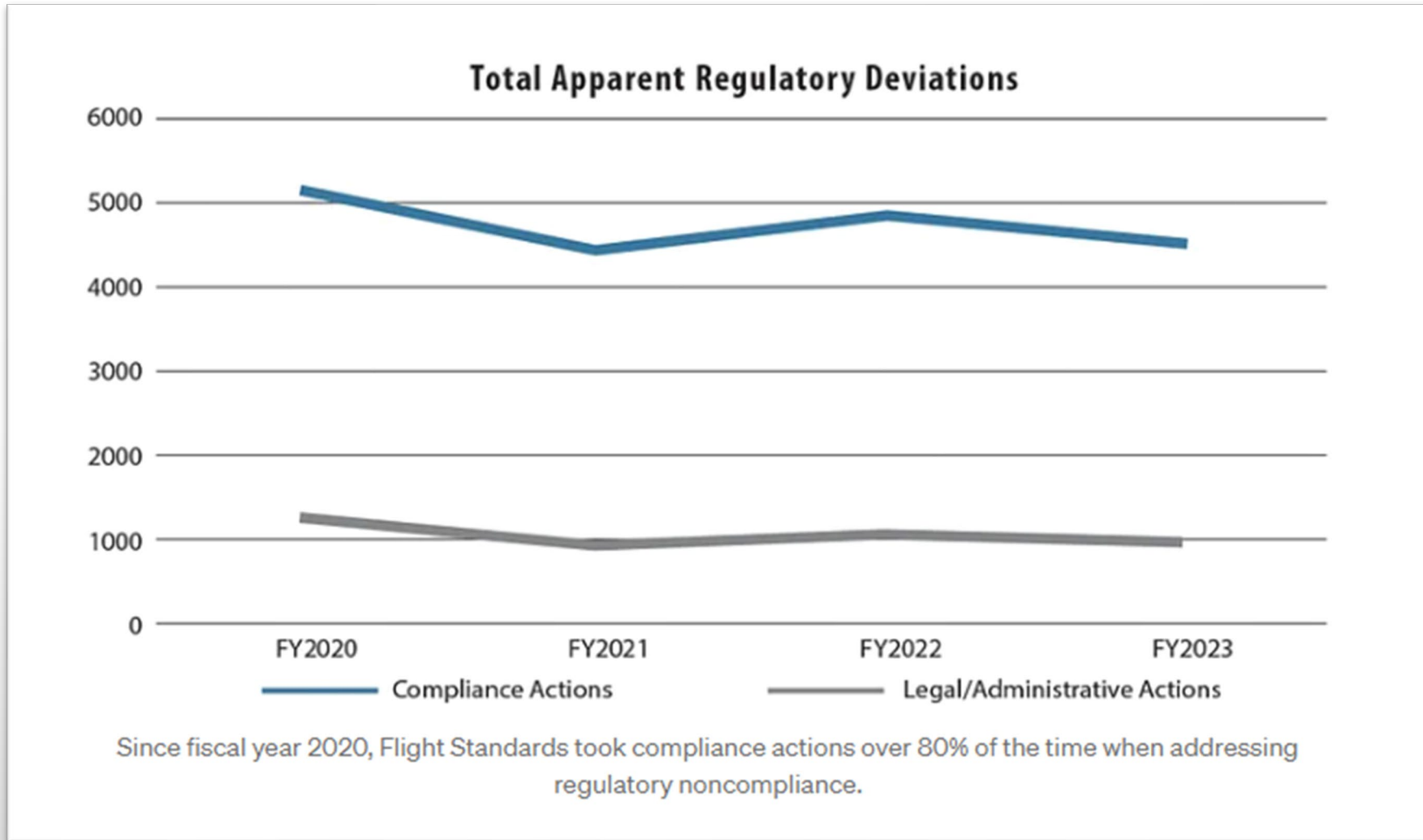
Safety Analysis & Promotion Division
Revision July 7, 2022

 Federal Aviation Administration

For more information at:
www.faa.gov/gp/cp

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Compliance Program



Education

- FAA Safety Team
 - <http://www.faasafety.gov>
- From the Flight Deck

The screenshot displays the FAA Safety Team website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, About the FAA Team, and a search box for the FAASafety Website. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with categories like Activities, Courses, Seminars & Webinars, Maintenance Hangar, Pilots, and Resources. The main content area is titled "FAA Safety Team | Safer Skies Through Education" and features several key sections:

- Featured Courses:** Lists courses such as "Conducting Preflight Self-Briefings for Student and VFR Pilots", "Part 107 Small UAS Recurrent", and "DC SFRA".
- Hot Topics:** Promotes "FLY SAFE" (General Aviation Safety Enhancement Topics) with a "Fly Safe" logo and a link to the topic blog.
- Upcoming Seminars:** Announces thousands of seminars and includes a search form for location and distance.
- AMT Awards:** Celebrates "14,545 AMT Awards Earned in 2021" and provides tutorials for individuals and employers.
- WINGS:** Promotes "WINGS - Learn More!" and "Quick WINGS" with a log-in option.
- Instructor Portal:** Offers a portal for instructors to validate or earn WINGS credit.
- WINGS Achievements:** Reports that 50,885 pilots have earned at least one phase in the WINGS - Pilot Proficiency Program.
- FAA Team Directory:** Includes a search box for finding team leaders by phone number, name, or location.
- FAA Team Industry Members:** Lists members like the Association for Women in Aviation and ASTM / Space TEC Partners, Inc.
- FAA YouTube:** Features a video player with the FAA logo.

At the bottom of the page, there are several utility sections:

- Offices:** Links to Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO), Runway Safety, and FAA For... Pilots.
- Forms:** Links to FAA Forms, Handbooks & Manuals, and Examiner & Inspector resources.
- Accidents & Incidents:** Links to Accident & Incident Data, Preliminary Accident & Incident Data, and Aeronautical Navigation Products.
- Regulations & Guidelines:** Links to Advisory Circulars, Airworthiness Directives, Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR), Orders & Notices, and Temporary Flight Restrictions.

Questions?



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