

Task 10: Monitoring Pilot and Designee Perceptions of FAA Aerospace Medical Services (AME, AMCS Pilot; Avers)

Program Manager:

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Task Stakeholders/Sponsors:

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Project Start Date: 10/1/2008

Anticipated End Date: 9/30/2011

Requirements Statement

Operational Shortfall or Knowledge Gap

A variety of aviation safety functions require feedback from designees and the regulated population to assess satisfaction with the services provided and the adequacy of policies and regulations. CAMI has surveyed pilots concerning their satisfaction with Aviation Medical Examiner (AME) and surveyed AMEs regarding the adequacy of training and satisfaction with FAA Aerospace Medical Certification Services (AMCS).

Requirements for these surveying tasks are ongoing and for FY10 will include:

- Aviation Medical Examiner Survey (concerning services and guidance provided by AAM)
- Aerospace Medical Certification Services Pilot Survey (concerning pilot experiences with AMCS)

This task requires CAMI to develop, deploy, collect, and report assessments of key agency constituencies concerning adequacy of services, guidance, and support provided by the agency.

In addition, two broader theoretical and methodological issues need to be addressed. First, to differing extents, customer satisfaction among regulated populations is a function of both the quality of services a regulator provides and the favorability of its decisions affecting each constituency. Agency services should be responsive to customer feedback, but specific decisions must ensure the safety of the traveling public. Research is required to design technically sound and efficient methods for the assessment of customer service and satisfaction of regulatory services and adequately discriminate them from parochial satisfaction with outcomes. Second, surveys to non-employees and non-designees must be coordinated and approved by the Office of Management and Budget, and a standardized methodology or integrated set of methodologies needs to be developed.

Benefit in Closing the Shortfall or Gap

The information received from these surveys is used to determine the most appropriate methods for assessing customer service and satisfaction in a regulatory environment. Moreover, the information will be used to evaluate current FAA services and compare them to previous practices to facilitate improvements.

Requirements for these services are ongoing and support ISO 9000 directives and the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA).

Description of the Desired Product

Identify and deploy a standard web-based methodology for surveys of FAA designees and pilots. Develop assessment tools for evaluating customer service and the adequacy of existing policies and regulations in the FAA. Provide assessment reports to sponsoring organizations.

Schedule

- FY10 First Quarter
 - Monitor progress of OMB application for AMCS pilot
 - Contact sponsors for revisions to existing AME survey
- FY10 Second Quarter
 - Submit IRB for AME survey
- FY10 Third Quarter
 - Distribute AME survey
- FY10 Fourth Quarter
 - Analyze data and deliver overall support for AME survey
 - Submit IRB for AMCS 2011 pilot survey

Research Objective

Develop, deploy, collect, and report assessments of key agency constituencies as directed by sponsoring organizations. Conduct research to determine most appropriate methods for assessing customer service and satisfaction in a regulatory environment. Deploy a standard web-based methodology for surveys of persons employed or designated by the FAA. Develop and deploy an integrated set of methodologies for surveying non-employee and non-designee groups.

Background

CAMI personnel have conducted a number of assessments under this Program Directive on behalf of sponsoring organizations, each with its own methodology and documented in its own task statement. Most recently these tasks have been combined under one program directive for two key reasons: 1) each survey examines customer service in a regulatory environment, and 2) a combined approach expedites processing issues associated with surveys of the public (e.g., OMB review).

In 2009, this program directive included a survey of pilots receiving their single-engine land (ASEL) certificate, a survey of pilots who recently requested medical certification from the FAA, and a survey of currently designated Aviation Medical Examiners (AMEs). Although these surveys were uniquely developed and delivered (depending on characteristics of the respondent population), each was designed to assess customer service and customer satisfaction.

The models of and methods for the assessment of customer service and satisfaction currently in use are grounded in the manufacturing, retail, and professional services sectors of the economy. Defining characteristics of these models, as exemplified by the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) are (1) the availability of alternatives, (2) customer choice among alternative goods or providers of a service; (3) direct exchange of money for goods and/or services between the customer and provider; and (4) customer voice for complaints and dissatisfaction. These characteristics might not generalize to the enforcement of government regulations. For example, a pilot might choose to attend one flight school over another for many reasons. However, that pilot must meet FAA standards for demonstrating his or her proficiency in flying; there is no alternative organization setting those standards. Similarly, an aircraft manufacturer must submit data on the design and fabrication of a new aircraft to the FAA for certification; there is no alternative organization from which the manufacturer can request certification if the FAA should deny the application. This task will pursue an alternative conceptualization of the meaning and measurement of customer service and satisfaction in a regulatory setting.

Previous Activity on this Task

During FY09, the 2008 Pilot ASEL survey was completed. The 2008 AME survey was completed. The 2008 AMCS Pilot survey was completed. The OMB process for the 2011 AMCS Pilot survey was initiated.

Proposed or Planned Research

This task requires CAMI to develop, deploy, collect, and report assessments of key agency constituencies concerning adequacy of services, guidance, and support provided by the agency.

Research Question(s)

AME Survey

Are AMEs satisfied with the services and guidance provided by AAM?

What areas require further guidance and support?

AMCS Pilot Survey

Are pilots satisfied with FAA Medical Certification Services?

How can airman services be improved?

Technical Approach

Current Year

The PI will identify all FY10 assessment requirements, plan their completion, provide milestones, apply common web-based methodology to surveys of FAA employees, designees, and pilots, develop and apply a standard set of methodologies for assessments of constituencies within the public, and negotiate with OMB for deploying required public surveys. They will design, deploy, collect, and report results of all assessments in accordance with milestones.

Out-Years

Obtain OMB approval for AMCS Pilot 2011 survey - allocate money to Xyant in July
FY11 - Conduct 2011 AMCS Pilot survey, begin developing 2012 AME survey

Air Traffic Resources Required

None

Information Technology Resources Required

Assist with online survey capabilities. Need to renew SNAP survey software license and technical support contract

Calibration

None

FY10 Milestone Schedule		
Description	Proposed Start Date	Proposed Completion Date
Develop AME '10 Survey	FY09 Q4	FY10 Q2
Develop AMCS Pilot '11 Survey and obtain OMB approval	FY09 Q4	FY10 Q4
Submit IRB for AME survey	FY10 Q2	FY10 Q3
Distribute AME survey	FY10 Q3	FY10 Q4
Analyze data and deliver overall support for AME survey	FY10 Q4	FY10 Q4
Submit IRB for AMCS pilot survey	FY10 Q4	FY11 Q1

FY10 Deliverables		
Description	Proposed completion date	Actual completion date
Provide reports summarizing AMCS Pilot '08 data to sponsors	FY09 Q2	FY09 Q2
Sponsor satisfaction assessment for AMCS Pilot by AAM-510	FY09 Q4	FY09 Q4
Provide reports summarizing AME '10 Survey data to sponsors	FY10 Q4	
Sponsor satisfaction assessment for AME '10 by AAM-510	FY10 Q4	