

# NOTICE

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.522

National Policy

Effective Date:  
9/20/19

Cancellation Date:  
9/20/20

**SUBJ:** FAA Responsibilities Associated with the Safety Assessment of Foreign Aircraft (SAFA) Ramp Inspection Program

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- 1. Purpose of This Notice.** This notice provides clarification of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) responsibilities associated with the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Safety Assessment of Foreign Aircraft (SAFA) Ramp Inspection Program.
- 2. Audience.** The primary audience for this notice is FAA Flight Standards Service (FS) International Field Offices (IFO), Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO), Certificate Management Offices (CMO), office managers, principal inspectors (PI), and aviation safety inspectors (ASI) with oversight and certificate management responsibilities of U.S. commercial and General Aviation (GA) operators who conduct flight operations to international destinations. The secondary audience includes FS offices and policy divisions for air transport and GA.
- 3. Where You Can Find This Notice.** You can find this notice on the MyFAA employee website at [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices). Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Operators can find this notice on the FAA's website at <http://fsims.faa.gov>. This notice is available to the public at [http://www.faa.gov/regulations\\_policies/orders\\_notices](http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices).
- 4. Background.**
  - a.** The SAFA Ramp Inspection Program began in the European Union (EU) community in 1996 and has since become a primary ramp inspection tool utilized by more than 45 countries. The EU SAFA program is now contained within the EU Ramp Inspection Programme. The SAFA program focuses on EU and non-EU aircraft landing at airports within EU Member States and other non-EU participating Member States. Aircraft suspect of noncompliance with international safety standards established by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) have a greater chance of a SAFA inspection.
  - b.** The SAFA inspections carried out by participating Member States follow a common procedure using a checklist of 54 inspection areas. It is SAFA policy that inspections will not delay aircraft except for safety reasons. Frequently, SAFA inspectors are unable to complete all checklist items due to the short turnaround time of the aircraft. Regardless if a SAFA inspection is completed in its entirety or not, it is an on-the-spot ramp inspection and does not substitute for

regulatory oversight by the State of the Operator or the State of Registry, as applicable. Additionally, a completed SAFA ramp inspection does not guarantee aircraft airworthiness.

**5. SAFA Category Findings.** When a SAFA ramp inspection is conducted and a finding is identified within a SAFA checklist item, it is categorized as 1, 2, or 3. The category is dependent upon the magnitude of the deviation of the requirements and the impact on safety of the noncompliance.

**a. Category 1 Finding.** A Category 1 finding is considered a minor deviation and is reported to the pilot in command (PIC) (operator).

**b. Category 2 Finding.** A Category 2 finding is considered a significant deviation from safety standards. The findings are reported to the operator and the oversight authority of the operator. For U.S. operators, Category 2 findings are reported to the FAA.

**c. Category 3 Finding.** A Category 3 finding is one that has a major impact on safety. The reporting requirements are the same as Category 2 findings. Category 3 findings are expected to be corrected before the aircraft departs by either correcting the deficiency or by imposing limitations or restrictions on the operation of the aircraft.

## **6. The SAFA Database.**

**a. Purpose.** The SAFA database is a computerized multifunction database system that contains all of the data generated by the SAFA Ramp Inspection Program. EASA regularly reviews and analyzes the database information, informs the participating Member States of the analysis results, and advises them of any identified potential safety hazards.

**b. Database Access.** The FAA signed an agreement with EASA to participate in the SAFA Ramp Inspection Program in 2011. The agreement allows read-only access to the SAFA database for both the FAA and those U.S. operators who have undergone a SAFA ramp inspection within the territory of participating Member States.

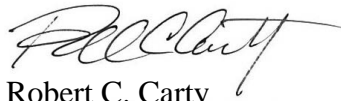
**7. The FAA SAFA National Coordinator.** The FAA SAFA National Coordinator is assigned to the International Program Division and may be contacted by utilizing the following email address: 9-AVS-AFS-SAFA@faa.gov. They are responsible for the following:

1. Coordinating all issues pertaining to SAFA with EASA, FS offices with U.S. operator oversight authority, and U.S. operators.
2. Monitoring SAFA ramp inspection reports and resolution of inspection finding(s).
3. Acting as the FAA point of contact for SAFA database access.
4. Receiving Category 2 and Category 3 notifications from the inspecting authority. The coordinator will ensure the information is forwarded to the appropriate FAA oversight office responsible for the U.S. operator.

**8. SAFA Findings Responsibility.** Any U.S. operator who experiences a SAFA ramp inspection and is assessed a Category 1, 2, or 3 finding is responsible for all immediate and future actions required to clear the finding to the satisfaction of the SAFA Ramp Inspection Program. Failure by the operator to respond within 60 days of notification of inspection findings, failure to address repetitive findings, and/or failure to address safety items could result in operational restriction(s) applied to that operator, up to and including rescinding flight authorizations and barring the operator from future operations into applicable State(s). Additional information on the EU Ramp Inspection Programme is available at: <https://www.easa.europa.eu/easa-and-you/air-operations/ramp-inspection-programmes-safa-saca>.

**9. Action.** PIs must provide their assigned U.S. operators with the above web page for the operator's awareness. Once notified of findings by the SAFA coordinator, the PIs must follow up with their respective operator(s) to ensure compliance. PIs may conduct follow-up surveillance to confirm compliance. PIs must ensure their assigned U.S. operators are responsive to SAFA findings and address findings within 60 days of notification of inspection findings.

**10. Disposition.** We will incorporate the information in this notice into FAA Order 8900.1, Volume 12, Chapter 2, Technical Functions, before this notice expires. Direct questions concerning the information in this notice to the International Program Division, International Operations Branch at (202) 267-0962.



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