

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.48

National Policy

Effective Date:
07/31/08

Cancellation Date:
07/31/09

SUBJ: Investigations of Safety Related Events or Issues with Special Emphasis on Pilot Deviations

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice requires the thorough investigation of any potential safety-related event or issue with special emphasis on improving the pilot deviation (PD) investigation and reporting process.

2. Audience. The audience for this notice is aviation safety inspectors (ASI), Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) managers, and Flight Standards managers. The secondary audience includes Flight Standards branches and divisions in the regions and in headquarters.

3. Where You Can Find This Notice. Inspectors can access this notice through the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS) at <http://fsims.avs.faa.gov>. Industry, applicants, and other non-FAA persons can access this notice through FSIMS at <http://fsims.faa.gov>.

4. Background. Issues surrounding PDs and other safety issues have recently surfaced through special emphasis investigations and audits. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit revealed the Southwest Region did not thoroughly investigate many PDs in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area. Air Traffic Control (ATC) in the Southwest Region had classified these incidents as PDs; however, the OIG audit revealed most of these were operational errors by air traffic and not pilot deviations. The lack of thorough investigations by Flight Standards is not acceptable.

5. Discussion.

a. Each office must conduct thorough and professional investigations of each safety-related issue or event in accordance with FAA Order 8020.11, Aircraft Accident and Incident Notification, Investigation, and Reporting.

b. A PD workgroup is currently working to improve the investigation and reporting process. The workgroup initiatives will improve accountability and develop processes, guidance, and training to support inspectors in investigations.

c. Flight Standards will improve the overall investigation process through changes to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order 8900.1, Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS), and improvements to the automated processing of PDs through the Air Traffic

Quality Assurance (ATQA) program. The objective is the identification of root causes of safety-related events. This will lead to effective targeting of interventions to reduce PDs and improve ATC/pilot interaction and overall system operation.

6. Action.

a. Flight Standards management at all levels must emphasize the importance of all investigations and outcomes.

b. In all cases of alleged PDs, ASIs must obtain and review all available evidence during investigations and in support of appropriate action.

c. Flight Standards District Offices (FSDO), certificate management offices (CMO), and certificate-holding district offices (CHDO) will conduct all investigations in a timely manner. ASIs must accurately gather and completely report all facts and conduct their investigations with an unbiased approach, focusing on the integrity of the process. ASIs shall conduct thorough PD investigations and consider evidence from all sources, including but not limited to:

- (1) ATC voice recordings,
- (2) Transcripts of ATC recordings,
- (3) Radar track data,
- (4) Controller statements,
- (5) Pilot statements,
- (6) Witness statements, and
- (7) Similar events or any trending data.

d. Investigators must complete the event description and summary of evidence as required on FAA Form 8020-18, Investigation of Pilot Deviation Report, block 18, in the ATQA program. For additional information, see Notice N 8900.34, Completing the Pilot Deviation Report, dated February 21, 2008.

e. If the investigation leads to a reclassification of the PD as an air traffic operational error, an operational deviation, or a no-action event, the ASI must completely and accurately report this on FAA Form 8020-19, Reclassification of an Aviation Incident Report, in a timely manner (refer to Figure 1). The ASI must include a rationale for this decision to reclassify.

7. Disposition. We will incorporate this notice into FAA Order 8900.1. Direct questions regarding this notice to the General Aviation and Commercial Division, AFS-800, at 202-267-8212.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

James J. Ballough

Director, Flight Standards Service

Figure 1. FAA Form 8020-19, Reclassification of an Aviation Incident Report

RECLASSIFICATION OF AVIATION INCIDENT REPORT	
<p>Complete this form to reclassify a preliminary incident report (FAA Forms 8020-17 or 8020-21) or to correct a report number on those forms. Complete all items and forward in accordance with the instructions below and in FAA Order 8020.11, "Aircraft Accident and Incident Notification, Investigation, and Reporting." Complete the form by hand or typewriter.</p>	
<p>1. Original incident Report Number from FAA Forms 8020-17 or 8020-21:</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>2. Date and Time of Incident:</p> <p>A. Date (Coordinated Universal Time-UTC)</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">M M D D Y Y Y Y</p> <p>B. UTC Time</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>C. Local Time</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>D. Nearest City or Town and State</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>3. Reclassifying Facility or Office:</p> <p>A. FAA Region <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div></p> <p>B. Location ID (complete one):</p> <p>(1) Air Traffic Control (e.g., ZNY) <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div></p> <p>(2) Flight Standards (e.g., 25) <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div></p> <p>4. Incident Reclassified as (mark one):</p> <p>A. <input type="checkbox"/> Operational Error or Deviation (complete Item 5A)</p> <p>B. <input type="checkbox"/> Pilot Deviation (complete Item 5B)</p> <p>C. <input type="checkbox"/> Report Number Correction (complete Item 5B)</p> <p>D. <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient Evidence to Investigate (complete Item 5C)</p> <p>E. <input type="checkbox"/> No Incident (complete Item 5D)</p> <p>F. <input type="checkbox"/> Other, Specify _____</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div>	<p>5. New Incident Report Number (complete one):</p> <p>A. Operational Error or Deviation</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>B. Pilot Deviation or Near Midair Collision</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>C. <input type="checkbox"/> Reclassified as "Insufficient Evidence to Investigate"</p> <p>D. <input type="checkbox"/> Reclassified as "No Incident"</p> <p>E. <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p> <p>6. Reclassification Reason and Comments (comments optional):</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <p>7. Facility Manager or Inspector Approving Form:</p> <p>A. Signature _____</p> <p>B. Name _____</p> <p>C. Date <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div></p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">M M D D Y Y Y Y</p> <p>8. Report Distributed to:</p> <p>A. ATX-400</p> <p>B. Others, List _____</p> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; width: 100%; height: 1.2em; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div>
<p style="text-align: center;">INSTRUCTIONS</p> <div style="display: flex;"> <div style="flex: 1; padding-right: 10px;"> <p>Reclassification of an incident should be based on new or additional information that was not available when the preliminary incident report was filed. Air Traffic Control will only use this form to correct a report number. An investigative report does not have to be completed for an incident that is reclassified as "Insufficient Evidence to Investigate" or "No Incident."</p> </div> <div style="flex: 1;"> <p>The distribution of the completed FAA Form 8020-19 should be the same as for the corresponding preliminary incident report. Forward copies to the organization responsible for the incident investigation and to the organizations that received the preliminary report, including ATX-400. Sign and date the form (Item 7) before distribution.</p> </div> </div>	