

Safety Oversight and Certification Advisory Committee Charter

U.S. Department of Transportation

- 1. Committee's Official Designation:** Safety Oversight and Certification Advisory Committee (SOCAC).
- 2. Authority.** The Committee was established pursuant to section 202, "Safety Oversight and Certification Advisory Committee," of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, Public Law (Pub. L.) 115-254. SOCAC is operated in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) as amended, Pub. L. 92-463, Title 5 of the United States Code (U.S.C.), App. 2.
- 3. Objectives and Scope of Activities.** SOCAC provides information, advice, and recommendations to the United States (U.S.) Secretary of Transportation, through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator, concerning policy-level issues facing the aviation community that are related to FAA safety oversight and certification programs and activities.

Authorized by Pub. L. 115-254, SOCAC provides information, advice, and recommendations concerning aircraft and flight standards certification processes, including efforts to streamline those processes; implementation and oversight of safety management systems; risk-based oversight efforts; utilization of delegation and designation authorities, including organization designation authorization; regulatory interpretation standardization efforts; training programs; expediting the rulemaking process and giving priority to rules related to safety; and enhancing the global competitiveness of U.S. manufactured and U.S. certificated aerospace and aviation products and services throughout the world.

- 4. Description of duties.** The SOCAC will act solely in an advisory capacity and will not exercise program management responsibilities. Decisions directly affecting implementation of transportation policy will remain with the FAA Administrator and the Secretary of Transportation. The SOCAC will:
 - a.** Undertake only tasks assigned by the Secretary of Transportation through the FAA Administrator, as authorized by Pub. L. 115-254.
 - b.** Provide the FAA direct, firsthand information, advice, and recommendations by meeting and exchanging ideas on the tasks assigned.
 - c.** Foster industry collaboration in an open and transparent manner and consult with, and ensure participation by, the private sector, including representatives of:
 - i** General aviation;

- ii** Commercial aviation;
 - iii** Aviation labor;
 - iv** Aviation maintenance, repair, and overhaul;
 - v** Aviation, aerospace, and avionics manufacturing;
 - vi** Unmanned aircraft systems operators and manufacturers and the commercial space transportation industry;
 - vii** Members of the public; and
 - viii** Other interested parties.
- d.** Recommend consensus national goals, strategic objectives, and priorities for the most efficient, streamlined, and cost-effective certification and safety oversight processes in order to maintain the safety of the aviation system and, at the same time, allow the FAA to meet future needs and ensure that aviation stakeholders remain competitive in the global marketplace.
 - e.** Provide policy guidance recommendations for the FAA's certification and safety oversight efforts.
 - f.** On a regular basis, review and provide recommendations on the FAA's certification and safety oversight efforts.
 - g.** Periodically review and evaluate registration, certification, and related fees.
 - h.** Provide appropriate legislative, regulatory, and guidance recommendations for the air transportation system and the aviation safety regulatory environment.
 - i.** Provide a venue for tracking progress toward national goals and sustaining joint commitments.
 - j.** Recommend recruiting, hiring, training, and continuing education objectives for FAA aviation safety engineers and aviation safety inspectors.
 - k.** Provide advice and recommendations to the FAA on how to prioritize safety rulemaking projects.
 - l.** Improve the development of FAA regulations by providing information, advice, and recommendations related to aviation issues.
 - m.** Facilitate the validation and acceptance of U.S.-manufactured and U.S.-certificated products and services throughout the world.

5. Agency or Official to Whom the Committee Reports. The SOCAC reports to the Secretary of Transportation through the FAA Administrator.

6. Support. The FAA's Office of Rulemaking will provide support services for the SOCAC, including maintaining committee records.

7. Estimated Annual Operating Cost and Staff Years. The estimated annual operating cost (including pro-rata share of salaries benefits, and travel of U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) employees) is \$459,000. The SOCAC will require the support of approximately 1.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees per year.

8. Designated Federal Officer.

a. On behalf of the Secretary of Transportation and in accordance with agency procedures, the FAA Administrator appoints a full-time or permanent part-time Federal employee to serve as the SOCAC Designated Federal Officer (DFO).

b. The DFO (or the DFO's designee) will:

- i Ensure compliance with FACA and any other applicable laws and regulations;
- ii Call and attend all meetings of the SOCAC and its subcommittees, and determine where the meetings are to be held;
- iii Formulate and approve an agenda for each SOCAC meeting, in consultation with the SOCAC Chairperson;
- iv Notify all SOCAC members of the time, place, and agenda for SOCAC meetings;
- v Chair meetings when directed to do so by the Secretary of Transportation through the FAA Administrator;
- vi Maintain files and records; and
- vii Adjourn any SOCAC meetings when doing so would be in the public interest.

9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings. The SOCAC expects to meet two times annually to manage administrative issues and address FAA-assigned tasks. SOCAC meetings will be open to the public, except as provided under Section 10(d) of FACA, and conducted pursuant to Title 41 of the Code of Federal Regulations (41 CFR) part 102-3 and DOT Order 1120.3C (Committee Management Policy and Procedures).

10. Duration. As directed in Pub. L. 115-254, the SOCAC will terminate on the last day of the six-year period beginning on the date of the initial appointment of SOCAC members (August 30, 2025).

11. Termination. This charter terminates two years after the effective date, unless it is renewed in accordance with FACA and other applicable requirements. If the FAA Administrator expects to terminate the SOCAC in accordance with this paragraph, the FAA will give as much advance notice as possible of such action to all participants.

12. Membership and Designation.

- a. The SOCAC shall be composed of members appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation upon recommendation by the FAA Administrator.
- b. The SOCAC will have no more than 22 voting members, who will serve as representative members. The FAA Administrator (or the Administrator's designee) is a voting member in addition to the representative members.

The SOCAC shall be composed of the Administrator (or the Administrator's designee) and at least 11 individuals, each of whom represents at least one of the following interests: transport aircraft and engine manufacturers; general aviation aircraft and engine manufacturers; avionics and equipment manufacturers; aviation labor organizations, including collective bargaining representatives of FAA aviation safety inspectors and aviation safety engineers; general aviation operators; air carriers; business aviation operators; unmanned aircraft systems manufacturers and operators; aviation safety management experts; operators of aviation maintenance, repair, and overhaul facilities; and airport owners and operators. The designated organizations are intended to provide balanced representation in terms of knowledge, expertise and points of view of interested parties relative to the SOCAC's tasks.

- c. As authorized by Pub. L. 115-254, the Secretary shall appoint nonvoting Regular Government Employee (RGE) members representing FAA safety oversight program offices. Nonvoting members may take part in deliberations of the Advisory Committee and provide input with respect to any final reports or recommendations of the Advisory Committee. Nonvoting members may not represent any stakeholder interest other than that of an FAA safety oversight program office.
- d. All members are appointed for a two-year term, but can continue to serve until their replacement is chosen or they are reappointed.
- e. SOCAC membership shall have the following characteristics as authorized by Pub. L. 115-254:
 - 1. Each voting member shall be an executive officer of the organization he or she represents, with decision-making authority within the organization he or she represents, and the authority to represent, and enter into commitments on behalf of such organization.

2. The ability to obtain necessary information from experts in the aviation and aerospace communities.
 3. The appropriate size so that the Advisory Committee can have substantive discussions and reach consensus on issues in a timely manner.
 4. Appropriate expertise, including expertise in certification and risk-based safety oversight processes, operations, policy, technology, labor relations, training, or finance.
- f. To ensure the recommendations of the Committee have considered the needs of diverse groups served by the Department, the membership of the Committee shall, to the extent practicable, include persons with lived experience and knowledge of the needs of underrepresented groups with regard to race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other factors.
 - g. Members serve without compensation. The organization employing the member bears all costs related to the member's participation in the SOCAC.
 - h. The Secretary of Transportation shall select a Chairperson from among those members of SOCAC that are voting members.

13. Subcommittees. The FAA Administrator has the authority to create and dissolve subcommittees as needed.

As authorized by Pub. L. 115-254, the SOCAC may establish special committees composed of private sector representatives, members of the public, labor representatives, and other relevant parties. A special committee established by SOCAC may:

- a. Provide rulemaking advice and recommendations to the SOCAC with respect to aviation-related issues;
- b. Provide the FAA with additional opportunities to obtain firsthand information and insight from those parties that are most affected by existing and proposed regulations; and
- c. Assist in expediting the development, revision, or elimination of rules without circumventing public rulemaking processes and procedures.

In accordance with Pub. L. 115-254, any special committee established by the SOCAC is not subject to Pub. L. 92-463.

Subcommittees and special committees must not work independently of the SOCAC. They must provide recommendations and advice directly to the SOCAC for deliberation, discussion, and potential recommendation.

- 14. Recordkeeping.** The records of the SOCAC are handled in accordance with National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) General Records Schedule 6.2. Subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, the records, reports, transcripts, minutes, and other documents that are made available to, or prepared for or by the SOCAC will be available for public inspection and copying at the Office of Rulemaking, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20591. The FAA will charge a fee for information furnished to the public in accordance with the fee schedule published in 49 CFR part 7. SOCAC records also are located on the FAA's public website.
- 15. Filing Date.** This charter is effective March 25, 2021, which is the filing date of this charter. This charter will expire two years from that date on March 25, 2023.