

Office of the Chief Operating Officer, Air Traffic Organization
800 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20591

December 10, 2024

Mr. Russell "Chip" Childs
President and Chief Executive Officer SkyWest, Inc.
444 South River Road
St. George, UT 84790

Dear Mr. Childs:

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and aviation stakeholders have invested in advanced aviation equipment to enhance the safety and efficiency of the National Airspace System (NAS). The NextGen Advisory Committee (NAC) emphasized the importance of providing preferential treatment to operators who have made these investments and are properly equipped. Additionally, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 highlights the need for preferential services and prioritization of aircraft equipped with specific avionics identified in the NAC's recommended Minimum Capabilities List (MCL).

In line with this, the FAA is requesting the NAC provide advice on the concept development for preferential service to aircraft meeting MCL standards. This input will inform the FAA in evaluating the feasibility of a best equipped better served strategy and assessing its potential efficiency benefits to NAS operations.

Task 24-1: Best Equipped Better Served

The NAC is tasked to provide the FAA advice to better understand the feasibility, benefits, and impacts in implementing a best equipped better served concept of operations while still maintaining the requirements within FAA Order JO 7110.65AA.

The NAC is asked to provide aviation community consensus advice by developing a report on:

- a. Obstacles to implementing preferential service and how to overcome those obstacles.
- b. Criteria to select best equipped aircraft for departure, en route and arrival operations based on NAC MCL equipment standards.
- c. Concept of operations for offering preferential service to equipped NAS operators necessary to develop policy/procedures to develop a priority system, which includes mixed equipped operators.
- d. Provide conceptual insights into potential impacts to operator schedules by selecting those that are best equipped over less equipped aircraft with a focus on what the aviation community is willing to accept.

- e. Provide suggestions for both challenging airspace environments (e.g., to potentially apply preferential service in complex, multi-airport terminal environments) and less complex airspace environments (e.g., potentially apply preferential services to terminal airspace with one dominant airport).

To successfully complete this tasking, the FAA will make subject matter expertise available to the NAC but would not participate in deliberations. Please complete the work and provide the Best Equipped Better Served recommendations no later than December of 2025.

The FAA is dedicated to working with the NAC and our aviation partners in implementing strategies that serve to improve the safety and efficiency of the NAS. If you have questions, please contact Steve Szukala, acting Director of Strategy at steven.l.szukala@faa.gov.
Sincerely,



Timothy L. Arel
FAA Chief Operating Officer, Air Traffic Organization
NAC Designated Federal Officer