



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Aviation  
Administration**



# FAA

*THE FAA. ADVANCING AVIATION.*

*Fiscal Year* **2018**

## **SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

*Supporting Aviation into the Future*

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### WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS *(inside back cover)*

**THIS REPORT  
AND REPORTS FROM PRIOR YEARS ARE AVAILABLE ON  
THE FAA WEBSITE AT**

**[www.faa.gov/about/plans\\_  
reports/#performance](http://www.faa.gov/about/plans_reports/#performance)**

Cover image: Vertical landing of the Falcon 9's reusable first stage on March 30, 2017, after placing a commercial satellite named SES-10 into orbit. Photo: SpaceX



## OUR MISSION

To provide the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the world.

## OUR VISION

To transform the aviation system to reflect the highest standards of safety and efficiency and be a model for the world. The FAA will bring about this transformation by fostering innovation in our workforce and in how we serve our stakeholders and the American people.

## OUR VALUES

### SAFETY IS OUR PASSION

We work so that all air and space travelers arrive safely at their destinations.

### EXCELLENCE IS OUR PROMISE

We seek results that embody professionalism, transparency, and accountability.

### INTEGRITY IS OUR TOUCHSTONE

We perform our duties honestly, with moral soundness, and with the highest level of ethics.

### PEOPLE ARE OUR STRENGTH

Our success depends on the respect, diversity, collaboration, and commitment of our workforce.

### INNOVATION IS OUR SIGNATURE

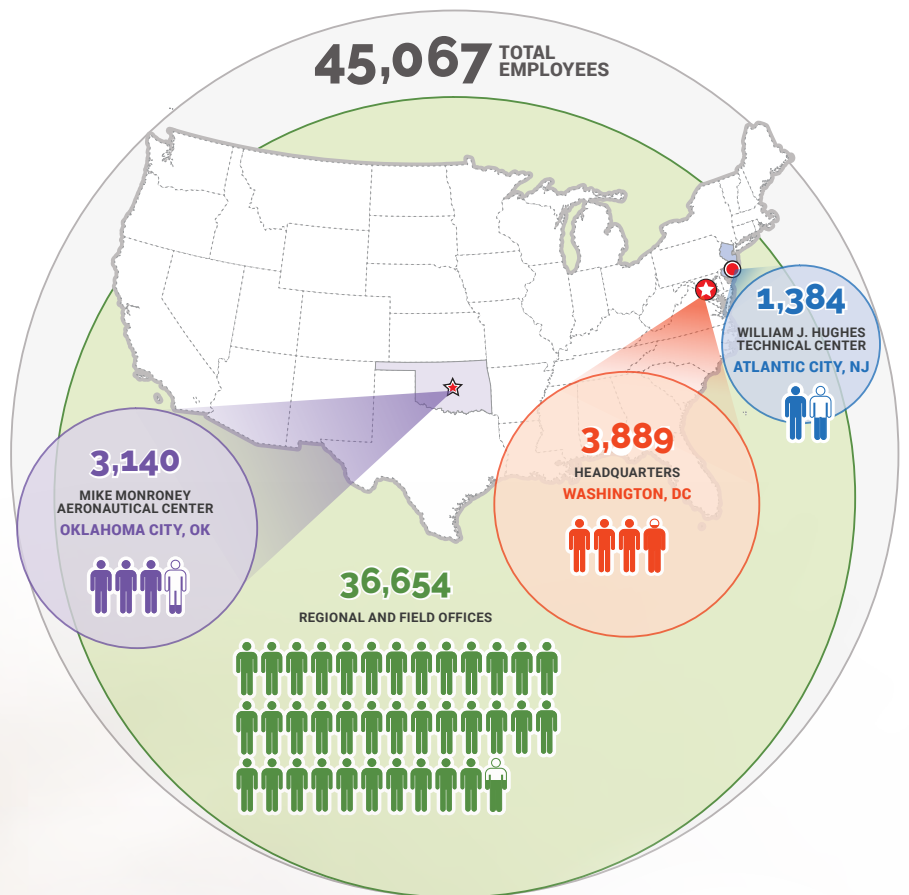
We foster creativity and vision to provide solutions beyond today's boundaries.



## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report summarizes the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) more detailed Performance and Accountability Report (PAR). As an agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), the FAA is not required to prepare a separate PAR or summary report. However, to demonstrate accountability, we choose to present our performance, management, and financial information, using the same statutory and guidance framework as that used by the DOT in its reporting to the federal government. In some cases, however, we may depart from the reporting formats prescribed for agencies that are subject to the Chief Financial Officers Act.

## IN A DAY'S WORK



**\$18.12** BILLION BUDGET  
ENACTED FOR FISCAL YEAR 2018

The enacted budget includes \$114.6 million in supplemental funding from the *Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2018* (P.L. 115-123)

**\$10.25** BILLION  
OPERATIONS

**\$4.35** BILLION  
GRANTS IN AID FOR  
AIRPORTS

**\$3.33** BILLION  
FACILITIES &  
EQUIPMENT

**\$0.19** BILLION  
RESEARCH,  
ENGINEERING &  
DEVELOPMENT

VISIT US  
FROM YOUR  
MOBILE  
DEVICE

[m.faa.gov](http://m.faa.gov)



# A Message from the Administrator

I am proud to lead the FAA as we reach a big milestone — the FAA is celebrating 60 years of safety. President Eisenhower created the FAA when he signed the Federal Aviation Act of 1958. That's the same year that National Airlines leased a Boeing 707 from Pan American World Airways, and became the first U.S. airline to fly jet aircraft in our national airspace.

Milestone anniversaries like this one often remind us to look back on our history and where we came from. I personally look back to my fifth grade teacher. He was a private pilot who said to the class that he would take up any student who wanted to fly. Of course I raised my hand, and we went out in his Cessna 150. I remember that flight vividly, seeing my neighborhood from 3,000 feet in the air. The flight was like a dream come true, and I've spent a lifetime in aviation since then.

For the FAA, we're looking back on 60 years of safety. Our dedication to safety has allowed aviation to become the safest form of transportation in the world.

The earliest days of flight were filled with trial and error, and our improvements in safety would usually come after lives were lost. But today, the work of the FAA has become the gold standard. We use data and a risk-based approach to identify and address risks before they turn into accidents. We also partner with industry to collect and analyze data, looking for meaningful trends. Over the last 20 years, commercial aviation fatalities in the U.S. have decreased by 95 percent. The fatality rate for general aviation has declined almost 23 percent over the last five years.

The FAA is also making a difference in its effort to modernize the national airspace, an effort we have been calling NextGen. We're moving from an air traffic control system based on radar technology to one that takes advantage of satellite-based technology. We're making it possible for pilots and air traffic controllers to send precise, digital messages that improve efficiency and reduce the kinds of errors that result from verbal communication.

**the FAA is celebrating 60 years of safety**

The FAA's modernization effort is no longer "in development." We have already built the foundations and brought new capabilities into the national airspace. Going forward, we will integrate these new capabilities into our day-to-day operations.

The FAA has made a lot of progress, and we have the opportunity to take a bold look at the future. We're developing new approaches to integrating unmanned aircraft systems and commercial space activity into the national airspace. We're re-examining our regulations, streamlining the rules and making them easier for industry to navigate. All of these activities are described in the following pages of this report, along with information about the FAA, its mission and accomplishments, and its proud history over the past 60 years.

*Above: The Orville Wright Building, one of two that make up the main FAA Headquarters complex. (The other, not shown, is the Wilbur Wright Building.)*

## Performance Highlights

During Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, the FAA has been developing a new strategic plan that will establish long-term objectives for the agency and align with the priorities included in the Department of Transportation's (DOT) strategic plan. These priorities are safety, infrastructure, innovation, and accountability. The FAA's FY 2019 Performance and Accountability Report will reflect this new structure. While we continue to develop our new strategic plan, the Performance and Accountability Report for FY 2018 follows the structure of the FAA's current plan, organizing our performance goals according to four strategic priorities: make aviation safer and smarter; deliver benefits through technology and infrastructure; enhance global leadership; and empower and innovate with the FAA's people. This year's report will not include performance targets for FY 2019 while we develop a set of performance measures for the new strategic plan.

In FY 2018, we achieved our target for 13 out of the agency's 15 performance measures. A summary of results for all 15 performance measures is provided on pages 9–10.

Seven of the 15 performance measures support DOT priorities. These priorities are reflected in the new performance plan the Department completed this year. As noted below, the FAA successfully achieved all seven of the DOT priorities.

- ▶ **Commercial Air Carrier Fatality Rate:** With a result of 0.1 fatalities per 100 million people on board, the FAA achieved its goal of not exceeding 6.2 fatalities per 100 million people on board.
- ▶ **Runway Incursion Rate:** The FY 2018 result of 0.132 serious runway incursions per million operations was below the goal of not exceeding 0.395.
- ▶ **General Aviation Fatal Accident Rate:** The year-end result of 0.89 fatal accidents per 100,000 flight hours was below our target of not exceeding 1.00.
- ▶ **Unmanned Aircraft Systems – Authorizations:** With an average time to process airspace authorizations in FY 2018 of 50 days, the FAA achieved its goal of not exceeding an average time of 72 days.
- ▶ **Unmanned Aircraft Systems – Waivers:** With an average time to process airspace waivers in FY 2018 of 17 days, the FAA achieved its goal of not exceeding an average time of 50 days.
- ▶ **NextGen Advisory Committee Recommendations:** With a year-end result of achieving 91.3 percent of NextGen Priorities Joint Implementation Plan commitments; the FAA achieved its goal of meeting 80 percent of its commitments.

- ▶ **Major System Investments:** The FY 2018 result of 90.5 percent of the major baselined acquisition programs being within 10 percent of the current cost, schedule, and technical performance baseline is above the goal of 90 percent.

## Accountability

The FAA continues its commitment to ensuring transparency and accountability to the public while achieving our mission. The performance and financial data in this report are complete, accurate, and provide a comprehensive representation of agency results. Furthermore, for the twelfth consecutive year, independent auditors gave our agency an unmodified audit opinion on our financial statements.

After obtaining audit opinions with no material weaknesses for nine years in a row, our financial statements last year reflected a material weakness. We had changed our method of estimating environmental decommissioning liabilities, which introduced an error into our FY 2017 third quarter unaudited financial statements. Since then, we have corrected our methodology and put better controls in place to ensure that changes to estimation methods are sound. I am proud that this year we have again obtained an unmodified audit opinion with no material weaknesses.

The *FY 2018 Performance and Accountability Report*, as well as this summary document, can be accessed online at [https://www.faa.gov/about/plans\\_reports/#performance](https://www.faa.gov/about/plans_reports/#performance).

## Conclusion

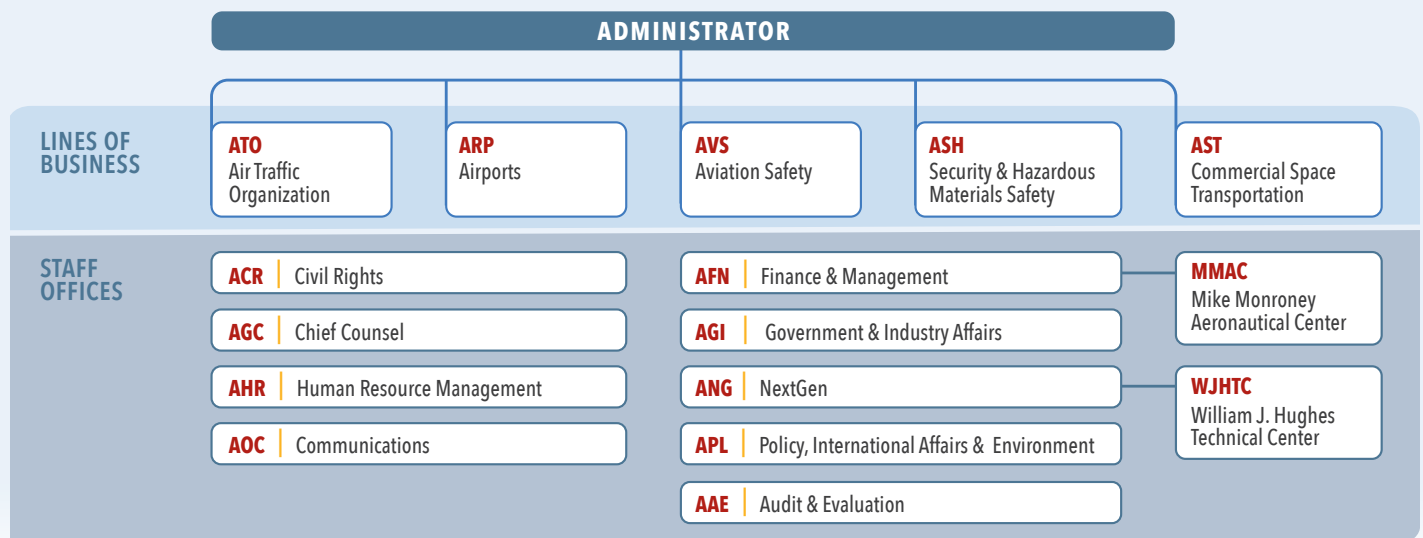
Since the day when the Wright brothers made our dreams of flight a reality, aviation has seen great advances. It has become central to the way we live and do business. Now transformational progress is with us again with developments in unmanned aircraft systems, commercial space transportation, and supersonic aircraft. The challenges posed by these rapid changes in aviation technology will require new thinking about the agency and how we do our work. I know the FAA is up to this task just as we have been meeting challenges for the past 60 years.

**DANIEL K. ELWELL**  
Acting Administrator  
November 9, 2018





# FAA Organization and Challenges



# FAA Organization

The FAA fulfills its mission through five lines of business that work collaboratively to create, operate, and maintain the national airspace system.

- ▶ **Air Traffic Organization (ATO).** Serves as the operational arm of the FAA. ATO is responsible for providing safe and efficient air navigation services for 29.4 million square miles of airspace. This represents more than 17 percent of the world's airspace and includes all of the United States and large portions of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and the Gulf of Mexico. ATO stakeholders include commercial and private aviation users and the military. ATO employees are the service providers — the controllers, technicians, engineers and support personnel whose daily efforts keep aircraft moving safely and efficiently through the nation's skies.
- ▶ **Airports (ARP).** Provides leadership in planning and developing a safe and efficient national airport system; is responsible for all programs related to airport safety and inspections, and for standards of airport design, construction, and operation (including international harmonization of airport standards). ARP awards Airport Improvement Program (AIP) grants and approves passenger facility charge collections. ARP is also responsible for national airport planning and environmental and social requirements. In addition, ARP establishes policies related to airport rates and charges, compliance with grant assurances, and airport privatization.
- ▶ **Aviation Safety (AVS).** Develops, establishes, administers, and enforces safety standards for all parts of the aviation industry, impacting every facet of domestic and international civil aviation safety. AVS is responsible for the certification of aircraft, airmen (pilots, mechanics, and other designees), and aviation entities (air carriers, charter operators, flying schools, training centers, etc.).
- ▶ **Security and Hazardous Materials Safety (ASH).** Protects critical FAA assets, personnel, and the flying public from security risks, including criminal, terrorist, and insider threat actions. This is done through 24/7 emergency preparedness and response; global aviation situational awareness; intelligence threat identification, warning and analysis; robust personnel and facility security programs; and identification issuance. ASH collaborates within FAA and with interagency, industry, and foreign partners to

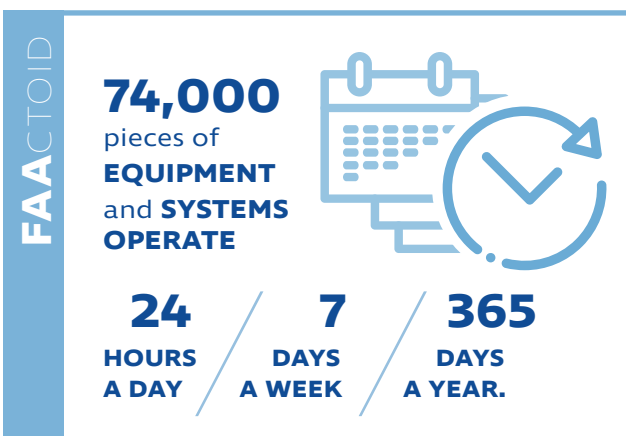
provide national security support and to ensure the safety of the transportation of hazardous materials (HAZMAT) in air commerce. This helps to prevent HAZMAT-related accidents or incidents aboard aircraft using targeted, risk-based oversight, as well as education, outreach, and engagement both domestically and internationally.

- ▶ **Commercial Space Transportation (AST).** Ensures protection of the public, property, and the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States during commercial launch or reentry activities through licensing launches, reentries, and launch and reentry sites. AST also encourages, facilitates, and promotes U.S. commercial space transportation.

The FAA has nine staff offices that support these lines of business and accomplishments of the agency's mission (see diagram on page 4).

Key among these staff offices are:

- ▶ **Finance and Management (AFN).** Streamlines agency functions to ensure they are delivered as effectively and efficiently as possible. AFN improves accountability and enhances operational efficiency through the responsible stewardship of FAA resources. AFN is comprised of the following offices:
  - ▶ **Financial Services**
  - ▶ **Acquisition and Business Services**
  - ▶ **Information & Technology Services**
  - ▶ **Regions and Property Operations**
  - ▶ **Aeronautical Center.** The Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center (MMAC) in Oklahoma City, OK, provides services in support of Center activities and agency programs including: logistics, enterprise business, software design, training, course design, and equipment/management services. The MMAC also trains air



*Opposite page: An aviation safety inspector works with an aviation mechanic at Reagan International Airport in Washington DC. Photo: FAA*

traffic controllers and the technicians who repair and maintain airspace supporting systems and equipment in the field. The MMAC provides technological training, national partnerships, logistics support, simulation, and medical research.

- **NextGen (ANG).** The NextGen Office provides leadership in planning and developing the Next Generation Air Transportation System. This office coordinates NextGen initiatives, programs, and policy development across the FAA. ANG also works with other federal and state government agencies, the FAA's international counterparts, and members of the aviation community to ensure harmonization of NextGen policies and procedures.
- **Technical Center.** The William J. Hughes Technical Center, located in Atlantic City, NJ, is the FAA's air transportation laboratory and national scientific test base for research and development, test and evaluation, and verification and validation in air traffic control, communications, surveillance, navigation, traffic flow management, and weather systems. The Technical Center supports advancement in airport and aircraft safety, human factors and separation standards, system development, and cyber security. These laboratories provide a platform to explore, integrate, and evaluate aviation concepts from initial concept to deployment in the airspace system.

For more information about FAA lines of business and staff offices, please visit [www.faa.gov/about/office\\_org](http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org).

FAAFACTOID

**THE FAA SAFELY GUIDES**  
approximately  
**26 MILLION**  
**FLIGHTS\*** every year

\* 15.8 million instrument flight rule flights (radar assisted) plus  
10.4 million visual flight rule flights (low flying planes)



FAAFACTOID

**THE FAA MAINTAINS**  
FAA-operated or  
FAA-contracted  
towers at  
more than **500**  
**AIRPORTS**



## Management Challenges

In FY 2018, the FAA was tasked by DOT to address the following 13 challenges identified by the Inspector General (IG).

- **Enhancing interagency communication and working with stakeholders to improve cockpit safety and security**
- **Keeping pace with a dynamic and evolving regional airline industry**
- **Strengthening the investigative process and proactively removing suspected unapproved parts from the aviation supply chain**
- **Addressing reports of increased runway safety incidents**
- **Mitigating risks with high-priority NextGen investments and delivering benefits to airspace users**
- **Keeping key air traffic infrastructure on track**
- **Strengthening the resiliency of the national airspace system**
- **Meeting the regulatory challenges of an evolving and diverse commercial UAS industry**
- **Developing strategies for overseeing operations and mitigating risks as UAS integration continues**
- **Managing commercial space launch activities as the industry grows and expands**
- **Increasing FAA's ability to withstand cyberattacks and enhancing DOT coordination with FAA**
- **Increasing management attention to FAA acquisitions—the Department's largest buyer**
- **Enhancing oversight of multiple-award contracts and other types of agreements to successfully manage risk**

Soon after the Inspector General's report was issued, the FAA developed an action plan that listed actions and timelines for addressing each of the 13 challenges. The FAA also submitted an "actions taken" report to DOT that describes the progress the FAA made throughout FY 2018 in addressing each of the challenges. These actions-taken reports, initial action plans, and the Inspector General's comprehensive report identifying top management challenges for FY 2018 are posted on FAA's website at [http://www.faa.gov/about/plans\\_reports/](http://www.faa.gov/about/plans_reports/) under the DOT IG Top Management Challenges section.



## NextGen Programs



### **AUTOMATIC DEPENDENT SURVEILLANCE-BROADCAST**

**(ADS-B)** is the FAA's satellite-based successor to radar. ADS-B makes use of GPS technology to determine and share precise aircraft location information, and streams additional flight information to the cockpits of aircraft equipped with ADS-B avionics.  
<http://www.faa.gov/nextgen/programs/adsb/>



### **COLLABORATIVE AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGIES (CATMT)**

is a suite of enhancements to the decision-support and data-sharing tools used by air traffic management personnel. These enhancements will enable a more collaborative environment among controllers and operators, improving efficiency in our nation's airspace.  
<http://www.faa.gov/nextgen/programs/catmt/>



**DATA COMMUNICATIONS (Data Comm)** enables controllers to send digital instructions and clearances to pilots. Precise visual messages that appear on a cockpit display are loadable into an aircraft's flight computer.  
<http://www.faa.gov/nextgen/programs/datacomm/>



**SYSTEM WIDE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (swim)** is the information-sharing platform that allows members of the aviation community to access the specific information they need, in the way that they need it, to facilitate an innovative and efficiently run national airspace system.  
<http://www.faa.gov/nextgen/programs/swim/>



**NEXTGEN WEATHER** will help reduce weather impact by producing and delivering tailored aviation weather products via SWIM, help controllers and operators develop reliable flight plans, make better decisions, and improve on-time performance. NextGen Weather is accomplished through collaboration between the FAA, National Aeronautics and Space Administration and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.  
<http://www.faa.gov/nextgen/programs/weather/>



**DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEMS** provide air traffic controllers with the tools they need to optimize traffic flow across the national airspace. These systems include Terminal Flight Data Manager, which shares real-time data among controllers, aircraft operators, and airports so they can better stage arrivals and departures for greater efficiency on the airport surface. Decision Support Systems also include Time Based Flow Management (TBFM), which uses time instead of distance to help controllers sequence air traffic. Compared to the traditional miles-in-trail process to separate aircraft, TBFM provides a more efficient traffic flow that reduces fuel burn, lowers exhaust emissions, and increases traffic capacity.  
[https://www.faa.gov/nextgen/how\\_nextgen\\_works/new\\_technology/dss/](https://www.faa.gov/nextgen/how_nextgen_works/new_technology/dss/)





# Performance Highlights



Top photo: Researchers performing final test cell instrumentation checks in preparation for testing at the William J. Hughes Technical Center (Propulsion and Airpower Engineering and Research Lab).

Bottom photo: An air traffic coordinator and two operations managers at the tower at Dallas-Ft. Worth International Airport. Photo: FAA



# Performance at a Glance

In this section, the FAA discusses its achievements in addressing our 15 performance measures. The FAA organizes its measures by the following strategic priorities:

- **Make Aviation Safer and Smarter**
- **Deliver Benefits through Technology and Infrastructure**
- **Enhance Global Leadership**
- **Empower and Innovate with the FAA's People**

In FY 2018, the FAA achieved 13 of the 15 performance targets. The FAA has noted the measures for which the data provided are preliminary. In previous years, the FAA has reported on performance targets for the upcoming fiscal year. The FAA is currently developing a new strategic plan that will include a different set of performance measures and a new organization for those measures. Performance targets for FY 2019 are not included in this report while the FAA continues its work on the new strategic plan.

Strategic PRIORITY: <b>Make Aviation Safer and Smarter</b>						
Strategic OBJECTIVE: Build on safety management principles to proactively address emerging safety risks by using consistent, data-informed approaches to make smarter, system-level, risk-based decisions.						
Performance Measure	FY 2015 Results	FY 2016 Results	FY 2017 Results	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Results	FY 2018 Status
<b>Commercial Air Carrier Fatality Rate</b> <sup>♦</sup> In FY 2018, the commercial air carrier fatality rate will not exceed 6.2 fatalities per 100 million people on board.	0.1	0.6	0.3 <sup>1</sup>	6.2	0.1 <sup>2</sup>	✓
<b>Runway Incursions Rate</b> <sup>♦</sup> Reduce Category A & B (most serious) runway incursions to a rate of no more than 0.395 per million operations.	0.302	0.380	0.159	0.395	0.132 <sup>3</sup>	✓
<b>System Risk Event Rate</b> Limit the rate of the most serious losses of standard separation to 10 or fewer for every thousand losses of standard separation within the national airspace system.	2.62	2.66	2.24	10	2.97 <sup>3</sup>	✓
<b>IT Risk Management and Information Systems Security</b> Address 80 percent of high value risks within 30 days. Continue oversight by the Cybersecurity Steering Committee to assure consistent risk acceptance decisions.	100%	100%	100%	80%	100%	✓
<b>General Aviation Fatal Accident Rate</b> <sup>♦</sup> Reduce the general aviation fatal accident rate to no more than 1.00 fatal accidents per 100,000 flight hours.	0.99	0.89	0.84 <sup>1</sup>	1.00	0.89 <sup>2</sup>	✓
<b>Commercial Space Launch Accidents</b> No fatalities, serious injuries, or significant property damage to the uninvolved public during licensed or permitted space launch and reentry activities.	0	0	0	0	0	✓
<b>Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) - Authorizations</b> <sup>♦</sup> Reduce the average time for processing Part 107 airspace authorizations by at least 15 percent to an average of 72 days by September 30, 2018.	This is a new measure for FY 2018	This is a new measure for FY 2018	This is a new measure for FY 2018	72	50	✓
<b>Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) - Waivers</b> <sup>♦</sup> Reduce the average time for processing Part 107 operational waivers to 50 days by September 30, 2018.	This is a new measure for FY 2018	This is a new measure for FY 2018	This is a new measure for FY 2018	50	17	✓

<sup>♦</sup> This performance measure supports a DOT Agency Priority Goal.

✓ Target met

✗ Target not met

1 Preliminary estimate; National Transportation Safety Board will confirm in March 2019. We do not expect any change in the result to be significant enough to alter our year-end status of achieving the target.

2 Preliminary estimate; National Transportation Safety Board will confirm in March 2020. We do not expect any change in the result to be significant enough to alter our year-end status of achieving the target.

3 Preliminary estimate until the final result becomes available in January 2019. We do not expect any change in the final result to be significant enough to alter our year-end status of achieving the target.



Strategic PRIORITY:	Deliver Benefits Through Technology and Infrastructure					
Strategic OBJECTIVE:	Lay the foundation for the national airspace system of the future by achieving prioritized NextGen benefits, integrating new user entrants, and delivering more efficient, streamlined services.					
Performance Measure	FY 2015 Results	FY 2016 Results	FY 2017 Results	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Results	FY 2018 Status
<b>NextGen Advisory Committee Recommendations*</b> Achieve 80 percent (18 of the 23) NextGen Priorities Joint Implementation Plan commitments, excluding industry-controlled milestones, within a calendar-quarter of their scheduled dates and within 10 percent of the planned cost.	This is a new measure for FY 2016	95%	92%	80%	91.3%	✓
<b>Major System Investments*</b> Maintain 90 percent of major baselined acquisition programs within 10 percent of their current acquisition cost, schedule, and technical performance baseline as of the end of FY 2018.	100%	95%	95%	90%	90.5%	✓
<b>Domestic Commercial Aircraft Fuel Consumption</b> Ensure fuel burn from domestic commercial aircraft operations do not exceed base year 2005 levels (42.1 Tg).	36.5	37.7	38.2	≤ 42.1	40.6	✓
<b>Noise Exposure</b> Reduce the number of people exposed to significant aircraft noise to less than 302,000 in calendar year 2017.	340,000	343,000	408,000	302,000	454,000	✗
<b>Unmodified Audit Opinion</b> Obtain an unmodified audit opinion with no material weakness on the agency’s financial statements.	Unmodified audit opinion w/no material weakness	Unmodified audit opinion w/no material weakness	Unmodified audit opinion w/1 material weakness	Unmodified audit opinion w/no material weakness	Unmodified audit opinion w/no material weakness	✓
* This performance measure supports a DOT Agency Priority Goal.				✓ Target met	✗ Target not met	

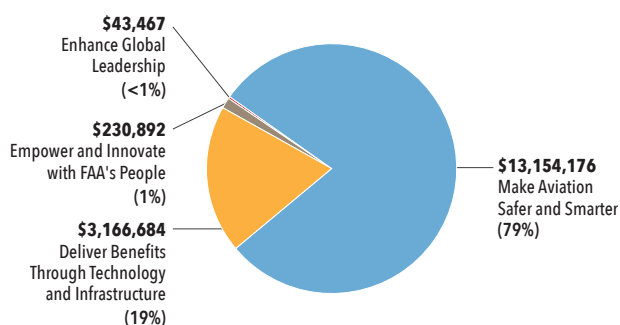
Strategic PRIORITY:	Enhance Global Leadership					
Strategic OBJECTIVE:	Improve safety, air traffic efficiency, and environmental sustainability across the globe through an integrated data-driven approach that shapes global standards, enhances collaboration and harmonization, and better targets FAA resources and efforts.					
Performance Measure	FY 2015 Results	FY 2016 Results	FY 2017 Results	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Results	FY 2018 Status
<b>Enhance Global Leadership</b> Develop data-informed regional and global priorities for inclusion in the FAA International Strategy to inform FAA engagement decision-making.	This is a new measure for FY 2017	This is a new measure for FY 2017	Priorities added to international strategy	Add regional and global priorities to the int’l strategy	Regional and global priorities developed and added	✓
				✓ Target met	✗ Target not met	

Strategic PRIORITY:	Empower and Innovate with the FAA’s People					
Strategic OBJECTIVE:	Prepare FAA’s human capital for the future by identifying, recruiting, and training a workforce with the leadership, technical, and functional skills to ensure the United States has the world’s safest and most productive aviation sector.					
Performance Measure	FY 2015 Results	FY 2016 Results	FY 2017 Results	FY 2018 Target	FY 2018 Results	FY 2018 Status
<b>Employee Engagement Index</b> Increase the Agency’s Employee Engagement Index score to 70 percent positive.	This is a new measure for FY 2017	This is a new measure for FY 2017	68%	70%	68%	✗
				✓ Target met	✗ Target not met	

# Alignment of FAA Costs and Strategic Priorities

The FAA's total net cost of \$16.6 billion was allocated to its four strategic priorities, as described below and as shown in the *Net Cost by Strategic Priority Area* chart. For more detailed information, see page 101 of our *Fiscal Year 2018 Performance and Accountability Report*.

**NET COST BY STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA**  
as of September 30, 2018  
(Dollars in Thousands)



**Make aviation safer and smarter.** A little under \$13.2 billion, or approximately 79 percent of total net cost, was devoted to the priority of ensuring the safety of the nation's airspace.

- ▶ The Air Traffic Organization (ATO) spent approximately \$9.7 billion, largely to maintain the safe separation of aircraft in the air and on the ground.
- ▶ The Office of Airports (ARP) provided approximately \$1.7 billion for projects to preserve or enhance safety.
- ▶ The Aviation Safety Organization (AVS) spent just under \$1.5 billion on its programs to regulate and certify aircraft, pilots, and airlines, directly supporting the safety of commercial and general aviation.
- ▶ The Security and Hazardous Materials Safety (ASH) spent approximately \$132 million on its programs to ensure critical infrastructure protection, emergency operations, contingency planning, and the safe transportation of hazardous materials in air commerce.
- ▶ Collectively, the Office of Commercial Space Transportation (AST), other FAA staff offices, and other programs spent about \$255 million to further support the agency's safety mission.

## Deliver benefits through technology and infrastructure.

Almost \$3.2 billion, or about 19 percent of total net costs, was assigned to expanding the capacity of the national airspace system, particularly through the pursuit of programs contributing to the NextGen initiative.

- ▶ The ATO spent just over \$1.5 billion, largely to finance its facilities and equipment projects.
- ▶ ARP also provided approximately \$1.5 billion to build or reconstruct core airfield infrastructure projects involving runways and taxiways.

**Enhance global leadership.** As a whole, the FAA committed approximately \$43 million to strengthening its international leadership role. These efforts included programs aimed at reducing fatal accidents around the world. Funding for training and technical assistance helped promote safety standards, as well.

**Empower and innovate with the FAA's people.** Approximately \$231 million supported this strategic priority, to which all the lines of business and staff offices contributed. This strategic priority entails preparing the FAA's human capital for the future by identifying, recruiting, and training a workforce with the leadership, technical and functional skills to ensure the United States has the world's safest and most productive aviation sector.

FAA  
ACTO  
ID

The FAA **OVERSEES**  
a system that transports



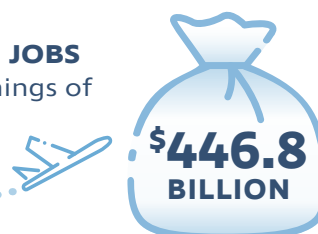
**971 MILLION PASSENGERS**  
annually on U.S.  
and foreign carriers

FAA  
ACTO  
ID

**AVIATION** in the United States  
**GENERATES** approximately



**10.6 MILLION JOBS**  
with earnings of



**\$446.8 BILLION**



## Airports— Behind the Scenes

Most airline passengers notice only a few key parts of the airport—the access road, the parking garage, the terminal, security checkpoint, and restaurants and shops.

Once on board, passengers in a window seat might see a bit more—such as crews loading baggage, fuel, food and beverages, guiding aircraft into adjacent gates, conducting pre-flight inspections, or applying anti-icing chemicals.

As the aircraft makes its way to the runway, even less is usually seen—taxiways, lights, signage, pavement markings, and a lot of specialized structures and equipment (including antennas and sensors).

Even for the passenger in the window seat, there is a lot more hidden from view. Airports require vast amounts of land—to protect against encroachment by buildings and other structures that could jeopardize safe flight paths; to provide noise buffers for nearby neighborhoods; and to protect for future aviation needs. Large-hub airports range from just over 600 acres (such as Chicago Midway and San Diego) to more than 10,000 acres (Dallas/Fort Worth and Orlando) or more than 30,000 acres (Denver).

Airports also require carefully engineered drainage systems. Because commercial aircraft take off and land at more than 150 miles per hour, they can't run the risk of skidding on ice or losing directional control due to standing water. Also, airports try to minimize the amount of water collecting in ditches and detention ponds, because that can attract birds. Similarly, many airports have to have special systems to collect and treat deicing chemicals.

In fact, runways and taxiways are far more complex structures than meets the eye. The top surface (whether made of concrete or asphalt) may be two feet thick or more sitting on a carefully structured base, sub-base, and foundation—in total, the structure may be six feet deep or more. Runways and taxiways have to be strong enough to handle the weight and constant usage of large airplanes;

and they must hide and protect all of the drainage lines and cables and housing for power, signage, lighting systems, weather sensors and other types of systems for communications, navigation and surveillance. The FAA works closely with airports to constantly inspect the condition of runways and every critical facility and system to ensure they are working correctly to protect the safety of the traveling public (as well as the efficiency and capacity of the air transportation system).

The largest airports often have 25,000 to 50,000 people working there every day (the equivalent population of a large town). When you add in the number of passengers flying through a large airport, that number can swell to over 300,000 people in an airport daily - now a mid-sized city! The people who serve airports include airport and airline employees as well as people who work for the FAA, Department of Homeland Security, concessionaires, contractors, and other businesses. This includes technicians who maintain key equipment such as elevators, escalators, moving walkways and people-movers, as well as electrical, lighting, telecommunications, security and access controls, baggage handling, heating, cooling, and plumbing systems. Some of these people are public-sector employees but many of them work for commercial contractors and service-providers. International airports need other federal agencies, too—Customs, Immigration, Department of Agriculture inspectors, and so on.

There are also nearly 3,000 smaller, general aviation airports that are also critical to the system. They support functions that can't generally be handled at the busy commercial service airports—functions like flight training, emergency response, aircraft maintenance, and others. If the busiest commercial service airports had to support those functions, then those airports would be a lot more congested than they are now.

Bottom line: It takes a lot more than just what's visible to keep the nation's airports safe and efficient. Next time you get on a flight, look around and try to see what you've been missing. ✈️

*Right: This aerial photograph of New York's JFK International Airport shows the complexity of runways, taxiways, terminals, access roads and other critical facilities in a tightly constrained environment.*







# A Message from the Chief Financial Officer

ALLISON W. RITMAN



When people think about the FAA, they generally think about the work of our air traffic controllers, who safely and effectively manage over 43,000 flights every day through the world's most complex airspace. At the same time we run these day to day operations, we also oversee the safety of airline operations and aircraft manufacturing; plan for and implement new technologies

into planes, airports, and the air traffic control system; safely integrate new entrants into our airways; and award over \$3 billion in grants each year to airports across the country.

All of these activities are represented in our financial statements, published each year as part of our commitment to use taxpayer dollars responsibly and to be accountable to the American taxpayer. Our financial statements with a report from an independent auditor and a quality control review by the Department of Transportation's Inspector General can be found in our *FY 2018 Performance and Accountability Report*.

Independent auditors have given us unmodified audit opinions for more than a dozen years. But that is not enough for us. We hold ourselves to a higher standard, so our performance goals

include a target of obtaining an unmodified audit opinion with no material weaknesses in internal controls, as shown on page 10.

After obtaining unmodified audit opinions with no material weaknesses for nine years in a row, last year our financial statements reflected a material weakness. It related to a change in our method of estimating environmental decommissioning liabilities, introducing an error into our FY 2017 third quarter unaudited financial statements. We have been transparent in our public disclosure about the material weakness and the immediate remediation we undertook to correct the deficiency before the end of last fiscal year. I am pleased to report that we have once again achieved our target of an unmodified opinion with no material weaknesses for FY 2018.

Finally, I am proud that our transparent reporting has earned the FAA the prestigious Certificate of Excellence in Accountability Reporting (CEAR) award fourteen times, with seven special "best in class" CEAR awards since 2003.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Allison W. Ritman".

**ALLISON W. RITMAN**

Acting Chief Financial Officer  
November 9, 2018

“Our most visible activity is effectively managing the world's most complex airspace.”



# Financial Highlights

Following are highlights of the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) FY 2018 financial performance. For a more detailed look at the financial statements and accompanying notes, see our *Fiscal Year 2018 Performance and Accountability Report (PAR)*, pages 23–29 and 82–121. The PAR is available on our website at [www.faa.gov/about/plans\\_reports/#performance](http://www.faa.gov/about/plans_reports/#performance).

The FAA receives budget authority to obligate and expend funds from both the Department of the Treasury's General Fund and the Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF). Created by the Airport and Airway Revenue Act of 1970, the AATF is supported by excise taxes and earned interest. It pays for investments in the airport and airway system, and a majority of the FAA's operating costs. In FY 2018, the AATF paid for approximately 85 percent of our enacted budget authority per the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-141), and the Further Additional Appropriations for Disaster Relief Requirements Act, 2018 (Public Law 115-123).

Aviation excise taxes, which include taxes on domestic passenger tickets, freight waybills, general and commercial aviation fuel, and international departures and arrivals, are deposited into the AATF. The Department of the Treasury, which administers the AATF, invests those funds in government securities. Interest earned is also deposited into the AATF. Balances are withdrawn from the AATF as needed to meet cash disbursement needs.

The FY 2018 enacted budget of \$18.1 billion was an increase of \$1.7 billion (10.4 percent) over the FY 2017 enacted level. The FAA requests and receives its funding in four primary accounts:

- ▶ Operations
- ▶ Grants-in-Aid for Airports (AIP)
- ▶ Facilities and Equipment (F&E)
- ▶ Research, Engineering, and Development (RE&D)

The largest, Operations, is supported by both the general fund and the AATF. In FY 2018, the AATF supported 87 percent of the funding for the Operations account. In most years, the AATF supports 100 percent of the funding for the three other accounts — AIP, F&E, and RE&D. In FY 2018, however, the AIP program received funding from both the AATF and the general fund. The AATF provided 77 percent of the total funding for AIP.

**Operations.** This account finances operating costs, maintenance, communications, and logistical support for the air traffic control and air navigation systems. It also funds the salaries and costs associated with carrying out safety inspection and regulatory responsibilities. In addition, the account covers administrative and managerial costs for international, medical, engineering, and development programs, as well as for policy oversight and overall management functions. The FY 2018 Operations appropriation was \$10.25 billion, approximately 2.2 percent greater than FY 2017. This funding level includes \$35 million provided specifically for expenses related to hurricanes that occurred during FY 2017.

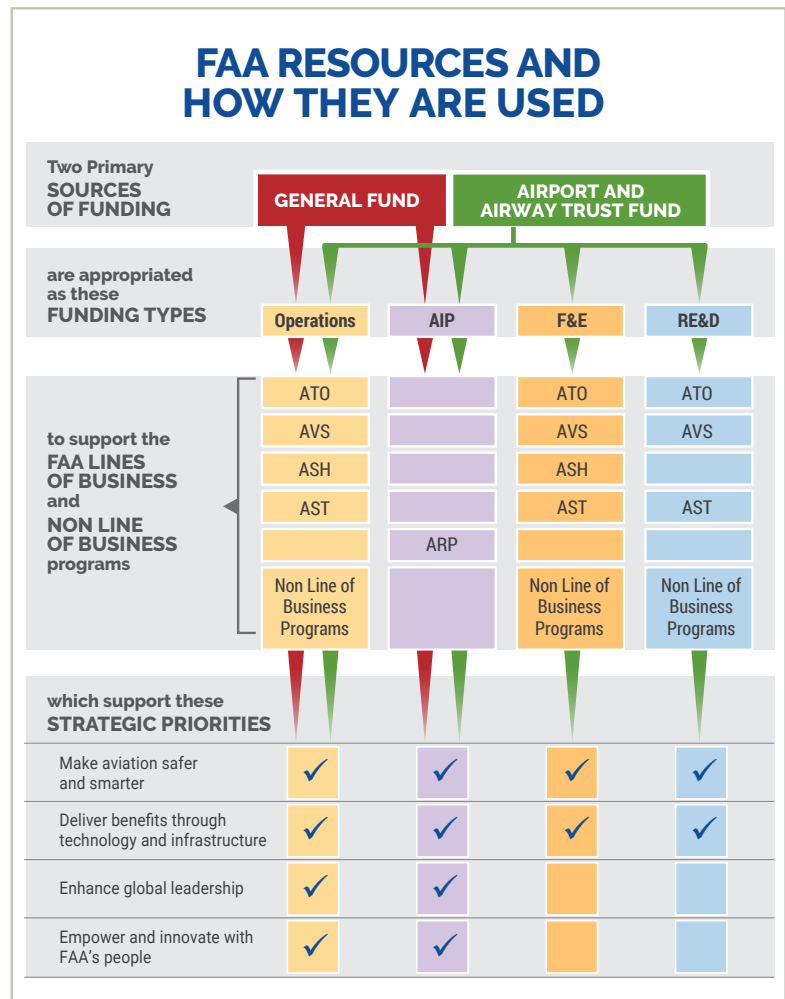
**AIP.** The FAA awards grants for airport planning and development to maintain a safe and efficient nationwide system of public airports. These grants fund approximately one-third of all capital development at the nation's public airports. The FAA issues grants to maintain and enhance airport safety, preserve existing infrastructure, and expand capacity and efficiency throughout the system. The program also supports noise compatibility and planning, the military airport program, reliever airports, and airport program administration. FY 2018 funding for AIP from the AATF was \$3.35 billion, unchanged from the FY 2017 level. In addition, AIP received \$1 billion from the general fund in FY 2018 for discretionary grants.

**F&E.** This account funds the capital improvement projects necessary to establish, replace, relocate, or improve air navigation facilities and equipment and aviation safety systems across the national airspace system, particularly through programs supporting NextGen. F&E was funded at \$3.33 billion in FY 2018, an increase of about 16.6 percent from the FY 2017 level. This funding level includes \$79.6 million provided specifically for expenses related to hurricanes that occurred during calendar year 2017.

**RE&D.** This account funds research, engineering, and development programs to plan, conduct, and integrate domestic and international research efforts, and develop products and services that will ensure a safe, efficient, and environmentally-compatible global air transportation system. The FY 2018 appropriation for RE&D was \$188.9 million, an increase of about 7 percent from the FY 2017 level.

The FAA must use its funds in the way they are appropriated. On its own, the FAA does not possess the legal authority to move funds between these accounts. A transfer between accounts requires an act of Congress.

**Other Budgetary Resources.** In addition to the primary funding resources appropriated by Congress, the FAA also receives budgetary resources from revolving funds and user fees. Revolving funds are accounts established by law to finance a continuing cycle of operations with receipts derived from such operations, usually available in their entirety for use by the fund without further action by the U.S. Congress. User fees are charges for government goods or services above and beyond what is normally available to the public. The "other funds" described below are not part of the enacted budget, but do provide another source of budgetary resources.



- ▶ **Aviation Insurance Revolving Fund.** The Aviation Insurance Revolving Fund provides non-premium war risk insurance, which includes hull loss and passenger, crew, and third-party liability coverage, for certain U.S. Government contracted air carrier operations, as authorized by 49 USC 44305. This non-premium insurance authority expires on December 31, 2019; pursuant to 49 USC 44310(b).
- ▶ **Administrative Services Franchise Fund (Franchise Fund).** The Franchise Fund is a revolving fund designed to create competition within the public sector in the performance of a wide variety of support services. These services include accounting, travel, multi-media, information technology, logistics and material management, aircraft maintenance, international training, and management training.
- ▶ **Aviation Overflight User Fees.** Aviation Overflight User Fees is a "special" fund whose receipts come from charges to operators of aircraft that fly in U.S. controlled airspace, but neither take off nor land in the United States.



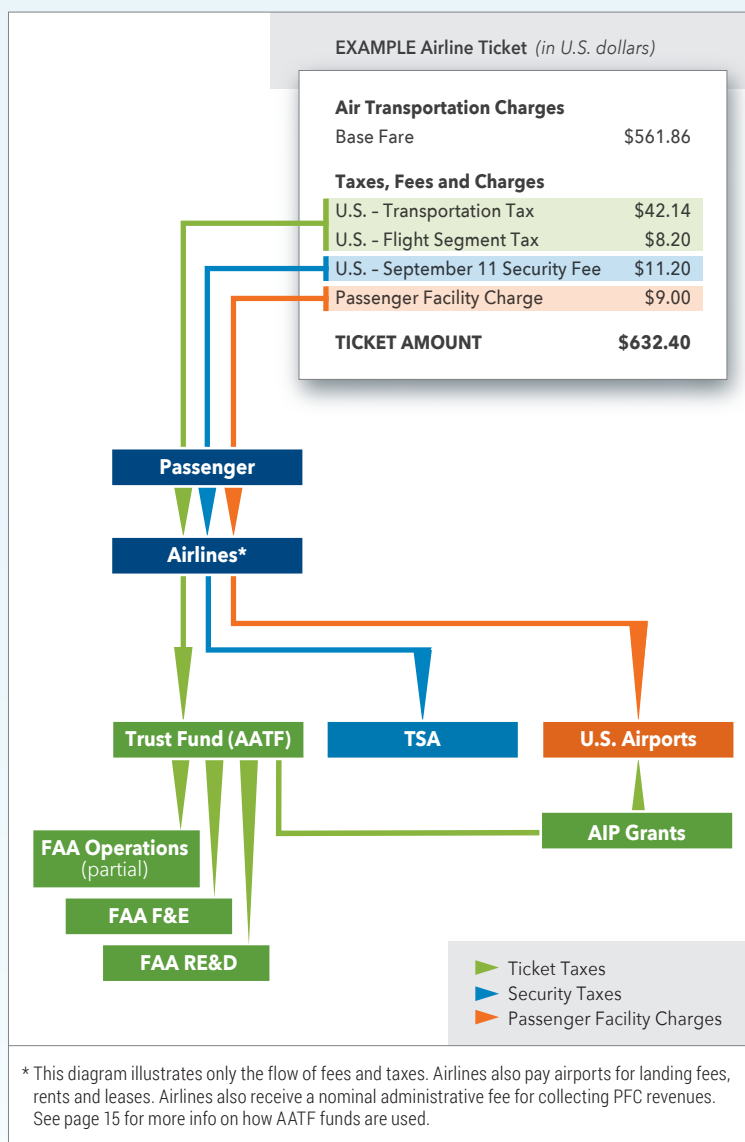
## What's in the Price of An Airline Ticket?

Many passengers are unaware that when they purchase an airline ticket, they are paying for more than a seat on a flight. The diagram shows the breakdown of an example ticket price for a domestic flight. Although the total ticket price is collected by the airlines, the airlines must forward a portion of those funds to others, for various purposes.

Taxes collected as part of the purchase of a domestic passenger ticket are **shown in green: a U.S. transportation tax and a flight segment tax**. These taxes, along with other excise taxes, are deposited into the **Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF)** which is a dedicated source of funding for the nation's aviation system. To the extent made available by law, FAA uses some of these funds to finance a portion of its **Operations**. The AATF is the primary source of funding for **FAA's Airport Improvement Program grants (AIP)**; **Facilities and Equipment (F&E)**; and **Research, Engineering, and Development (RE&D)** activities. These activities are explained further on pages 14–15, and further information on AIP grants is also provided on page 5.

Another part of the cost of an airline ticket is the passenger security service fee, also known as the **September 11 Security Fee, shown in blue**. This fee is collected by airlines from passengers at the time a ticket is purchased. Airlines then remit the fees to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

**Passenger Facility Charges (PFC) are shown in orange** and are an important source of capital for U.S. airport infrastructure. PFCs are collected by airlines at the time a ticket is purchased and the funds that are raised are transferred directly to the appropriate airports. It is up to the individual airport to decide whether, and how it will use PFC funds subject only to airline consultation and FAA approval of the application. Airports use these fees to fund FAA approved projects that enhance safety, security, or capacity; reduce noise; or increase carrier competition. PFC funds may also be used as the matching share for AIP grants. In addition, PFC funds may be used to pay for debt service on bonds used to raise capital for larger improvement projects



allowing for a significant degree of leverage for PFC funds. Since 1992, FAA has approved over \$100 billion of PFC projects.

# Summary of Financial Information

The summary financial information presented in this section was derived from the FAA's audited FY 2018 and FY 2017 financial statements, which can be found on pages 82–121 of FAA's *FY 2018 Performance and Accountability Report*.

The FAA's total assets were \$34.6 billion as of September 30, 2018. The FAA's assets are the resources available to pay liabilities or satisfy future service needs. The *Composition of Assets* chart depicts major categories of assets as a percentage of total assets.

*Fund balance with Treasury* (FBWT) represents 14 percent of the FAA's current period assets and consists of funding available through the Department of Treasury accounts from which the

FAA is authorized to make expenditures to pay liabilities. It also includes passenger ticket and other excise taxes deposited to the Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF), but not yet invested. Fund balance with Treasury ended the year at \$4.9 billion compared to \$3.5 billion in 2017.

At \$16.5 billion, *Investments* represent 48 percent of the FAA's current period assets, and are derived primarily from the collection of passenger ticket and other excise taxes deposited semi-monthly to the AATF. The deposited taxes are invested within several business days, thus transitioning the asset classification from fund balance with Treasury to investments. The investment balances also include the Aviation Insurance Program investments. Investments are redeemed, as needed, to finance the FAA's daily operations to the extent authorized by Congress, and to pay potential insurance claims. Investment balances increased approximately \$853 million on a comparative basis.

At \$12.3 billion, *General property, plant, and equipment, net* (PP&E) represents 35 percent of the FAA's assets as of September 30, 2018, and primarily comprises construction in progress related to the development of the national airspace system assets, and capitalized real and personal property. There was a decrease of \$387.5 million in the total composition of PP&E, as retirements, disposals, and depreciation exceeded purchases of equipment and additions to construction in progress through the normal course of business.

As of September 30, 2018, the FAA reported liabilities of \$4.4 billion. Liabilities are probable and measurable future outflows of resources arising from past transactions or events. The *Composition of Liabilities* chart depicts the FAA's major categories of liabilities as a percentage of total liabilities.

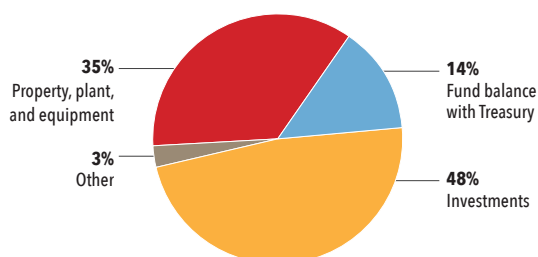
At \$1.4 billion, *Employee related and other liabilities* represent 33 percent of the FAA's total liabilities. These liabilities increased by \$17 million as of September 30, 2018 and are

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION SUMMARIZED ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND NET POSITION

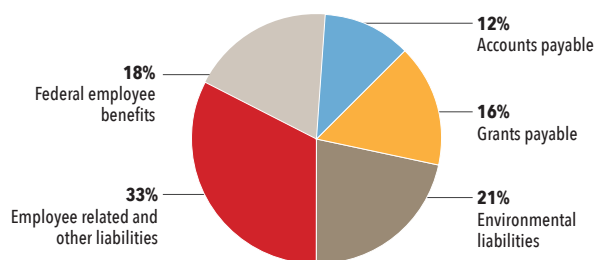
As of September 30  
(Dollars in Thousands)

Assets	2018	2017
Fund balance with Treasury	\$ 4,905,776	\$ 3,469,614
Investments, net	16,525,203	15,671,840
Accounts receivable, prepayments, and other, net	233,183	269,786
Inventory, operating materials, and supplies, net	730,524	710,839
Property, plant, and equipment, net	12,254,568	12,641,781
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 34,649,254</b>	<b>\$ 32,763,860</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts payable and grants payable	\$ 1,205,476	\$ 1,238,714
Environmental	945,968	1,047,940
Employee related and other	1,441,898	1,424,842
Federal employee benefits	806,679	818,732
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 4,400,021</b>	<b>\$ 4,530,228</b>
<b>Net position</b>		
Unexpended appropriations	1,085,256	965,149
Cumulative results of operations	29,163,977	27,268,483
<b>Total net position</b>	<b>30,249,233</b>	<b>28,233,632</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net position</b>	<b>\$ 34,649,254</b>	<b>\$ 32,763,860</b>

## COMPOSITION OF ASSETS as of September 30, 2018



### COMPOSITION OF LIABILITIES as of September 30, 2018



comprised mainly of \$380.2 million in advances received, \$164.4 million in Federal Employee's Compensation Act payable, \$308.9 million in accrued payroll and benefits, \$448.5 million in accrued leave and benefits, \$24.5 million in legal claims liability and \$63.9 million in capital lease liability.

At \$806.7 million, *Federal employee benefits* represent 18 percent of the FAA's current year liabilities, and consist of the FAA's expected liability for death, disability, and medical costs for approved workers compensation cases, plus a component for incurred but not reported claims. The Department of Labor calculates the liability for the DOT, and the DOT attributes a proportionate amount to the FAA based upon actual workers' compensation payments to FAA employees over the preceding four years. This liability is updated on an annual basis at year end.

*Environmental liabilities* represent 21 percent of the FAA's total liabilities and decreased slightly to \$946 million as of September 30, 2018 compared with \$1,048 million a year

earlier. *Environmental liabilities* include a component for remediation of known contaminated sites that decreased by \$58 million on a comparative basis. The other component of environmental liabilities includes the estimated costs for future facility decommissioning. This components' costs decreased by \$43.9 million.

The FAA's *grants payable* are estimated amounts incurred, but not yet claimed by Airport Improvement Program grant recipients and represent 16 percent of liabilities. *Grants payable* decreased by \$21.3 million. *Accounts payable* represents 12 percent of liabilities and decreased \$11.9 million. *Accounts payable* are the amounts the FAA owes to other entities for unpaid goods and services received.

For the fiscal years ended September 30, 2018 and September 30, 2017, FAA's net costs were \$16.6 billion and \$16.7 billion, respectively. The *Composition of Net Cost* chart illustrates the distribution of costs among the FAA's lines of business.

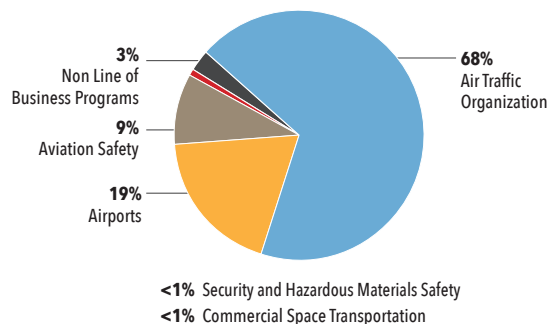
With a net cost of \$11.3 billion, the *Air Traffic Organization* is the FAA's largest line of business, comprising 68 percent of total net costs. The Air Traffic Organization's net costs decreased by \$45.8 million, on a comparative basis, primarily from decreases in costs for equipment and contractor services offset by increases in costs for labor and benefits, materials and supplies and other costs allocations.

The *Airports* line of business net cost decreased by \$118.7 million to \$3.2 billion for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2018, and represents 19 percent of the FAA's total net costs. *Airports* net costs are comprised primarily of Stewardship Investments from the Airport Improvement Program. The Stewardship Investments are made through grants to airport authorities, local and state governments, and metropolitan planning authorities for airport facilities throughout the United States and its territories.

### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION SUMMARIZED NET COST OF OPERATIONS For the Years Ended September 30 (Dollars in Thousands)

Lines of Business	2018	2017
Air Traffic Organization	\$ 11,341,999	\$ 11,387,759
Airports	3,166,777	3,285,443
Aviation Safety	1,500,202	1,495,829
Security and Hazardous Materials Safety	133,861	99,584
Commercial Space Transportation	23,142	23,300
<b>Non line of business programs</b>	<b>429,238</b>	<b>434,788</b>
<b>Net cost of operations</b>	<b>\$ 16,595,219</b>	<b>\$ 16,726,703</b>

### COMPOSITION OF NET COST for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2018





At \$1.5 billion, the net cost for *Aviation Safety* represents 9 percent of the FAA's total net costs, while *Non-Line of Business Programs* comprise 3 percent of total net costs. Net Costs of *Security and Hazardous Material Safety* and *Commercial Space Transportation* each represent less than 1 percent of total net costs.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
SUMMARIZED CHANGES IN NET  
POSITION**

**For the Years Ended September 30**  
(Dollars in Thousands)

	2018	2017
<b>Net position – beginning of year</b>	\$ 28,233,632	\$ 28,699,127
<b>Financing sources</b>		
Excise taxes and associated revenue	16,129,404	15,362,658
Appropriations received	2,360,754	852,852
Net transfers out	(295,817)	(252,337)
Imputed financing and other	416,479	298,035
Total financing sources	18,610,820	16,261,208
<b>Net cost of operations</b>	16,595,219	16,726,703
<b>Net position – end of year</b>	<u>\$ 30,249,233</u>	<u>\$ 28,233,632</u>

*Net Position* presents those accounting items that caused the net position section of the balance sheet to change from the beginning to the end of the reporting period. Various financing sources increase net position. These financing sources include appropriations received and non-exchange revenue, such as excise taxes and imputed financing from costs paid on the FAA's behalf by other federal agencies. The agency's net cost of operations and net transfers to other federal agencies serve to reduce net position.

The FAA's *Cumulative Results of Operations* for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2018, increased by \$1.9 billion primarily due to a combination of financing sources of \$2.2 billion from appropriations used, non-exchange revenue of \$16.1 billion, imputed financing of \$400.4 million, offset by transfers out of \$295.8 million and net costs of \$16.6 billion. Unexpended appropriations increased by \$120.1 million.

## Summary of Financial Statement Audit and FAA Management Assurances

The FAA's independent auditor, KPMG, LLP, has rendered an unmodified opinion on the FAA's FY 2018 financial statements with no material weaknesses. The DOT's Office of Inspector General presented KPMG's audit report to the FAA Administrator on November 9, 2018.

The accompanying table summarizes the results of the independent audits of the FAA's FY 2017 and FY 2018 consolidated financial statements. The table also summarizes the management assurances related to the effectiveness of internal control over the FAA's financial reporting and operations, and its conformance with financial management system requirements under Sections 2 and 4, respectively, of the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act (FMFIA) of 1982, as well as compliance with the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA).

### Auditor Conclusions

<b>Financial statements audits: FY 2017 and FY 2018</b>	Unmodified opinions ✓	No material weaknesses ✗ <sup>1</sup>
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### Agency Assertions

<b>Effectiveness of Internal Control over Financial Reporting and Operations (FMFIA § 2)</b>	Unmodified statement of assurance ✓	No material weaknesses ✓
<b>Financial management system requirements (FMFIA § 4)</b>	No nonconformances (Auditor and Agency) ✓	
<b>Systems requirements, accounting standards, and the USSGL at the transaction level (FFMIA)</b>	No lack of compliance noted (Agency and Auditor) ✓	

<sup>1</sup> Material weakness in FY 2017.



# A New Old Challenge: Safe Airspace from Amateur Rockets to Drones

In 1957, the Soviets launched Sputnik, the first artificial satellite and the first manmade object placed in the Earth's orbit, shortly followed by Sputnik II. In early 1958, the United States successfully launched its first satellite on a four-stage Juno I rocket. The space race had begun.

Adults and children alike became enamored with rockets and rocketry. They quickly formed amateur rocket clubs around the country. Amateur rocketry was a dangerous hobby since explosive chemicals were used as fuel. Reports of injuries became common, and so many towns banned the firing of homemade rockets.

While local fire departments, insurance companies, and even the American Rocket Society worried about injuries to people, FAA's predecessor agency, the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA), expressed concern about rocketry's impact on the safety of the flying public. By the early 1960s, more than 5,000 amateur rocket clubs with more than 40,000 active members operated in the United States. As the rocket builders became more sophisticated, some rockets weighed up to 75 pounds and could reach an altitude of over five miles. With a distinct threat to aviation, the Federal Aviation Agency, the successor to CAA, responded with regulations in 1963 that set out a number of conditions that prohibited the launching of rockets and missiles and required notification to local air traffic control before launches.

Fast forward 50 plus years and the FAA is addressing a similar yet more complicated threat to the safety of our nation's airspace—unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) or drones. Like amateur rockets, drones are popular with hobbyists and fall under the purview of the FAA. In December 2015, the FAA required drone hobbyists to register their drones and follow safe flying guidelines. However, unlike amateur rockets, drones are being designed for a variety of commercial uses that presents the FAA with an ever evolving challenge to embrace new uses for drones while assuring public privacy and safety. Safely integrating unmanned aircraft systems into our nation's airspace is one of the FAA's top priorities to protect manned aircraft, to protect people on the ground, and to protect innovation. The FAA successfully integrated rocketry into our airspace and it will do the same with other new entrants as they progress. ✈️



FAA  
ACTOID

The FAA **OPERATES** and **MAINTAINS FACILITIES** and **EQUIPMENT**

at over  
**13,000**  
**SITES** nationwide



FAA  
ACTOID

There are **14,285** **AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS**

working at FAA  
**AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL FACILITIES** in the U.S.





# We Welcome Your Comments

Thank you for your interest in the FAA's FY 2018 Performance and Accountability Report. We welcome your comments on how we can make this report more informative for our readers.

Please send your comments to:

MAIL:

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL  
MANAGEMENT



Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Avenue SW  
Room 600W  
Washington, DC 20591



**PHONE:** 202-267-9105



**EMAIL:** [PAR@faa.gov](mailto:PAR@faa.gov)



This FY 2018 Performance and Accountability Report and its companion: the FY 2018 Summary of Performance and Financial Information; and prior year documents are available on the FAA website at:

[https://www.faa.gov/about/plans\\_reports/#performance](https://www.faa.gov/about/plans_reports/#performance)

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