



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**

General Counsel

1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

November 14, 2023

Ms. Karen P. Gorman
Acting Special Counsel
U.S. Office of Special Counsel
1730 M Street NW, Suite 218
Washington, DC 20036

Re: OSC File No. DI-18-5205

Dear Ms. Gorman:

By letter dated July 29, 2022, the Office of Special Counsel referred for investigation a whistleblower's allegation that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is failing to secure aircraft from terrorist attacks using synthetic opioids. The referral required the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to investigate whether the FAA has "failed to take reasonable steps to protect flight crews and the public from potential opioid attacks and related medical emergencies."

The Secretary of Transportation has delegated responsibility for matters falling under 5 U.S.C. Section 1213(d) to the General Counsel. The FAA, through its Office of Aviation Safety, prepared the Report of Investigation (ROI) in this matter. I enclose the ROI with this letter.

The investigation did not substantiate the allegations. As the ROI explains, the FAA relies on intelligence reporting from interagency partners and the FAA's own expertise to determine whether there are aviation vulnerabilities that warrant FAA action, using a risk-based approach. Here, the FAA is unaware of current credible reporting indicating extremist groups are planning to use opioids to attack civil aviation operations.

The whistleblower suggests that as one potential action, the FAA should mandate opioid antidotes in emergency medical kits on board commercial airlines. Although the investigation found that the current threat assessment would not support the mandate, the enclosed report notes that the FAA "plans to continue reviewing intelligence reporting related to an opioid dispersal

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attack on board an aircraft, and to take appropriate action if the current threat assessment changes.”

We have appreciated the opportunity to review this important matter and the whistleblower’s diligence in raising concerns.

Sincerely,

Subash Iyer
Acting General Counsel

Enclosure