



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**

**OFFICE OF THE
GENERAL COUNSEL**

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

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

February 26, 2026

Johanna Oliver, Esq.
Attorney, Disclosure Unit
U.S. Office of Special Counsel
1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20036

Re: OSC File No. DI-24-000224

Dear Ms. Oliver:

By letter dated December 3, 2024, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) transmitted to the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) DOT's Report of Investigation in the above-referenced whistleblower referral matter. On July 3, 2025, OSC requested a supplemental report in this matter. By this letter, we are transmitting the requested supplemental report.

As noted in DOT's letter enclosing the Report of Investigation, DOT has appreciated the opportunity to review this important matter and the whistleblower's diligence in raising concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald Jackson".

Ronald Jackson
Senior Counsel for Oversight

Enclosure



Federal Aviation Administration

Memorandum

Date: February 6, 2026

To: Ronald Jackson
Senior Counsel for Oversight
Office of the Secretary/Office of the General Counsel

From: Barbara L. Barnet
Director (A), AAE-1
FAA Office of Audit and Evaluation

Prepared By: [REDACTED] Senior Investigator, FAA Office of Audit and Evaluation

Subject: Supplemental Information: OSC File No. DI-24-000224

History/Background

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is providing the information below in response to a July 3, 2025, email request from the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC). The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) submitted its Report of Investigation in this matter on December 3, 2024. OSC's July 3, 2025, email included follow-up questions concerning the report. For convenience, this memorandum recites each OSC question, followed by the response.

Summary

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Medical Support System (MSS) is a set of digital tools and processes managed by the FAA's Office of Aerospace Medicine (AAM). It facilitates the assessment and certification of the medical fitness of pilots and other personnel for safety-related duties. This is primarily through the MedXPress online portal for pilot applications and the Aerospace Medical Certification Subsystem (AMCS), which Aviation Medical Examiners (AMEs) use to transmit application data and medical history. The MSS was not initially designed to generate detailed reports based on multiple criteria. Therefore, while the numbers presented in this document are certainly indicative of trends, they may not represent precisely exact figures.

Supplemental Request

On July 3, 2025, following its review of the DOT report in this matter, OSC requested a supplemental report to address the following questions:

Question 1: Please provide the total number of medical certificate applications received and deferred in 2023.

Response: In FY23, AMEs transmitted 445,613 pilot medical exam information from the AMCS into the Document Imaging Workflow System (DIWS). Of these exams, 25,564 were deferred by the AMEs to the FAA for further review.

Question 2: It is reported that in 2023, LIEs resolved between 25-50% of the 802 certificates reviewed. Please clarify whether the calculations in the report are correct, or whether LIEs resolved between 200-401 certificates and forwarded 401-600 certificates to be resolved by MOs. and were forwarded to the Enforcement Investigative Report (EIR) process?

a. How many of the 401-600 certificates were not timely reviewed by MOs and were forwarded to the Enforcement Investigative Report (EIR) process?

Response: The report contained the correct percentage of certificates resolved through LIE reviews—between 25-50 percent—but an inaccurate calculation of the number of applications that, as a result, required MO reviews. The number of certificates reviewed by MOs ranged between 401 (50%) and 602 (75%). Not all certifications referred to MOs were forwarded to the EIR process. AAM Medical Certification Office forwarded 479 EIR referrals to the FAA’s Office of Chief Counsel (AGC) in calendar year 2023. As for timeliness, Federal Aviation Regulation 14 C.F.R. § 67.407(c) provides that the medical certificate issuance is affirmed after sixty (60) days if the FAA takes no action. However, a “final” review is not required within 60 days because the “action” taken within that period need not be an approval or denial. For example, if an applicant is asked for additional information within 60 days of the initial AME issuance, AAM’s timeframe to complete the review (and therefore its ability to deny) is automatically extended for however long it takes the applicant to provide the requested information. Once the FAA receives all of the requested information it starts a new 60-day clock. This is not tolling of the original period, but a new 60 days to review the application. As a result, a review that takes longer than sixty days is not necessarily an “untimely” review by the FAA given the frequent need for additional information from the applicant, and all of this is dependent upon the communication between the MO and the applicant in each individual case.

Question 3: How many deferred medical certificate applications did MOs review in 2023? What is the average processing time for deferred applications and/or special issuance certificates?

Response: In FY23, MOs reviewed 29,750 deferred exams, with an average disposition time of 152 days. It is important to note that some of these exams may have been deferred from earlier fiscal years, and can include delays caused by airmen requested to provide additional medical information or complete additional medical tests.

Question 4: Please clarify whether the Document Imaging Workflow System was deployed in 1999 or 2023.

Response: The Document Imaging Workflow System (DIWS) first deployed in 1999 and has undergone numerous upgrades since its release. In 2023, DIWS deployed new features that supported electronic submissions.

Question 5: Please provide the number of Air Traffic Controller (ATC) medical certificate applications processed in 2023; how many ATC applicants are currently awaiting medical clearance; and the average processing time for ATC medical certificate applications.

Response:

- a. ATC Medical Certificate (Clearance) applications processed in 2023 (which include new applicants and current employees):
 - i. Total processed: 2,844
- b. How many ATC applicants are currently awaiting medical clearance?
 - i. Total awaiting a medical clearance: 4,073 ¹
- c. The average processing time for ATC medical clearance applications (using 2023 data)
 - i. Total FY2023 average processing time: 133.2 calendar days.

Question 6: Please provide a status update on AAE's recommendations and if completed, the results of AAM's staffing needs evaluation.

Response: In addition to staffing increases, the Office of Aerospace Medicine has undertaken other efforts to improve the efficiency of the airman medical certification process and medical clearances for air traffic controller applicants. The first was to better educate applicants on how to prepare for a medical examination (as explained immediately below). Current statistics show individuals who bring required items to the examination for the Aviation Medical Examiner to review and upload into the FAA's medical system directly reduce decision delays by nearly four months on average. Aerospace Medicine has directed changes to MedXpress to provide information on requirements and necessary supporting documentation to bring to an examination. For ATCS applicants, the FAA signed a contract to provide case management services to schedule required evaluations, collect required documents, and prepare cases for FAA physician adjudication, allowing support staff to resume true analyst work. Finally, a low code application and bot is in development for MedXpress that will allow applicants to access required instructions at the actual point in the application.

Aerospace Medicine explored staffing needs and was given permission to hire additional medical officers (FV-0602 Physician) in the fall of 2024. On September 1, 2024, Aerospace Medicine had 57 physicians, reaching 64 by January 3, 2025. In January and February 2025, the FAA designated the FV-0602

¹ The total number of ATC medical applicants that are pending include new applicants and current ATCs who's medical clearance is under review.

series as safety critical and exempt from programs designed to reduce the FAA workforce. Further, the FAA was allowed to continue hiring. As of today, Aerospace Medicine has 72 physicians, with an additional 6 in the hiring process, to reach the final goal of 78 physicians. The Office of Aerospace Medicine continues to recruit as doctors retire to maintain the staffing level.