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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

KEITH B. ASHDOWN, STAFF DIRECTOR  
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February 17, 2016

The Honorable Michael P. Huerta  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
800 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Mr. Huerta:

As you are aware, since 2011, I have followed the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) efforts to provide training to the next generation of air traffic controllers, including the problems identified by the Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General regarding the Air Traffic Controller Optimum Training Solution (ATCOTS) contract and its successor, the Controller Training Contract (CTC), awarded in March 2015. In 2014, I chaired a hearing examining the failures of the ATCOTS contract.<sup>1</sup> My staff has met with the FAA numerous times over the past several years to better understand whether the FAA has made improvements to its contract management and addressed deficiencies in its oversight of air traffic controller training.

The Inspector General recently issued a report providing an update on FAA's progress in implementing prior recommendations.<sup>2</sup> While the Inspector General found that the FAA has made progress, the Inspector General also found that the FAA has failed to implement several recommendations, including creating a training plan with clearly defined requirements, developing an internal resources assessment, and performing a baseline review of contract costs.<sup>3</sup>

As part of my ongoing oversight, I request that you provide me with information regarding the FAA's efforts in identifying internal resources as a means of controlling costs. In addition, I request more information on the alternative efforts the FAA made in developing the budget baseline for the CTC in order to mitigate risk as opposed to the approach recommended by the Inspector General.

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<sup>1</sup> Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight, *Hearing: Management of Air Traffic Controller Training Contracts*, 113th Cong. (Jan. 14, 2014) (S. Hrg. 113-323).

<sup>2</sup> Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General, *FAA Has Not Sufficiently Addressed Key Weaknesses Related to Its ATCOTS Contract* (Dec. 10, 2015) (ZA-2016-010).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

The Honorable Michael P. Huerta  
February 19, 2016  
Page 2

I am also interested to learn about the FAA's progress in implementing the Inspector General's recommendation to develop a training plan that clearly defines training requirements and resolves the division of training being provided by certified professional controllers and contractors under the CTC. The Inspector General reports that the FAA is developing a tool that will provide data for the training plan and that this data is expected to be available in January 2016.<sup>4</sup> I request that FAA provide a detailed update on its progress in developing the tool and data and information on when the training plan is expected to be completed and available for review.

Thanks you for your assistance. I request that the FAA respond on or before **March 9, 2016**.

Please have your staff contact Sarah Garcia with my Subcommittee staff at (202) 224-5602 with any questions. Please send any official correspondence relating to this request to [Kelsey\\_Stroud@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Kelsey_Stroud@hsgac.senate.gov).

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

cc: Rob Portman  
Chairman  
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.*