



Chapter 06: Safety and Compliance

05. FAA Compliance Audits

Manage FAA compliance audits to ensure adherence to aviation regulations and maintain operational certificates.

Roles and Responsibilities

Safety Officer:

- Monitor safety compliance across all operations
- Conduct safety investigations and reporting
- Coordinate safety training and certification
- Ensure regulatory safety compliance
- Authorize safety equipment and improvements

Operations Leader:

- Oversee daily operations and coordinate between departments
- Authorize emergency response procedures and resource allocation
- Monitor safety compliance and operational excellence
- Coordinate scheduling across departments for operational coverage
- Review billing disputes and approve service adjustments
- Ensure regulatory compliance across all operations

Process Steps

Pre-Audit Preparation Phase

- **Review audit notification** - Analyze audit scope, timeline, and specific areas of focus identified by FAA
- **Assemble audit team** - Designate internal personnel to support audit activities and serve as subject matter experts
- **Gather documentation** - Collect all required records, certificates, procedures, and supporting documentation
- **Conduct self-assessment** - Perform internal audit of areas to be examined to identify potential issues
- **Prepare facilities** - Ensure audit areas are organized, accessible, and professional in appearance
- **Brief personnel** - Inform affected team members about audit process, expectations, and their roles

Audit Logistics Phase

- **Coordinate schedules** - Work with FAA to establish audit timeline and inspector availability
- **Arrange work space** - Provide dedicated workspace for auditors with necessary equipment and resources
- **Confirm documentation** - Verify all requested documentation is complete, current, and properly organized
- **Establish communication protocols** - Define how questions and requests for information will be handled
- **Prepare escort personnel** - Assign knowledgeable personnel to accompany auditors during facility inspections
- **Review safety protocols** - Ensure auditors are briefed on facility safety requirements and procedures

Audit Execution Phase

- **Conduct opening meeting** - Participate in audit kickoff meeting to review scope, process, and expectations
- **Provide requested documentation** - Supply all requested records and documentation promptly and completely
- **Support facility inspections** - Accompany auditors during facility tours and operational area inspections
- **Answer questions accurately** - Provide honest, complete answers to auditor questions and requests for information
- **Document audit activities** - Maintain records of audit activities, findings, and inspector comments
- **Address immediate concerns** - Take corrective action on any immediate safety or compliance issues identified

Audit Response Phase

- **Review audit findings** - Carefully analyze all audit findings, observations, and recommendations
- **Develop corrective actions** - Create specific action plans to address each finding with timelines and responsibilities
- **Submit formal response** - Provide written response to FAA within required timeframe with detailed corrective action plans
- **Communicate with team** - Brief all affected personnel on audit results and required corrective actions
- **Allocate resources** - Ensure adequate resources are available to implement all required corrective actions
- **Establish tracking system** - Create system to monitor progress on corrective action implementation

Implementation and Follow-up Phase

- **Execute corrective actions** - Implement all required corrective actions according to approved timelines
- **Monitor progress** - Track implementation status and address any obstacles or delays
- **Document completion** - Maintain evidence of corrective action completion for FAA review
- **Conduct verification** - Verify effectiveness of corrective actions through internal audits or inspections
- **Submit completion reports** - Provide FAA with documentation of corrective action completion as required
- **Schedule follow-up** - Coordinate any required follow-up inspections or verification activities with FAA

Continuous Improvement Phase

- **Analyze audit results** - Review audit findings to identify systemic issues or improvement opportunities
- **Update procedures** - Revise operational procedures based on audit findings and lessons learned
- **Enhance training** - Modify training programs to address knowledge gaps identified during audit
- **Improve documentation** - Enhance record-keeping and documentation systems based on audit experience
- **Share lessons learned** - Communicate audit lessons learned with industry peers and internal stakeholders
- **Prepare for next audit** - Use audit experience to improve preparation for future regulatory inspections

Tools and Resources

Documentation Systems:

- Regulatory compliance files and databases
- Certificate and license tracking systems
- Training records and certification databases
- Operational procedure manuals and updates

Audit Support Tools:

- Audit preparation checklists
- Document organization and filing systems
- Corrective action tracking spreadsheets
- Communication and correspondence logs

Reference Materials:

- Applicable FAA regulations and advisory circulars

- Industry best practices and guidance documents
- Previous audit reports and corrective actions
- Organizational policies and procedures

Common Issues and Solutions

- **Issue:** Incomplete or disorganized documentation during audit
- **Solution:** Maintain ongoing document management system; conduct regular internal audits to verify documentation completeness

Issue: Personnel unable to answer auditor questions effectively

Solution: Provide audit preparation training; ensure subject matter experts are available during audit

Issue: Corrective actions not implemented within required timeframes

Solution: Establish clear accountability and tracking systems; allocate adequate resources for implementation

Regulatory References

- **14 CFR Part 119** - Certification: Air Carriers and Commercial Operators
- **14 CFR Part 139** - Certification of Airports
- **14 CFR Part 145** - Repair Stations
- **FAA Order 8900.1** - Flight Standards Information Management System
- **FAA Order 5190.6** - Airport Compliance Manual
- **FAA Advisory Circular AC 150/5200-37** - Introduction to Safety Management Systems for Airport Operators