

Aerospace Medical Association



President
CDR Andrew Bellenkes, Ph.D.
HQ USAFA/DFBL
2354 Fairchild Drive
USAF Academy, CO 80840-4159

320 South Henry Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3579
Phone: 703-739-2240
Fax: 703-739-9652
www.asma.org

Executive Director
Russell B. Rayman, M.D., M.P.H.
Association Home Office

January 21, 2009

Mr. Robert A. Sturgell
Acting Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20591


Dear Mr. Sturgell:

The Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA) recommends that the Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) be continued. The Federal Aviation Administration's stated goal for this program is to enhance aviation safety through the prevention of accidents and incidents. The focus of the ASAP is to encourage voluntary reporting of safety issues and events that come to the attention of employees of certain certificate holders. The goal of the ASAP is to encourage an employee to voluntarily report safety issues even though they may involve an alleged violation of Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR).

Employees, union representatives, airline officials, and federal regulators should share and analyze the ASAP data, and subsequently take constructive corrective action. If employees are discouraged from reporting incipient safety threats, in-flight mistakes, or other problems because of the threat of punitive action by regulators or employers, ASAP data will be non-existent and as a result program effectiveness will suffer. Therefore, confidentiality of ASAP reports should be strengthened to encourage full disclosure of the incident by all of the involved parties.

The AsMA believes that programs such as the ASAP are one reason for the decline in commercial aircraft accident rates and strongly endorses the continued voluntary participation of eligible certificate holders, unions and federal regulators in this program

Sincerely,


Russell B. Rayman, M.D.
Executive Director

AEROSPACE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
THE INTERNATIONAL LEADER FOR EXCELLENCE IN AEROSPACE MEDICINE
80th ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC MEETING, WESTIN BONAVENTURE,
LOS ANGELES, CA, MAY 3 - 7, 2009