



PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

IMMEDIATE ASSESSMENT OF AVIATION SAFETY

January 30, 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FEDERAL AVIATION
ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: Immediate Assessment of Aviation Safety

On January 29, 2025, a commercial aircraft and a military helicopter horrifically collided near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. American families today woke up without their loved ones after what should have been a routine trip, and the entire Nation mourns the loss of the victims.

This shocking event follows problematic and likely illegal decisions during the Obama and Biden Administrations that minimized merit and competence in the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The Obama Administration implemented a biographical questionnaire at the FAA to shift the hiring focus away from objective aptitude. During my first term, my Administration raised standards to achieve the highest standards of safety and excellence. But the Biden Administration egregiously rejected merit-based hiring, requiring all executive departments and agencies to implement dangerous “diversity equity and inclusion” tactics, and specifically recruiting individuals with “severe intellectual” disabilities in the FAA.

On my second day in office, I ordered an immediate return to merit-based recruitment, hiring, and promotion, elevating safety and ability as the paramount standard. Yesterday’s devastating accident tragically underscores the need to elevate safety and competence as the priority of the FAA.

Consistent with the Presidential Memorandum of January 21, 2025 (Keeping Americans Safe in Aviation), I am further ordering the Secretary of Transportation (Secretary) and the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (Administrator) to review all hiring decisions and changes to safety protocols made during the prior 4 years, and to take such corrective action as necessary to achieve uncompromised aviation safety, including the replacement of any individuals who do not meet qualification standards. This review shall include a systematic assessment of any deterioration in hiring standards and aviation safety standards and protocols during the Biden Administration.

Consistent with the Presidential Memorandum of January 21, 2025, the Secretary and the Administrator shall take all actions necessary to reverse concerning safety and personnel trends during the prior 4 years, instill an unwavering commitment to aviation safety, and ensure that all Americans fly with peace of mind.