



## United States Air Force (USAF) Airworthiness Bulletin (AWB)-1007

**Subject:** Airworthiness Audit Process

*This bulletin supplements USAF policy and instruction. In cases of conflict, this bulletin takes precedence per paragraph 2.3.4.1 of Air Force Instruction (AFI) 62-601, AFMC Supplement, USAF Airworthiness, 12 May 2011.*

- References:**
- AFI 62-601, *USAF Airworthiness*, 11 June 2010
  - AFI 62-601, AFMC Supplement, *USAF Airworthiness*, 12 May 2011
  - Air Force Policy Directive (AFPD) 62-6, *USAF Airworthiness*, 11 June 2010

- Purpose:** This bulletin defines the purpose, scope, and execution steps of the airworthiness audit process, in accordance with References a. and b., paragraph 1.3.7.
- Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR):** The USAF Airworthiness Office, Air Force Life Cycle Management Center/Engineering (AFLCMC/EN-EZ). Comments, suggestions, or questions on this bulletin should be emailed to the USAF Airworthiness mailbox at [USAF.Airworthiness.Office@wpafb.af.mil](mailto:USAF.Airworthiness.Office@wpafb.af.mil).

**Purpose of the Audit:** An airworthiness audit is performed to assess compliance with airworthiness policy (Reference c.), thereby gaining confidence in the interpretation and implementation of the USAF airworthiness process. The audit examines Program Executive Officers (PEO) and the Technology Executive Officer (TEO) portfolio for compliance with USAF airworthiness policy and adherence to delegations of authority given to the PEO's Director of Engineering (DOE)/Delegated Technical Authority (DTA) and the TEO's DTA. The PEO's and TEO's portfolio of air systems is defined, as all air systems for which the PEO or TEO is responsible, to include air systems owned and operated by the USAF and any other air system for which they have responsibility (e.g., contracted or leased air systems). Policy compliance is assessed by examining airworthiness process artifacts and other deliverables delineated in letters of delegation for availability, accuracy, and quality. The Airworthiness (AW) SharePoint site contains additional information on questions and artifacts.

- Execution of Audit:** A typical airworthiness audit is expected to take about three days and consist of an examination of a subset of the portfolio's air systems. The Airworthiness Audit Team (AAT) will send advance notification, a pre-audit information request, and a schedule to the PEO or TEO for upcoming audits. The scheduled activities include a portfolio leadership (PEO & DOE/DTA; TEO & TEO/DTA) interview, an executive introduction, an air system audit, an AAT team caucus, and an executive out-brief. The details are given in the following sub-paragraphs. PEO's and the TEO can expect their portfolios to be audited every two (2) to three (3) years.
  - Audit Notification:** The AAT will send advance notification and a pre-audit information request to the PEO or TEO at least 60 calendar days before the scheduled audit.

- b. **Pre-Audit Information:** The PEO or TEO will provide the AAT a list of all air systems under the responsibility of the PEO and/or TEO during the past three (3) years (including leased or contracted air systems). The list will show, for each air system, a short description of any and all modifications (reportable and non-reportable) and the current flight authorization (a Template is located on the AW SharePoint site). The PEO or TEO will also provide the AAT with a list of internal (portfolio) Operating Instructions (OIs), processes and/or practices intended to supplement the USAF airworthiness policy as well as a list of internal and external airworthiness delegation letters. The requested information will be sent to the AAT at least 30 calendar days before the scheduled audit.
- c. **Air Systems Selected for Audit:** The AAT will select air systems to be audited and send notification of the chosen air systems to the PEO's DOE/DTA and/or the TEO's DTA at least two weeks before the scheduled audit.
- d. **Executive Introduction:** The Executive Introduction will occur in advance of the formal audit and gives the AAT the opportunity to discuss the audit process with the portfolio leadership and can include a discussion of any special issues they may want the AAT to examine during the audit. At the discretion of the portfolio leadership, others may be invited to the Executive Introduction. If others are invited, the AAT is willing to meet privately with the portfolio leadership before or after the Executive Introduction.
- e. **Audit Kick-off Meeting:** The kick-off meeting occurs prior to the start of the audit with the individual air systems leadership. During the kick-off meeting, the AAT will outline the audit process, schedule and address any questions. This meeting may be held in conjunction with the Executive Introduction, if PEO/TEO leadership concurs.
- f. **Air System Audit and Follow-up Sessions:** The AAT will evaluate the airworthiness process by examining airworthiness artifacts for the selected air systems. While it is recommended that the appropriate DTA's be present during the audit, the AAT can independently examine airworthiness process artifacts. During the audit, the AAT will generate comments and initial ratings for the selected air systems. Portfolio Leadership may redress any unresolved questions or concerns from the AAT review.
- g. **AAT Caucus:** At the end of each day, the AAT will meet and discuss preliminary audit results. AAT caucuses allow the AAT to reflect on the information received. The AAT may generate further inquiries and/or confirm findings of discrepancies, best practices, benchmark practices, and commendable activities. This information becomes the content of the AAT report to the TAA and the Executive Out-brief.
- h. **Executive Out-brief:** The Executive Out-brief is prepared by the AAT on the last day of the audit, after the final Follow-up Session and Caucus discussions, and presented to the portfolio leadership prior to departing. The Executive Out-

brief will inform the portfolio leadership of the AAT's initial findings and observations, to include draft ratings in each evaluation element, the discrepancies found, and timeline for corrective actions. At the discretion of the portfolio leadership, others may be invited to the Executive Out-brief

- i. **AAT Report to the USAF TAA:** Within two weeks of completing the audit, the AAT will brief the USAF TAA on its findings and observations, if available. The audit report is then finalized, approved by the TAA, sent to the portfolio leadership, and archived.
- j. **Notes on Ratings:** Any element of evaluation with a yellow or red rating requires a Corrective Action Plan. A red rating requires corrective action within 30 days and yellow rating within 90 days to be submitted to the TAA. The TAA may adjust the final ratings based upon the audit report and assess whether the respective DTA's Corrective Action Plan appropriately addresses the audit concerns. Deficiency and corrective action status is reported to the TAA by the DOE/DTA on an agreed basis. The TAA will determine whether briefings to other organizations or senior leaders are appropriate. Additional details follow:

**Best Practices** – New or novel approaches to improve airworthiness execution and/or maintain airworthiness.

**Benchmark Practices** – The best of the best practices observed and researched to date by the assessment team and worthy of posting for consideration for emulation by other organizations. Benchmark Candidates will be identified by the assessment team and reviewed by the TAA who will make the final decision if the process is worthy of Air Force wide implementation.

**Corrective Action Plan** – A written response that is intended to resolve a documented discrepancy and prevent recurrence. The Corrective Action Plan must include technical, cost, and schedule information where appropriate.

**Commendable** – A highly effective concept, technique, or management practice which enhances airworthiness accomplishment and exceeds the program requirements specified by USAF directives.

**Discrepancy** – (1) Violation of USAF airworthiness directive, and (2) Results in or could result in significant airworthiness impact or widespread airworthiness impact. These findings require the respective PEO or TEO to submit a written response describing the corrective actions(s) taken to address the deficiency and prevent recurrence.

**Overall Evaluation** – Rating for the organization will evaluate repeat findings, safety findings, and ability to produce and maintain aircraft that conform to type design and condition for safe flight. Repeat findings are findings reported in the organizations' previous airworthiness process assessment that exists again during the current assessment. Repeat findings are highly undesirable and may indicate a systemic problem with leadership in the organization. Safety related findings are

significant deficiencies that potentially affect the safety and well being of USAF members, aircrew, equipment or assets and may be highlighted in any evaluation area of the assessment report.

**Evaluation Green rating** – Performance satisfies airworthiness policy. Procedures and activities are carried out in an efficient and competent manner. Resources and programs are efficiently managed. Deficiencies may exist but do not impede or limit airworthiness accomplishment.

**Evaluation Yellow rating** – Performance does not satisfy some airworthiness policy. Procedures and activities are not carried out in an efficient manner. Resources and programs are not efficiently managed. Deficiencies exist that impede or limit airworthiness accomplishment.

**Evaluation Red rating** – Performance does not satisfy airworthiness policy. Procedures and activities are not carried out in an adequate manner. Resources and programs are not efficiently managed. Deficiencies exist that impede or limit airworthiness accomplishment.

4. **The Location for On-Site Reviews:** Unless otherwise specified through communication with the AAT, the reviews will be conducted at the organization's offices or at a designated contractor's facility suitable for open government discussions.
5. **Staff Assistance Visit (SAV):** A SAV is a means for the PEO or the TEO to obtain insight on the status of their airworthiness processes prior to a formal audit. The PEO or TEO determines their individual need for a SAV and requests such a visit from the TAA. Upon request from the PEO or TEO and acceptance by the TAA, a Staff Assistance Team (SAT) may be convened to observe the portfolio for compliance to airworthiness policy. The SAT will provide formal feedback on strengths and weaknesses of the airworthiness activities observed by the chosen programs/platforms. The SAV is not mandatory and may only occur by request from the PEO or TEO and is not a substitute for the airworthiness audit.



JOHN E. WHITE, SES  
Director, Engineering & Technical Management/Services  
Air Force Life Cycle Management Center (AFLCMC)  
USAF Technical Airworthiness Authority