



FAA Employee Union Faults Agency For Inadequate COVID-19 Response

Today, the Professional Aviation Safety Specialists, AFL-CIO (PASS) expressed strong disappointment in the way the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has prepared employees and, the agency itself, to cope with the coronavirus outbreak that has only spread in recent weeks and shows no sign of ending.

PASS represents 11,000 employees at the FAA and the Department of Defense, with the bulk of those employees at the FAA.

“The employees we represent are rightfully concerned about this global pandemic,” said National President Mike Perrone. “Many work at airports, others physically inspect planes and interact with flight crews. Yet the responses from the FAA and Department of Transportation to their concerns have been woefully inadequate.”

The union has written twice to FAA Administrator Steve Dickson since March 2 asking for a joint review of the FAA’s pandemic contingency plans as soon as possible. In a second letter sent this week, President Perrone emphasized the need to allow for teleworking to the maximum extent possible and to protect any employee who occupies a job that is not conducive to teleworking. This will require agency-specific guidance to cover “the diversity of FAA workplaces, working conditions and jobs.” He continued, regardless of what work the employee performs, “We will need to provide accommodations for their personal health and safety.” Neither letter has been answered. In fact, during recent communications, Perrone noted that “The agency provided very little concrete guidance.”

[March 2 letter to FAA administrator](#)

[March 11 letter to FAA administrator](#)

The Office of Personnel Management, the White House and even the FAA’s own guidance to managers dated March 6, call for increased use of telework by employees whose work can be done remotely. The FAA guidance told managers to take steps including increasing the number of telework eligible positions; provide the option of expanding the number of telework days for employees with existing telework agreements; and testing the telework-readiness of all eligible employees. PASS remains concerned that the FAA is not maximizing telework as required by its own guidance. Most problematic, there appears to be a lack of preparedness and transparency.

Noting that the aviation industry is under the most stress it has faced since 9/11 and is now under a declared national emergency, Perrone expressed frustration with the FAA’s inability to be more aggressive and forthcoming in its planning. “If the agency won’t share contingency plans with the union and won’t be more proactive and transparent about what it is doing to protect employees, it is more difficult for PASS to assist with a successful recovery from this worldwide emergency,” said Perrone.

“The employees we represent are dedicated public servants. They are under tremendous pressure



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to keep the largest, safest and most complex air traffic control system in the world functioning at this difficult time,” he continued. “The agency should be just as dedicated to its employees.”

PASS will continue to pressure the agency to share its continuity planning and to strengthen workplace protections for the men and women the union represents. “The FAA can do better,” said Perrone.

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Since 1977, PASS has represented more than 11,000 employees of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Defense who install, maintain, support and certify air traffic control and national defense equipment, inspect and oversee the commercial and general aviation industries, develop flight procedures and perform quality analyses of the aviation systems. For more information, visit www.passnational.org.