Project Overview

Federal Aviation Administration

NextGen Accountability Review

Background: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), located within the Department of Transportation, has the mission of providing "the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the world." The FAA's Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) was a large-scale FAA modernization initiative that overhauled air traffic control infrastructure for communications, navigation, surveillance, automation, and information management to increase the safety, efficiency, capacity, predictability, flexibility, and resiliency of aviation.

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Project Description

Section 603 of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 directs the FAA Administrator to enter into an arrangement with the Academy to conduct an independent review of the NextGen program, with the following objectives:

- Assessing the FAA's performance in delivering and implementing quantifiable operational benefits to the National Airspace System (NAS)
- Validating existing metrics and identifying additional metrics the FAA can use to accurately capture and communicate improvements in throughput, efficiency, fuel burn, and aircraft operation time
- Evaluating fleet equipage levels and associated costs/benefits and identifying additional metrics the FAA can use to track and assess fleet equipage across operators in the NAS

Results of this review are intended to inform FAA decision-making and support broader planning for the future of the NAS.

The Academy has appointed a five-member Panel of Fellows to oversee and guide this study. Information on the Panel of Fellows and Study Team is provided on the next page. A final report with findings and recommendations, and executive briefings on the report, will be completed by October 1st, 2026.

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Panel of Fellows

David Berteau (Panel Chair),* David Berteau is a nationally recognized expert in public administration, federal acquisition, and research and development governance, with more than four decades of experience evaluating R&D programs in government and on external study boards. He has direct experience with the Federal Aviation Administration conducting work on software systems supporting air traffic control, as well as contributing to the development of FAA acquisition regulations in the 1990s. In his Professional Services Council capacity, he followed implementation of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024. Mr. Berteau is President of David Berteau & Associates and a long-standing Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration.

Doug Webster,* Dr. Doug Webster served a 21-year career as an Air Force officer, followed by over two decades of serving in or consulting to the federal government. He has served as Director of government-to-government risk management at USAID, and as CFO of the US Dept. of Labor and the US Dept. of Education. He convened the first cross-agency meeting of federal executives interested in ERM in 2008, leading to the first Federal ERM Summit that year. He was a co-founder of the Association of Federal Enterprise Risk Management in 2011 and served two terms as the association's founding president. In 2016, Doug was the initial awardee of the AFERM Hall of Fame Award. He has guided ERM implementation in two agencies as a federal employee, and has consulted to over two dozen agencies in the areas of strategic planning, cost and performance management, and ERM. He is a co-author of four books, including Managing Risk and Performance: A Guide for Government Decision Makers in 2014, and Value-Based Management in Government, published in 2020.

Roberta Bobbie Stempfley.* Bobbie Stempfley has been serving as the Vice President of the Product Group at Dell Technologies since 2020. Prior to this role, from 2017 to 2020, Bobbie was the Managing Director at CERT within the Software Engineering Institute. Before that, Bobbie held the position of Technical Director of Security Strategy at MITRE Corporation from 2015 to 2017. From 2010 to 2015, Bobbie served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary at the National Protection and Programs Directorate within the Department of Homeland Security. Earlier in Bobbie's career, she was the Chief Information Officer at the Defense Information Systems Agency, Department of Defense, from 2009 to 2010, and the Deputy Chief Information Officer at the same agency from 2006 to 2008. Bobbie's career also includes various technical leadership roles at the Defense Information Systems Agency, Department of Defense, from 1997 to 2006.

Michael Wooten.* The Honorable Michael Eric Wooten is a nationally recognized leader in public administration, infrastructure governance, and workforce development. He is a Fellow of the National Academy of Public Administration and serves as Chair of the State Board for the Virginia Community College System, overseeing system-wide governance, capital planning, and accountability for infrastructure and workforce investments. Dr. Wooten previously served as Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy in the Executive Office of the President, where he led government-wide acquisition policy and emphasized lifecycle cost analysis, performance metrics, and benefits realization for complex, technology-intensive and R&D-driven federal programs. He has also held senior roles as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Career, Technical, and Adult Education at the U.S. Department of Education and Deputy Chief Procurement Officer for the District of Columbia, with responsibility for evaluating program outcomes and managing diverse stakeholder environments. Dr. Wooten began his career as a U.S. Marine Corps Air Traffic Controller, earning Certified Tower Operator qualification and performing operational air traffic control duties from 1983 to 1995. He holds a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania and reports no conflicts of interest related to this study.

Susan Kinney Perkins.* Susan Kinney-Perkins has nearly 20 years of experience in Space Acquisition and Logistics and Policy development as the Director for Logistics (SES) at NASA and as a Logistics Program Manager for the Space Station program. Additionally, she has served the DOD for over 14 years as a civilian at HQMC USMC as the Deputy for Logistics addressing all facets of logistics planning, policy development, and strategic mobility across the ground forces of the Marine Corps; and at Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) supporting logistics Program Managers. She also served NAVAIR as a Naval reserve officer for 27 years (Aerospace Maintenance Duty Officer) commanding four acquisition and maintenance organizations. Susan served in commercial industry as a Senior Manager establishing a Supply Chain practice offering solutions to the Federal sector, and earlier as a Logistics Manager supporting multiple aircraft platforms and space hardware. Later in her career Susan transitioned to Academia and led the Supply Chain curriculum at the National Defense University (NDU–Eisenhower School) and taught Acquisition, Innovation, and supported the Space, Land Combat, and Industrial Base industry studies programs. Later she taught at the Defense Systems Management College – Defense Acquisition University (DAU) where she led the Life Cycle Logistics and Sustainment portion of the university education and provided consulting to Senior Program Managers across the DoD and Federal Government. Susan received a MS in National Resource Strategy & a Strategic Acquisition Certificate from the National Defense University, Industrial College, an MBA from George Mason University, and a BS in Management from GMU/Virginia Tech

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