



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

800 Independence Ave., SW
Washington DC 20591

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Mr. Edwin Griffioen
Managing Director
Civil Aviation Authority of the Netherlands
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Dear Mr. Griffioen:

I wanted to take a moment to thank you for taking the time to meet with the FAA at EASA Headquarters in Cologne, Germany last week. My team was favorably impressed with the corrective action plan presented by the Netherlands Civil Aviation Authority.

As discussed, the focus of our concern is the qualifications and number of Flight Operations Inspectors. There are many opinions regarding the currency and level of qualifications for each Operations Inspector and we contend that in order to administer a type rating the person conducting the examination must also be type rated in that particular type of aircraft. The system of qualification must include an adequate training program and plan to ensure that all inspectors remain current in the latest technology. In addition, once a commercial pilot is certified, the CAA must conduct adequate oversight of that airman. This necessitates the maintenance of a structured annual surveillance plan. Of course training and surveillance is not effective unless the CAA possesses an adequate number of qualified inspectors commensurate with the size of the country's aviation environment.

We are aware of the current financial difficulties affecting many EU member states. This situation is not a reason to allow the size and effectiveness of a CAA to dwindle. There are innovative ways to compensate for shortfalls in personnel or qualifications. Methods such as regional cooperation and sharing or hiring qualified retired airline personnel are examples of how this can be accomplished, but to do nothing has potential safety implications and jeopardizes compliance with ICAO Standards.

During my next visit, I would like to focus on the following points:

- Number of qualified inspectors
- Establishment of training and recurrent training programs
- Qualifications of operations inspectors
- Establishment of an annual surveillance plan
- Explanation of the term "covenants" as it relates to the airline

I read the recent NRC.NL newspaper article with interest. The article indicates that the FAA interprets ICAO Standards differently and that we have made exaggerated demands in regards to the oversight provided by the Netherlands. I wanted to reassure you that we are not asking Netherlands CAA to implement any additional standards that are not already expected to be met by over 100 ICAO member states, even those as small as Nigeria, Croatia or Israel. I believe that the new EASA Implementing Rules will require compliance with the attributes that I described above with additional requirements for a competent authority. In the future the FAA would be very interested in the time required for each EASA member state to fully comply with the new regulation.

I look forward to our next meeting and I hold my calendar open in anticipation of your recommended visit date. Please rest assured that the FAA is ready to assist your agency in any way possible.

Sincerely,

John Barbagallo, Manager
International Programs and Policy Division