

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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February 15, 2007

The Honorable David M. Walker
Comptroller General
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Walker,

The National Weather Service (NWS) plays a significant role in providing weather services to the aviation community. NWS's weather products and data are a vital component of the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA's) air traffic control system, providing timely and accurate weather information to local, regional, and national air traffic management, navigation, and surveillance systems. In response to a request by the Federal Aviation Administration, in 2005, NWS established a working group to assess aviation weather technologies and services, and to recommend ways to reduce costs and increase efficiencies. The working group subsequently issued a series of recommendations to improve efficiency and cut costs, and, in 2006, NWS began to implement them.

To support the subcommittee's continued oversight, we request that GAO evaluate efforts to restructure our nation's aviation weather technologies and services. Specifically, we request that GAO (1) determine FAA's requirements for aviation weather products, the alternative sources it has for these aviation weather products, and the agency's ability to ensure the consistency and quality of these products, (2) determine the status of NWS's plans for restructuring its aviation weather services, (3) assess NWS's efforts to evaluate the merits and costs of these changes, and (4) assess the adequacy of efforts to ensure that any changes do not degrade aviation weather services.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this request.

Sincerely,



NICK LAMPSON

Chairman

Subcommittee on Energy and Environment

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