
Musk's DOGE team to visit FAA command center amid air traffic safety concerns



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Washington, D.C. – Elon Musk's DOGE team is set to visit the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Virginia command center on Monday, following heightened scrutiny over air traffic safety and staffing shortages.

The visit comes amid controversy over the Trump administration's recent decision to exclude air traffic controllers and Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officers from an incentive

program aimed at retaining government employees. The Professional Aviation Safety Specialists union criticized the move, revealing that several hundred FAA probationary employees were among those dismissed as part of a broader effort to reduce bureaucracy.

“This drastic action will overburden an already strained workforce,” the union warned.

Musk, CEO of Tesla and SpaceX, defended the planned visit, stating on social media platform X that “air travel safety is a non-partisan matter” and that SpaceX engineers aim to enhance aviation security. His concerns were previously raised after a temporary failure of the FAA’s NOTAM pilot alert system.

However, Musk’s involvement in FAA reforms has drawn criticism. Senator Maria Cantwell recently urged FAA Administrator Michael Duffy to bar Musk from airspace policy discussions, citing a conflict of interest and past FAA fines imposed on SpaceX.

The FAA, which manages around 45,000 daily flights, faces staffing shortages that have worsened aviation risks. Senators Jeanne Shaheen and John Hoeven recently highlighted that the agency is 3,500 air traffic controllers short of its target. The crisis was underscored by a tragic January 29 midair collision near Washington Reagan National Airport, which left 67 dead—the deadliest U.S. air disaster in over two decades.

In response, Duffy announced plans to modernize the U.S. air traffic control system and reconsider staffing rules. He is also set to visit the FAA Academy in Oklahoma to meet instructors and trainees, with further measures expected to boost recruitment and training efforts.