

National Aviation Operations Monitoring Service (NAOMS) Phase 2 Release Executive Summary

September 30, 2008

This website has been updated as part of NASA's continuing effort to release more and higher fidelity National Aviation Operations Monitoring Service (NAOMS) information. It contains responses collected from air carrier and general aviation pilot surveys as part of the NAOMS project between April 2001 and December 2004. The public now has access to more NAOMS aviation safety information in its raw form (as it was originally collected). NASA has affixed limited pilot attribute information to the safety information while protecting pilot anonymity and confidentiality. NASA has no plans to post any additional NAOMS information after September 30, 2008.

As promised in January 2008, NASA has conducted a review of the NAOMS information and is releasing more NAOMS information to the public than was provided in Phase 1 (released on December 31, 2007) and in the Phase 1A update (released on February 6, 2008). As with previous releases of NAOMS information, NASA has taken the necessary redaction steps to ensure that both the anonymity and confidentiality promised to pilots has been maintained and that no commercial confidential information is released. Additionally, please note that the survey responses and the methodology used to acquire them have not been peer-reviewed to date. Accordingly, no product of the NAOMS project, including the survey methodology, the survey responses, and any analysis of the responses, should be viewed or considered at this stage as having been validated.

NASA has spent the past few months developing a method in which the Agency could provide additional information to the public while maintaining a promise of anonymity and confidentiality to the pilots who voluntarily provided information to the Agency. This new posting of NAOMS information contains substantially more of the information that was collected during the NAOMS project in comparison to the December 2007 and February 2008 releases. The additional information that is now available, but was not previously released, follows:

- Section A (pilot background questions) legs/takeoffs and make-models (category for general aviation only) affixed to each numerical response
- All "high unique" events
- All rare events
- Raw numerical values for Section B (safety-related events), Section C (in-close approach change, Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST) Joint Implementation Measurement Data Analysis Team (JIMDAT), and weather-related questions), and Section D (questionnaire feedback)
- Incomplete surveys

Additional text is being released within free-text fields, providing the reader a better look at the information collected during the interviews. In addition, the layout of the tables in which the information is presented allows safety events to be correlated with flying hours, legs/takeoffs, and aircraft.

NASA has a long history of collecting voluntarily-reported safety information from the pilot community in systems like the Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS). Since 1976, NASA has been gathering this type of information and has protected this information from inappropriate disclosure. When the NAOMS project started, many aviation safety systems were still being improved upon to create a more robust reporting system for gathering aviation safety information. Two of the more commonly used systems are the NASA/Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) ASRS and the FAA Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP). Over the past several years, both of these systems have grown in their use and have been enhanced continuously to provide a better service to the aviation community, including the flying public.

NASA, as with other organizations that collect voluntarily-provided safety information, needs to protect the confidentiality of those who respond to its surveys. Promises of confidentiality provide assurances to the public that information about individuals will be held in confidence and will not be used against them. Protecting the confidentiality of individuals who provide information under a promise of confidentiality serves both the interests of the public and the needs of society. Without this trust, the public would lose confidence in these systems for gathering safety information—affecting both the accuracy and completeness of statistical information in the future. Ensuring that confidential information receives protection is essential to ensuring continuing public cooperation in statistical programs.

NAOMS was an active information collection system that acquired data in a statistical manner. NASA started collecting NAOMS survey information in 2001 and made a promise to protect the anonymity of -- and provide confidentiality to -- all the pilots who voluntarily provided responses. NASA needs to continue protecting voluntarily provided safety information to ensure that our Nation's aviation community feels safe in providing this information to Federal agencies. NASA takes this obligation seriously, as we do our obligation to the American taxpayer to provide access to the results of this information. Maintaining a balance between these two seemingly contradictory goals resulted in the difficult and arduous task of releasing the maximum amount of NAOMS survey information while meeting NASA's obligation to survey participants' confidentiality and anonymity. We believe that we have accomplished this goal with the information provided.

Today, NASA continues to enhance the state of aviation for our nation. NASA's unique capabilities in aviation safety research are dedicated to improving the safety of current and future aircraft operating in the National Airspace System. We continue conducting cutting-edge, fundamental research in traditional aeronautical disciplines and emerging fields that will help transform our Nation's air transportation system and that will support future air vehicles. We are supporting research challenges that must be overcome in

order to create the Next Generation Air Transportation System. Our aeronautics activities will play a key role in finding solutions for increasing the safety, capacity, efficiency, and flexibility of our national airspace.