

Tracking Number 2010-03-08 (CSC-04)
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Licensing

NASA Advisory Council Recommendation:

The Council agrees with NASA that Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) licensing of Commercial Crew services should be the “eventual state.” The Council recommends that NASA engage the FAA as soon as possible to discuss FAA licensing of Commercial Crew with the goal of providing clarity to potential offerors regarding the regulatory framework for both development and operation of Commercial Crew capabilities.

NASA Response:

NASA concurs that FAA licensing of Commercial Crew services should be the “eventual state.”

It is the goal of the Commercial Crew to enable a diverse portfolio of commercial transportation service capabilities with the intent of allowing for the commercial industry to expand their business cases to include NASA’s needs, as well as those of the public.

Although FAA licenses are not required for launch or reentry that the Government carries out for the Government, NASA has established a close working relationship with the FAA to define the requirements, standards, and certification processes for commercial spaceflight involving crew and passengers, all which will be used by NASA to certify crew transportation systems to transport NASA and NASA-sponsored crews to the ISS. The ultimate goal of this working relationship is to optimize Government oversight of commercial providers through the use of compatible requirements, standards, and processes for certifying or licensing commercial crew flights.

Through COTS and CRS, NASA works closely with the FAA to license launch and reentry events of commercial providers. In addition, NASA and the FAA are providing mutual training opportunities for key personnel by rotating managers in positions that will promote integration between the agencies and through formal training sessions. NASA is also working closely with the FAA as it establishes its Commercial Spaceflight Technical Center at KSC. In addition, to ensure safety of crew and passengers, NASA will contribute to the FAA and to industry its expertise and lessons learned in the inherently risky environment of space.