



EU Ramp Inspection Programme



Information leaflet on the surveillance tool for foreign operators

The programme in a nutshell

The EU Ramp Inspection Programme is a tool for the surveillance of foreign operators, which monitors safety compliance through ramp inspections on their aircraft. The programme is based on two pillars:



SACA ramp inspections (Safety Assessment of Community Aircraft): these are ramp inspections performed by EU Member States on aircraft used by operators under the regulatory oversight of another EU Member State. These inspections take EU requirements (which are at least equal, but often more stringent than ICAO standards) as the regulatory reference.

SAFA ramp inspections (Safety Assessment of Foreign Aircraft): all other ramp inspections performed by any of the States participating in the programme are taking ICAO standards as the regulatory reference.

In addition to the above mentioned standards, manufacturer data is being used when assessing the technical condition of the aircraft.

The programme provides for the prioritisation of ramp inspections on aircraft suspected of non-compliance with the applicable requirements, based on e.g. safety relevant information collected by the Participating States or on the regular analysis of the centralised database performed by EASA. Ramp inspections are also carried out in the absence of any suspicion, applying certain principles such as non-discrimination and proportionality.

The applicable legal framework

For the EU Member States, the participation in the programme is required by law. The regulatory framework consists out of the following:

- Commission Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 of 5 October 2012, including the implementing rules in its Annexes
- Acceptable Means of Compliance (AMC) and Guidance Material (GM) to Part-ARO
- Inspection Instructions on the Categorisation of Ramp Inspection (SAFA/SACA) Findings
- Guidance material in the form of a Ramp Inspections Manual (RIM) consisting of a full set of guidance assisting states in performing standardised ramp inspections

Further detailed information on these references can be found on the [EASA website](#)

For non-EASA States, the participation is formalised through the signature of Working Arrangement (WA) between the aviation authority of such State and EASA. Whereas the WA cannot require the direct application of EU law, the above mentioned framework is included in the “technical requirements” which should be applied by the non-EU aviation authority.

The main features of the Ramp Inspection Programme

- An increasing global coverage by all Participating States in Europe, North-America, North-Africa, Middle-East, Asia and Oceania
- Full dissemination of inspection results through a centralised database
- Its bottom-up approach: the programme is built around ramp inspections of aircraft
- Non-discriminatory approach
- A risk based approach for the inspection planning

The inspections are carried out in accordance with a standardised procedure and the results are reported using a common format. In case of significant or major findings, the operator is requested to take corrective measures, which may include a root cause investigation to address systemic issues.

Depending on the nature of the finding, the responsible aviation authority (State of Operator and/or State of Registry) may be involved to ensure that they are satisfied by the corrective actions.

All data from the reports, as well as supplementary information, is shared through the centralised web-based database which is managed by EASA.

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Participating States

The following States are members of the programme*:

Republic of Albania, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Republic of Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Republic of Serbia, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Republic of North Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom.

*Status January 2020

EASA's role in the programme

EASA is coordinating the Ramp Inspection Programme. Its main tasks are:

- to manage the ramp inspection procedures
- to collect the inspection reports from the Participating States engaged in the programme
- to develop, maintain and continuously update the centralised database holding the inspection reports
- analyse the database content and other relevant information concerning the safety of aircraft and its operators
- based on the analysis, to report potential aviation safety issues to all the Participating States and the European Commission
- to maintain an operator priority list for ramp inspections
- to conduct standardization visits to the Participating States to assess the harmonized implementation of the programme



Stakeholders management

The Participating States and the European Commission are informed of any identified potential safety hazards. The States and EASA come together biannually during the Ramp Inspections Coordination and Standardisation (RICS) meetings. EASA is also organising yearly the Industry & Regulators Forum in Cologne, whereby aviation authority and aviation industry representatives meet to discuss issues of common interest in the ramp inspections area.

Centralised database/Ramp inspection tool

The backbone of the Ramp Inspection Programme is the Ramp inspection tool (the centralised database), which is managed and maintained by EASA. Each Participating State uploads its reports to this tool, thereby making them available to all other States. This shared effort creates a wealth of safety information, allowing for a comprehensive analysis with a reliable output of indicators.

Data contained in the database is confidential and therefore shared only with other Participating States; it is not available to the general public. The database can be accessed by all aviation authorities of the Participating States via the web based application. In addition, more than 60 other States and 1100 operators are connected on-line to the application.

Benefits of participating in a global Ramp inspection programme

Many national aviation authorities already have access to the centralised database holding the inspection results for their operators. The additional benefits of participation in the programme are the following:

- Access to the ramp inspection results of all inspected operators, which can be used for the surveillance of such operators flying to your airports
- Use of the Ramp inspection tool to prepare your inspections, store your inspection results, engage with the operators for the follow-up of findings, retrieve the numerical analysis for operators and more...
- Receive the comprehensive analysis of operators which potentially have safety deficiencies
- Availability of a set of requirements, procedures and guidance for the standardised performance of ramp inspections
- Contribute to the development of the programme by participating in the coordination and standardisation meetings

Commitments expected from the Participating State

- Contribute a reasonable number of ramp inspections according to the principles set out in the programme
- Ensure that all staff involved in ramp inspections are at all times qualified to perform their duties
- Attend the biannual Ramp Inspections Coordination and Standardisation (RICS) meetings
- Participate in the inspector exchange programme
- Implement a national Ramp inspection quality control system

Financial consequences for the Participating States

The membership of the EU Ramp Inspection Programme is free of charge; however, States should be prepared to cover the costs related to the following:

- Mission costs related to the periodic standardisation visits (normally in a 4 year cycle)
- Participation to the biannual RICS meetings
- Initial and recurrent training costs of ramp inspectors
- Inspector exchanges between your and another Participating State

The harmonised performance of ramp inspections by all States is paramount for a sound data analysis. For that reason, it is advisable to send the first ramp inspectors for their initial training to an approved Ramp Inspection Training Organisations (RITOs) or to one of the more experienced Participating States; the latter could also support in delivering the on-the-job training. The training of other ramp inspectors could be organised in house as soon as the pioneering ramp inspectors have gained sufficient experience in the programme.

Contact Us

Dedicated further information can be given by request made to:

safa@easa.europa.eu



Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer
3D-50668 Cologne,
Germany

[Connect with us](#)