

PASS MEDIA TALKING POINTS

**** FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY ****

PASS should be prepared to speak with members of the media to let them know how a partial government shutdown affects your local area, and the long-term impacts on the aviation and airport services as the shutdown continues. These inquiries could come through the national office or directly to you from local media outlets.

When speaking to the media, please do it on non-duty time (if you are not furloughed) and to identify yourself as speaking on behalf of PASS, and NOT on behalf of the FAA.

Try not to speak in agency acronyms that may not be familiar to those outside the FAA. For example, say “National Airspace System,” ‘Air Traffic Control Tower,’ and ‘data communications’ rather than using acronyms or FAA terminology.

Below is a sample Q&A that you can refer to when speaking with the media.

Who are you? / What do you do at the FAA?

I am a member of the Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS) and a [INSERT OCCUPATION] at [INSERT LOCATION]. In my position, my responsibilities include [DEFINE YOUR OCCUPATION AND RESPONSIBILITY IN SIMPLE TERMS WITHOUT USING ACRONYMS].

Who is PASS?

PASS represents aviation safety inspectors, systems specialists, aeronautical professionals and administrative support staff who install, maintain, certify and inspect every aspect of the nation’s aviation system. We are dedicated to preserving the safety of the system and the flying public above all else. Flight Standards employees, who have been furloughed, include aviation safety inspectors who oversee every aspect of the aviation industry to ensure adherence to FAA regulations and safety standards. These are the employees who inspect aircraft, pilots and safety practices to keep all flyers safe. Removing them from the job would be stripping a vital layer of safety.

Why are you speaking with the media?

I have serious concerns regarding the shutdown and how it could affect the flying public the longer it lasts as well as the stress it has put on me and my family. If this shutdown continues, I am concerned about the major impact it could have locally, including [SPECIFICS ABOUT YOUR CITY/STATE/REGION].

What does it mean for the flying public? / Is it safe to fly?

The safety, reliability and efficiency of the system remain my top priorities. It is critical that lawmakers put an end to this shutdown before it impacts the safety of the flying public. The longer the FAA’s aviation safety inspectors and administrative professionals are not permitted to do their jobs, the greater the risk to our fellow Americans. With nearly 2 million Americans

traveling by air every day, any aviation safety event could become catastrophic without the full FAA workforce on the job.

If you have been furloughed, what isn't getting done for aviation safety since you are off the job?

Since I have been furloughed, I am not able to [YOUR DUTIES FOR AVIATION SAFETY]

If you are on the job, how is the lack of these services affecting your workload and duties?

Without my colleagues who perform [DUTIES] it makes it more difficult for me to [EXAMPLE] to keep the aviation system safe.

Use the examples here that are appropriate for you:

- A vast majority of **aviation safety inspectors** are off the job meaning limited or no oversight of: commercial and general aviation aircraft, pilots, flight instructors and domestic and foreign repair stations. Without **aviation safety professionals** performing this important work, many aviation safety efforts will be delayed, which could seriously limit the number of aircraft able to operate in the National Airspace System. Our country's aviation industry is an important part of the U.S. economy.
- FAA **manufacturing inspectors** have ceased production approval and certification. While industry manufacturers must await approval from furloughed inspectors, they would be manufacturing aircraft components without the FAA supervision needed to ensure the highest-level of safety for the flying public.
- Nationwide, air traffic control facilities may experience delayed maintenance and repairs as the furlough may reduce staffing at some of the nation's busiest airports. Flyers in medium and small airports would also feel the ripple effect of a shutdown.
- FAA **engineering services technicians** organize and implement projects related to air traffic control operations, including evaluating safety procedures that ensure the National Airspace System is complying with the highest safety standards. Without these employees on the job, there is no guarantee that this level of safety will be maintained.
- With limited **administrative employees** and staff providing logistical support, the backlog of paperwork is piling up and will leave the system riddled with senseless administrative delays.
- Thousands of FAA employees are working every day to ensure the safety of the flying public and furloughing any of these employees is gambling with aviation safety. Legislation must be passed to provide back pay to those employees who have been furloughed. Those who are not furloughed are forced to work without knowing when they'll receive their next paycheck, as holiday bills are coming due. Combined with reduced staffing due to the furloughs, this will cause an undue burden on the men and women who are responsible for maintaining the world's largest and most complex air traffic control system.

You should also be prepared to mention other recent issues—of which you are aware—experienced by PASS members nationwide, including any reduced maintenance of aviation systems and equipment, increase in outages and/or delays in restoration, modernization/new program implementation delays, understaffed shifts at facilities nationwide, open watches at ARTCCs and towers, any impact on safe working conditions (i.e., two-person rule), and the impact of cancelled training. Again, it is critical to stress the local impact of the furloughs.

Broader federal employee talking points:

- Federal employees are dedicated public servants. They believe in their agencies' missions and chose to serve their country by working for the government. They want to continue working on behalf of the American people.
- Federal employees, either furloughed or working without pay, have rents and mortgages due just like every other American. They are not bargaining chips.
- When the government shut down in 2013, 800,000 federal employees were furloughed and another 1.3 million worked without pay. Currently, 380,000 employees are furloughed and another 420,000 are working without pay. According to Standard & Poor's, the 2013 shutdown cost the U.S. economy \$24 billion.
- The majority of federal employees, including FAA employees, do not work in and around Washington, D.C., so the economic impact will be felt coast to coast.
- If federal employees are unable to pay their bills on time because they are not being paid, their credit scores could take a serious hit. Due to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) data breach of 2015 and subsequent data breaches, federal employees, like many Americans, have already seen their credit scores and personal data put at risk.