

TDOT AERONAUTICS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

FAA Flight Inspection Reimbursable Agreement Standard Operating Improvement

The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) Aeronautics Division is pleased to announce the release of our executed agreement with the FAA that establishes a **Statewide Master Reimbursement Agreement (RA)** for all eligible public-use General Aviation projects requiring an FAA-commissioned flight check.

What is changing?

- This agreement establishes a statewide master RA with the FAA
- Instead of individual airport sponsors/consultants contacting the FAA directly for flight inspection RAs for navigation aid equipment, these requests will now be made to TDOT Aeronautics Division. The flight check costs will now be paid by TDOT.

What is the agreement?

- The master RA is an agreement between TDOT and FAA with an initial \$150,000 state deposit which is derived from the 3-year ACIP and project scope. Flight check costs were estimated based on this information.
- The agreement is a 5-year agreement, that can be amended or reinstated over time.
- This is for FAA flight inspections only. On-site contractor costs excluded but are AIP eligible for one successful flight check.
- Eligible general aviation navigational aid equipment eligible for flight inspection under this agreement generally includes:
 - REILs
 - PAPIs
 - Approach and Runway Lighting Systems
- TDOT, in conjunction with FAA, will determine the eligibility of the flight check for the equipment proposed.
- If the airport equipment is not eligible under this master RA, then the airport may have the option to enter into a separate RA agreement with the FAA.

Why use the FAA Master RA Agreement?

- This new agreement will significantly reduce the typical **3 – 6-month delay** in setting up individual RAs and getting navigational aids FAA flight checked & commissioned. The process will now be cut to a **2 - 3-week** timeframe (depending on FAA Flight Scheduling).
- As a result, newly installed equipment can be inspected and approved for official use much sooner—minimizing downtime and ensuring safer, faster activation at airports across the state.

How do I request an FAA Flight Inspection in TN?

1. On the TDOT Aeronautics Website under *Contact Us*, submit a Microsoft Forms [TN FAA Flight Check help ticket](#).
 2. Once the info. is received/reviewed by TDOT Aeronautics Division, it will be sent to FAA AJF-4100 for flight check scheduling.
 3. TDOT Aeronautics Division will then provide the Airport Sponsor/Consultant with the designated FAA Flight Scheduler, and the Sponsor/Consultant will assume communication responsibility (until commissioning completion).
 4. After the flight check is completed, the Airport Sponsor will receive an FAA report signifying if the equipment was satisfactory or unsatisfactory for NAVAID category evaluated.
- ✚ **The checkbook will be monitored by TDOT/FAA and will no longer be the responsibility or cost of the Airport Sponsor.**

Key Point – In alignment with FAA Order 5100.38 (AIP Handbook):

If the FAA requires a flight check to commission a NAVAID, the cost of one flight check under a reimbursable agreement with the FAA is allowable. If the FAA cancels the flight check and the sponsor incurs contractor costs due to their presence on site, those costs may also be allowable. **However, costs associated with failed flight checks are not allowable.**

Conclusion:

We are aiming to make this process as seamless as possible to improve safety, efficiency, and faster activation of NAVAIDs at TN's public-use General Aviation airports. As always, we welcome feedback in hopes to best fit the process. If you do not hear back from TDOT Aeronautics Division within 5 business days of the flight check request, please reach out to your assigned TAD project manager.

Additional Resources:

[FAA Order 8200.1D CHG 2 – United States Standard Flight Inspection Manual](#)

February 2026 Office Hours – TN FAA Flight Commissioning Checks