

US team to check local aviation safety in May (Philippines)



A team from the US Federal Aviation Administration will arrive in the country next month to check whether the local aviation has complied with international safety standards.

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines is hoping the next USFAA audit will lead to the upgrade of the country's category 2 rating.

"There will be a check-in visit by [John] Barbagallo of the FAA sometime in May to find out again if the recommended action plan started in 2010 was followed. We are in constant communication with FAA in this particular respect," CAAP director-general William Hotchkiss III told reporters.

"I am confident that as far as the action plan is concerned, we have complied. Hopefully, [we will be upgraded] within the year," he said.

The category 2 status prevents Philippine carriers from increasing flights between the Philippines and the US.

Hotchkiss also said the EU Commission director-general for mobility and transport had accepted CAAP invitation for the EU representative on air safety to conduct an on-site visit in the Philippines in June.

The visit will coincide with the EU Air Safety Committee meeting in the last week of June in Brussels, Belgium. The committee is the one tasked to determine whether a country can be removed from the EU blacklist.

CAAP officials earlier met with the EU Commission's Directorate General for Mobility and Transport director Matthew Baldwin and presented a general overview of the Philippine aviation safety standards, including the accidents involving Philippine Airlines and Cebu Pacific Air in 2008 to 2012.

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