

RESOLUTION NO. 20231109-055

WHEREAS, in November 2022, there was a near miss incident between Southwest and American Airlines aircraft; and

WHEREAS, in February 2023, there was a near miss incident between a landing FedEx cargo plane and a Southwest aircraft departing on the same runway; and

WHEREAS, in April 2023, there was a near miss incident where a SkyWest Airlines jet was routed to ascend into the path of a descending Southwest aircraft; and

WHEREAS, in June 2023, there was a near miss incident involving an Allegiant Air flight and a small private aircraft; and

WHEREAS, in September 2023, there was a near miss incident between a military F-18 fighter jet and a small private aircraft; and

WHEREAS, the recent string of near misses between aircraft at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (AUS) poses a significant threat to the safety of travelers and the general public; and

WHEREAS, in April 2023, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) named an independent safety review team to further examine ways to enhance safety and reliability in the nation's air traffic control system; and

WHEREAS, U.S. Representative Lloyd Doggett and U.S. Representative Greg Casar have expressed serious concerns about the air traffic controller staffing

levels at AUS, and have urged the FAA to take immediate action to address these incidents; and

WHEREAS, the increased volume of takeoffs, landings, and air traffic at AUS, which has grown by 30 percent since pre-Covid levels, necessitates a commensurate increase in staffing levels to ensure the safe operation of the airport; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. House of Representatives has recently approved H.R. 3935, the Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act, which reauthorizes the FAA and aims to bring about safety reforms and mandates the FAA to adopt a new staffing model; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Senate has yet to pass S. 1939, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2023, which could include further safety reforms; and

WHEREAS, since September 2022, AUS traffic volumes increased from medium- to large-hub status, accounting for more than one percent of total flights in the National Airport System; and

WHEREAS, the FAA should take immediate action to improve the safety of travelers and the general public; **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

The City Manager is directed to, as soon as practical and in coordination with the FAA and airlines operating at AUS, develop and implement a ramp control system at AUS to facilitate and support safe navigation of the ramp and aircraft pushback.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to, upon receiving official notification of a significant event, immediately notify the City Council and Airport Advisory Commission of the incident. In addition, upon conclusion of any and all investigations related to the incident by the responsible federal agency, and the public release of an investigative report, staff shall notify, and make this information available to, the City Council and Airport Advisory Commission. In addition, staff shall continue to routinely engage with the Air Traffic Control Tower to discuss and mitigate safety risks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The Austin City Council endorses H.R. 3935, the Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act, which reauthorizes the functions of the FAA and aviation safety and infrastructure programs for the next five years, and urges the U.S. Congress to adopt an FAA reauthorization law that includes robust safety reforms, such as:

- a hiring target for controllers to be set at the maximum able to be trained;
- a required study on congested airspace including air traffic controller staffing;
- expansion of ground surveillance and detection equipment at large and medium hub airports to better inform air traffic controllers of potential danger and prevent runway incursions;
- require foreign aircraft repair stations to be subject to the same standards as American repair stations;
- an audit of FAA workforce plans to ensure proper staffing;

- a revised safety model for aviation safety inspectors including a set facility staffing level;
- new cybersecurity requirements for aircrafts; and
- enhanced aircraft certification reforms for the design and manufacturing of aircraft.

The City Manager is directed to communicate to our federal delegation our support for legislation that includes these provisions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The Austin City Council urges the FAA to take immediate and comprehensive action to improve the safety of travelers at AUS through the following specific actions:

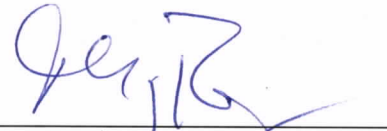
- Designate AUS as a “level 10 terminal” facility, enabling the airport to access additional resources and provide increased compensation to air traffic controllers.
- Grant AUS priority consideration in future transfers facilitated by the National Centralized Employee Requested Reassignment Process Team until staffing levels reach a satisfactory level.
- Allow for the appointment of an operational supervisor/controller-in-charge to provide oversight without being tasked with flight data/clearance delivery duties.
- Ensure that a minimum of 12 hours of on-the-job training is provided to each certified professional controller every week.
- Consider upgrading the airspace levels surrounding AUS to increase the protected airspace and reduce controller workload.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to report back to the City Council with recommendations for action and implementation of this Resolution by February 2024.

ADOPTED: November 9, 2023

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Myrna Rios', is written over a horizontal line.

Myrna Rios
City Clerk