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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

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March 11, 2025

Brigadier General Matthew Braman
Director, Army Aviation
United States Army
400 Army Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20310-0400

Dear General Braman:

Thank you for appearing before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation (Committee) on February 6 to discuss the tragic crash of an Army Blackhawk and American Airlines Flight 5342, operated by PSA Airlines. Many of the topics discussed at that roundtable were concerning and require prompt attention.

Following the roundtable, the Army and the Department of Defense committed to providing responses to questions from Committee members that required further review. Given the high-profile nature of the accident, the multi-agency investigations, and the urgent need to understand and correct vulnerabilities, these lines of inquiry are vital to the Committee's review of the accident.

It has now been one month since the roundtable and key questions remain unanswered including:

1. How frequently does the Army turn off ADS-B transmission?
2. How many helicopter flights on average does the Army operate in the DCA airspace and what types? Specifically, how many flights are training missions, how many are for transporting flag officers, and how many are other VIP missions?

Subsequently, a member of Congress announced the Army stated in 2023 that ADS-B Out is turned off for 100 percent of missions operated by the Army Air Brigade at Fort Belvoir. This appears to contradict what you told the Committee on February 6 that the exemption from transmitting ADS-B Out data should not be used for routine flights. It has now been three weeks since I requested additional information regarding this letter and the Army Air Brigade's use of ADS-B Out:

1. Is it accurate that ADS-B Out is off for 100 percent of missions flown by the Army Air Brigade at Fort Belvoir?

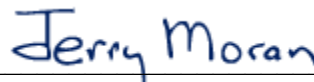
- a. Does “missions” capture training flights? If not, what percentage of training flights are completed with ADS-B Out not transmitting?
2. Over the past two years, how frequently has the 12th Aviation Battalion disabled ADS-B Out for training flights versus mission support flights?
 - a. What specific circumstances or mission types authorize aircrews to disable ADS-B Out in the National Capital Region (NCR) per the FAA/DoD ADS-B MOA?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Andrew Miller on my Committee staff at Andrew_Miller@commerce.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Ted Cruz
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on
Commerce, Science, and Transportation



Jerry Moran
Chairman
Subcommittee on Aviation, Space, and Innovation