

# Scathing Report Blasts FAA for Allegiant Inaction

Rich Thomaselli, TravelPulse.com | DEC 19, 2016



Photo courtesy Allegiant Air

A scathing new report from the Tampa Bay Times newspaper alleges that the Federal Aviation Administration—the government’s prime overseer of the nation’s airlines—failed to perform its due diligence despite mountains of evidence that Allegiant Air had been lax, at best, about servicing its planes.

A [Times review](#) of hundreds of pages of federal records showed a disturbing pattern of inaction by the FAA even though a pattern of well-documented mechanical breakdowns existed by Allegiant planes in 2015. There were no fines and no enforcement actions, even after the night of June 25, 2015, when five different Allegiant flights had been interrupted in a span of four hours due to mechanical problems.

In fact, the paper noted, at least 12 times in 2015 Allegiant had three or more flights end in mechanical breakdowns in a single week. During a single four-day period in June, the airline had 10 flights end in unexpected landings caused by mechanical failures.

“That is like a million red flags going up, and nobody doing anything,” Richard Wyeroski, a former FAA inspector who turned whistleblower, told the paper. “The FAA is reactive. They react after the accident. They don’t stop it.”

The **FAA released this statement** after the story was posted.

*“A story that ran Friday on the Times website about the FAA’s oversight of Allegiant Air grossly mischaracterizes how the agency’s oversight system functions. The FAA’s oversight system is vastly different from the one that was*

*in place two decades ago. Today's system focuses on data analysis to detect potential risk, and works to identify potential problems or trends before they result in accidents. It identifies hazards, assesses the risks from those hazards, ensures measures are put in place to mitigate those risks, and monitors those measures to ensure they are effective. These efforts, combined with airline Safety Management Systems and industry-wide voluntary reporting systems, have produced the safety record we enjoy today and have reduced the risk of fatalities in U.S. commercial aviation by 90 percent since 1997. Furthermore, and contrary to what the Times suggested, the FAA investigates every significant event involving U.S.-certificated operators and ensures appropriate measures are taken to address the cause of the event."*

Allegiant Air declined to comment, but its **CEO, Maurice Gallagher Jr., sent a letter** to government officials in Pinellas County, Fla., where the Times is located.

*"The FAA — acknowledged worldwide as the gold standard of aviation safety regulators — is obligated to ensure airlines within the United States are operating at the highest levels of safety," Gallagher wrote. "To that end, the FAA has subjected Allegiant to the extensive oversight it exercises over all U.S. airlines. Thanks in large part to the efforts of the experts at the FAA, Air travel, including on Allegiant, is by far the safest mode of transportation. Any insinuations that the FAA has been negligent in its oversight of Allegiant are patently false."*

**Copied 12/22/2016 from: <http://www.travelpulse.com/news/airlines/scathing-report-blasts-faa-for-allegiant-inaction.html>  
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