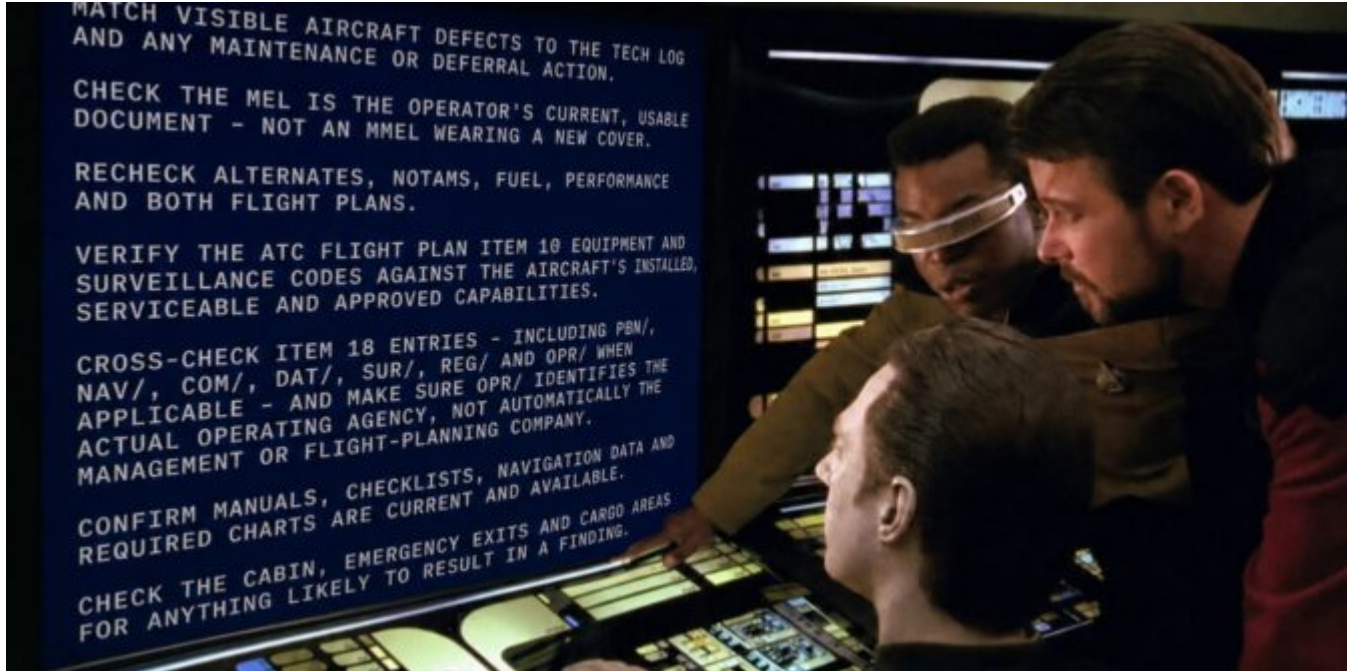


SAFA Ramp Checks: What the 2025 Findings Are Really Telling Us

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In our previous article, we looked at the SAFA findings that rarely make the crew briefing: **EFB mounts, MEL customization, maintenance due dates, placards and the other details hiding behind the inspection checklist.**

Following that article, the EASA Ramp Coordination team shared its 2025 inspection data with us (although EASA did not commission or endorse this article!). It shows that **many of the most common problems were routine issues that could have been caught before the inspection.**

So here's a look at what inspectors found, and what crews can do to avoid the same problems.

If the inspector can see it, the log should explain it

A recurring significant finding involved defects that had not been properly identified, assessed or monitored. Inspectors also found maintenance actions that were not properly recorded.

Anything found on the walkaround should be properly covered in the tech log. Staining, damage, loose panels and other visible defects should have been assessed, deferred, monitored or fixed. If an inspector can see it, expect them to check the paperwork.

"Cabin ready" means ready for flight

The more serious findings included unsecured cabin equipment, blocked emergency-exit access, poorly restrained cargo and maintenance work that did not follow the applicable MEL, Aircraft Maintenance Manual or Structural Repair Manual instructions.

Some of that can be caught during a final cabin and cargo sweep. Some of it needs maintenance control long before departure. Better to know which is which before the inspector asks!

For GA, the inspection starts at the planning desk

For business aviation, the main findings included unsuitable or insufficient alternates, missed Notams, and missing or seriously incorrect performance or fuel calculations.

They also found crews carrying an MMEL instead of an MEL, MELs that were not fully customized, outdated or incomplete manuals, mismatched checklists, old navigation databases and required charts that were unavailable when needed.

EASA's Ramp Coordination team confirmed that the SAFA-GA Top 5 includes findings from all three categories, not just Category 3. For GA crews, flight planning and document control are among the main areas to check before an inspection.

Before your next trip to Europe

- Match visible aircraft defects to the tech log and any maintenance or deferral action.
- Check the MEL is the operator's current, usable document – not an MMEL wearing a new cover.
- Recheck alternates, Notams, fuel, performance and both flight plans.
- Verify the ATC flight plan Item 10 equipment and surveillance codes against the aircraft's installed, serviceable and approved capabilities.
- Cross-check Item 18 entries – including PBN/, NAV/, COM/, DAT/, SUR/, REG/ and OPR/ when applicable – and make sure OPR/ identifies the actual operating agency, not automatically the management or flight-planning company.
- Confirm manuals, checklists, navigation data and required charts are current and available.
- Check the cabin, emergency exits and cargo areas for anything likely to result in a finding.

Run your own ramp check first

Carry out an internal ramp check using one of your aircraft and an actual trip. Work through each inspection area, record any discrepancies, assign responsibility and confirm they have been closed. That is a simple internal Ramp Inspection Program.

If you prefer to do it electronically, Fly-Right LLC's SAFA+Checklist app for iOS takes crews through the inspection and records the review in one place.

Bottom line

A ramp inspection covers much more than the condition of the aircraft. Inspectors will also check the flight plan, MEL, tech log, manuals, cabin and cargo, so make sure everything is current and consistent before departure.

EASA contact and responsibility

For program information, visit the EASA Ramp Inspection Programmes website or contact the EASA Ramp Coordination team at safa@easa.europa.eu. The mailbox is monitored, and the team will do its best to address community questions.

EASA does not mediate or decide disagreements over individual findings. Each finding remains the inspecting authority's responsibility and is subject to that state's normal appeal process. EASA also

provides information to IBAC annually, and IBAC members may contact IBAC.

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