

# FAA workers threatened with firing if they ‘impede’ Elon Musk’s SpaceX federal deal: Report

## Elon Musk has been at the center of huge illicit conflicts of interest since his political ascendance

[Michelle Del Rey](#)

Washington D.C

A [SpaceX](#) operative has threatened Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) employees with termination if they stand in the way of agency work by the [company](#), which could lead to a lucrative federal contract, according to a report.

SpaceX engineer Ted Malaska last month instructed employees at the FAA headquarters in Washington, D.C. to “immediately start work on a program to deploy thousands of the company’s Starlink satellite terminals to support the national airspace system,” [Bloomberg News](#) reported Wednesday.

Malaska, who also works as a Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) volunteer, warned FAA workers that anyone who “impeded” his work would be reported to Musk and “risked losing their jobs,” sources told [Bloomberg](#).

Malaska is a temporary special government employee, and is working for DOGE even as he retains his engineering job at Musk’s SpaceX.

He reportedly issued his directive as [Tesla](#) CEO and SpaceX founder Musk is firing thousands of federal workers via DOGE. The move triggered conflict of interest concerns as Musk appears to be dismantling the federal system as his own company seeks to take over lucrative work amid an employee shortfall he is creating.

Musk has not been elected to a position, nor does he serve as one of President Donald Trump’s Cabinet members, nor has his work been authorized by Congress.

Malaska could not immediately be reached for comment, but he has touted his work on X. No one has yet been fired since Malaska’s threat, Bloomberg reported Wednesday.

The federal government currently has a \$2.4 billion contract with Verizon to revamp the FAA that’s [now being sought by Musk for Starlink](#). The [FAA](#) is now reportedly “[close to canceling](#)” the Verizon deal to overhaul the system integral to supporting U.S. air traffic control and handing it to Musk’s company, according to [The Washington Post](#).

*Bloomberg* noted that administration officials are not sure how much SpaceX should receive for the directed work, given conflict of interest concerns about Musk. It's unclear if the work by Musk's company has officially been authorized.

It's not the first time Musk has been in this position since his political ascendance thanks to his "best buddy" Trump.

Last month, a line item in a government spreadsheet stated the State Department planned to [appropriate \\$400 million for Tesla armored government vehicles.](#)

Musk quickly shut down rumors of an upcoming contract on X. "I'm pretty sure Tesla isn't getting \$400 million. No one mentioned it to me, at least," he insisted.

The word "[Tesla](#)" was [quickly scrubbed from the line item](#), and a department official told *NPR* that there are currently no plans to go through with the deal.

A person familiar with the deal said Tesla and the department had agreed to conduct research into armoring electric vehicles last year but Tesla had not yet received government funds.

The discovery sent Tesla stock up some 5 percent, only to drop back down after Musk denied that a contract was in the works.