U.S. Department
of Transportation

Federal Aviation
Administration

Air Traffic Bulletin

Issue # 2008-1
March 2008

A Communication from the
Vice President, System Operations Services

***In this Issue**:*

TRANSITION TO ICAO FLIGHT PLANS FOR FLIGHTS REQUESTING RNAV SIDs, ROUTES, AND STARs

/TERF/ Change is Coming. - On June 5, 2008, the Federal Aviation Administration will implement use of en route host automation International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) flight plan (FP) processing for requesting assignment of area navigation (RNAV) standard instrument departures (SID), standard terminal arrivals (STAR), or RNAV routes within U.S. domestic airspace. This is part of a risk reduction strategy for introduction of the En Route Automation Modernization (ERAM) system in October 2008. ERAM also will use ICAO FP processing.

Background. - En route host automation software provides for automatic assignment of preferential routes based on a number of factors, including filed altitude, departure/arrival airport, and aircraft category. Many preferential routes are assigned based on the filed navigation equipment qualifiers (suffixes) in field 3 of the National Airspace System (NAS) FP. These routes are referred to as equipment restricted routes (ERR). Most ERRs are established for RNAV SIDs and/or STARs. In addition to aircraft equipage, the ability to fly an RNAV route may be affected by crew capabilities, current airspace configurations, weather, and local procedures. Consequently, FP filers need the ability to suppress the automated assignment of preferential routing.

Host Automation FP processing. - Current host software assigns ERRs based on the NAS FP. However, host has an inherent alternate processing mode through which preferential routes may be assigned based on the navigation capabilities filed in items 10 and 18 of an ICAO FP. These are called Route ICAO Equipment Eligibility (RIEE) routes. Depending on the status of an electronic switch, the host will assign ERR preferential routes based on filed NAS equipment suffixes, or RIEE preferential routes based on filed ICAO capabilities, but not both. ERAM will be introduced into the NAS at Salt Lake City Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) on October 7, 2008, and can make RNAV preferential route assignments based only on filed ICAO capabilities. To ensure system compatibility, as ERAM is fielded throughout the NAS, all en route host systems will switch to RIEE processing on June 5, 2008.

Impacts. - These changes will make FAA en route automation more compatible with international air traffic control systems in general and, more specifically, will foster compatibility with the neighboring systems in Canada and Mexico. Planned changes will enable filed FPs to more accurately reflect pilot desires and the true navigation capabilities

Distribution: ZAT-423, ZAT-464

of the aircraft and crew. Although operators will be able to file NAS FPs for flights within U.S. domestic airspace, those requesting to fly RNAV departures and/or arrivals will be required to file an ICAO FP. Users filing NAS FPs will continue to receive appropriate non-RNAV SIDs and STARs, where available.

Procedures. - Dissemination of information and coordination with users began in earnest in September 2007. FP filers, who are unfamiliar with ICAO message formats and/or procedures, may request to participate in testing with the William J. Hughes Technical Center or with individual ARTCCs. Detailed information about operational procedures, FP filing requirements, and frequently asked questions associated with these changes is available at http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/ato/service_units/enroute/flight_plan_filing/. Please direct additional questions to Diane Bodenhamer, RTT Focal/SOS ERAM Team Lead, at (202) 493-5276, or diane.bodenhamer@faa.gov, or to Jim Arrighi, RNAV/RNP Group at (202) 385-4680, or james.arrighi@faa.gov.

TEMPORARY FLIGHT RESTRICTION (TFR)

/TERF/ A situation may arise at a location under your facility's airspace and jurisdiction where, in the interest of maintaining safety and security within your airspace, the decision is made to put a TFR in place to protect the area around this situation/event. These types of scenarios seldom occur; however, unfamiliarity with handling such matters may create confusion, which could lead to a potentially dangerous situation.

With severe weather and hurricane season on the horizon, along with the ever-present possibility of the impromptu "emergency situation," we must be able to respond to these events as they occur. Several different types of TFRs are managed by multiple offices within the Agency. This makes the process especially confusing in times of emergency. Immediate guidance on TFR procedures and processing is just a phone call away, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Whether it is an emergency situation or simply a preplanned event, the specialists at the Special Operations Support Center (SOSC) in System Operations Security (AJR-2), are available to provide assistance regarding TFRs. They also provide other services in executing the FAA's air domain security efforts. The SOSC specialists are also well-versed on Notices to Airmen processing and guidance. The number to call is (202) 267-8276 during the hours 6:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. e.t., Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. e.t., Saturday and Sunday. During other hours, phone calls will be returned.

TEAMWORK - AN OPERATIONAL ERROR (OE) PREVENTION METHOD

/*TR/E With the increase in hiring of air traffic controllers, it is certain that on-the-job (OJT) training would also increase. Unfortunately, this fiscal year has seen a noticeable increase in operational errors while conducting OJT. This year, there have been 18 terminal errors as compared to 13 for this same time period last year. It is our responsibility to determine the cause and to develop and implement mitigation strategies. Although a detailed evaluation of each error is conducted, it is time to examine this issue from a broader perspective.

When a trainee is plugged into a position, his or her responsibility or objective is to learn. Trainees have varying degrees of knowledge and experience. Although they are accountable, from a training progression aspect, we do not hold them responsible for operational errors. Primarily, the OJT instructor (OJTI) is held accountable for the error. We all are aware of this at some level; however, we all need to be committed to reducing operational errors during OJT.

There are some traps the OJTI may fall into, such as misjudging the trainee's level of competency, that lead to forgetting who has ultimate responsibility for that position. When the trainee appears to be more skilled than he or she actually is, the OJTI may tend to be overconfident and pay less attention than is necessary. When the trainee has limited experience, the OJTI may allow him/her to go too far, resulting in difficulty recovering the position. An OJTI may also be tempted to assist the struggling trainee, rather than assume the position themselves. One of the largest distractions is unrelated conversations in the operat-

ing area, whether it is with the trainee or others. The OJTI is a valuable member of the team by staying engaged in the operation, making responsible judgment calls, and using available resources when needed. We can avoid potential traps and ensure a safe, error free operation by being a cohesive team. Just as the trainee depends on the instructor for guidance, or assistance during difficult times, the instructor is also depending on a network to support his/her efforts. The front line managers (FLM) or controllers-in-charge need to be aware of the traffic activity and operational conditions to manage a safe, efficient operation. They must manage distractions and provide assistance when and where needed. The management team can identify whether procedures need to be improved or enforced.

The following questions serve as a reminder. Am I appropriately engaged in the operation? Do I allow distractions in the control room to impede my judgment? Do I observe potential or pending loss at another sector and bring it to the attention of the controller or FLM?

We distributed a mandatory briefing item on March 12 addressing some of the areas mentioned above. This briefing serves as a valuable tool as we endeavor, as a team, to reduce operational errors.

CREW RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (CRM)

/*TRF/E Human factors cause or contribute to most aviation accidents and almost all air traffic control operational errors. CRM is the intentional use of effective human factors principles and methods to reduce errors and accidents, and to improve individual and team performance. CRM is used by airline and military flightcrews, National Aeronautics and Space Administration astronauts and flight engineers, surgical teams, and in other fields where there are potential risks.

Controllers and pilots are skilled professionals; however, because of the number of flights, and the multiple decisions, control instructions, and actions for each of them – even skilled professionals are vulnerable to human and system errors. CRM reduces human error and accidents by identifying and eliminating vulnerabilities, and providing countermeasures against those that remain.

A common vulnerability is the Risk Denial Syndrome. Captain Robert Besco, American Airlines Retired, Ph.D., describes it as the tendency of skilled professionals to circumvent or shortcut standard procedures, in order to gain an operational advantage, while thinking that "it won't matter." Pilots and controllers, as well as anyone who drives an automobile, are vulnerable to the Risk Denial Syndrome. Many of us can relate to running yellow lights that are changing to red, while thinking that we are gaining an operational advantage and "it won't matter." However, most accidents happen at intersections. The vulnerability is that sooner or later, it <u>will</u> matter. The countermeasure, whenever we find ourselves thinking that "it won't matter," is to catch and correct ourselves, and then do the right thing.

In this publication, the option(s) for which a briefing is required are indicated by an asterisk (*) followed by one or more letter designators, i.e., ***T** *= Tower, combined tower/approach control,* ***R** *= TRACON,* ***E** *= ARTCC (En route), or* ***F** *= AFSS/FSS. (Reference FAA Order 7210.3, para. 2-2-8.)*

This table lists Air Traffic Bulletins published since 2003. They can also be found on the Internet at http://www.faa.gov/airports_airtraffic/air_traffic/publications/.

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