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InFO

Information for Operators

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http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info

An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.

Subject: “Climb Via” Phraseology for the Assignment of Route Transitions and/or Standard Instrument Departure (SID) and Area Navigation (RNAV) SID Procedures

Purpose: This InFO explains the upcoming implementation of “climb via” phraseology for the assignment of route transitions and/or SID and RNAV SID procedures. Additionally, this InFO emphasizes the importance of pilots understanding and using the correct response phraseology when Air Traffic Control (ATC) issues a “climb via” clearance.

Background: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Air Traffic Control (ATC) will add “climb via” phraseology and procedures for departure operations consistent with existing “descend via” phraseology and procedures in FAA Order 7110.65U. Both “climb via” and “descend via” will be added to the Pilot/Controller Glossary. Other than implementing use of “climb via”, there is no change in altitude clearance procedures.

Discussion: “Climb via” means to navigate laterally and vertically to comply with all published route transitions and/or SID routing, heading, speed, and altitude restrictions unless specifically told otherwise by ATC. If ATC removes an aircraft from the lateral or vertical path of a SID then subsequently re-clears an aircraft with a “climb via” clearance, the pilot is required to comply with all published restrictions of the SID. Flight crews are reminded that the top altitude of the SID is the published or ATC issued altitude limit until cleared to climb higher by ATC. The filed/expected altitude is not relevant to, and has no bearing on the SID unless communications are lost between the pilot and ATC.

Pilots shall respond to “climb via” or “descend via” clearances by repeating the clearance verbatim. Phrases such as “on the” or “descending on” a procedure are not acceptable and can create additional workload with unnecessary controller queries. When changing frequencies, on initial contact advise ATC of current altitude, “climbing/descending via” procedure name, and runway transitions if assigned. When departing on SIDs also advise ATC of the top altitude you are climbing to. If issued an altitude or speed not contained on the SID/STAR, advise ATC of restrictions issued by the prior controller.

Examples:

“United Seven Forty Seven leaving FL 210 descending via the JOHNN One arrival, runway two one transition.”

“American Seven Seventy Seven leaving niner thousand climbing via the SMITH One departure to one-five thousand.”

Published speed restrictions are always mandatory regardless of the use of climb/descend via. ATC may issue speed adjustments with climb/descend via clearances. The term “resume published speed” is used to terminate ATC speed adjustments on routes where there are published speed restrictions. When ATC issues “resume normal speed”, this phraseology applies only to procedures or route segments where there are no published speed restrictions. Where published speed restrictions are no longer required, the phraseology used is “delete speed restrictions”.

ATC Instructions – FAA	FAA Requirements
CLIMB VIA (SID designator) DESCEND VIA (STAR designator)	Requires the aircraft to navigate laterally and vertically to meet all published restrictions; climb/descent is at pilot discretion. Subsequent issuance of a “maintain” clearance deletes published altitude restrictions.
CLIMB/DESCEND AND MAINTAIN (altitude)	Pilot is expected to vacate current altitude and commence an unrestricted climb/descent to comply with the clearance. For aircraft already climbing via a SID, or descending via a STAR, published altitude restrictions are deleted unless re-issued by ATC.
COMPLY WITH RESTRICTIONS	Requires aircraft resuming a procedure to comply with published restrictions. May be used in lieu of reissuing individual restrictions.
RESUME PUBLISHED SPEED	Cancels ATC issued speed restrictions. Pilot is expected to comply with speeds published on the SID/STAR.
RESUME NORMAL SPEED	Cancels ATC issued speed restrictions and instructs pilot to return to normal aircraft speed where no restrictions are published. This does not relieve the pilot of those speed restrictions which are applicable to 14 CFR Section 91.117.
DELETE SPEED RESTRICTION	Cancels published speed restrictions.

Additional guidance is available by viewing the following video:

- <http://www.faa.gov/tv/?mediaId=507>

Recommended Action: Operators of aircraft, directors of safety, directors of operations, chief pilots, dispatch supervisors, fractional ownership program managers, and training managers should ensure that the following procedures are utilized.

1. Carefully review the departure procedures before takeoff.
2. Confirm that flight management, navigation, and communication systems are properly set and verified with the correct departure procedure information.
3. Read back all clearances verbatim.
4. Comply with all published departure procedure restrictions unless specifically told otherwise by ATC.
5. When in doubt, query the controller.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this InFO should be directed to Ron Kimbrough, Aviation Safety Inspector, AFS-470 at (202) 385-4623.