

# NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
Air Traffic Organization Policy

N JO 7210.799

**Effective Date:**  
January 6, 2012

**Cancellation Date:**  
July 26, 2012

**SUBJ:** Route Test

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- 1. Purpose of This Notice.** This notice adds a new section to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order JO 7210.3, Chapter 17, which describe policies and guidelines for conducting and evaluating route tests. It also provides a concise definition of route tests, a definition of technical terms used, the policy guidance which must be followed, as well as a delineation of responsibilities of the Air Traffic Control System Command Center (ATCSCC) and all participating stakeholders.
- 2. Audience.** This notice applies to the following Air Traffic Organization (ATO) service units: Terminal, En Route and Oceanic, and System Operations; FAA tower facilities; and Federal contract towers.
- 3. Where Can I Find This Notice?** This notice is available on the MyFAA employee Web site at [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices/](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/) and on the air traffic publications Web site at [http://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications/](http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/).
- 4. Explanation of Policy Change.** These paragraphs provide guidance on how route tests must be safely conducted throughout the National Airspace System (NAS). Since all routes are critical to the day-to-day operations of the NAS, it is crucial that specifics for the conduct of this procedure be properly identified for participant compliance. Route test initiatives involve mandatory collaboration and coordination between the ATCSCC, the final approval authority for all en route and terminal facilities and stakeholders affected by route tests.
- 5. Procedures.** Add Section 24 to read as follows:

## Section 24. Route Test

### 17-24-1. PURPOSE

This section describes policies and guidelines for conducting and evaluating route tests.

### 17-24-2. DEFINITION

- a. Route test - a process established for the purpose of:
  1. Assessing new routing concepts.
  2. Exploring alternative routing possibilities.
  3. Developing new routes to enhance system efficiency and safety.
- b. Route test will:
  1. Last for a pre-determined length of time, usually 90 days.

2. Include, but not be limited to, the following NAS elements:
  - (a) NRS waypoints.
  - (b) RNAV waypoints.
  - (c) NAVAIDs.
  - (d) Departure Procedures (DP).
  - (e) Standard Terminal Arrival Routes (STAR).

### **17-24-3. POLICY**

Route tests must be conducted only after collaboration and coordination between the ATCSCC, affected en route and terminal facilities, and stakeholders. Route tests will include existing certified NAS elements. The ATCSCC is the final approval authority for all route tests.

### **17-24-4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **a. The requesting facility must:**

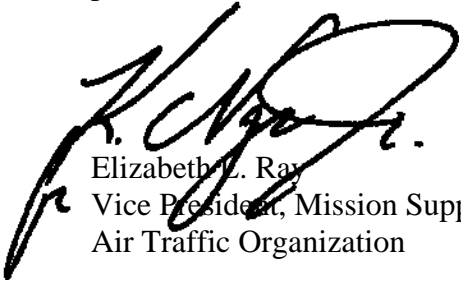
1. Ensure coordination is accomplished with all affected FAA facilities and stakeholders.
2. Submit a formal letter, in memorandum format, to the ATCSCC Procedures Office, through the regional MTO. The memorandum must include:
  - (a) Detailed summary of the route test being requested and the anticipated results.
  - (b) List of affected FAA facilities and stakeholders with which coordination has been completed.
  - (c) Length of time for which the route test will be in effect, not to exceed 180 days.
  - (d) Detailed summary of the possible impact to the NAS, surrounding facilities, and stakeholders.
3. Perform an air traffic safety analysis in accordance with FAA Order 1100.161, Air Traffic Safety Oversight.
4. After the above items have been completed and the test approved, conduct the test as requested.
5. Determine if the route test timeframe is adequate. A facility may be granted an extension of up to 90 days with the approval of the ATCSCC. Submit requests for extension through the MTO to the ATCSCC Procedures Office, with supporting documentation. Facilities requesting extensions exceeding 180 days must review and comply with FAA Order 1050.1, Policies and Procedures Considering Environmental Impacts, to ensure environmental studies are completed. Include the studies with your request.
6. Within 30 days of completion of the test:
  - (a) Conduct a review and analysis with the stakeholders and accept comments.
  - (b) Determine if the proposed route is viable or if other alternatives should be explored.
  - (c) Document test results and prepare a post-test report in accordance with Air Traffic Safety Analysis and with FAA Order 1100.161, Air Traffic Safety Oversight.
7. If the route is determined to be beneficial, initiate implementation, and have the route published in appropriate charts, databases, letters of agreement, and any other appropriate FAA publications.

#### **b. The ATCSCC must:**

1. Review the route test memorandum and approve the test or provide justification for disapproval.
2. Review and approve requests for test extensions or provide justification for disapproval.
3. Issue any necessary traffic management advisories.
4. Be the approving authority for any TMIs requested in association with the route test.

**6. Distribution.** This notice is distributed to the following ATO service units: Terminal, En Route and Oceanic, System Operations, and Mission Support; ATO Safety; the Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service; the William J. Hughes Technical Center; and the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center.

**7. Background.** Throughout the NAS, traffic management personnel conduct route tests to assess new routing concepts, explore alternative routing possibilities, and develop new routes to reduce delays and enhance system safety and efficiency. Route tests require established precoordination practices to ensure all affected parties can evaluate the impact, comment on the concepts, and participate. Route tests can vary in duration, usually 90 days. There are no current national directives establishing this practice.



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12/6/11  
Date Signed