

U.S. Department
of Transportation

Federal Aviation
Administration

Air Traffic Bulletin

Issue # 2010-4
December 2010

A Communication from the
Vice President, System Operations Services

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Maneuvers within Surface Areas

/*TR/ Aircraft operations at airports, surrounded by congested areas, have long been the source of noise complaints and public perception of aviation associated hazards. Controllers must be cognizant of their responsibilities regarding surface area restrictions, as detailed in FAA JO 7110.65, Paragraph 3-1-11b.

b. Do not approve a pilot's request or ask a pilot to conduct unusual maneuvers within surface areas of Class B, C, or D airspace if they are not essential to the performance of the flight.

EXCEPTION. A pilot's request to conduct aerobatic practice activities may be approved, when operating in accordance with a letter of agreement, and the activity will have no adverse effect on safety of the air traffic operation or result in a reduction of service to other users.

Reference-

FAAO JO 7210.3, Para 5-4-7, Aerobatic Practice Areas

NOTE-

These unusual maneuvers include unnecessary low passes, unscheduled flybys, practice instrument approaches to altitudes below specified minima (unless a landing or touch-and-go is to be made), or any so-called "buzz jobs" wherein a flight is conducted at a low altitude and/or a high rate of speed for thrill purposes. Such maneuvers increase hazards to persons and property and contribute to noise complaints.

Unusual maneuvers within surface areas, not associated with normal flight operations, are not to be initiated or approved by controllers. If pilots persist in requesting such unusual maneuvers, they must be referred to facility management for further clarification.

Intersection Departures

/*T/ Operations on the airport surface are critical due to the risk of a catastrophic accident. Specifically, intersection departures continue to be a significant component of operational errors and pilot deviations. Aircraft departing from or on the runway at an intersection are vulnerable to collisions with aircraft taking off and landing full length. Extreme care must be taken by controllers and pilots to ensure communications are received and understood correctly. All parties must be

hyper vigilant of position awareness in relation to runway(s) in use. Phraseology requirements, outlined in FAA JO 7110.65 and N JO 7110.536, require controllers to state the intersection with both a line up and wait clearance and a take-off clearance. In addition, the phraseology “full length” is required to be stated for aircraft waiting and/or departing full length when aircraft are at an intersection.

Along with phraseology, position determination and scanning is fundamental. These are duties best shared by everyone in an air traffic control tower (ATCT). Most experienced controllers have, at some time during their career, either warned another controller or have been warned when aircraft or equipment were not where they should be. FAA JO 7110.65, Paragraph 3-1-12, Visually Scanning Runways, states the following;

- a. Local controllers shall visually scan runways to the maximum extent possible.
- b. Ground control shall assist local control in visually scanning runways, especially when runways are in close proximity to other movement areas.”

These are the requirements; however, controllers in an ATCT should assist with position determination and scanning as they are able.

Alerts from a controller working flight data or clearance delivery have prevented many errors and incidents. A controller working these positions can often see wrong turns on taxiways or runways and incorrect actions in response to clearances, especially when local control and ground control are busy giving progressive or corrective instructions to other pilots. Even the newly checked-out person on flight data can be the one that saves the day!

Adhering to correct phraseology, and conducting effective scanning and functioning as an effective operational team, can significantly reduce the potential for error. The end result is a safe, efficient, and effective flow of aircraft using full length and intersections for departure.

The Air Traffic Bulletin (ATB) is a means for headquarters to remind field facilities of proper application of procedures and other instructions. It is published and distributed quarterly, with special issues published as necessary.

Articles must be submitted electronically in Microsoft® Word by the offices of primary responsibility with approval at the group level or above. Quarterly articles must be received by the end of September, December, March, and June of each year.

*In this publication, the option(s) for which a briefing is required is indicated by an asterisk followed by one or more letter designators, i. e., *T – Tower, *E – ARTCC, *R – TRACON, or *F – AFSS/FSS.*

(Reference FAA Order JO 7210.3, Facility Operation and Administration, paragraph 2-2-9)

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