

GOVERNMENT/INDUSTRY AERONAUTICAL CHARTING FORUM 05-01

May 11-12, 2005

Recommendation Document

Subject: ASR Symbol on Visual Charts

Background/Discussion: In 1982 the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued Safety Recommendation A-82-114, which stated "Add to all federal sectional aeronautical charts a prominent advisory notation pertinent to terminal areas at which radar traffic advisory service are available on request." In 1990 the IACC approved a requirement document establishing the requirement to chart at airports with FAA operated ASRs that do not lie within the charted lateral limits of Class B, Class C or TRSAs the negative type R in a circle, indicating radar, immediately prior to and on the same line as the airport name in the airport data block. In 2003 the IACC approved Requirement Document 556, which expanded the requirement to include the airports inside the lateral limits of Class B, Class C, and TRSAs.

The source data to chart and maintain the ASR symbol is limited and application of the symbology is subject to interpretation of unclear guidance and original NTSB intent. When queried, most pilots could not provide an explanation as to the purpose of the ASR symbol on the visual chart. Pilots have commented that the usefulness of an ASR symbol is extremely limited, even ambiguous. The original NTSB request was made over 22 years ago. The availability of flight following and traffic advisory service within the United States calls into question the continued application of this requirement.

Recommendations: Obtain ACF concurrence to delete the ASR symbol on Visual charts and forward ACF recommendation to the NTSB for review of Safety Recommendation A-82-114 to determine the validity of the requirement.

Comments: This recommendation affects Sectional and Terminal Area Charts.

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MEETING 05-01: Mr. Eric Secretan, NACO, submitted this issue. Mr. Secretan stated that in 1982 the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) issued Safety Recommendation A-82-114, which stated, "Add to all federal sectional aeronautical charts a prominent advisory notation pertinent to terminal areas at which radar traffic advisory service are available on request." In 1990, the IACC approved a requirement document establishing the requirement to indicate radar using the negative type R in a circle, immediately prior to and on the same line as the airport name in the airport data block at airports with FAA operated ASRs that do not lie within the charted lateral limits of Class B, Class C or TRSAs. In 2003, the IACC approved Requirement Document 556, which expanded the requirement to include airports inside the lateral limits of Class B, Class C, and TRSAs. The source data to chart and maintain the ASR symbol is limited and application of the symbology is subject to interpretation of unclear guidance and original NTSB intent. Currently, the ASR symbol is added to the airport data block of the closest airport to the antenna site. Mr. Secretan questioned if charting the physical location of an antenna site at an airport provides any useful information to the pilot. When queried, most pilots could not provide an explanation as to the purpose of the ASR symbol on the visual chart. Pilots have commented that the usefulness of an ASR symbol is extremely limited, even ambiguous. The original NTSB request was made over 22 years ago. The availability of flight following and traffic advisory service within the United States calls into question the continued application of this requirement. Recommendation was made to obtain ACF concurrence to delete the ASR symbol on Visual charts and forward this ACF recommendation to the NTSB for review of Safety Recommendation A-82-114 to determine the validity of the requirement. Col. Scott Adams, NGA, stated that there are still places out west where flight following is not available. Mr. Hal Becker, AOPA, stated that they would poll their members to determine if this information is required and determine if there is a better way to depict the information. Mr. Secretan stated the ASR symbol needs to be clearly defined. **ACTION:** FAA/NACO and AOPA.

MEETING 05-02: Mr. Eric Secretan, NACO, provided the following update. NACO has been researching the issue to determine origin and intent of the negative type R symbol when charted. NACO is currently working with Airway Facilities to identify towers that have ASR capability. However, towers that have ASR capability may not have operators authorized to use the ASR system. Mr. Secretan reported that NACO is still investigating the issue. Mr. Hal Becker, AOPA, stated that AOPA did not poll their members. However, AOPA recommends continuing to chart the negative type R in the airport data block at airports with FAA operated ASRs that do not lie within the charted lateral limits of Class B, Class C or TRSAs. In addition, AOPA recommends charting the approach control and departure control frequencies in the radar approach control frequencies legend of the Sectional and the TAC. A copy of the AOPA request is attached to these minutes. Mr. Secretan stated that the AOPA request seems reasonable but we need to get a handle on what the symbol means prior to adding the frequency data. Mr. Mark Washam, ATO-T, stated that he could provide NACO with a source for towers that are certified to use ASR. Mr. Washam stated that this information is available on the NATCA web site. **ACTION:** FAA/NACO and ATO-T.

MEETING 06-01: Mr. Mark Washam, ATO-T, was unable to attend the forum. Mr. Eric Secretan, NACG, provided the following update. On Sectional charts the NACG currently charts the negative type R symbol to indicate the availability of airport surveillance radar (ASR). The criteria to chart the ASR information have been determined to be shaky. Currently, the ASR symbol is added to the airport data block of the closest airport to the antenna site. Mr. Washam provided the NACG with a listing of FAA towers that have the ASR equipment. However, the listing does not provide the necessary information to determine if the equipment and personnel

are certified. The group discussed ASR, flight following, and VFR advisory service. Mr. James Spencer, NAVFIG, inquired about the source for this information at military facilities. Mr. Spencer indicated that a listing of certified and non-certified military facilities is available from his office. He expressed his concern regarding charting the negative type R symbol at facilities that are not certified. Mr. Secretan reiterated that the original intent of the recommendation was to delete the ASR symbol. However, the ACF has requested that the NACG keep digging into the source issue and determine the criteria for adding the negative type R symbology. The NACG will not pursue the AOPA recommendation to add the frequency data until the source and criteria issues are resolved. **ACTION:** NACG, ATO-T, and NAVFIG.

MEETING 06-02: Mr. Jim Grant, NACG, provided the following update. The definition of ASR according to the AIM 4-5-3 states, “ASR is designed to provide relatively short-range coverage in the vicinity of an airport and to serve as an expeditious means of handling terminal area aircraft through observation of precise aircraft locations on a radarscope. The ASR can also be used as an instrument approach aid.” Mr. Grant recapped the history of this issue for the ACF members and provided a detailed account of the charting issues associated with the NTSB requirement. Currently the NACG uses the DACS-9 as source for charting the ASR symbol. Numerous inconsistencies have been discovered which include, but is not limited to duplicate ASR entries – ASRs with same coordinates listed at multiple airports. ASR Coordinates not close to an airport – as far away as 15 miles. Obvious wrong coordinates for the ASR – 30 minutes away. Listing of ASR 4 and ASR 8 located very close to each other, and finally, the DACS 9 and NASR out of agreement. The NACG contacted several other FAA offices to determine their perspective on the issue. Mr. Kerry Rose, FAA Terminal Services, stated “The controllers may or may not be certified to provide separation services with the monitor installed... .” Ms. Pamela Coopwood, FAA Terminal Airspace Procedures, added, “there are towers who use DBRITE displays as extensions of their eyes for situational awareness only. However, a lost pilot can contact any tower for assistance regardless of their types of equipment and the controllers would provide assistance.” Based on the information gathered from numerous sources the NACG determined that the resulting 1991 specification to add the **R** to the airport data block currently may serve to remind VFR pilots that radar services (e.g. Flight Following) are provided for those choosing to participate. Virtually all of the U.S. now has radar coverage and VFR pilots are encouraged, although not required, to use Flight Following. Therefore, the NACG Recommendation is to remove the **R** symbols from both the sectional and terminal area charts and place a boxed note in the chart margins stating that Flight Following Services are available on request and highly recommended in and around Class B, C, and TRSA areas. Mr. Grant’s recommendation led to extensive discussion by the forum participants. Mr. Eric Secretan, NACG commented that the use of the ASR symbol is outdated and the source is unreliable. However, the NTSB recommendation will need to be addressed prior to any NACG action. Mr. Ian Twombly, AOPA, stated that his initial thought is that the note is not required. The note will not replace the intent of the **R** information. Also, how will the user obtain frequency information? The group responded that frequency information is available on the chart and in the Airport/Facility Directory (A/FD). Mr. John Moore, NACG, reiterated the NACG position and asked Mr. Twombly for an AOPA recommendation. Mr. Mark Ingram, ALPA, stated that if the note is added to the chart the Aeronautical Information Manual should be modified to reflect this recommendation. Mr. Secretan stated that the use of the term ‘recommended’ should be coordinated with Air Traffic. The final consensus of the group was to remove the **R** from the charts. The NACG will coordinate with the removal of the symbol with the NTSB and the IACC and report at the next forum. A copy of Mr. Grant’s complete report is attached to these minutes. **ACTION:** NACG and IACC.

MEETING 07-01: Mr. John Moore NACO, provided a recap of the issue from the last meeting. Mr. Jim Grant, NACO, spoke with a representative from the NTSB who said that they consider the issue closed because the FAA satisfied the NTSB recommendation by placing the **R** on the charts where Airport Surveillance Radar existed. At the last ACF, a comment was made that placing a boxed note on each chart informing pilots of flight following services should be common knowledge and therefore should not be necessary. The problem is if we remove the **R** from the charts and don't put a boxed note, we will no longer be satisfying the recommendation of the NTSB. The NTSB has said that placing the boxed note in the margin will still satisfy the intent of the NTSB recommendation and the issue will be considered closed. The boxed note will say, "Flight Following Services are available on request and highly recommended in and around Class B, C and TRSA Areas."

Valerie Watson added that RD-640 on this issue had been signed by the IACC. **CLOSED.**
