

GOVERNMENT/INDUSTRY AERONAUTICAL CHARTING FORUM 05-02

October 26 – 27, 2005

Recommendation Document

Subject: Identification of a Location Identifier for a Helicopter Point in Space instrument approach procedure, which directs the pilot to “Proceed VFR” from the Missed Approach Point to the points of landing so that the approach procedure can be protected by Notice to Airman (NOTAM) coverage.

Background/Discussion: Currently there are two kinds of helicopter Point in Space (PNS) instrument procedures, one that goes to a specific landing area identified as “Proceed Visually” in the instructions to the pilot to proceed to the landing area if it is in sight from the missed approach point. In this case the pilot will be cleared for the Copter RNAV approach to XXX heliport (the Location Identifier of the single heliport). The other kind of Point in Space instrument approach is to a point at which the pilots makes visual contact with the ground and proceeds under visual flight rules to any of a number of landing surfaces. It is not inconceivable for one instrument approach to support 5 heliports or to just get a helicopter into visual contact with the ground and proceed under visual flight rules, e.g. a power line checking operation.

In 2004, a GENOT was issued requiring all instrument approaches, both public and special, to be provided NOTAM protection. For the PNS instrument approaches to a single heliport, the NOTAM would be tied to the heliport location identifier. However, to the approaches that do not terminate at a landing location in the National Airspace System Resources (NASR), a decision needs to be made as to how to assign a usable location identifier and thus enable provision of NOTAM protection for these procedures.

Currently, the PNS procedure has been associated with the location identifier of the closest major airport to the missed approach point. Industry representatives have requested using the missed approach point (MAP) waypoint identifier as the location to be put into the NASR database for NOTAM purposes. However, being a waypoint the location has five character identifiers, the last four letters of which may or may not be unique (other waypoints might have the same combination of letters) which would make this solution not workable.

Recommendations: Request the Charting Forum review the issue and factors and make a determination on a standardized process for the assignment of location identifiers for helicopter PNS instrument approaches for inclusion into the NASR database for NOTAM coverage.

Comments: This recommendation affects helicopter operators flying PNS helicopter instrument procedures.

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Date: 8/23/2005

MEETING 05-02: Mr. Mike Webb, AFS-420, submitted this issue. Mr. Webb briefed that currently there are two kinds of helicopter Point in Space (PNS) instrument procedures. One procedure goes to a specific landing area identified as 'Proceed Visually' in the instructions to the pilot to proceed to the landing area if it is in sight from the missed approach point. In this case the pilot will be cleared for the Copter RNAV approach to a single heliport. The other PNS procedure is to a point at which the pilot makes visual contact with the ground and proceeds under visual flight rules to any of a number of landing surfaces. In 2004, a General Notice was issued requiring all instrument approaches, both public and special, to be provided NOTAM protection. For the PNS instrument approaches to a single heliport the NOTAM was tied to the heliport location identifier. For approaches that do not terminate at a specific landing location, industry representatives have requested using the missed approach point waypoint identifier as the location for NOTAM purposes and stored in NASR. Option two is to use the closest landing surface that is already in NASR. A third option is to use the location where pilots get the altimeter setting. Request is made for the ACF to make a determination on a standardized process for assigning location identifiers for helicopter PNS instrument approaches. ATO-R reported that the industry suggestion of using the missed approach point waypoint identifier is not feasible. A waypoint has a five-character identifier and the last four letters may or may not be unique which would make this recommendation unacceptable. Mr. Eric Secretan, NACO, inquired about the placement of the instrument approach procedure in the Terminal Procedures Publication. The procedure would be listed under the primary airport/identifier. If it were to a missed approach point with an assigned identifier, how would the pilot find it? Mr. Tom Schneider, AFS-420, recommended a separate section in the A/FD to identify these points. Mr. Bill Hammett, AFS-420, recommended that they be treated the same as SIDs that service multiple airports. Each point would be assigned an identifier and published in the TPPs multiple times. Mr. Webb reported that there are only two published procedures and approximately 70 specials. Mr. Hammett questioned if the NOTAM System could be programmed to handle five character identifiers or is it limited to four characters. Mr. Gary Bobik, ATO-R, will investigate and report at the next ACF. Mr. Hammett stated that the NOTAM System is key to resolving this issue. Mr. Brad Rush, NFPO, informed the group that the state of Pennsylvania was considering adding GPS Helicopter approaches every five miles along their interstates for evacuation purposes. Other states could adopt this plan causing hundreds of thousands of these points in the future. The group discussed database and liability issues associated with these points. Ms. Debbie Martin, Transport Canada stated that PNS is an issue in Canada and requested that Transport Canada participate in the working group. The following individuals/organizations have expressed an interest in participating on the working group. The PNS presentation is attached to these minutes.

ACTION: FAA/AFS-420 and ATO-R.

NAME	ORGANIZATION	EMAIL	PHONE
Deb Copeland	NACO	deborah.l.copeland@faa.gov	301-713-2631
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Tom Schneider	AFS-420	thomas.e.schneider@faa.gov	405-954-5852
Rich Wagner	Jeppesen	richard.wagner@jeppesen.com	303-328-4447
Val Watson	Carto Standards	valerie.watson@faa.gov	202-267-9302
Mike Webb, Chair	AFS-420	mike.webb@faa.gov	202-385-4603

MEETING 06-01: Mr. Mike Webb, AFS-420, briefed that since the last ACF, a meeting was held with the critical players to identify the challenges associated with helicopter Point-in-Space (PinS) instrument procedures. The main focus of the group was to determine how to get the final approach fix identified as a destination that can be used for a point-in-space approach. From this point the copter will proceed visually to the landing area. The issue is identifying these points or destinations for NOTAM support, and in the future OE/AAA support. Mr. Webb stated that his group recommended using a unique five-character identifier for these points. The first two characters will be the two letter state abbreviation followed by three unique characters. He informed the group that the state of Pennsylvania was considering adding a large number of GPS Helicopter approaches along Interstate 80 for evacuation purposes. Mr. Webb reported that the NOTAM system could handle five character identifiers. However, there is a problem with some of the equipment at the FSS locations. The equipment is not standard throughout all the FSS locations. This issue will be resolved when Lockheed Martin begins installing new equipment in the spring of 2007. Mr. Webb stated that the requirements and funding issues will need to be resolved and it could take four years. The final approach fix point or destination will be a waypoint. These waypoints must be a pronounceable five-character name otherwise it becomes an ATC and an Air Traffic Union issue. The group will work with Air Traffic to resolve this issue. Mr. Gary Bobik, ATO-R, reported that the five-character identifiers would be accepted in all the legacy systems except the sixteen Oasis systems. Oasis cannot store, process or retrieve any five-character identifiers. He stated that a test FDC procedural NOTAM would be issued to determine the facilities' handling capabilities. Mr. John Moore, NACG, inquired if the group discussed the placement of these procedures in the TPPs or a listing in the A/FD. Mr. Webb responded that the group is looking into the technical aspects first. Once they are resolved they will resolve the implementation issues. Mr. Moore requested that the individuals/organizations that expressed an interest in participating on the working group at the last ACF be included in the next telcon. **ACTION:** ATO-R and AFS-420.

MEETING 06-02: Mr. Mike Webb, AFS-420 was unable to attend the forum. The Working Group, Chaired by Mr. Webb that was established at the 05-02 ACF has not met. Mr. Gary Bobik, ATO-R, was unable to attend the forum. Therefore, the NOTAM issues outlined at the last forum remain unanswered. Mr. Eric Secretan, NACG, updated the group on the NACG proposal for the indexing of the Point-in-Space (PinS) procedures in the terminal procedures publication and related ARINC issues. Mr. Greg Yamamoto, NACG, is currently attending the ARINC meeting in Germany where he intends to submit a proposal for consideration. FMS require a four-character airport/heliport identifier as the first step in selecting a procedure. Once an identifier is selected, the individual PinS procedure can be selected based on the last common point, similar to the STAR convention. PinS procedures could be coded by use of a pseudo 4 character heliport identifier. This naming convention is based on the state two letter postal code, for example, MD01, MD02 etc. This naming convention will limit the pseudo heliport identifier to 99 per state. These pseudo heliports could be located regionally across each state along major highway intersections, populated areas, and other significant landmark. Each single pseudo heliport can have multiple PinS procedures assigned to it. The pseudo heliport has nothing to do with actually flying the PinS procedure. It is simply used for FMS selection. There are still numerous unresolved issues associated with this concept, charting, NOTAMs, and indexing of the procedures. Mr. John Moore, NACO recommended that the issue be sent back to Mr. Webb for coordination. **ACTION:** ATO-R and AFS-420

MEETING 07-01: No progress on this issue. Mike Webb is still working this issue.

MEETING 07-02: In order to get Helicopter “Point-in-Space” (PinS) instrument procedures into the FAA NOTAM system, there is a need to establish unique location identifiers.

Some of the questions being asked were: What are the issues? What should the criteria be? How would FAA’s internal systems be affected?

Today, some helicopter procedures are to a common MAP, then ‘split’ into separate VFR paths to individual landing sites.

Options include:

- a. Use ID of the common Missed Approach Point (MAP) – ATO says “not feasible”.
- b. Use closest Landing Surface already in the NASR database – New York example.
- c. Use location where pilot gets the current altimeter setting – ties ID to the facility used by the pilot to fly the procedure.
- d. Treat similarly as done for SIDs that serve multiple airports.

This issue is still being worked. **OPEN.**

ACTION: Mr. Mike Webb will provide an update at the next ACF.

MEETING 08-01: Mr. Mike Webb, FAA/AFS-420 briefed the issue. In order to get Helicopter “Point-in-Space” (PinS) instrument procedures into the FAA NOTAM system, there needs to be unique location identifiers. Point-in-space procedures support several locations (Heliports).

There is an also a related International issue of running out of names for heliports. Five characters will not work because there is a four-character limit in the naming convention.

Therefore the question remains, how to identify the procedures with a four character naming convention? The FAA has been working with the international community to resolve this issue but have made little progress. One idea was to have a standard identifier for a region of heliports. Procedures would be located for a regional area, similar to how a SID serves multiple airports. The committee will continue to develop other possibilities. Mr. John Moore, FAA/NACO asked if additional members would help the cause. Mr. Webb asked Jeppesen and Canada for members. The following people have agreed to participate:

- David Bradshaw, DoD
- Ron J. Graham, Transport Canada
- John Kasten, Jeppesen
- Greg Pray, NFDC
- Gary Prock, NOTAM Office
- Valeria Watson, NACO
- Mike Webb, AFS

ACTION: Mr. Mike Webb will provide an update at the next ACF.

MEETING 08-02: Note: This item relates to ACF Issue 04-01-168, Identifiers for Heliports and Helipads. It was decided to combine the two issues into one. See issue 04-01-168 Identifiers for Heliport and Helipads. This issue will remain open until the related issue closes.

MEETING 09-01: Mr. Mike Webb, FAA/AFS-420, reported that his committee was still working on how to add the visual segment to the approach chart. They will be discussing that topic in Brussels in July. Shortly after the Brussels meeting Mr. Webb will contact Ms. Valerie Watson, FAA/NACO, for IACC coordination.

Mr. Webb reported that as far as Location Identifiers for heliports/helipads, the FAA has overcome internal problems related to the designation of heliport/helipad idents and the existing NOTAM system.

Mr. Webb has not yet had a chance to convene the ACF working group. Mention was made of related helicopter Point-In-Space (PinS) activities taking place in the ICAO IFPP, including guidance addressing the concept of helicopter maneuvering areas and helicopter approach chart formats. Also under discussion with ICAO are criteria for helicopter RNAV RNP applications. Note: John Kasten is a member of the ICAO IFPP (representing ARINC). He may be a source for additional information if needed.

Note: This item relates to ACF Issue 04-01-168, Identifiers for Heliports and Helipads. It was decided to combine the two issues into one. See issue 04-01-168 Identifiers for Heliport and Helipads. This issue will remain open until the related issue closes.

MEETING 09-02: Mr. Mike Webb, FAA/AFS-420, was not present. No progress report was available.

Note: This item relates to ACF Issue 04-01-168, Identifiers for Heliports and Helipads. It was decided to combine the two issues into one. See issue 04-01-168 Identifiers for Heliport and Helipads. This issue will remain open until the related issue closes.

MEETING 10-01: This issue has been combined with 04-01-168

Action: See 04-01-168

MEETING 10-02:

This issue has been combined with 04-01-168

STATUS: CLOSED