

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

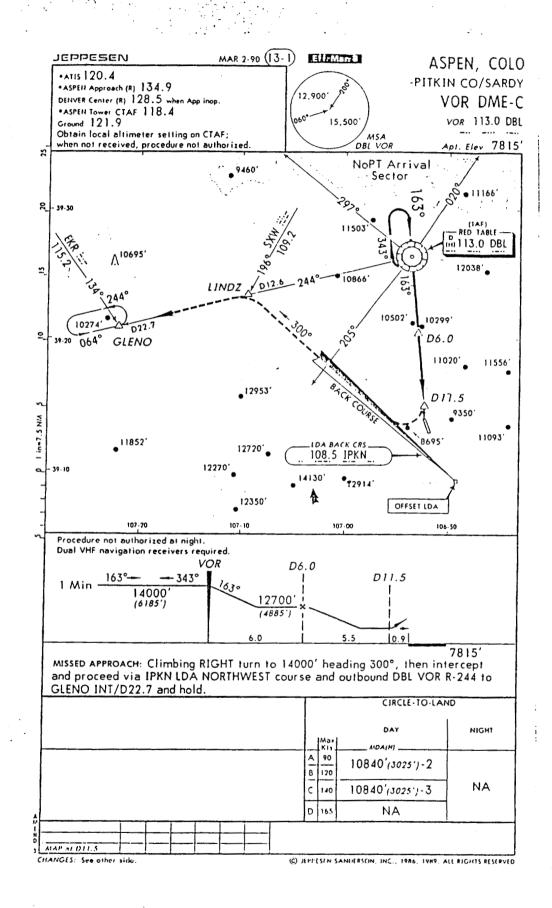
Office of Aviation Safety

Washington, DC 20594

DCA01MA034

Air Traffic Group Factual Report of Investigation

Attachment 8 - Procedures Data, pre-1991, 21 pages



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ASPEN-PITKIN COUNTY AIRPORT SUMMARY OF AIRPORT OPERATING HOURS October 24, 1989

I. HISTORY

- a. Airport opened in 1946 as a private use airstrip.
- b. Dedicated to County in 1957, opened for public use.
- c. Certificated air carrier service began in 1963-64.
- d. Rocky Mountain Airways installed private precision approach (TALAR), and runway lights in 1974.
- e. Airlines began nighttime operations in mid-1970's.

II. RATIONALE

The basis for establishing the airport operating hours as they currently exist are due to noise impact and safety at the airport and surrounding community. It is the opinion of the County that it is inherently unsafe for general aviation aircraft to conduct flight operations during nighttime hours. It is the opinion of the County that a local government, and airport sponsor should have the right to establish and enforce local noise limits to protect the surrounding community.

All governmental actions involve a balancing of legitimate competing interests; this is also the case with the airport curfew. Given the low level of actual demand for nighttime general aviation access to the airport, and the high impact of nighttime traffic the County feels that this can best be accomplished, in part, by managing nighttime airport operations to the greatest extent feasible, and maximizing daytime capacity.

III. RECENT ACTIONS

On August 30, 1989, the National Business Aircraft Association (NBAA) registered an official complaint to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), alleging that the existing regulation of airport operating hours discriminates against general aviation users. On September 25, 1989 the FAA advised Pitkin County of it's investigation of possible violation of federal grant assurances (Assurance No. 22 Economic Nondiscrimination), and directed the County to provide it's rationale for the establishment of the curfew. The County submitted its position on the airport operating hours on September 26, 1989. That position, along with other information, is currently being reviewed by the FAA.

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DEP CON: 134.9

GRND: 121.9 TOWER: 118.4 NOTE: THIS IS A RADAR VECTOR DEPARTURE TO ASSIGNED ROUTE/FIX, ROUTE DEPICTED IS LOST COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURE ONLY.

NOTE: APPLICABLE ONLY WITH APPROACH CONTROL RADAR.

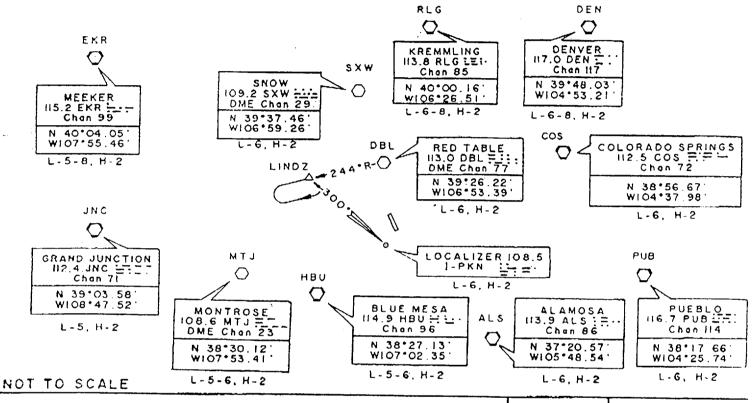
NOTE: ATC INITIAL HEADINGS AUTHORIZED FROM 310 ° CW TO

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NOTE: THIS SID REQUIRES A MINIMUM CLIMB

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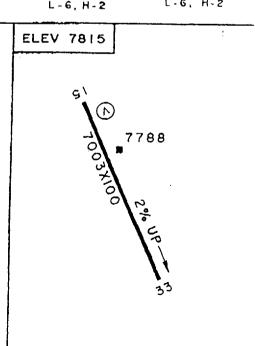


DEPARTURE ROUTE DESCRIPTION

TAKEOFF RUNWAY 15: NOT AUTHORIZED.

TAKEOFF RUNWAY 33: FLY ASSIGNED HEADING FOR RADAR VECTORS FILED/ASSIGNED FIX/ROUTE. MAINTAIN 16,000 FEET OR ASSIGNED LOWER ALTITUDE. EXPECT CLEARANCE TO FILED ALTITUDE 10 MINUTES AFTER DEPARTURE.

LOST COMMUNICATION: IF NO TRANSMISSIONS ARE RECEIVED FOR ____ ___AFTER DEPARTURE, CLIMBING LEFT TURN TO INTERCEPT NW COURSE 1-PKN TO LINDZ INTERSECTION. CLIMB IN LINDZ HOLDING PATTERN TO MEA FOR ASSIGNED ROUTE, THENCE VIA ASSIGNED FIX/ROUTE.



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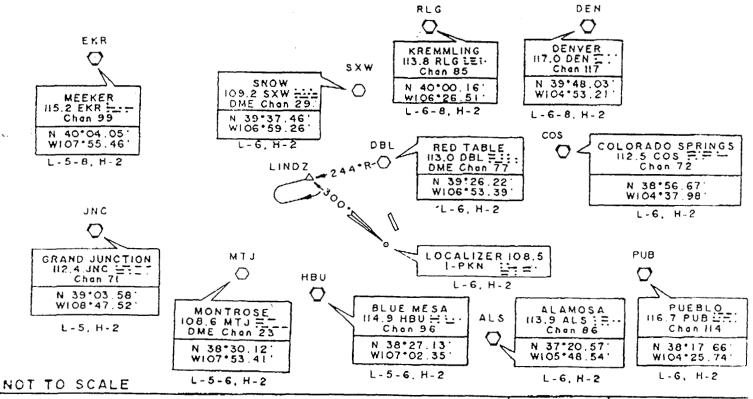
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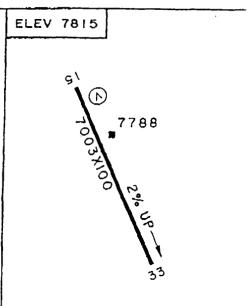


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ASPEN ONE DEPARTURE (VECTOR)

ASPEN. COLORAD

FACSIMILE B. G SENT FROM WASHINGTON LIAISON STAFF, AVN-5 WASHINGTON, D.C.

AVN-5 FACSIMILE TELEPHONE NUMBER: 426-8987 CONFIRMATION NUMBER: 267-3848

DATE 8/16/88
SUBJECT ASPEN, CO VOR/DME-C
NUMBER OF PAGES TO FOLLOW
Mr. D. Slodn J. Green SAC FIFO 460-533/ NAME OF RECEIVER NUMBER
NAME OF SENDER AN AFT-J30/367-8277
COMMENTS Officed are note memo sent to the Administrator on 8/12. a Memorandum from ANM-200 was used in part to provide background.

Date: 8/11/88

ERIEFING MEMORANUM OFFICE OF FLIGHT STANDARDS

SUBJECT: Public Use VOR/IME-C Instrument Approach to Aspen-Pitkin County/Sardy Field Airport, Aspen, Colorado

The Federal Aviation Administration's Northwest Mountain Region, in response to the concerns expressed by the community of Aspen, officials of Pitkin County, and user groups, has identified the need to upgrade the existing air traffic services at the Aspen-Pitkin County/Sardy Field Airport. It has been determined that the establishment of a limited radar approach control facility in the air traffic control tower will best provide these enhanced services.

The proposed commissioning date for this facility is October 1989. To increase traffic flow and use the radar to its maximum capability, it was determined that a new missed approach procedure for the VOR/IME-C and a new departure procedure would be necessary to facilitate air traffic flow to the northwest. It was determined these modifications, even prior to radar commissioning, would enhance the traffic situation at Aspen. December 15 is the target date for the amended VOR/IME-C procedure and public use departure procedure.

A localizer-type directional aid (LDA) will be sited 4 miles southeast of the airport to provide a missed approach course to the northwest. The LDA will also provide positive course guidance for aircraft on the published departure procedure. Aircraft climbing out on the LDA, above 12,000 feet mean sea level (m.s.l.), will find the Carbondale NDB straight ahead on a bearing of 295 to the NDB. (See the attached sketch.)

For safety reasons, the LDA will provide positive or direct sensing (right needle, fly right) to the pilot while outbound on the LDA. Flight Standards has requested a distance measuring equipment (DME) be installed with the LDA to enhance the facility.

Every attempt will be made to amend the private approaches for the carriers to bring their missed approach/departure procedures into agreement with the public procedures.

The last Northwest Mountain Region working group meeting was held on August 8 to verify requirements for subject airport. All members left the meeting in agreement that maximum effort will be expended to complete the project by December 15. The Sacramento Flight Inspection Field Office (SAC FIFO) can meet that date.

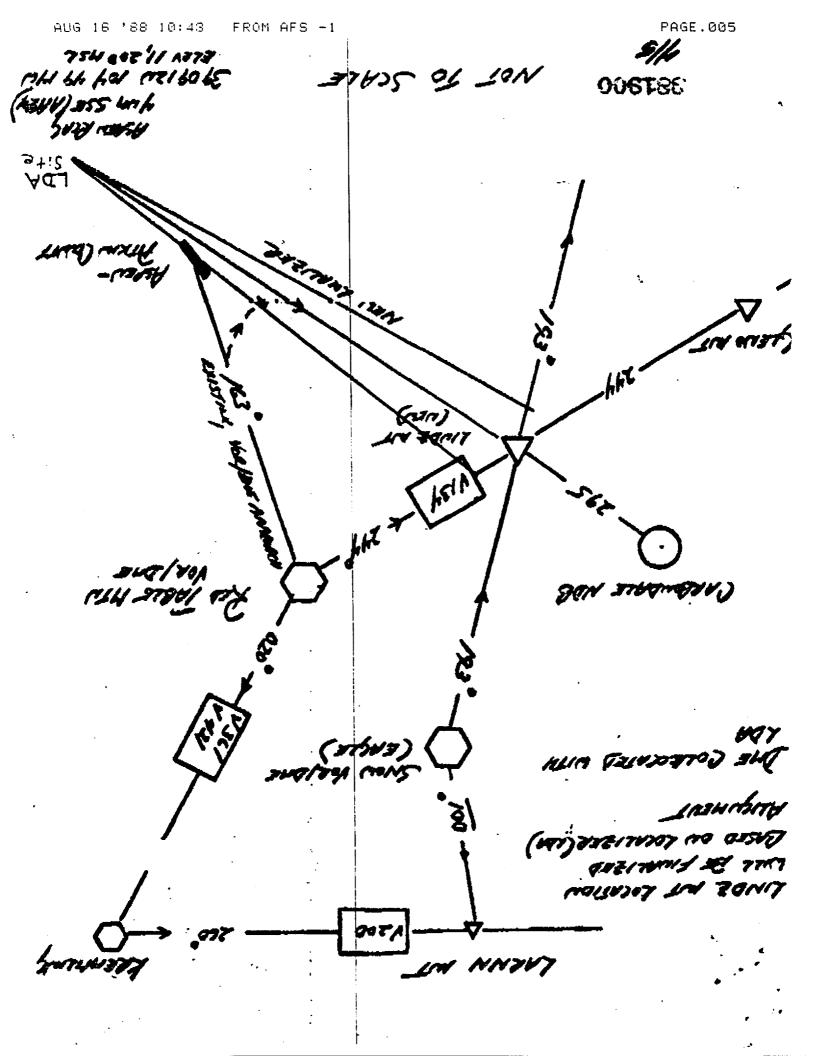
Please contact the Flight Procedures Standards Branch, AFS-230, if we may be of assistance.

Attachments Bullets

Prepared: Quinlan

AFS-235

267-3738



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NOTE TO: The Administrator

The Deputy Administrator

THRU: Acting Executive Director for Regulatory

Standards and Compliance

SUB: Public Use VCR/IME-C Instrument Approach

to Aspen-Pitkin County/Sardy Field

Airport, Aspen, Colorado

Per your request on August 9, the attached information is provided.

Original Signed By: A. J. Broderick

Anthony J. Broderick

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AOA-2

Attachment

œ:

ATR-1

AVR-1

AVS-1

APS-1

AFS-200

AFS-230

AFS-235:QUINLAN:dub:267-3738:8/10/88

(Kaypro: VORIME, DB's #1)

file:

HUG 16 '88 10:41 FROM AFS -1

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PAGE, DD2

Page 506 5

SUBJECT: Bullets on Aspen-Pitkin County/Sardy Field Airport Aspen, Colorado

- o Recognized need to increase traffic flow.
- o Establish a limited radar approach control in 1989.
- Amend the public use VOR/IME-C instrument approach December 15 to provide missed approach to the northwest using a LDA. Direct sensing (right needle, fly right) will be provided by the LDA while flying outbound.
- o Publish public use departure, using the LDA, on December 15.
- o LDA will be sited near airport and provide positive course guidance during missed approach or departure. DME has been requested to be added to the LDA.
- o Private instrument approaches can be amended later to take advantage of the course guidance provided by the LDA.

Last Page

ANM-200 MASPENI cc: AEK-1, AOA-2 AKR-1, AFS-1 AFS-200, AFS-230 AVS-1, AVN-1 AVN-200, ARM-200

FILE:

(FILE COPY)

MEMORANDUM

U.S.Department of Transportation

Federal Aviation Administration Northwest Mountain Region 17900 Pacific Highway South C-68966 Seattle, Washington 98168

Subject:

ACTION: Amend (DBL) VOR/DME-C, Amendment 3

Date: July 17 , 1989

at Aspen, Colorado

Reply to Chapman

Manager, Flight Procedures Branch, ANM-220

Attn. of: FTS 446-2212

To: Manager, Sacramento Flight Inspection Field Office, SAC FIFO

Per 7/17/89 TELCO: Foit / Chapman

Please review and if possible amend the (DBL) VCR/DME-C. Amendment 3. Instrument Approach Procedure at Aspen-Pitkin County/Sardy Field, Aspen. Colorado as follows:

- 1. Relocate the FAF to DBL 5 DME.
- 2. Name the FAF. "ALLIX" has been pre-coordinated.
- 3. Provide a stepdown fix in the final approach segment, approximately midway between the FAF and the MAP.

It appears that a significant reduction in minimums might be achieved if the FAF where located at 5 DME and a stepdown fix where added to the final.

Priority: ROUTINE

Thank you.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

Preston C. Gardner, Jr.

Attachments: Letter from Continental Express dated June 22, 1989.

Speed Memo from ANM-530 dated 5/15/89.

cc: ANM-530

FILE: ANM-220/8260:ASE-1 (9052608 JC)



Subject: ACTION: Amend (DBL) VOR/DME-C,

Amendment 3 at Aspen, Colorado

Date:

Reply to Attn. of:

From: Manager, Flight Procedures Branch, ANM-220

To: Manager, Sacramento Flight Inspection Field Office, SAC FIFO

On July 17, 1989, this office provided you with a memorandum requesting an amendment of the (DBL) VOR/DME-C, Amendment 3, Instrument Approach Procedure at Aspen-Pitkin County/Sardy Field, Aspen, Colorado. A study suggested that relocating the FAF to DBL 5 DME and establishing a stepdown fix in the final approach segment might lower the MDA by as much as 400 feet.

In a verbal response from your office, it was stated that our request could not be complied with; however no supporting documentation was provided.

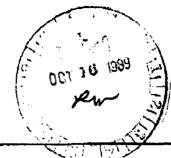
Please review our July 17, 1989, memorandum and if possible take action to amend the procedure as requested. However, if after further review it is determined that the requested amendment is not possible, please provide this office with a detailed report including 1) the latitude, longitude and elevation of obstacles in question, 2) the specific pertinent paragraphs of TERPS and 8260.19, 3) the resultant minimum at the FAF, stepdown fix and MDA and 4) rate of descent required in the intermediate and final segments.

Preston C. Gardner, Jr.

Attachments: Memorandum dated July 17, 1989.

cc: ANM-530





Subject: ACTION: Aspen, Colorado VOR/DME-C Minimums

Dat QCT 1 2 1989

From: Manager, Flight Procedures Branch, ANM-220

Reply to Attn. of:

To: Manager, Sacramento Flight Inspection Field Office

Due to a number of requests for information, this office is in need of a memorandum from your office which details your reasons and rationale for continuing to recommend the present minimums for the VOR/DME-C public approach at Aspen, Colorado.

As your schedule permits, please try to furnish this information as soon as possible so that we can provide answers to those questions mentioned above.

Thank you.

Preston C. Gardney,





OCT 12 1989 Date:

Subject: ACTION: Aspen, Colorado Night

Operations - Restrictions

From: Manager, Flight Procedures Branch, ANM-220

Reply to Attn. of:

To: Manager, Sacramento Flight Inspection Field Office

Please remove the note restricting night operations from the Aspen, Colorado VOR/DME-C public procedure.

Should you have any questions or comments, please contact me or John Chapman at FTS 446-2220.

Thank you.

Preston C. Gardner, Jr.



Federal Aviation Administration

Subject:

INFORMATION: ASPEN-PITKIN/SARDY FIELD, CO

VOR/DME-C, Amdt 3

Date: October 27, 1989

Reply to

Attn. of: Foit FTS:460-5340

From:

Manager, Sacramento Flight Inspection Field Office, SAC FIFO

To: Manager, ANM-220

Night minimums at Aspen-Pitkin/Sardy Field, CO have been denied IAW Order 8200.1, Para 214.43, Order 8260.19A, Para 110 and Order 8260.3B. Day operations in and out of Aspen are difficult under the best of circumstances. Night operations would present an unjustified degradation in safety. Order 8200.1, Para 214.43 states, "For original procedures at airports having no prior IFR service, a night flight inspection will be conducted to determine the adequacy of airport light systems prior to authorized night minimums." Not a single Flight Inspection pilot in this office will conduct the flight at night in order to remove the restriction. Given the extremes of weather, terrain and available ground reference lighting it is the firm belief of both the Flight Inspection Section and involved Procedures personnel that approval of night operations at Aspen presents a hazardous situation for the general public.

John D. Pearsall, Jr.

Subject: ASPEN, CO., VOR/DME-C

RTTA: FOIT

From: MGR SAC FIFO

TO: MGR ANM-220

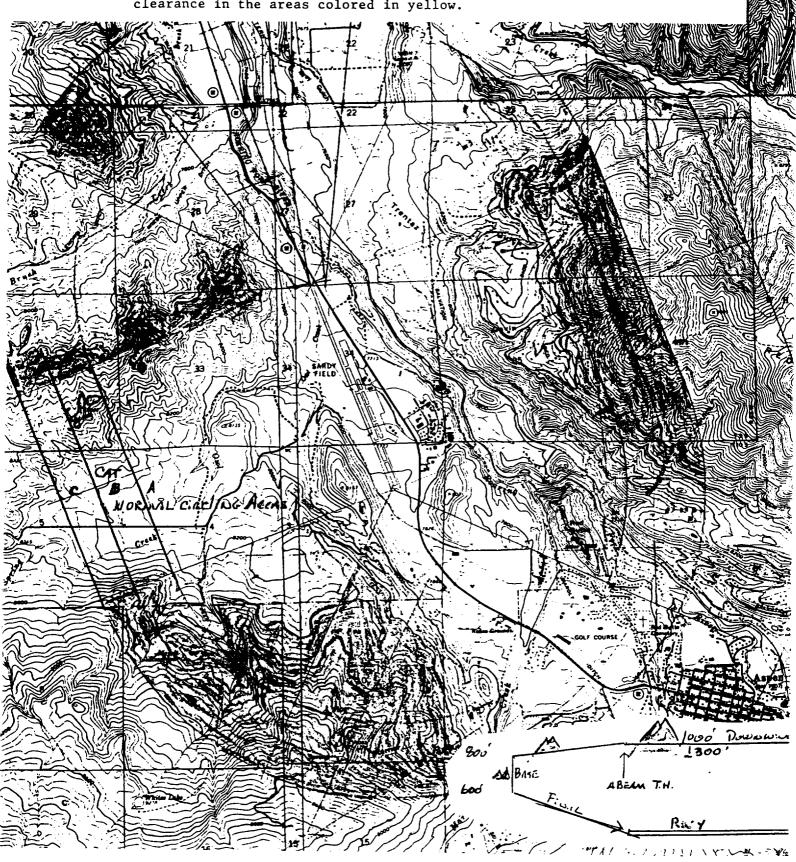
The present minimums for the VOR/DME-C, Amdt 3 at Aspen, CO are a result of the missed approach obstacle identification surface and charted controlled airspace. A control sone exists at Aspen, however it was charted for the old NDB-A SIAP. This control zone is not adaquate for the VOR/DME-C approach. If in the future, airspace were to be revised to add a new key to encompass Red Table VOR/DME it is possible that lower minima could be achieved. Preliminary "ROC" studies indicate that the missed approach will continue to control procedural minima.

Constitution and the second second second second

REASONS FOR DISALLOWIN HIS PROCEDURE AT NIGHT:

- 1-Pilots are trained to fly standard patterns at untamiliar airfields.

 A standard pattern consist of 1000ft above airport elevation on downwind, start desent when abeam the intended point of touchdown, continue downwind until 45° beyond the threshold and approximately 200ft lower than downwind, turn base and continue desent until lined up for final and approximately 500 to 600ft above airfield elevation.
- 2-Flying a standard patter at this airport would put the aircraft below ground level in the areas colored red, and leave it with insufficient terrain clearance in the areas colored in yellow.



A

NIGHT USE OF ASPEN/PITKIN CO. VOR/DME-C APPROACH

BASED ON THE EXPERIENCE OF TWO DAYS OF FLIGHT CHECKING, OPERATING IN MAPPIN COLORDOL TRANSPORT CONTINUING THE POLICY DENYING AND OUT OF THE PITKIN CO. AIRPORT, I SUPPORT CONTINUING THE POLICY DENYING THE GENERAL PUBLIC NIGHT USE OF THE VOR/DME-C APPROACH TO ASPEN/PITKIN CO. AIRPORT. THE PUBLISHED PORTIONS OF THE APPROACH AND MISSED APPROACH ROUTINGS SAFETY ISSUE OF THE AIRCRAFT LEAVES THE APPROACH ROUTING WITH ITS BUILT IN SAFETY MARGINES AND BEGINS TO MANEUVER VISUALLY for Land, 9.

THE AIRPORT SITS BETWEEN MOUNTAINS IN A HOLE APPROXIMATELY FOUR MILES IN DIAMETER. WITHIN THE "HOLE" ARE SEVERAL FOOT HILL AND MOUNTAIN SIDE INCURSIONS RANDOMLY LOCATED AROUND THE AIRPORT. NONE OF THESE ELEVATED AREAS ARE LIGHTED. THE VOR/DME-C APPROACH DELIVERS THE USER 0.9 MILES FROM THE RUNWAY 15 THRESHOLD, 3025 FEET ABOVE THE AIRPORT. FROM THIS POINT THE OPTIONS ARE: A LEFT OR RIGHT DOWN WIND ENTRY FOR RUNWAY 33 OR A 360 DEGREE DESCENDING TURN ONTO FINAL FOR RUNWAY 15. BOTH A MAP STUDY AND DIRECT OBSERVATION OF THE TERRAIN INDICATE THAT A NORMAL 1000 FEET ABOVE AIRPORT ELEVATION DOWN WIND LEG FOR TURBOJET AIRCRAFT OR A 1500 FEET ABOVE AIRPORT ELEVATION DOWN WIND LEG FOR TURBOJET AIRCRAFT WOULD PLACE THAT AIRCRAFT 300 FEET OR MORE BELOW GROUND LEVEL AT SEVERAL PLACES IN THE TRAFFIC PATTERN. THE ALTERNATIVE IS A STEEP, CLOSE IN PATTERN, A CHALLENGING MANEUVER UNDER IDEAL CONDITIONS, HIGHLY DANGEROUS FOR THE UNFAMILLIAR, UNPRACTICED PILOT IN CONDITIONS OF DARKNESS AND/OR REDUCED VISIBILITY.

THE F.A.A. HAS A LONG STANDING POLICY THAT NEITHER AN AIRCRAFT NOR AN APPROACH PROCEDURE SHOULD REQUIRE AN UNUSUAL DEGREE OF PILOTING SKILL.

SAFELY GETTING IN AND OUT OF THIS AIRPORT REQUIRES CERTAIN SKILLS NOT NORMALLY PRACTICED BY MOST PILOTS AND ALSO FAMILIARITY WITH THE LOCAL TERRAIN NOT POSESSED BY THOSE WHO DON'T FREQUENTLY OPERATE FROM THIS AIRPORT.

THE PRESENT POLICY IS SENSIBLE AND PRUDENT. IT SHOULD BE CONTINUED UNCHANGED.



Administration

Subject: ACTION: Night Use of Aspen/Pitkin Co.

Date: October 26, 1990

VOR/DME-C Approach

From: Manager, Oklahoma City Flight Inspection Field Office

Reply to Attn. of:

To: Manager, Flight Procedures and Inspection Division, AVN-200

Based on the Oklahoma City Flight Inspection Field Office's (OKC FIFO) experience operating at the Pitkin Co. Airport at Aspen, Colorado, the FIFO strongly recommends continuing the policy denying the general public night use of the VOR/DME-C approach to Aspen/Pitkin Co. Airport. The published portions of the approach and missed approach routings are neither difficult nor dangerous. The safety issue occurs once the aircraft leaves the approach routing with its built-in safety margins and begins to maneuver visually for landing.

The airport sits between mountains in a "hole" approximately four miles in diameter. Within the "hole" are several foothill and mountainside incursions randomly located around the airport. None of these elevated areas are lighted. The VOR/DME-C approach delivers the user 0.9 miles from the Runway 15 threshold, 3025 feet above the airport. From this point the options are: A left or right downwind entry for Runway 33 or a 360 degree descending turn onto final for Runway 15. Both a map study and direct observation of the terrain indicate that a normal 1000 feet above airport elevation downwind leg appropriately spaced for aircraft category or a 1500 feet above airport elevation downwind leg for turbojet aircraft would place that aircraft 300 feet or more below ground level at several places in the traffic pattern. The alternative is a steep, close-in pattern, a challenging maneuver under ideal conditions, highly dangerous for the unfamiliar, unpracticed pilot in conditions of darkness and/or reduced visibility.

The Federal Aviation Administration has a long-standing policy that neither an aircraft nor an approach procedure should require an unusual degree of piloting skill. Safely getting in and out of Aspen/Pitkin Co. Airport requires certain skills not normally practiced by most pilots and also familiarity with the local terrain not possessed by those who do not frequently operate from this airport. The present policy is sensible and prudent. It should be continued unchanged.

Attachment