



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

**ORDER  
JO 7110.65W**

Effective Date:  
December 10, 2015

**SUBJ:** Air Traffic Control

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This order prescribes air traffic control procedures and phraseology for use by personnel providing air traffic control services. Controllers are required to be familiar with the provisions of this order that pertain to their operational responsibilities and to exercise their best judgment if they encounter situations not covered by it.

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**OCT 27 2015**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Chapter 2. General Control

### Section 1. General

#### 2-1-1. ATC SERVICE

The primary purpose of the ATC system is to prevent a collision between aircraft operating in the system and to provide a safe, orderly and expeditious flow of traffic, and to provide support for National Security and Homeland Defense. In addition to its primary function, the ATC system has the capability to provide, with certain limitations, additional services. The ability to provide additional services is limited by many factors, such as the volume of traffic, frequency congestion, quality of radar, controller workload, higher priority duties, and the pure physical inability to scan and detect those situations that fall in this category. It is recognized that these services cannot be provided in cases in which the provision of services is precluded by the above factors. Consistent with the aforementioned conditions, controllers must provide additional service procedures to the extent permitted by higher priority duties and other circumstances. The provision of additional services is not optional on the part of the controller, but rather is required when the work situation permits. Provide air traffic control service in accordance with the procedures and minima in this order except when:

a. A deviation is necessary to conform with ICAO Documents, National Rules of the Air, or special agreements where the U.S. provides air traffic control service in airspace outside the U.S. and its possessions or:

**NOTE-**

*Pilots are required to abide by CFRs or other applicable regulations regardless of the application of any procedure or minima in this order.*

b. Other procedures/minima are prescribed in a letter of agreement, FAA directive, or a military document, or:

**NOTE-**

*These procedures may include altitude reservations, air refueling, fighter interceptor operations, law enforcement, etc.*

**REFERENCE-**

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 1-1-9 Procedural Letters of Agreement.*

c. A deviation is necessary to assist an aircraft when an emergency has been declared.

**REFERENCE-**

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 2-1-6 Safety Alert.*

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Chapter 10 Emergencies.*

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 5-1-8 Merging Target Procedures.*

#### 2-1-2. DUTY PRIORITY

a. Give first priority to separating aircraft and issuing safety alerts as required in this order. Good judgment must be used in prioritizing all other provisions of this order based on the requirements of the situation at hand.

**REFERENCE-**

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 2-1-6 Safety Alert.*

**NOTE-**

*Because there are many variables involved, it is virtually impossible to develop a standard list of duty priorities that would apply uniformly to every conceivable situation. Each set of circumstances must be evaluated on its own merit, and when more than one action is required, controllers must exercise their best judgment based on the facts and circumstances known to them. That action which is most critical from a safety standpoint is performed first.*

b. Provide support to national security and homeland defense activities to include, but not be limited to, reporting of suspicious and/or unusual aircraft/pilot activities.

**REFERENCE-**

*FAAO JO 7610.4 Special Operations.*

c. Provide additional services to the extent possible, contingent only upon higher priority duties and other factors including limitations of radar, volume of traffic, frequency congestion, and workload.

#### 2-1-3. PROCEDURAL PREFERENCE

a. Use automation procedures in preference to nonautomation procedures when workload, communications, and equipment capabilities permit.

b. Use radar separation in preference to nonradar separation when it will be to an operational advantage and workload, communications, and equipment permit.

**j.** Provide maximum assistance to expedite the movement of interceptor aircraft on active air defense missions until the unknown aircraft is identified.

**k.** Expedite movement of Special Air Mission aircraft when SCOOT is indicated in the remarks section of the flight plan or in air/ground communications.

**NOTE–**

*The term “SCOOT” will not be part of the call sign but may be used when the aircraft is airborne to indicate a request for special handling.*

**REFERENCE–**

*FAAO JO 7610.4, Para 12–7–1, Applications.*

**l.** When requested, provide priority handling to TEAL and NOAA mission aircraft.

**NOTE–**

*Priority handling may be requested by the pilot, or via telephone from CARCAH or the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (53WRS) operations center personnel, or in the remarks section of the flight plan.*

**REFERENCE–**

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 9–2–19, Weather Reconnaissance Flights.*

**m.** IFR aircraft must have priority over SVFR aircraft.

**REFERENCE–**

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Chapter 7, Section 5, Special VFR (SVFR).*

**n.** Providing priority and special handling to expedite the movement of OPEN SKIES Treaty observation and demonstration (F and D) flights.

**NOTE–**

*An OPEN SKIES Treaty (F and D) aircraft has priority over all “regular” air traffic. “Regular” is defined as all aircraft traffic other than:*

- 1. Emergencies.*
- 2. Aircraft directly involved in presidential movement.*
- 3. Forces or activities in actual combat.*
- 4. MEDEVAC, and active SAR missions.*
- 5. AIR EVAC and HOSP aircraft that have requested priority handling.*

**REFERENCE–**

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 9–2–22, OPEN SKIES Treaty Aircraft.*

*FAAO JO 7210.3, Para 5–3–7, OPEN SKIES Treaty Aircraft Priority Flight (F and D).*

*Treaty on OPEN SKIES, Treaty Document, 102–37.*

**o.** Aircraft operating under the North American Route Program (NRP) and in airspace identified in the High Altitude Redesign (HAR) program, are not subject to route limiting restrictions (e.g., published preferred IFR routes, letter of agreement requirements, standard operating procedures).

**REFERENCE–**

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 2–3–2, En Route Data Entries.*

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 2–2–15, North American Route Program (NRP) Information.*

*FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 4–2–5, Route or Altitude Amendments.*

*FAAO JO 7210.3, Chapter 17, Section 16, North American Route Program.*

**p.** If able, provide priority handling to diverted flights. Priority handling may be requested via use of “DVRSN” in the remarks section of the flight plan or by the flight being placed on the Diversion Recovery Tool (DRT).

**REFERENCE–**

*FAAO JO 7210.3, Para 17–4–5, Diversion Recovery.*

## **2–1–5. EXPEDITIOUS COMPLIANCE**

**a.** Use the word “immediately” only when expeditious compliance is required to avoid an imminent situation.

**b.** Use the word “expedite” only when prompt compliance is required to avoid the development of an imminent situation. If an “expedite” climb or descent clearance is issued by ATC, and subsequently the altitude to maintain is changed or restated without an expedite instruction, the expedite instruction is canceled.

**c.** In either case, if time permits, include the reason for this action.

## **2–1–6. SAFETY ALERT**

Issue a safety alert to an aircraft if you are aware the aircraft is in a position/altitude that, in your judgment, places it in unsafe proximity to terrain, obstructions, or other aircraft. Once the pilot informs you action is being taken to resolve the situation, you may discontinue the issuance of further alerts. Do not assume that because someone else has responsibility for the aircraft that the unsafe situation has been observed and the safety alert issued; inform the appropriate controller.

**NOTE–**

**1.** *The issuance of a safety alert is a first priority (see para 2–1–2, Duty Priority) once the controller observes and recognizes a situation of unsafe aircraft proximity to terrain, obstacles, or other aircraft. Conditions, such as workload, traffic volume, the quality/limitations of the radar system, and the available lead time to react are factors in determining whether it is reasonable for the controller to observe and recognize such situations. While a controller cannot see immediately the development of every situation where a safety alert must be issued, the*

controller must remain vigilant for such situations and issue a safety alert when the situation is recognized.

2. Recognition of situations of unsafe proximity may result from MSAW/E-MSAW, automatic altitude readouts, Conflict/Mode C Intruder Alert, observations on a PAR scope, or pilot reports.

3. Once the alert is issued, it is solely the pilot's prerogative to determine what course of action, if any, will be taken.

a. Terrain/Obstruction Alert. Immediately issue/initiate an alert to an aircraft if you are aware the aircraft is at an altitude that, in your judgment, places it in unsafe proximity to terrain and/or obstructions. Issue the alert as follows:

**PHRASEOLOGY-**

LOW ALTITUDE ALERT (call sign),

CHECK YOUR ALTITUDE IMMEDIATELY.

and, if the aircraft is not yet on final approach,

THE (as appropriate) MEA/MVA/MOCA/MIA IN YOUR AREA IS (altitude),

**REFERENCE-**

P/CG Term - Final Approach - IFR

b. Aircraft Conflict/Mode C Intruder Alert. Immediately issue/initiate an alert to an aircraft if you are aware of another aircraft at an altitude that you believe places them in unsafe proximity. If feasible, offer the pilot an alternate course of action. When an alternate course of action is given, end the transmission with the word "immediately."

**PHRASEOLOGY-**

TRAFFIC ALERT (call sign) (position of aircraft) ADVISE YOU TURN LEFT/RIGHT (heading),

and/or

CLIMB/DESCEND (specific altitude if appropriate) IMMEDIATELY.

**EXAMPLE-**

"Traffic Alert, Cessna Three Four Juliet, 12'o clock, 1 mile advise you turn left immediately."

or

"Traffic Alert, Cessna Three-Four Juliet, 12'o clock, 1 mile advise you turn left and climb immediately."

**REFERENCE-**

FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 5-14-1, Conflict Alert (CA) and Mode C Intruder (MCI) Alert.

FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 5-14-2, En Route Minimum Safe Altitude Warning (E-MSAW).

FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 5-15-6, CA/MCI.

FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 5-2-23, Altitude Filters.

FAAO JO 7110.65, Para 2-1-21, Traffic Advisories

## 2-1-7. INFLIGHT EQUIPMENT MALFUNCTIONS

a. When a pilot reports an inflight equipment malfunction, determine the nature and extent of any special handling desired.

**NOTE-**

Inflight equipment malfunctions include partial or complete failure of equipment, which may affect either safety, separation standards, and/or the ability of the flight to proceed under IFR, or in Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum (RVSM) airspace, in the ATC system. Controllers may expect reports from pilots regarding VOR, TACAN, ADF, GPS, RVSM capability, or low frequency navigation receivers, impairment of air-ground communications capability, or other equipment deemed appropriate by the pilot (e.g., airborne weather radar). Pilots should communicate the nature and extent of any assistance desired from ATC.

b. Provide the maximum assistance possible consistent with equipment, workload, and any special handling requested.

c. Relay to other controllers or facilities who will subsequently handle the aircraft, all pertinent details concerning the aircraft and any special handling required or being provided.

## 2-1-8. MINIMUM FUEL

If an aircraft declares a state of "minimum fuel," inform any facility to whom control jurisdiction is transferred of the minimum fuel problem and be alert for any occurrence which might delay the aircraft en route.

**NOTE-**

Use of the term "minimum fuel" indicates recognition by a pilot that his/her fuel supply has reached a state where, upon reaching destination, he/she cannot accept any undue delay. This is not an emergency situation but merely an advisory that indicates an emergency situation is possible should any undue delay occur. A minimum fuel advisory does not imply a need for traffic priority. Common sense and good judgment will determine the extent of assistance to be given in minimum fuel situations. If, at any time, the