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# Radio Technical Commission for Aeronautics

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**RTCA, Inc.**, formerly known as (**Radio Technical Commission for Aeronautics**), is a United States volunteer organization that develops technical guidance for use by government regulatory authorities and by industry. It was founded in 1935, and was re-incorporated in 1991 as a private not-for-profit corporation. It has over 200 committees and overall acts as an advisory body to the FAA. In 1948 Special Committee 31 recommended that a common air traffic control system be developed for all aircraft flown in the United States.

Requirements for membership include a fee that is based on information in the application for membership, and an interest in aviation. RTCA is sponsored as a Federal Advisory Committee by the United States Department of Transportation (DOT) Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Guidance documents are developed and drafted by Special Committee (SC) and are based on a consensus developed within the SC charged with responsibility for the given document. Despite the loosely defined requirements of membership in RTCA, the guidance documents are based on expert technical opinion.

RTCA's objectives include but are not limited to:

- ensuring the safety and reliability of airborne systems;
- developing minimum operational performance requirements for document-specific systems;
- developing guidelines for use by a regulatory authority, the given authority determines appropriate;
- providing administrative and logistics resources that enable teamwork among the worldwide aviation community (e.g., International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Telecommunication Union and others).

Although RTCA is sponsored by the FAA, RTCA is not an agency of the United States government. Hence the documents it publishes are treated as guidelines, not as requirements.

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## Special Committee 31

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