Federal Aviation Administration

Memorandum

Date: December 6, 2005

From: Manager, Flight Procedure Standards Branch, AFS-420

To: Manager, National Flight Procedures Group

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Subject: Clarification of TERPS Glidepath Angle Standard

PURPOSE. This memorandum clarifies the actions required to develop a vertically guided approach procedure with a nonstandard (≠3°) glidepath angle.

DISCUSSION. TERPS Volume 3, paragraph 2.5 states "*...Angles above 3.0° require approval of FAA Flight Standards Service or the appropriate military authority.*" Order 8260.50, paragraph 2.4 states *...Angles less than 3° or greater than 3.1° require Flight Standards or appropriate military authority approval.*" Order 8260.52, paragraph 3.2 states "*...The OPTIMUM (design standard) glidepath angle is 3°. Lower angles require Flight Standards approval. Glidepath angles higher than 3° are authorized only where obstacles prevent use of 3° or minimum temperature limitations restrict approach availability when the approach is operationally needed.*" These paragraph excerpts identify inconsistency of glidepath angle policy guidance. Policy intent is to establish 3° as the United States standard glidepath angle for vertically guided instrument approach procedures. This is an international standard that the FAA fully supports. Obstructions may prevent establishing a 3° angle at a given location. Tables are provided in all these documents that specify the maximum angle allowable for each approach category. However, wherever obstructions permit, 3° is the intended glidepath angle.

POLICY. The OPTIMUM (design standard) glidepath angle is 3°. Glidepath angles greater than 3° that conform to the maximum angle tables are authorized without Flight Standards/military authority approval only when obstacles prevent use of 3°. Flight Standards or appropriate military approval is required for angles less than 3° or for angles greater than the minimum angle (≥3°) required for obstacle clearance. Note: **USAF only** - See appropriate military directive.

Jack Corman

for Donald P. Pate