Subject: Discontinuation of World Aeronautical Chart (WAC) Chart

Background/Discussion:
Following the FAA Strategic Initiatives, AeroNav Products must rigorously analyze our suite of products and stop doing those things that no longer are in demand from the public or have become obsolete due to technological advances. By right sizing our portfolio we can lay the foundation for a sustainable NAS of the future by leveraging technology we will deliver the benefits of more efficient products.

Observe WAC Sales Data Trends. (Compare to other chart series sales trends.)

The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency has stopped ordering the WAC product series for its customers (military services). They report that the services utilize the Sectional Aeronautical Chart in the US and electronic flight bag (EFB).

EFB moving map technology (seamless charting) is now readily and economically available to general aviation through a number of commercial interests.

Underlying charts continue to portray the aeronautical information in the US where this recommendation is applicable.

Recommendations:
Except where obligated by international agreement or where US territory doesn’t have sufficient alternative chart coverage, discontinue the World Aeronautical Chart (WAC).

Comments:
This is the first public forum discussing this initiative. Several internal FAA assessments are still underway on this topic.

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ACF 14-01:

Ron Haag, AJV-321, briefed this issue on behalf of FAA AeroNav Products, VFR Charting. Ron emphasized at the beginning of his briefing that the recommendation for the discontinuation of the WACs is only in the initial stages of consideration. Ron added that the purpose of bringing this topic to the ACF is to gather user input.

Ron outlined the reasons the FAA is investigating the possibility of discontinuing the publication of the WAC, including; the availability of digital Visual Charts, the expanding use of devices such as iPads and Electronic Flight Bags, the loss of NGA as key purchaser, and an overall decline in printed chart subscribers. Ron commented that the decline in the paper sales of the WAC charts has been more rapid than other FAA Charting products. Ron also stated that there is duplicate coverage on the Sectional Charts in all but a very limited area. The proposal is to discontinue the WACs, except where obligated by international agreement, or in areas that do not have sufficient alternate VFR (Sectional) coverage. Ron then opened the floor to user comments.

John Kernaghan, NBAA, commented that FAR Part 135 operators are required to have Visual charts in the cockpit and he felt that some pilots choose to carry the WACs because a single WAC covers a great deal more geographical area than a Sectional chart. He said he will poll some of NBAA’s membership to determine the level of demand for the WACs.

George Sempeles, AOV-310, stated that the WACs are a required product by ICAO and the US would have to file a difference if they are discontinued.

John Moore, Jeppesen, asked about the international agreements and the requirements of those agreements. Ron responded that his office is looking into that issue. John then stated that despite the decline in sales, there are still a sizable number of users that still purchase the WACs. He suggested that the FAA try to determine who those users are and if the available alternatives would be suitable for those users.

Melissa McCaffrey, AOPA, commented that many pilots may be using the WACs for flight planning purposes. She asked if there would be a public comment period. Ron responded that yes, there would be outreach and time for public comment.

Bruce McGray, AFS-410, suggested that the original intent of the WACs be reviewed to ensure that the original requirements are being met by other products. Bruce also inquired as to whether the proposal would be open to formal comment. Ron reiterated that yes, a public comment period would be provided.

Jay Jackson, AJV-222, suggested that coverage of the sectional charts could be expanded to meet the geographical requirements. Ron responded that expansion of the Sectional chart coverage would probably prove cost prohibitive.

Valerie Watson, AJV-3, asked Melissa if she could poll the AOPA membership to gather feedback on the impacts of discontinuing the WACs. Melissa responded that she would coordinate with Ron and begin doing some regional outreach.

**STATUS: OPEN**
**ACTION:** Ron Haag, AJV-321, will take the comments received at the ACF back to the VFR charting team management, will seek a venue for public comment and will report back at the next ACF.

**ACTION:** Melissa McCaffrey, AOPA, will coordinate with Ron Haag, AJV-321, to begin to gather feedback from the AOPA membership and report back at the next ACF.

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**MEETING 14-02**

Ron Haag, AJV-3212, reviewed the topic. Ron reported that his office submitted the Federal Register Notice in July to address AeroNav Products’ proposal to discontinue the WACs. The Notice has not yet been published. Until the Federal Register Notice is published and comments are received, this issue is on hold.

**STATUS:** OPEN

**ACTION:** Ron Haag, AJV-3212, will report back on the Federal Register Notice at next ACF.

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**MEETING 15-01:**

Rick Fecht, AJV-5223, reviewed the topic. Rick reported that the Federal Register Notice to address the proposal to discontinue the WACs has yet to be released. The Notice is still under review by FAA Legal, but it is anticipated that it will be released soon. Until the Federal Register Notice is published and comments are received, disposition of the WAC charts remains on hold.

**STATUS:** OPEN

**ACTION:** Rick Fecht, AJV-5223, will report back on the Federal Register Notice at next ACF.