

AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE ACTION PLAN TO MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE CUSTOMER SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE PLAN, 1999 – 2003

- In the past, the Air Traffic Service has developed numerous plans for providing quality service to the user. Often, the plans were developed for strategic or tactical use, were short-lived, and then replaced by a new plan.
- This year, FAA has instituted a 5-year Air Traffic Service Plan. Its purpose is to:
 - Reaffirm the responsibility of the FAA's Air Traffic Service organization as a service provider to all users of the national airspace system.
 - Provide collaborative efforts between service providers and customers to improve current air traffic services and to influence the nature of future services.
 - Address the diverse customer needs and provide a framework for strategies to satisfy those needs.
 - Energize and sustain an open dialogue between air traffic service providers and their customers.

Each year an annual roundtable meeting will be held with the users to discuss current and emerging issues, identify the need for program improvements, and to update the ATS Plan.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE CUSTOMER ADVOCATE POSITION

- Air Traffic Service customers sometimes have experienced difficulty in contacting senior officials at FAA to discuss their issues or concerns. To alleviate this problem, the Air Traffic Service has established a dedicated Customer Advocate position whose job it is to enhance the customer focus and ensure a quick response to user's issues. This will be accomplished through:
 - The Customer Advocate having one primary responsibility. That is, to pay full-time attention to issues and concerns, of importance, to the customers.
 - The Customer Advocate maintaining a valuable communications link between the provider and the recipients of air traffic services system-wide.
 - The Customer Advocate working directly with and assisting the Director, Air Traffic Service to ensure that adequate attention is paid to the issues and concerns of the customers.

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A TACTICAL CUSTOMER ADVOCATE (TCA) POSITION
AT THE
DAVID J. HURLEY AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM COMMAND CENTER (ATCSCC)**

- During periods of air travel delays, operators often have concerns about specific flights that are critical to their operations. Delays to key flights, or loss of the connections, often result in considerable expense or inconvenience to their airline customers. Historically, customer attempts to contact Air Traffic Management Specialists at the ATCSCC for assistance were often unsuccessful due to the high workload placed on these individuals.
- In response, the ATCSCC management has established two full-time Tactical Customer Advocate (TCA) positions.
- Tactical Customer Advocates routinely will be available during busy periods and on days when there is traditionally a high volume of flights. The TCA will be available to assist customers by expediting flights critical to their operation and will support the users in their decision-making by providing an informed explanation of the available options.

CUSTOMER FORUMS AND MEETINGS

- Customer meetings have routinely been held at the national, regional and field facilities levels of the Air Traffic Service. In some cases these meeting were held on a recurring basis, (i.e., quarterly, or annually), while in other cases it's been on an ad hoc basis.
- A renewed focus has been placed on having these meetings on a more frequent, scheduled basis. They have proven to be an effective way to exchange ideas and discuss what is working, what is not, and to develop plans for improvement. Future plans and changes are discussed and input is solicited by all parties.
- ATS management is holding meetings with major customers much more frequently.
- Some regions and facilities will conduct formalized customer sessions, such as "Operation Raincheck," where local area pilots observe control positions and local operations.
- Some facilities are now holding training sessions for new pilots and employees of organizations that receive air traffic services. These sessions provide a learning environment wherein controllers, staff, managers, and customers learn from each other.