



# Federal Aviation Administration

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## Memorandum

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Date:

To: Ryan Almasy, Manager, Operations Support Group, AJV-E2  
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From: Scott Rosenbloom, Acting Manager, Rules and Regulations Group, AJV-P2

Subject: Management of Aircraft Operations in the Vicinity of Aerial Demonstrations  
and Major Sporting Events Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs)

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**PURPOSE:** This memo updates FAA policy for airshow TFRs issued by the three Service Center Operations Support Groups (OSGs) pursuant to Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 91.145 (14 CFR 91.145), Management of Aircraft Operations in the Vicinity of Aerial Demonstrations and Major Sporting Events. Additionally, this memo standardizes terms/activities that may be considered as part of a “practice” session for an airshow TFR; defines what a qualifying event (QE) is, specifically for a civilian performer; and provides guidance for the timing of an airshow TFR when more than one QE is scheduled to perform.

**BACKGROUND:** The Rules and Regulations Group (AJV-P2) delegated authority to the OSGs for issuing airshow TFRs on July 1, 2012. Recently, the International Council of Air Shows (ICAS) requested clarification of definitions and terms from AJV-P2 due to variations of policy between the three OSGs. Specifically, ICAS questioned what the FAA considers a practice, what civilian aircraft qualifies for a TFR, and the timing of the TFR between qualifying events. Prior to responding to ICAS, AJV-P2 held a telcon with the OSGs to discuss the existing policy guidance reference these items. To ensure standard application of the policy across the NAS, this memorandum provides additional policy clarification for the issuance of airshow TFRs.

### **POLICY CLARIFICATION:**

**Practice sessions:** The FAA supports establishing a TFR pursuant to 14 CFR 91.145 for airshow practice sessions of qualifying aerial demonstrations, being conducted as part of the airshow event. Approved practice sessions may include the terms: survey, arrival show, circle arrival, etc., which are accomplished to determine aerobatic maneuver timing and visual references of the airfield for the actual airshow.

**Qualifying Events (QE):** The FAA’s policy for qualifying events authorized an airshow TFR include (1) military aircraft conducting aerobatic demonstrations, (2) civilian aircraft that operate in excess of 200 knots while conducting aerobatic demonstrations, and (3) military or civilian parachute team performances.

Timing of airshow TFRs supporting an airshow: Airshow TFRs are authorized for the QEs listed above during practice and performance demonstrations. In the past, AJV-P2 advised airshow event coordinators to space out their airshow QEs when the airshow schedule included qualifying and non-qualifying demonstrations to ensure an airshow TFR remained in effect during the airshow's performance schedule instead of activating/deactivating the TFR. AJV-P2 still supports airshow event coordinators spacing out their airshow QEs; however, an airshow TFR time period must terminate when the airshow performance schedule includes a gap of two hours or more between QEs. Should additional QEs perform beyond the two hour gap, another airshow TFR time period is authorized to be established. Alternatively, if there is only one QE scheduled for an airshow, then the airshow TFR will be established for that performance only.

**POLICY:** Guidance addressing TFRs for aerial demonstrations is contained in 14 CFR 91.145, Advisory Circular 91-63D, and FAA Order JO 7210.3, Facility Operation and Administration, Chapter 20, Section 7.

Criteria for qualifying events authorized an airshow TFR is:

- 1) Military aircraft conducting aerobatic demonstrations
- 2) Civilian aircraft that operate in excess of 200 knots while conducting aerobatic demonstrations
- 3) Parachute team performances (military and civilian)

Additional information regarding TFRs may be found under the ATO tab at the website, <https://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/airshow/>, (i.e., *Airshow Temporary Flight Restrictions, ATO Service Area Contacts, Advisory Circular 91-63D, TFR Instructions, Airshow TFR Worksheet*).

Requests for aerial demonstration TFRs are submitted to the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) Service Center OSG responsible for the geographical location. The OSG reviews the request package and determines if it meets the criteria in accordance with applicable directives and the policy clarification guidance contained in this memorandum. If the OSG determines the TFR does not meet the criteria, the request must be disapproved by the OSG Manager. If the request meets the criteria for an airshow TFR, the OSG Manager (or designated representative) approves and processes the TFR. Coordination with AJV-P2 is not required.

Each airshow TFR should be limited to the minimum airspace area/altitude/time required to support aerial demonstrations and protect persons and property on the surface or in the air, maintain air safety and efficiency, and manage participating and non-participating aircraft in the area. "Fly-bys" should be handled through existing operational procedures, without the establishment of a TFR.

The flight restricted airspace area will normally be a 5 nautical mile (NM) radius around the airshow center (7 NM for the Canadian Snowbirds if requested and supported by local air traffic operations) and at an altitude no greater than the minimum airspace necessary for the management of aircraft operations in the vicinity of the airshow. Altitude requests submitted in AGL must be converted to MSL for the NOTAM. The maximum altitude for an aerial demonstration TFR is 17,999 feet MSL. The effective times should be limited to periods when QEs are actively being performed during practice sessions or actual shows; not when an airport is closed by Notice to Airman (NOTAM) or as indicated in the Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (FAA Form 7711-1) issued by Flight Standards District Office.

For approved airshow TFRs, the OSG Manager, or designated representative should publish a NOTAM via the TFR Builder application to the US NOTAM Office 7 days prior to the first requested airshow practice or demonstration time period.

OSGs are only authorized to issue TFRs pursuant to 14 CFR 91.145 for airshow performances that meet the QE criteria listed above. TFR requests for non-airshow aerial demonstrations or major sporting events not covered by FDC NOTAM 7/4319 (and successor NOTAMs), will continue to be forwarded to AJV-P2, with an OSG recommendation. This memo supersedes the memo dated June 28, 2012, reference the same subject.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Kenny Ready at (202)-267-3396.