

# Flight Service

## Reduction of Remote Communications Outlets Infrastructure

### Frequently Asked Questions

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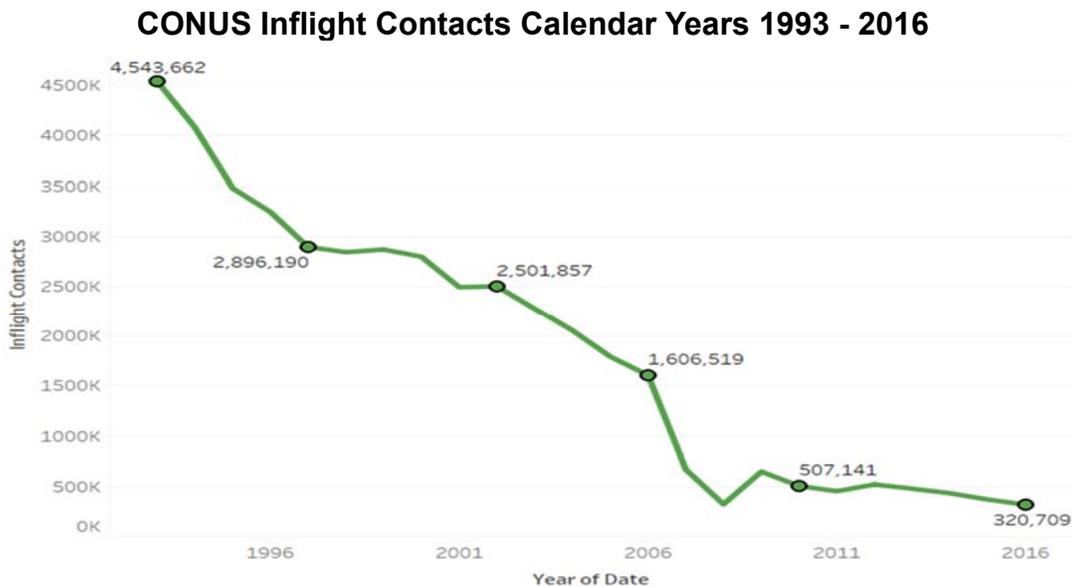
#### What are FAA's goals for Flight Service?

The FAA has three primary goals:

- Expand the use of existing and developing technologies for functions that support FAA's critical safety mission
- Redesign processes to optimize service delivery
- Eliminate redundancies and underutilized activities

#### Why is the FAA reducing RCO coverage?

The RCO infrastructure we have today has been in place for over 30 years and consists of over 1,200 outlets throughout the continental United States, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. As shown in the following graphic, usage has decreased substantially over time:



Flight Service is realigning the RCO network to match the demand for services.

### How will I know which frequencies will be decommissioned and which ones will be retained?

You can see the list of frequencies that are going to be retained and removed on our website. All frequency changes will be reflected in the appropriate Chart Supplements, Sectionals, En route Charts, etc. In addition, NOTAMs will be issued as needed.

### Will the universal frequency 122.2 be cut?

Flight Service has 198 RCOs that currently use the 122.2 frequency. The RCO reduction effort has identified nine (9) locations where this frequency is to be decommissioned.

In addition, 81 RCOs previously dedicated to the En Route Flight Advisory Service (EFAS) will be returned to service on 122.2 or other suitable Flight Service frequency, providing greater coverage than what was previously available.

As part of this reduction, a portion of the Flight Service frequencies will be retuned to more commonly used frequencies such as 122.2, 122.3, 122.4, 122.5 and 122.6 for consistency and ease of use.

### What kind of geographic coverage can I expect?

Our goal is to retain a minimum of 90% of the current RCO coverage at 1,000 feet AGL. Graphical representations of RCO coverage areas at different altitudes are available on our website.

### What is the timeframe for removal of the frequencies?

The removal of the frequencies is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2017 and be completed by the end of 2019.

### What, if anything, is happening to Hazardous Inflight Weather Advisory Service (HIWAS)?

No changes are happening to the HIWAS coverage at this time.

### What is the VOR Minimum Operational Network (MON) program and how will it affect me?

Navigation in the NAS is moving towards a satellite-based system; however, a need exists for a back-up navigation system in case of GPS outages. The VOR MON is a separate agency initiative to retain sufficient VOR coverage to enable pilots to continue operations in the event it becomes necessary.

Flight Service has a number of transmitters and receivers that are tied to VORs, which may be affected. As VORs are decommissioned, the voice capability, if available, will also be decommissioned. The FAA will look at individual locations and make a determination as to whether or not to retain the voice capability. If it is determined that a need exists, a separate RCO will be installed to replace the VOR voice.

### Does Flight Service participate at national aviation events?

Yes, Flight Service attends key aviation events in the CONUS. These are great opportunities to speak with Flight Service staff in person to ask questions while learning more about recently implemented and proposed changes. In addition, you can obtain relevant literature (to include flyers, informational business cards and postcards) at the booth from our staff. Flight Service plans to attend AOPA Fly-Ins, as well as the NBAA and Heli-Expo conventions to interact with the flying public.

### How else does Flight Service communicate updates to pilots?

Flight Service publishes timely articles and announcements on a regular basis in the *FAA Safety Briefing*, and *FAAST Blast* messages. Flight Service also communicates and collaborates with user groups such as AOPA, EAA, NASAO, NBAA, and HAI on proposed changes.

### **Are you listening to pilots' feedback as you make changes to Flight Service?**

Yes, both individual pilots and aviation organizations representing the pilot community are engaged in the process.

Pilots have the opportunity to share feedback with Flight Service by speaking with Flight Service staff at aviation events such as AOPA Fly-Ins, and by submitting comments via the Flight Service comment forms.

Aviation organizations participate on the Safety Risk Management panels and have the opportunity to participate in recurring user group meetings. For example, Flight Service continues to convene user group meetings that include representatives from AOPA, EAA, NASAO, NBAA, HAI and numerous internal FAA organizations to brainstorm and identify alternatives for providing future flight services.

To provide your input on the changes FAA is considering:

- Contact your user group(s)
- Send comments, questions and suggestions directly to Flight Service via our website [www.faa.gov/go/flightservice](http://www.faa.gov/go/flightservice) by selecting the *Contact Us* link and then the *Contact the FAA concerning future Flight Service changes* to complete a comment form.