FAA's Aeronautical Charting Program

MEETING 25-02

Nate Rahn, FAA/AJV-A210, began the [presentation](#) by introducing himself as the acting manager of the Aeronautical Charting Group within Aeronautical Information Services (AIS). He first acknowledged the attention focused on the national airspace system (NAS) modernization and how this effort will have impacts on the aeronautical charting program. He provided background that included the AIS mission, program history, and a list of the current suite of aeronautical products. He highlighted the challenges that the aeronautical charting program needs to address to put the organization in the best position to support the changing landscape of the NAS. He explained that legacy paper-based formats are inflexible and require time-consuming manual processes. Current digital outputs mirror paper products and don't support dynamic geospatial capabilities. Additionally, the static 28/56-day production cycle is not conducive to on-demand access to aeronautical information. Nate described the future as a shift toward more data-centric services and the end of paper-based boundary limitations. Future products will be layered data that service providers can use, adapt, and add value to. The goal is for AIS to position ourselves to move and assist with industry innovation instead of trying to keep up with it. The focus of the modernization initiatives initially will be on improving internal processes before moving to modernizing the products themselves.

Nate acknowledged the brand-new air traffic control system being developed, the new NOTAM system, the ICAO plan for a more digital future, and our military partners moving away from paper. He said that while a concrete plan for the future of aeronautical charting has not been set, AIS is working on some of the foundational pieces to enable a shift to a more digital future and is looking for feedback from our stakeholders to help guide this change. AIS is soliciting feedback on which products matter the most, how the FAA charting products are being used today, and what format/service will enable innovation. Feedback should be emailed to 9-AMC-AVS-ACM-Info@faa.gov. He said there may be some tough choices that must be made in the months and years ahead about which products the FAA will continue to carry forward. AIS will be standing up internal working groups to discuss potential product changes, and the ACM will be used to socialize changes before they happen. Regarding existing ACM recommendation documents (RDs), the plan is to continue to work on them; however, they will be scrutinized through a new, more focused lens. The goal of AIS is to be proactive and to put the Charting Group in the best possible position to support the changing landscape. Nate sees this as a positive opportunity for us to work together as we move to a more digital future.

Cameron Korrect, NGA, said, regarding the military going paperless, that when NGA proposed to discontinue the paper DoD flight information publication (FLIP) and other paper products, they received a critical non-concur. The military services recognize the need to modernize, but they would like to continue the paper publication through 2032. Nate agreed that he doesn't see paper charts going away soon.

Rich Boll, NBAA, agreed with modernizing and moving toward digital products and expressed concern that the FAA will go in a direction that will not support the industry. He believes the FAA needs to set up an advisory panel with industry stakeholders, avionics manufacturers, and charting service providers to advise the FAA as this goes forward. Nate agreed and said the plan is to work with our industry partners. Rich added that this topic should be briefed to the Performance-Based Operations Aviation Rulemaking Committee (PARC) steering group.

Bill Tuccio, Garmin, asked if, in the future, a NOTAM is issued that changes the procedure mid-cycle, will that procedure get updated and made available immediately, rather than having to wait for the charting cycle date? Nate said that it will be part of what the FAA will be looking at.

Joshua Fenwick, Garmin, echoed Rich's comments about stakeholder engagement and asked if the FAA is providing a standard form to solicit feedback. He said the feedback from Garmin is going to depend on what AIS will be offering in terms of the dataset. There is a lot of use for data, and the goal should be efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Nate replied that there is no form at this time, just an opportunity to provide some generalized feedback. There may be a solicitation for more specific feedback in the future.

Vince Massmini, Tetra Tech, said he also echoes Rich's comments regarding an advisory panel. He also said that during flight instruction, he encourages new pilots to look at the paper chart and that it is important to teach the nuances associated with the electronic flight bag (EFB), such as magnetic vs true and reliance on the EFB.

Mike Stromburg, UPS-IPA, suggested that pilots who still need paper charts should still have the option to print a basic chart.

Craig Boxrucker, ALPA, echoed Rich's comments about an advisory panel and bringing the information to the PARC.

Dan Wacker, FAA/AFS-420, added that for this to move forward, the FAA needs to be on the same page internally as well. This includes AIS, Flight Standards, and air traffic control. He also expressed concerns about testing standards, operational specifications, and Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) implications. Nate added that he looks forward to working together, agreed that there is a lot to consider, and noted that this briefing was made to open the conversation.

Samer Massarueh, FAA/AJV-A223, closed the briefing by reminding the audience to refer to Slide 9 for clarification on the feedback request and to email 9-AMC-AVS-ACM-Info@faa.gov with any input.