AERONAUTICAL CHARTING FORUM
Charting Group
ACF 11-02
RECOMMENDATION DOCUMENT

FAA Control # <u>11-02-245</u>

Subject:

Propagating 'Automated Unicom' easily understood annotation onto Terminal Procedures (approach plates) and Sectionals.

Background/Discussion:

Traditional AWOS weather reporting equipment operates on a set aside discrete VHF frequency. For pilots to know how to obtain AWOS information only requires the VHF frequency be published.

Automated Unicom, a new type of weather reporting equipment, is described in the Pilot Controller Glossary and Airmen Information Manual.

Unlike traditional AWOS, Automated Unicom weather reporting equipment shares airport' existing Unicom/CTAF VHF frequency, typically activated by clicks of the microphone, similar to pilot-controlled lighting.

When the presence of Automated Unicom is not annotated, pilots do not know the equipment is available, do not know to activate it, and may be denied access to the information needed for IFR and flight operations.

Recommendations:

Terminal Procedures (Approach Plates)

In frequency block replace "UNICOM" with "AUTOMATED UNICOM"

Avoid unnecessary contractions.

Add to the right the number of clicks to activate weather and radio-check

Sectionals

1. Annotate presence of Automated Unicom
    add "Auto" before VHF unicom frequency

Auto 122.8

Comments: This recommendation affects

This recommendation incorporates annotations into AFD, Terminal Procedures, and Sectionals

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PILOT CONTROLLER GLOSSARY   3/10/11   PCG A−15

AUTOMATED UNICOM− Provides completely automated weather, radio check capability and airport advisory information on an Automated UNICOM system. These systems offer a variety of features, typically selectable by microphone clicks, on the UNICOM frequency. Availability will be published in the Airport/Facility Directory and approach charts.

Source http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/atpubs/PCG/pcg.pdf

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MEETING 11-02: Mr. David Wartofsky, Potomac Airfield, submitted and briefed the issue. Mr. Wartofsky's company developed the Automated UNICOM system and has currently installed it for use at approximately 100 locations. He discussed the functionality of Automated UNICOM and the current challenges faced by pilots in not being able to discern from standard UNICOM on FAA products. An Automated UNICOM offers a variety functions to pilots through a series of micro phone clicks. Transient pilots may be not be aware of the existence of an Automate UNICOM and therefore may not be able to fully maximize the full potential of the service.

Mr. Wartofsky referenced the wording within the FAA Pilot Controller Glossary, which includes an explanation of Automated UNICOM and drew specific attention to the implied publishing requirement in the A/FD and on approach charts.
Ms. Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-3B, commented that the FAA publishes Automated UNICOM and associated frequency on their products as simply "UNICOM" and does not specify that the system is automated. Pilots are provided the frequency. Use of the

system (clicks, etc.) is contained in the AIM. She remarked that her office had no reports of pilot confusion with the current depiction and questioned whether users need to be aware that the UNICOM is automated or not.

Mr. John Moore, FAA/AJV-3B, commented that the glossary definition had never been coordinated with AeroNav Products and that regardless of how long the current definition has been in existence, in and of itself, it does not establish a requirement to publish or chart. Mr. Moored added that it appeared to be more of a pilot education issue than a charting issue.

ACTION: AOPA, ALPA and NBAA will poll their respective pilot members to see what the community needs are, any associated issues and what value publishing Automated Unicom information on an approach chart would have in addition to the existing entry in the A/FD. All three associations will report back at next ACF.

MEETING 12-01: Ms. Maura McGrath, FAA/AJW-163, from the non-Fed Weather Program office, was to have presented an update on activities since the last ACF, but Ms. Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-3B, briefed in her absence.

Ms. Watson briefed on the decertification of the SuperAWOS systems, which occurred in January 2012. Subsequently, NFDC, after working with the non-Fed Weather Program office, formally decommissioned all of the decertified systems, an action which caused them to be removed from all FAA charts and publications.

Ms. Watson further briefed that the FAA Terminal Team has been working the necessary procedural revisions caused by loss of local altimeter source at the subject airports with respect to minima. Mr. Brad Rush, FAA/AJV-3B, confirmed that the procedural revisions resulting from the AWOS decommissionings are being addressed via P-NOTAM.

Associated with SuperAWOS are the Automated UNICOM (A-UNICOM) systems. There remain questions regarding charting of A-UNICOMs. Mr. Rush stated that there was still no resolution as to whether A-UNICOM systems need to be discriminated from normal UNICOM systems in our FAA databases and on FAA charts/publications.

STATUS: OPEN

ACTION: Ms. Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-3B, to follow up with Ms. Maura McGrath, FAA/AJW-163, on the Automated UNICOM system issue and brief at the next ACF.

MEETING 12-02:

Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-3B, provided an update on actions taken since last ACF. Valerie briefed that she had sent out an e-mail to the pilot community soliciting comments regarding the need to discriminate Automated Unicom from standard, Non-Automated Unicom on charts. The pilot community expressed strong support for distinguishing Automated and Non-Automated systems on charts.

Based on the pilot community response, Valerie will draft an RD for submission to the MPOC/IACC with Automated Unicoms identified as AUNICOM.

STATUS: **CLOSED**