

**AERONAUTICAL CHARTING FORUM**  
**Charting Group**  
**Meeting 12-02 – October 24-25, 2012**

**RECOMMENDATION DOCUMENT**

**FAA Control # 12-02-257**

**Subject:** Simplification and Standardization of the Airport Sketch Final Approach Course on TPPs

**Background/Discussion:**

There are several different ways that the final approach track note is depicted in the airport sketch area of the chart. Most commonly, it is a track value and a distance from the final approach fix to the threshold/landing area or a track value only to the MAP. However, the wording that is used varies widely from chart to chart depending upon factors such as whether the MAP is a NAVAID, the MAP is a waypoint, the MAP is a runway end, the MAP is a DME fix, etc.

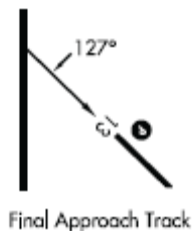
Examples:

140° to RW13	032° 5.4 NM from FAF	323° to ITSEJ	066° to VOR/DME	091°	Fly visual 151° 2.7 NM
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**Recommendations:**

In order to standardize the depiction of this note, and because this information is already clearly presented in the profile area of the chart, Terminal recommends that only the final approach course track with the course value be shown on the airport sketch for all charts for which the MAP falls within the area of the sketch.

When the final approach track is shown, the course value shall be shown leadered to the final approach track.



**Comments:**

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**Date:** 5 October 2012

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**Minutes from ACF 12-02:**

Ken Wilkes, FAA/AJV-352, introduced the issue and briefed on the proposal for simplifying the Final Approach Course (FAC) information contained within the Airport Sketch on FAA-produced Instrument Approach Charts. Ken [reviewed current FAA charting practices](#) and showed that, depending on the procedure, one of six different depictions are shown. He stated that this is perhaps unnecessarily complicated and proposed that the FAC be shown, annotated only with the course bearing and without distance information. He demonstrated that all of the information proposed to be removed is shown elsewhere on the procedure plate (i.e., in the planview or profile). He also pointed out that Jeppesen does not even chart an airport sketch or the attendant FAC information, so apparently users do not need it in this form.

Bruce McGray, FAA/AFS-410, speaking as a pilot, stated that, in his opinion, all of the information currently depicted on the FAC in the sketch is critical, citing how he utilizes the information to easily determine the Missed Approach Point (MAP) when on Final.

Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-3B, reiterated that all of the FAC information is available elsewhere on the plate and a pilot need not rely on the airport sketch for this critical information.

This sparked a broader discussion on how the information and the depiction of the FAC is interpreted and used by pilots.

Bill Hammett, Contractor, FAA/AFS-420, emphasized that the distance information in the airport sketch associated with the FAC is the distance to the runway threshold and that this distance is not always from the Final Approach Fix (FAF) to the MAP. The MAP may be located prior to the threshold; therefore, if the distance to the threshold is used, the pilot may initiate a missed approach late and compromise obstacle clearance. Bill stated that the main purpose of the sketch is to act as a visual reference for when the pilot breaks out of the clouds and sees the airport.

Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-3B, inquired of the audience as to what they saw the intent of the airport sketch to be. Valerie repeated that Jeppesen does not have an airport sketch on their charts and its absence does not appear to cause users confusion.

Doug Edsall, USAASA, agreed that the information that appears in the airport sketch is contained elsewhere with on the procedure plate, most notably in the approach profile window and stated that this is sufficient.

Geoff Waterman, NGA/PV, stated that the FAC line used in the sketch is an aid in orientating the pilot to the airport and to the specific runway that the pilot is approaching. In his opinion, the sketch is intended to provide the pilot with situational awareness of the airport environment and not for procedural guidance.

Bruce re-emphasized that in his opinion, the information contained in the final approach sketch, especially the final approach course information, was critical for a pilot on final approach. Bruce emphasized that in single pilot situations during severe weather conditions or in congested airspace, he believes having the information in the airport sketch is a significant aid to the pilot. This opinion did not receive support from the majority of the audience.

Lance Christian, NGA/MSRF, stated that within the military community, pilots utilize the airport sketch upon breaking out of the clouds as a means of verifying their orientation of the aircraft in relation to the runway.

Ted Thompson, Jeppesen was directly asked if Jeppesen has received requests from their subscribers to add an airport sketch to their charts. Ted responded with a firm "No."

Bruce commented that, in his opinion, Jeppesen's procedure plates supply more information than the FAA plates. Bruce repeated his previous position, but conceded that his personal technique in which he utilizes the airport sketch may not be consistent with its intended use.

Valerie summed up the discussion in saying that it appeared that there was a consensus from the group that there is a value in retaining the orientation of the aircraft in relation to the final approach path and the airport and stated that removal of the course line reference was never intended.

There was a question raised within the audience as to how long the FAA had been providing the airport sketch and why it was included in the chart. Brad and Valerie commented that the sketch and the current information related to the final approach path have been on the charts for over 30 years.

John Moore, Jeppesen, commented that this RD was really a cartographic issue and that before any final decision is made regarding the removal of any information currently contained in the airport sketch, the pilot community should be given a chance to provide feedback.

**STAUS: OPEN**

**ACTION:** Representatives from ALPA, NBAA, DoD and NGA to survey their pilot communities on the following items regarding airport sketches on FAA Approach Charts:

- Is the airport sketch of value?
- How do pilots utilize the airport sketch?
- What information is "critical" for inclusion in the sketch?

All groups are to provide an update and, if available, survey results at next ACF.

**ACTION:** Bruce McGray, FAA/AFS-410, will obtain a written response from FAA Human Factors Group at next ACF.

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**MEETING 13-01:** Valerie Watson, AJV-3B, reviewed the item. Valerie stated that since last ACF, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) has stated that they are not in support of the proposed simplification of the Final Approach Course (FAC) in the airport sketch. Because a shared FAA/DoD specification oversees the sketch, changes cannot be made without NGA (DoD) support. No change will be made to the FAC depiction.

**STATUS: CLOSED**