

**AERONAUTICAL CHARTING FORUM**  
**Charting Group**  
**Meeting 13-01 – April 24-25, 2013**

**RECOMMENDATION DOCUMENT**

**FAA Control # ACF-CG RD 13-01-267**

**Subject:** Addition of certain ATC radar telephone numbers to the Airport/Facility Directory (A/FD)

**Background/Discussion:** This is a request for FAA to include recorded Approach Control telephone numbers to A/FD listings for non towered airports that have Instrument Approach Procedures, but do not have ground RADIO communication with ATC.

Currently, pilots operating under IFR to and from most uncontrolled airports must use Flight Service to obtain and cancel IFR clearances, thus inserting a “third party” into the communications loop. Departure clearances received from Flight Service usually contain “Void” times which tie up the airspace until either the time expires or control establishes radar contact. On landing, the airspace is also be tied up until after the pilot contacts Flight Service, and Flight Service contacts the controlling agency to cancel the IFR flight plan. Delay and uncertainty for both pilots and controllers are associated with this system. This undesirable situation can be improved by publishing appropriate ATC radar telephone numbers in the A/FD (and perhaps in Approach Plates) so that pilots can use Cell Phone Technology to communicate from the cockpit directly with the controlling agency. Additionally, the numbers could be used to enable NORDO (no radio) communications in certain situations.

This recommendation is specifically narrow in scope. We are requesting to add recorded telephone numbers for approach control facilities or Centers that are responsible for providing clearances or receiving cancellations for only those locations where there are no means of communications via ground based radio outlets. We think that publishing this data in a limited fashion in the directory will be accessible by aviation personnel but will not be readily available to the general public.

[Reference: ACF RD [11-02-247 – Addition of Approach Control Phone Numbers to Airport/Facility Directory.](#)]

**Recommendations:** FAA include appropriate telephone numbers in the A/FD for the controlling ATC facility at all uncontrolled airports that have Instrument Approach Procedures but no GROUND RADIO communication. It may also be applicable to airports with part time control towers.

- The numbers should probably be added to the same line in the A/FD as the frequency listed with the encircled R, to be prefixed with the abbreviation “CLNC DEL”
- A frequency and a telephone number would probably be required for a listing with a part time tower.

**Comments:** If this input is approved it would be a natural follow-up to add the phone numbers to a new block entitled CLNC DEL in the NACO Approach Plate briefing strip, only for the same uncontrolled airport population. Use of these phone numbers must be limited to obtaining IFR clearances and Flight Plan cancellations/down times. Specifications should prohibit filing of Flight Plans using these numbers.

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**Date:** April 3, 2013

**MEETING 13-01:** Paul Eure, AJE-31, reviewed the topic on behalf of the submitter who did not attend the ACF. Paul stated that both he, representing the ATO Enroute Service Unit and Gary Fiske, TEG-Y90, representing the ATO Terminal Service Unit are both in support of publication, with certain limitations, of select ATC Approach Control telephone numbers. Paul voiced support for this only in limited scope for those approach control facilities responsible for providing departure clearances or arrival IFR cancelations (or landing time) at non-towered airports with instrument approaches, but no ground-based radio communication with ATC. Paul stated that it would be up to each facility to decide whether they wanted their phone numbers published in this limited capacity.

Paul commented that within the NAS, there are 2100 ATC sectors and there are challenges in securing and maintaining all the ATC Radar telephone numbers.

Lev Prichard, APA, voiced that if this is approved and the ATC telephone numbers are published, it could result in a sizeable amount of telephone traffic. He asked if the FAA might consider use of an 800 telephone number.

Paul commented that at present, the primary phone traffic experienced at the facilities is generated by calls coming in from the Remote Communications Outlets (RCOs) and from Lockheed Martin Flight Service Stations (FSSs). It was pointed out by a member of the audience that pilots are often able to obtain a direct phone number to an ATC radar facility from the fixed base operator (FBO) at same airport.

The audience agreed that there are benefits for a pilot being able to speak directly to a controller. The procedure eliminates the need for the pilot to go through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party (such as FSS) in communicating with ATC and eliminates "void times". Additionally, when a controller receives a cancelled IFR clearance directly from a pilot, he can free the airspace instantly and allow other aircraft clearance more efficiently.

Michael Poisson, AJT-2A3, voiced opposition to the suggestion of publishing ATC Radar telephone numbers. Mike argued that by publishing ATC Radar telephone numbers, the door opens for anyone and everyone to phone up the facility. He believes ATC facilities may well be inundated by phone calls from the public that have nothing to do with the function of controlling traffic and that would provide a significant distraction to the job at hand. Distraction of controller from their primary function could potentially become a safety issue.

As ATC is not unanimously in favor of this proposal, more discussion is necessary within Air Traffic. Enroute and Terminal ATC representatives need to discuss the matter to develop a single joint response.

**STATUS: OPEN**

**ACTION:** Paul Eure, AJE-31, will engage Terminal ATC and report back at next ACF with a consolidated, unanimous ATC response.

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**MEETING 13-02:**

Valerie Watson, AJV-3, reviewed the topic. Michael Poisson, AJV-8, stated that some Air Traffic facilities publish or make available their phone numbers while others do not. At present, Michael reiterated his position from last ACF that he believes these phone numbers should not be published in the Airport Facility Directory (AFD). Valerie asked if this was a formal response from Terminal ATC, Michael conceded it was not, but that he would seek such a response.

It was suggested that only those ATC facilities willing to release phone numbers could submit those numbers for publication in the AFD. Valerie agreed with this, but stated that the numbers need to be submitted by Terminal to AIM for publication in the NFDD and some explanatory text would also need to be drafted by Terminal to explain to users of the AFD how the numbers may be used.

Rich Boll, NBAA, expressed an interest in working with ATC to discuss the establishment of an agreement to publish ATC phone numbers. He feels strongly that the numbers would be extremely useful and would like to work with ATC to expedite matters. Michael agreed to work with Rich and put him into contact with individuals within Air Traffic.

**STATUS: OPEN**

**ACTION:** Michael Poisson, AJV-8, and Rich Boll, NBAA, will work with ATC to discuss the issue.

**ACTION:** Michael Poisson, AJV-8, will secure a consolidated official Terminal ATC response and report at the next ACF.

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**MEETING 14-01:**

Valerie Watson, AJV-3, reviewed the topic. Gary Fiske, AJV-822, stated that this has been a low priority issue. Gary stated that he is personally not opposed to the idea of publishing the telephone numbers; however, having only recently been tasked with this issue, he needs to go back and get ATC consensus. Gary did question where the numbers will be published and wanted to ensure that such information would be easily accessible by pilots. Gary inquired if the plan was to publish the contact telephone numbers on approach plates.

Valerie responded that the current plan is to only publish the numbers in the AFD. John Collins, GA Pilot, commented that more pilots are using the AFD because with the widespread use of iPads, airport information is easy to retrieve. He believes that publication of the numbers in the AFD would be sufficient.

Ted Thompson, Jeppesen, opposed the idea of putting the numbers on the approach plates because maintenance of those numbers would become a problem.

Bob Lamond, NBAA, commented that the original request was not to publish ATC phone numbers on approach plates, but to establish a consolidated telephone listing in the AFD.

Eric Fredericks, AJV-823, stated that he supports the listing of ATC phone numbers, but expressed concern that not all facilities can accept calls. Eric also questioned who within the ATC facility would handle such incoming phone calls. He highlighted that there is no simple solution and that this issue will require some legwork on the part of ATC.

Valerie emphasized that there is pilot support for this issue and the ACF should continue to work toward getting the ATC numbers published.

**STATUS: OPEN**

**ACTION:** Gary Fiske, AJV-822, will work to get a consolidated ATC response and report at the next ACF.

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**MEETING 14-02**

Gary Fiske, AJV-82, reviewed the issue and stated that this issue has not progressed since the last ACF. Gary was not able to obtain ATC consensus to release the requested phone numbers. Many questions remain unanswered within ATC such as what phones at the facilities might be dedicated to this use, who will be charged to field the calls in the facility, what specific services could be offered via phone. Gary stated that it is possible that some terminal facilities might be willing to release phone numbers, while others may not and

restated that at present he does not have the ATC authorization to go forward. He will attempt to obtain a consolidated ATC position.

Valerie Watson, AJV-344, commented that in order for the ATC numbers to be published in the AFD, they would first have to be published in NASR. Valerie also stated that there is currently no placeholder in the AFD to publish the numbers and that preliminary work will not be done to create one until a decision has been made by ATC.

**STATUS: OPEN**

**ACTION:** Gary Fiske, AJV-82, will work to gain a consolidated ATC response and report back at the next ACF.

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**MEETING 15-01**

Gary Fiske, AJV-82, reviewed the issue and stated that there is still no consensus in ATC to publish phone numbers. Gary expressed ATC's concern that allowing public access to the numbers could potentially lead to the numbers being used inappropriately.

Valerie Watson, AJV-553, commented that since the last ACF, a few CLNC DEL phone numbers have [appeared in the AFD airport entry](#) in the COMM/NAV/WEATHER REMARKS section. These numbers were submitted by individual facilities to NFDC, published in NASR & pulled into the AFD. This suggests that at least some ATC facilities are willing to release their own information, but does not constitute an overall ATC policy. Gary stated that if ATC senior management decides to establish a consensus policy *against* the publication of phone numbers, this information may need to be removed from the AFD.

Rich Boll, NBAA, emphasized the complexity and time sensitive issues for pilots obtaining clearances, especially in busy and complex airspace like Chicago. Rich voiced that obtaining a clearance directly from the controller by phone can save time for both the pilot and for ATC.

There was consensus to close the topic given ATC's unwillingness at this time to do a wholesale release of phone numbers. Gary stated that with the upcoming Flight Service responsibility/services changes, it may be that ATC will adopt a phone number release endeavor, but that is yet to be known.

Rich stated that given the consensus to close the item, NBAA will work directly with each Center to request that they provide telephone numbers to NFDC for ultimate publication in the AFD.

**STATUS: CLOSED**