

AERONAUTICAL CHARTING FORUM
Charting Group
Meeting 16-02 – October 26 - 27, 2016

RECOMMENDATION DOCUMENT

FAA Control # ACF-CG RD 16-02-308

Subject: Change operational altitudes on IFR Charts to coincide with current operational standards.

Background/Discussion:

1. Center Low Sector ceilings are typically FL230.
2. Center High Sector floors are typically FL230.
3. Regardless of Current Chart Information, most active MOA's ceilings are FL230.
4. A larger number of Turbo-Charged General aviation aircraft are utilizing the airspace above FL180 than ever before.

Recommendations:

1. Low Altitude IFR Enroute charts depict up to FL230 and high altitude charts depict above FL230.
2. Raise Victor Airways operating altitude up to FL230 & Jet Airways to FL240 and above.
3. Depict MOA's maximum operating altitude as appropriate on Low Altitude IFR Enroute Charts.

Comments:

The above changes would align IFR charts to current center operational practices in that Low Altitude Enroute Chart's would correctly depict borders of center's controlling "Low" sector.

This change will also provide a way for pilots operating up to FL230 a depiction of Military Operating Areas and other Special Use Airspace (SUA) that exceed FL180 and are not depicted on High Altitude Charts. This would allow for better flight planning and fewer re-routes being assigned, thereby reducing pilot and controller workloads and enhancing safety.

It would also allow Turbocharged General Aviation Aircraft that are increasingly using the lower Flight Levels a "One Map" capability, thereby reducing workload and allowing pilots to operate with charting they are more familiar with. Impact to Jet/Turbine aircraft is minimal since they typically operate well above FL230.

There should be no change to Airspace designations. Alpha would still begin at FL180.

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Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-553, briefed the issue on behalf of the submitter. The proponent recommends that IFR Enroute charts more closely align with operational standards. The specific recommendations are as follows:

1. Revise Low Altitude IFR Enroute charts to depict up to FL230 and IFR High Altitude charts to depict above FL230.
2. Raise Victor Airways operating altitude up to FL230 and Jet Airways to FL240 and above.
3. Depict MOA's maximum operating altitude as appropriate on Low Altitude IFR Enroute Charts.

Paul Gallant, FAA/AJV-113, presented the response to the submission from the Airspace Policy Group. Paul provided an [overview of airspace definitions in the NAS](#). The division in the U.S. for High and Low Altitude Airspace is 18,000 feet not 23,000 feet. He stated that the recommendations in this proposal would present a drastic change to the U.S. Airspace Structure.

Paul discussed several major issues that would arise as a result of the implementation of these recommendations ([See slides 13 and 14](#)). Other considerations that Paul pointed out is that the National Airspace System is currently in transition and modernizing to increase efficiency and safety with new PBN routes and procedures and new programs such as the VOR MON.

Paul pointed out that if it were decided that such a change in the U.S. Airspace structure was going to be pursued, the process to make such a change would require a major rulemaking effort, including republication of all regulatory routes (J, Q, V, T, TK) and a significant cost involved in training, publications updates, and chart restructuring.

Paul stated the Airspace Policy Group does not endorse the proposal.

Ted Thompson, Jeppesen, stated that there is defined line of division of low and high airspace. The airspace as it is currently is structured represents what it is rather than how the airspace is used. Ted agreed that there is no merit in changing it.

Rune Duke, AOPA, stated that he had reached out to the proponent. The proponent was not aware of the magnitude of the regulatory effort/changes required or that Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace (ATCAA) and Special Use Airspace (SUA) information is available through a number of FAA resources.

Valerie asked the audience for feedback and found no support for this recommendation. This recommendation will not be pursued.

STATUS: CLOSED