Subject:
Addition of specifications for VFR and Visual Segments on Copter Approach & Departure Procedures

Background/Discussion:
There are currently copter procedures in the NAS that include both IFR and VFR or Visual Segments. Visual segments have been assessed for obstacles and are defined by a course that may be flown using the bearing & distance provided on the procedure source document. VFR segments have NOT been assessed for obstacles and the pilot is expected to make his way following VFR rules and avoiding obstacles. On the procedure source document, a bearing & distance is provided, but the intention is NOT for the pilot to fly this course. The two distinct types of segments should be shown in different ways on the charts so that there is no confusion.

Recommendations:
Add charting for Visual/VFR segments of copter procedures as follows:

1. Visual Flight Path
The visual flight path shall be shown by a heavy dashed line symbol as illustrated below.

   ──────────── Visual Flight Path

2. VFR Reference Bearing and Distance
The VFR segment on a copter procedure shall be shown by a thin solid line as illustrated:

   ─────── 275° ─── Reference Bearing and Distance - Copters only (2.1)

Modify relevant chart legends as appropriate.

Comments:

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MEETING 17-02

Mike Webb, FAA/AFS-420 briefed the issue. Mike stated that in the near future numerous public-use Copter Departures will be published. In the process of developing charting specifications for these procedures, it was discovered that there are currently copter procedures published that have a Visual segment and there are some that have a VFR segment. These have always been depicted in the same manner on the charts, but they have major differences. Visual segments have been assessed for obstacles and are defined by a course that may be flown using the bearing and distance provided. VFR segments have not been assessed for obstacles, there is no specific route to fly, and the pilot is responsible for avoiding obstacles. Although a reference bearing and distance may be supplied for VFR segments, this is not a course the aircraft is intended to follow. It is recommended that a new charting specification be put into place for the two distinct types of segments. Mike would like input on the proposed depiction options.

Mike displayed examples of how the segments are shown today, and examples of his recommendations for the depiction of visual segments and VFR segments. He is recommending that for visual segments, the current depiction of the heavy dashed line should remain. For VFR segments, he proposed two different depictions. The first is a thin solid line with the reference bearing and distance included on the line (Slides #8 and #9). The second is with no line depicted but the inclusion of the reference bearing and distance information located in proximity to the landing point.

Pilots in the room concurred with depiction of the visual segment with the heavy dashed line.

In regard to the proposed depiction of VFR segments, Tim Long, NGA, commented that if you show a line on a chart with a bearing and distance, a pilot will fly that line. This is dangerous as the line is not intended to be the course the pilot is to follow. Rich Boll, NBAA, agreed. There was concurrence from the pilots in the room for not showing a line on VFR segments as it could easily be mistakenly interpreted as a course to fly. There was no voiced support for depiction of linework on VFR segments.

Mike stated that he will work with Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-553, on the specification changes. He also said he would work on socializing this change with the helicopter community.

STATUS: OPEN

ACTION: Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-553, will draft a specification change for the depiction of VFR segments without the reference bearing depicted as a line.

MEETING 18-01

Valerie Watson, FAA/AJV-553, reviewed this issue. Valerie said that proposed Interagency Air Committee (IAC) specifications documents supporting the ACF-approved clarification of the charting of VFR and Visual Segments on Copter Approaches and Departures have been vetted and approved by FAA/AFS-400. These documents are now in the IAC signature process and
are due to be approved in the near future. Mike Webb, FAA/AFS-420, showed the audience the chart examples of the changes. There was consensus to close this item.

STATUS: CLOSE