



Federal Aviation Administration

Memorandum

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To: ARP Division Managers, ARP-610s, ARP-620s, Program Managers,
Airport Planners, and Environmental Specialists

From: Elliott Black, Director of Airport Planning and Programming, APP-1 

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Subject: Requests for Release of FAA real-time NAS Data to Airports for Surface
Situational Awareness and Noise Monitoring Programs

Airports have a need for access to real-time FAA flight track data for their surface situational awareness and noise monitoring programs. This real-time surveillance data is a type of National Airspace System (NAS) data. This memorandum provides guidance to Office of Airports (ARP) offices on recent changes initiated by the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) to improve the security of data connections for NAS data released to airports, as well as the overall process and options that airports can use to access real-time NAS data.

ATO has initiated the transition of externally shared, real-time flight track data connections to access via FAA-approved enterprise gateways, and away from various non-secure, direct connections. The intent is not to cut off access to the data, but rather to move the airport data feeds to secure connections. We are aware that many ROs and ADOs are hearing concerns about this transition from their airport sponsors. APP has been coordinating with the ATO NAS Data Management Directorate (AJR-D) on data release processes for airports.

The following FAA Orders represent the Agency's approach to both providing NAS data to external users while maintaining the security of the NAS. The orders require that NAS data released to external users must be completed through an approved, secure enterprise gateway.

- FAA Order 1370.82A, Information Systems Security Program, dated September 11, 2006;
- FAA Order 1370.95, Wide Area Network Connectivity Security, dated September 12, 2006;
- JO 1370.114, Implementation of FAA Telecommunications Infrastructure (FTI) Services and Information Security Requirements in the NAS, dated January 4, 2012; and
- FAA Order 1200.22E, External Requests for NAS Data, dated January 20, 2012.

Consistent with FAA Order 1200.22E, all direct connections must transition to an alternate data sources as soon as possible. FAA may choose, on a case-by-case basis, to extend

expired Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) after receipt and review of an airport's written request to retain the local connection. The FAA's intent is to accomplish the transition in a reasonable time, consistent with each airport's particular situation. As part of the transition, all unauthorized non-FAA equipment must be removed from FAA facilities. The objective is to complete the transitions as soon as practicable.

Most airports that had direct connections have transitioned to alternative data sources. Each ATO Service Center has staff assigned to work with affected airports on the remaining transition plans in Mission Support, Planning and Requirements: AJV-E38, AJV-C39, and AJV-W39.

Airports have several options to transition to alternate data sources for real-time NAS Flight Track Data, through the FAA NAS Enterprise Security Gateway (NESG) and/or commercial vendors:

- (1) Several commercial vendors have advertised fee-based surveillance information products, including Exelis and Passur. Other commercial vendors may also be available. Exelis currently has an FAA-approved enterprise gateway for data release, including continuity and quality monitoring services, as part of its contract with FAA to operate the Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) system. Further, the ADS-B contract contains clauses for cost reduction to FAA as a result of NAS data release through Exelis. Other vendors have non-FAA sources of NAS data. FAA cannot endorse any particular vendor product.
- (2) An airport can request an approved gateway connection to the FAA's Aircraft Situation Display for Industry (ASDI). See <http://www.fly.faa.gov/ASDI/asdi.html#subscriberInfo>. Note that ASDI is planned to be replaced by similar data that will be available via System Wide Information Management (SWIM) in 2015.
- (3) An airport can request an approved gateway connection to FAA ASDE-X surface surveillance data, which is available via the SWIM Terminal Data Distribution System (STDDS).

Note that FAA does not charge for ASDI or ASDE-X data, although the airport would be responsible for vendor service costs, as applicable. To seek approval for a data connection to an FAA NESG, airports should coordinate with the appropriate ATO Service Area representative to complete the appropriate paperwork starting with FAA Form 1200-5. This is not required for data connections using commercial vendors.

Selecting the appropriate data source is dependent on the data needs of the airport, given factors such as refresh rate, latency, target data, etc. For example, the data needs for a Noise and Operations Monitoring System (NOMS) may vary from that needed for surface situation awareness. Airports are encouraged to work with vendors and the ATO Service Center representatives to identify the appropriate data source.

Ongoing vendor service costs in support of real-time NAS data access, as needed for either FAA NESG or commercial products, are considered operational costs. Operational costs are the responsibility of the airport. Airports should consider data costs when evaluating installation or upgrade to their NOMS.

Airports are encouraged to consider the use of recorded, historical data as an alternative to real-time data for NOMS. Data release to airports of recorded, historical data is covered under a separate Joint ARP/ATO memorandum titled 'Requests for Release of FAA Recorded, Historical NAS Data for Airport Planning and Environmental Studies' and dated 16-January-2015.

Additional questions may be directed to Gene Hayes, the NAS Data Release Program Manager (AJR-D). Within ARP, please contact Kent Duffy in APP-400.

Cc:
Gene Hayes, AJR-D