

# NOTICE

## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N JO 7110.804

### Air Traffic Organization Policy

Effective Date:  
October 28, 2026

Cancellation Date:  
December 24, 2026

### **SUBJ:** Visual Separation

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- 1. Purpose of this Notice.** This notice amends FAA Order JO 7110.65, Air Traffic Control, paragraph 7-2-1 Visual Separation.
- 2. Audience.** This notice applies to the following Air Traffic Organization (ATO) service units: Air Traffic Services, Mission Support Services, System Operations Services, Safety and Technical Training, and all associated air traffic facilities.
- 3. Where can I Find This Notice?** This notice is available on the MyFAA employee website at [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices/](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/) and on the Air Traffic Plans and Publications website at [https://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications/](https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/).
- 4. Background.** The use of visual separation is an important tool in the air traffic control (ATC) system to ensure a safe, orderly, and efficient flow of air traffic. A near mid-air collision (NMAC) occurs when two aircraft come within less than 500 feet of each other, posing a potential collision risk. Since the primary purpose of the ATC system is to prevent collisions, controllers must maintain positive control when aircraft targets converge. To enhance the safe application of visual separation, during pilot-applied visual separation, aircraft targets must not be allowed to merge with less than 500 feet vertical separation. Since merging target procedures are a function of a radar controller, this does not apply to tower-applied visual separation.
- 5. Action.** Amend FAA Order JO 7110.65 by changing the following paragraph to read as follows:

#### **7-2-1. VISUAL SEPARATION**

Visual separation may be applied when approved separation exists before and after the application of visual separation. Targets must not be allowed to merge with less than 500 feet vertical separation during pilot-applied visual separation. To ensure that approved separation will exist, consider aircraft performance, wake turbulence, closure rate, routes of flight, known weather conditions, and aircraft position. Weather conditions must allow the aircraft to remain within sight until approved separation exists. Visual separation is not authorized when the lead aircraft is a super.

#### **REFERENCE-**

*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 1-2-1, Word Meanings, Subpara i.*  
*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 2-1-20, Wake Turbulence Cautionary Advisories.*  
*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 2-1-21, Traffic Advisories.*  
*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 3-1-9, Use of Tower Radar Displays.*  
*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 5-9-5, Approach Separation Responsibility.*  
*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 7-4-1, Visual Approach.*

FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 7-4-2, Vectors for Visual Approach.  
 FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 7-4-4, Approaches to Multiple Runways.  
 FAA Order JO 7210.3, Para 4-3-2, Appropriate Subjects.  
 FAA Order JO 7210.3, Para 10-3-9, Visual Separation.  
 P/CG Term – Visual Approach.  
 P/CG Term – Visual Separation.  
 14 CFR section 91.113

Subparagraph a through a2(d), No Change

(e) If the controller becomes aware that the targets will merge with less than 500 feet vertical separation, they must issue control instructions to establish approved separation.

**EXAMPLE–**

*“Targets appear likely to merge, maintain at or below (altitude).”*

(f) Control of aircraft maintaining visual separation may be transferred to an adjacent position/sector/facility. Coordination procedures must be specified in an LOA or facility directive.

**REFERENCE–**  
 FAA Order JO 7210.3, Para 4-3-1, Letters of Agreement

Subparagraph b through b2(e), No Change

(f) If the controller becomes aware that the targets will merge with less than 500 feet vertical separation, they must issue control instructions to establish approved separation.

**EXAMPLE–**

*“Targets appear likely to merge, turn (number of degrees) degrees left/right.”*

**PHRASEOLOGY–**

*(ACID) TRAFFIC, (clock position and distance), (direction)–BOUND, (type of aircraft), ON CONVERGING COURSE, HAS YOU IN SIGHT AND WILL MAINTAIN VISUAL SEPARATION.*

*(ACID) TRAFFIC, (clock position and distance), (direction)–BOUND, (type of aircraft), TARGETS APPEAR LIKELY TO MERGE, TURN LEFT/RIGHT HEADING (degrees).*

**REFERENCE–**  
 FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 5-6-2, Methods.  
 FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 7-4-1, Visual Approach.  
 FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 7-4-2, Vectors for Visual Approach.

Subparagraph b2(g) through b2(h), No Change

Interpretation (5-24-2017), Delete

No further changes to paragraph

**6. Distribution.** This notice is distributed to the following ATO service units: Air Traffic Services, Mission Support Services, and System Operations, and Safety and Technical Training; the Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service; the William J. Hughes Technical Center; and the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center.

10/28/26

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