

# NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
Air Traffic Organization Policy

N JO 7110.535

**Effective Date:**  
October 1, 2010

**Cancellation Date:**  
March 10, 2011

**SUBJ:** Aircraft Communication Status

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- 1. Purpose of This Notice.** This notice provides air traffic procedural guidance to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order JO 7110.65, Air Traffic Control, related to air traffic control (ATC) operations regarding the establishment, transfer, and loss of communications with aircraft.
- 2. Audience.** This notice applies to the following Air Traffic Organization (ATO) service units: En Route and Oceanic, Terminal Services, and System Operations Services; the ATO Office of Safety; and all associated air traffic control facilities.
- 3. Where Can I Find This Notice?** This notice is available on the MyFAA employee Web site at [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices/](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/) and on the air traffic publications Web site at [http://www.faa.gov/air\\_traffic/publications/](http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/).
- 4. Explanation of Policy Change.** This notice addresses five changes to clarify expectations of actions to be taken by ATC during loss of radio communication events, reporting requirements. These changes clarify expectations of actions to be taken by air traffic controllers and ATC management during loss of radio communication events, reporting requirements, and that communication status is to be included during transfer of position responsibility briefings.
- 5. Procedures.**
  - a.** Amend FAA Order JO 7110.65, Paragraph 2-1-17, Radio Communications Transfer, by adding a new subparagraph c to read as follows:

## 2-1-17. RADIO COMMUNICATIONS

Title thru b, no change.

**c.** Controllers must, within a reasonable amount of time, take appropriate action to establish/restore communications with all aircraft for which a communications transfer or initial contact to his/her sector is expected/required.

### **NOTE-**

*For the purposes of this paragraph, a reasonable amount of time is normally considered to be 5 minutes from the time the aircraft enters the controller's area of jurisdiction or comes within range of radio/communications coverage. Communications includes two-way VHF or UHF radio contact, data link, or high frequency (HF) radio through an approved third-party provider such as ARINC.*

Subparagraphs c through f, renumber d thru g.

b. Amend FAA Order JO 7110.65, Paragraph 2-1-25, Supervisory Notification, by adding a new subparagraph f to read as follows:

**2-1-25. SUPERVISORY NOTIFICATION**

Ensure supervisor/controller-in-charge (CIC) is aware of conditions which impact sector/position operations including, but not limited to, the following:

Subparagraphs a through e, no change.

- f. Possible suspicious aircraft/pilot activity as prescribed in FAA Order JO 7610.4, paragraph 7-3-1.

c. Amend FAA Order JO 7110.65, Paragraph 2-4-3, Pilot Acknowledgement/Read Back, subparagraph a, to read as follows:

**2-4-3. PILOT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/READ BACK**

- a. When issuing clearances or instructions, ensure acknowledgment by the pilot. If no acknowledgment is received, attempt to re-establish contact. If attempts are unsuccessful, advise the FLM/CIC.

No further changes to paragraph.

d. Amend FAA Order JO 7110.65, Paragraph 10-4-4, Communications Failure, subparagraph e, to read as follows:

**10-4-4. COMMUNICATIONS FAILURE**

- e. If radio communications have not been (re) established with the aircraft after 5 minutes, consider the aircraft's or pilot's activity to be suspicious and report it to the FLM/CIC per FAA Order JO 7610.4, Chapter 7, Hijacked/Suspicious Aircraft Reporting and Procedures, and Paragraph 2-1-25f, Supervisory Notification, of this order.

e. Amend FAA Order JO 7110.65, Appendix D, Standard Operating Practice (SOP) for the Transfer of Position Responsibility, Paragraph 6b, Verbal Briefing, to read as follows:

**Appendix D. Standard Operating Practice (SOP) for the Transfer of Position Responsibility**

Title through subparagraph 6a, no change.

**b. VERBAL BRIEFING**

Relieving Specialist	Specialist Being Relieved
<p>4. Ask questions necessary to ensure a complete understanding of the operational situation.</p>	<p>1. Brief the relieving specialist on the abnormal status of items not listed on the Status Information Area(s) as well as on any items of special interest calling for verbal explanation or additional discussion.</p> <p>2. Brief on traffic if applicable.</p> <p><b>3. Brief communication status of all known aircraft.</b></p> <p>5. Completely answer any questions asked.</p>

No further changes to paragraph.

**6. Distribution.** This notice is distributed to the following ATO service units: Terminal, En Route and Oceanic, and System Operations Services; the ATO Office of Safety; Office of the Service Center; the Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service; the William J. Hughes Technical Center; and the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center.

**7. Background.** In light of several recent loss of communication events in the National Airspace System (NAS), a multidisciplinary team reviewed and analyzed how to improve air traffic control operations regarding the establishment, transfer, and loss of communications with aircraft. This notice is based on the recommendations of the team.

**8. Safety Management System.** This change does not negatively affect the NAS and there are no safety impacts. Therefore, no further SRM analysis is required.



Nancy B. Kalinowski  
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Air Traffic Organization

7-16-10

Date Signed