

NOTICE

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

N JO 7210.785

Effective Date:
September 16, 2011

Cancellation Date:
February 9, 2012

SUBJ: Volcanic Ash

1. Purpose of This Notice. This notice adds a new paragraph to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order JO 7210.3 to give guidance to the air route traffic control center (ARTCC) traffic management units (TMU) and the Air Traffic Control Systems Command Center (ATCSCC) on how to establish lines of communication to verify and disseminate timely and accurate information during and after a volcanic eruption. This guidance is not all inclusive; it establishes a baseline for preparedness and mitigation activities that must be accomplished to prevent a catastrophic event.

2. Audience. This notice applies to the following Air Traffic Organization (ATO) service units: Terminal, En Route and Oceanic, and System Operations; FAA tower facilities; and Federal contract towers.

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/ and on the air traffic publications Web site at http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/.

4. Procedures. Add Paragraph 17-4-6, Volcanic Ash, to FAA Order JO 7210.3 to read as follows:

17-4-6. VOLCANIC ASH

a. Upon receipt of a validated report of volcanic activity and/or ash cloud movement, the ARTCC TMU whose geographic area of responsibility is impacted by such activity must:

1. Assess areas of potential or actual ash cloud location.
2. Notify the ATCSCC and the other facilities in their area of jurisdiction that may be affected. Provide as much information as possible, including PIREPS and other pertinent information that has been received.

b. Upon receipt of a Volcanic Ash Advisory (VAA), Volcanic Ash SIGMET, or ARTCC notification, the ATCSCC must:

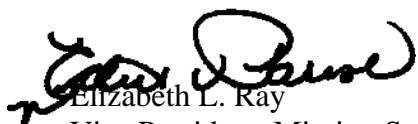
1. Retransmit the VAA received from the Washington or Anchorage VAACs to air traffic control facilities and stakeholders via a numbered ATCSCC advisory. The VAA will also be displayed on the ATCSCC web site in the advisories database.
2. Conduct, as needed, conference calls to assess constraints and TMIs associated with the volcanic ash.

NOTE-

The FAA does not have the capability to predict or depict volcano eruptions or ash cloud density and movements. It is not the responsibility of the FAA to provide separation between aircraft and volcanic activity or ash clouds.

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

6. Background. The National Weather Service is responsible for providing meteorological data to stakeholders of the National Airspace System (NAS). This includes the dissemination of observations, forecasts, and warning messages that pertain to volcanic ash that may potentially impact aircraft operations. The FAA is responsible for issuing notices to airmen (NOTAM) on the status of a known volcanic eruption. The Anchorage and Washington Volcanic Ash Advisory Centers (VAAC) are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. VAAC meteorologists are tasked with monitoring remote sensing data, pilot reports, and reports from the Volcano Observatory and aviation community on a continuous basis. The VAACs are also tasked with creating ash dispersion models, determining current and forecast areas of airborne ash concentrations, determining the extent of the ash clouds, producing a volcanic ash advisory (VAA), as well as a volcanic ash advisory in graphical format for its customers. The Meteorological Watch Offices in Anchorage, Honolulu, and Kansas City are responsible for issuing the volcanic ash significant meteorological information (SIGMET) within United States-controlled airspace.



Elizabeth L. Ray
Vice President, Mission Support Services
Air Traffic Organization

8-15-11

Date Signed