

NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N JO 7210.958

Air Traffic Organization Policy

Effective Date:
April 2, 2025

Cancellation Date:
August 7, 2025

SUBJ: Flight Inspection Aircraft

- 1. Purpose of this Notice.** This notice amends FAA Order JO 7210.3, Facility Operations and Administration, paragraph 5–2–2, regarding Flight Inspection Aircraft.
- 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, Flight Program Operations, 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/ and on the Air Traffic Plans and Publications website at https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/.
- 4. Explanation of Policy Change.** This change incorporates new language into paragraph 5–2–2 to standardize the process and requirements for communication, operational monitoring, and disseminating information regarding flight inspection mission operations. Flight Inspection Central Operations (FICO) was changed to Flight Program Operations (AJF) and AJF Operations Control Center (OCC) was identified as a point of contact for flight inspection missions.
- 5. Action.** Amend the following paragraph in FAA Order JO 7210.3EE to read as follows:

5–2–2. FLIGHT INSPECTION AIRCRAFT

a. FAA aircraft engaged in flight inspection of navigation aids must be provided priority handling by ATC facilities in accordance with FAA Order JO 7110.65, paragraph 2–1–4, Operational Priority. Flight Program Operations (AJF)/flight inspectors are expected to coordinate with the facility prior to conducting flight inspections. Occasionally, due to unplanned/special flight inspection requirements, flight inspectors may attempt to conserve flight hours and accomplish additional opportune flight checks with minimal advance coordination.

NOTE–

Many flight inspection missions can be conducted without being afforded priority handling. Do not cancel flight inspection missions solely based on not being able to provide priority handling.

REFERENCE–

FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 2–1–4, Operational Priority, Subpara l Note.

b. Unless otherwise agreed to, direct contact must be maintained between the flight inspection pilot and the ATC facility to provide for an exchange of information regarding the intention of the pilot and the known traffic in the facility's area of responsibility.

c. Many flight inspection missions are accomplished using automatic recording equipment, and an uninterrupted flight is necessary for the successful accomplishment of the flight. Maximum cooperation will help AJF accomplish its mission within their limited aircraft resources. Facilities must immediately notify the pilot-in-command (PIC), or the AJF Operations Control Center (OCC) located at the Joint Air Traffic Operations Command (JATOC) if they are unable to accommodate flight inspection missions.

NOTE–

1. *Flight Check (FLC) aircraft stating “recorded run” indicates automated flight inspections are in progress. Such inspections necessitate the full length of the runway (including protection of any critical areas) and require the entire procedure to be flown, up to and including the missed approach as needed. Any interruption of a recorded run will require the entire procedure to be reinitiated.*

2. *Not every flight inspection mission requires prior coordination. The PIC may contact the facility for final coordination, but due to unforeseen variables, subtle differences may occur. It is also possible that flight checks that are not listed will transit your airspace. Additionally, weather, aircraft maintenance, and other unplanned issues may alter the schedule.*

REFERENCE–

FAA Order JO 7110.65, Chapter 9, Special Flights.

d. Air Traffic Districts must distribute information regarding flight inspection mission operations to affected facilities in a timely manner.

e. Facilities must review published schedules and maneuvers to be performed utilizing the Flight Inspection Activity Map (<https://fiog.faa.gov/foms/itinerary/scheduledWorkMap>), when available.

1. The ATM must ensure the Operations Supervisor (OS), or Controller-in-Charge (CIC) reviews the requested FLC operation. Airport flight inspection/certification of navigational aids and flight procedures are the only category required to be briefed.

2. The OS/CIC must brief controllers prior to assuming a control position affected by the flight inspection aircraft. The briefing must include the associated flight procedures/maneuvers depicted on the Flight Inspection Activity Map, when available.

3. Completed briefings of airport flight inspection/certification of navigational aids and flight procedures must be documented on FAA Form 7230-4, Daily Record of Facility Operation.

4. The ATM must make it a priority to monitor and be periodically present for any FLC operations during their duty hours.

f. FLC aircraft that request to perform an unplanned procedure should be approved to proceed if:

1. The requested operation would not adversely affect air traffic operations.

2. The FLC aircraft would not/does not request priority handling.

NOTE–

The utilization of the Flight Inspection Activity Map and monitoring requirements for unplanned FLC operations should be performed to the extent possible.

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

7. Background. In response to multiple safety reports, the Safety and Technical Training Safety Investigation and Response Team (AJI-133) and the Flight Program Operations Flight Program Safety and Training Directorate (AJF-3000) conducted an assessment to gather information on the factors that can influence the NAS safety risk associated with flight inspection missions in the operational environment. The 2022 Assessment Report identified risk factors contributing to close proximity events during flight inspection mission operations.

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