

Section 20. Operations Plan

17-20-1. PURPOSE

Establishes the process, structure and responsibilities for developing, managing and implementing a daily strategic plan for air traffic operations in the National Airspace System (NAS).

17-20-2. DEFINITION

a. The Operations Plan (OP): The OP is a plan for management of the NAS. The OP is a collaboratively developed plan. The OP is derived by the Planning Team (PT) after collaboration with the FAA and customer's weather forecasters, FAA Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) Traffic Management Officer (TMO) or designee, other FAA field facility management personnel, airline planners, Air Traffic Control System Command Center (ATCSCC) personnel, international facilities, military, and general aviation system customers.

b. Trigger: A specific event that causes a specific traffic management initiative (TMI) to be implemented.

1. A trigger is for planning purposes and is intended to reduce coordination when implementing the specified TMI.

2. All en route facilities impacted by the TMI must be contacted prior to implementing the TMI in response to the trigger.

3. En route facilities must relay TMIs to affected terminal facilities within their area of jurisdiction.

4. All triggers will be identified by "IF, THEN" clauses in the OP.

EXAMPLE-

IF thunderstorms develop as forecast on J96, THEN ZKC will initiate the ORD BDF1 Playbook route.

c. The OP will specify:

1. Terminal constraints: facilities where delays are expected to be 15 minutes or greater.

2. En route constraints: facilities where expanded miles-in-trail, deviations, and tactical reroutes may be required.

17-20-3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. The ARTCC TMO or their designee must:

1. Participate via the PT Telephone Conference (TELCON) in the formulation and development of the OP when stated on the previous OP, or requested later by the ATCSCC, or issues within the facility arise that may require inclusion in the OP.

2. Provide input on:

(a) Equipment outages having an operational impact;

(b) Internal initiatives;

(c) Terminal constraints;

(d) Route closure/recovery information;

(e) Anticipated Traffic Management Initiatives (TMI) necessary to manage the system; or

(f) Other issues which may impact operations (i.e., staffing, special events, etc.). See FIG 17-20-1, Operational Planning TELCON Checklist.

3. Brief and direct facility Operational Supervisors, Traffic Management Supervisors, Traffic Management Units, and operational personnel on the implementation of the OP and gather additional information for the next TELCON.

4. Coordinate with and provide direction to underlying facilities on the implementation of the OP.

5. Monitor and assess the OP, notifying the ATCSCC of problems that may impact the OP.

6. Provide operational feedback for use in post-operational evaluation of the OP.

b. The ATCSCC must:

1. Maintain the Planning Team (PT) TELCON Bridge.

2. Maintain a web page for publicizing the OP to aviation systems users.

c. The ATCSCC National Operations Manager (NOM) must:

1. Direct the facility National Traffic Management Officer (NTMO), ATCSCC operational units, and personnel on implementation of the OP.

2. Coordinate with and provide direction to FAA facilities on implementation of the OP.

d. The ATCSCC PT must:

1. Lead the PT in development of the OP.

2. Record participation of FAA and non-FAA entities in PT TELCONs.

3. Formulate the OP through coordination with PT members using the OP Timeline.

4. Brief the NOM, NTMO, and other ATCSCC operational elements on the OP.

5. Post the OP on the ATCSCC web site and issue as a numbered advisory.

6. Document agreed upon triggers in the OP.

e. The Terminal Facility Management must:

1. When notified by the ARTCC TMO or designee or ATCSCC PT, participate in the PT TELCONs.

2. Brief and direct facility operational personnel on actions required by the OP.

3. Monitor and assess the OP, notifying the ATCSCC of problems that may impact the OP.

17-20-4. PROCEDURES

a. The PT is composed of FAA and customer weather forecasters, FAA ARTCC's TMO, or designee, other FAA field facility management personnel, airline strategic planners, ATCSCC personnel, international facilities, and military and general aviation system customers.

b. The ATCSCC has been delegated the authority to direct the operation of the PT TELCONs for the FAA.

1. The ATCSCC will notify those FAA facilities required to participate as part of the PT TELCON.

2. Military, international, and general aviation entities will be included as necessary.

c. The PT collaborates on the formation of the OP. The OP is normally developed for the hour beginning after the TELCON commences and the subsequent six (6) hours. The OP is updated, amended, and evaluated on a recurring basis through a dedicated TELCON Phone Bridge at the ATCSCC.

d. Collaborative Convective Forecast Product (CCFP): The CCFP is the consolidated input of ARTCC Weather Service Unit (CWSU), Aviation Weather Center (AWC) personnel, ATCSCC Weather Unit (DCCWU) personnel, and airline meteorologists. The CCFP is the primary weather product used by the PT in developing the OP.

e. OP Timeline (all times local/eastern): The OP Timeline provides a method for group decision-making and collaboration in dealing with system constraints. Modification of the timeline, participation, and scheduling is done at the discretion of the PT and as directed by the ATCSCC.

1. 5:00 a.m. – National Weather TELCON: ATCSCC PT monitors the weather TELCON, receives midnight operational briefing, and collaborates with select FAA facilities and users for the next amendment.

2. 6:00 a.m. – Amendment to the OP is published on the ATCSCC web page and through an ATCSCC numbered advisory.

3. 6:00–7:00 a.m. – Individual team entities conduct an assessment of operation in preparation for the OP TELCON. The ATCSCC identifies and notifies FAA facilities required to participate in the PT TELCON.

4. 7:15 a.m. – Planning TELCON conducted: The OP is developed by the PT.

5. 8:00 a.m. – The OP is published on the ATCSCC web site and via numbered advisory.

6. 8:00–9:00 a.m. – Individual team entities conduct an assessment of operation in preparation for the OP TELCON.

7. 9:15 a.m. – Planning TELCON conducted: The OP is developed by the PT.