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InFO

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An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements, with relatively low urgency or impact on safety. The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Subject: Instrument Approach Operations with a Visual Guidance Fix (VGF) and an Extended Visual Segment.

Purpose: This InFO serves to inform Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 91, 91K, 121, 125, 129, 135 Operators, and part 142 Training Centers, of interim information on flying public part 97 standard instrument approaches with an extended visual segment.

Background: In 2019, as a response to a Commercial Aircraft Safety Team request, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) established public Required Navigation Performance Approach (RNP APCH) procedures that uniquely offer the flightcrew continuous advisory lateral and vertical guidance in an extended visual segment leading to the landing runway threshold. Examples include Area Navigation (RNAV) (Global Positioning System (GPS)) runway (RWY) 33 at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (KDCA), RNAV (GPS) Z RWY 13L and RNAV (GPS) Z RWY 13R at John F. Kennedy International Airport (KJFK), and the RNAV (GPS) X RWY 31 at LaGuardia Airport (KLGA).

Discussion: An RNP APCH procedure with a VGF and an extended visual segment does not levy any new regulatory requirements and relies on standard pilot actions used during non-precision operations with a missed approach point at the runway threshold. RNP APCH procedures with an extended visual segment do not require an air carrier or operator to obtain a specific authorization and are not RNP Authorization Required (RNP AR) approaches. Operators, Air Carriers and Training Centers should review Operations Specifications (OpSpec) or Letter of Authorization (LOA) C052 to ensure that RNAV (GPS) approaches to Lateral Navigation (LNAV) minima are authorized. Consult the Airplane Flight Manual (AFM), AFM Supplement, Aircraft Operating Manual (AOM) or avionics manual for pilot procedures and aircraft limitations applicable to RNP APCH non-precision operations to a minimum descent altitude (MDA) for the lateral navigation (LNAV) line of minima.

An RNP APCH procedure with a VGF and an extended visual segment has some unique features, such as the final approach track offset from runway centerline and a published visual ground track beginning at the VGF which includes reference waypoints and recommended altitudes. The design supports the pilot's responsibility to ensure the aircraft is continuously in a position from which a descent from MDA to a landing on the intended runway can be made at a normal rate of descent using normal maneuvers. The visual segment of the procedure begins at a specified VGF waypoint, at which the pilot

chooses to continue following the advisory lateral and vertical guidance in the descent below the LNAV MDA along the depicted ground track to the runway. If the pilot determines the required flight visibility is insufficient (§91.175, §135.225 or §121.651), the pilot should stop the descent at or above the MDA and proceed using the aircraft's navigation guidance along the depicted lateral track to the MAP while beginning the missed approach. Each of these procedures is flown in the same manner as any non-precision procedure with a missed approach point (MAP) at the runway threshold. Until the explanation of the VGF and the extended visual segment is included in the current pilot educational handbooks, the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM), and the United States of America Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP), flightcrews are advised to understand the following interim guidance when conducting RNP APCH procedures with VGF and an extended visual segment:

- These part 97 public procedures require no new pilot training or specific authorization.
- The procedure, including the extended visual segment flight path, is coded in the aircraft's navigation database and should be extracted by name. The data supplier may code Radius-to-Fix (RF) and/or Track-to-Fix (TF) path terminators in the extended visual segment, depending on aircraft capability. The flightcrew is expected to use a composite cross-check of the advisory lateral and vertical path guidance (including recommended altitudes) to the runway threshold and, if required, the lateral path during the missed approach.
- Some procedures show the VGF as the MAP. Recently implemented charting standards harmonize the labeled MAP location at the runway threshold will ensure that future charts of these procedures appear similar. The data supplier should code the MAP at the runway end identifier waypoint.
- To ensure consistent flight trajectories and stabilized approaches, flightcrews should remain on the depicted path of the approach, even when the visual references for the intended runway are distinctly visible and identifiable before the VGF.
- If the pilot assesses the required flight visibility is insufficient, the pilot should stop the descent at or above the MDA and proceed using the aircraft's navigation guidance along the depicted lateral track to the MAP while beginning the missed approach.
- The flightcrew should maintain a stabilized, constant-descent final approach (CDFA), referencing the advisory lateral and vertical guidance, while using standard piloting, remaining visually clear of clouds, and avoiding obstacles and terrain. If a CDFA cannot be maintained, a missed approach is advised.
- The flightcrew is expected to read, understand, and comply with the procedure notes. Examples of procedure notes include:
 - The missed approach instructions may contain a phrase similar to “*Climb to XX00 on the FMS lateral path to Rwy XX.*” This indicates that whenever sufficient visual references, are not obtained or lost for any reason the flightcrew should discontinue the approach by remaining above the MDA while following the lateral guidance to the procedural MAP at the runway threshold, then flying the missed approach procedure, unless alternate missed approach instructions have been received.

- The plan view should contain a “Fly Visual to Airport” note accompanied by a published VGF. This note means that the flight crew must assess and verify flight visibility sufficient for the procedure’s prescribed minima by the time the aircraft arrives at the MDA and must avoid obstacles, traffic, and terrain visually while maneuvering from the VGF along the advisory lateral and vertical guidance to the runway. Correctly assessing flight visibility against the published minima is essential to ensure the pilot can continue the descent below MDA.

Recommended Action: Chief Pilots, Certificated Flight Instructors, Directors of Operations and Training Center Managers should ensure flightcrews and instructors are aware of this information. The FAA will expand and publish this information in an Advisory Circular, the AIM and US AIP as soon as practical.

Contact: Direct questions and comments regarding this InFO to the Flight Technologies and Procedures Division, Flight Operations Group, at (202) 267-8976 or 9-AWA-AFS400-COORD@faa.gov.