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InFO

Information for Operators

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http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info

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.

Subject: “Climb Via” Phraseology for Standard Instrument Departure (SID), Modification to “Descend Via” Phraseology for Standard Terminal Arrival (STAR), and Phraseology associated with Speed Instructions.

Purpose: This InFO explains the implementation of “Climb Via” and the modification to “Descend Via” phraseology for SID and STAR procedures, effective April 3, 2014. Additionally, this InFO emphasizes the importance of pilots understanding and using the correct response phraseology when Air Traffic Control (ATC) issues a “Climb Via” or “Descend Via” clearance. Phraseology associated with speed instructions is also explained.

Background: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) ATC will implement “Climb Via” phraseology and procedures for departure operations consistent with existing “Descend Via” phraseology and procedures in FAA Order 7110.65U. Both “Climb Via” and “Descend Via” will be added to the Pilot/Controller Glossary (PCG). Additionally, speed phraseology associated with “Climb Via” and “Descend Via” will be included in the PCG. Other than implementing use of “Climb Via”, there is no change in altitude clearance procedures.

Discussion: “Climb Via” is an abbreviated ATC clearance that requires compliance with the procedure lateral path, associated speed restrictions, and altitude restrictions along the cleared route or procedure. It may be issued with the initial ATC departure clearance via voice or Pre-Departure Clearance (PDC); or given as an airborne clearance. The “top altitude” of the SID is the published or ATC assigned altitude limit until cleared to climb higher by ATC. The filed/expected altitude is not relevant, and has no bearing on the SID unless communications are lost between the pilot and ATC (14 CFR § 91.185). If ATC removes an aircraft from the lateral or vertical path of a SID then subsequently re-clears an aircraft with a “Climb Via” clearance, the pilot is required to comply with all published restrictions of the SID.

“Descend Via” is an abbreviated ATC clearance that requires compliance with a published procedure lateral path and associated speed restrictions, and provides a pilot-discretion descent to comply with published altitude restrictions. The “bottom altitude” on a STAR or STAR runway transition is the lowest published or ATC assigned altitude authorized and is not to be mistaken for the minimum en route altitude (MEA).

Pilots shall respond to “Climb Via” or “Descend Via” clearances by repeating the clearance verbatim. Phrases such as “on the” or “descending on” a procedure are not acceptable and can create miscommunication and additional workload with unnecessary controller queries. When changing frequencies or on initial contact advise ATC of current altitude, “Climbing/Descending Via” procedure

name, and runway transitions if assigned. If assigned an altitude or speed not contained on the SID/STAR, advise ATC of restrictions assigned by the prior controller.

Examples:

“Cactus Seven Eleven leaving two thousand climbing via the Laura Two departure.”

“Delta Fifty Eight climb via SID except cross MKALA at or above seven thousand.”

“American Airlines 76 proceed direct ROCKR, cross ROCKR at or above one-zero thousand, climb via the Bizee Two departure.”

“United Thirty Five cleared to Johnston Airport, Scott One departure, JONEZ transition, Q-one forty five, climb via SID except maintain flight level one eight zero.”

“JetBlue Six Zero Two leaving flight level two one zero descending via the Ivane two arrival landing south.”

“Delta One Twenty One leaving flight level one niner zero, descending via the Eagul Five arrival runway two-six transition.”

Published speed restrictions are always mandatory. Published speed must be complied with regardless of the use of “Climb/Descend Via” clearance. ATC may issue speed adjustments with climb/descend via clearances. The term “resume published speed” is used to terminate ATC speed adjustments on routes where there are published speed restrictions. When ATC issues “resume normal speed”, this phraseology applies only to procedures or route segments where there are no published speed restrictions. Where published speed restrictions are no longer required, the phraseology used is “delete speed restrictions”. A Climb/Descend Via clearance cancels a previously assigned ATC speed restriction and all subsequent published speeds are mandatory.

ATC Instructions	Explanations
CLIMB VIA	An abbreviated ATC clearance that requires compliance with the procedure lateral path, associated speed restrictions and altitude restrictions along the cleared route or procedure. Subsequent issuance of a “maintain” clearance deletes published altitude restrictions.
DESCEND VIA	An abbreviated ATC clearance that requires compliance with a published procedure lateral path and associated speed restrictions and provides a pilot-discretion descent to comply with published altitude restrictions.
CLIMB/DESCEND AND MAINTAIN (altitude)	Pilot is expected to vacate current altitude and commence an unrestricted climb/descent to comply with the clearance. For aircraft already climbing via a SID, or descending via a STAR, published altitude restrictions are deleted unless reissued by ATC.
COMPLY WITH RESTRICTIONS	Requires aircraft joining or resuming a procedure to comply with published restrictions. May be used in lieu of reissuing individual restrictions.
RESUME PUBLISHED SPEED	Cancels ATC assigned speed restrictions. Pilot is expected to comply with speeds published on the SID/STAR.

RESUME NORMAL SPEED	Cancels ATC assigned speed restrictions and instructs pilot to return to normal aircraft speed where no speed restrictions are published. This does not relieve the pilot of those speed restrictions which are applicable to 14 CFR Section 91.117.
DELETE SPEED RESTRICTIONS	Cancels ATC assigned or published speed restrictions.

Additional guidance is available by viewing the following video: <http://www.faa.gov/tv/?mediaId=507>

Recommended Actions: Operators of aircraft, directors of safety, directors of operations, chief pilots, dispatch supervisors, fractional ownership program managers, and training managers should ensure that the following procedures are utilized.

1. Review AC 90-100A, Section 11, Pilot Knowledge Requirements and Training.
2. Confirm that navigation and communication systems are properly set and verified with the correct departure procedure information.
3. Read back all clearances verbatim.
4. When issued a “Climb Via” or “Descend Via” clearance, comply with all published procedure restrictions unless specifically told otherwise by ATC.
5. When in doubt, query the controller.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this InFO should be directed to Trent Bigler, Aviation Safety Inspector, AFS-470 at (202) 385-4504.