

GOVERNMENT/INDUSTRY AERONAUTICAL CHARTING FORUM
Instrument Procedures Group
(Transcribed/Re-Formatted)
HISTORY RECORD

FAA Control # 97-02-194

SUBJECT: Introduction of Term "DA"

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION: Very early in the TERPS history, the United States adopted the term "DH" to relate to the altitude for landing/missed approach decision making on the ILS. This has been an item for much discussion over the years since the letter "H" technically refers to a "height" rather than an *altitude*.

a. Jeppesen uses the publication format "DA(H)." to mean "Decision Altitude (and HAT)."

b. ICAO PANS-OPS uses the publication format "DAIH" to mean Decision Altitude/Height or "OCA/H" to mean "Obstacle Clearance Altitude/Height" for "convenience where both expressions are published." ICAO recognizes the difference by noting that "DA" or "OCA" is referenced to mean sea level, while "DH" or "OCH" is referenced to the threshold elevation.

In both cases, "Decision Altitude (DA)" is the primary terminology and minima element. FAA's use of the terminology "Decision Height (DH)" in this manner is both incorrect and misleading, especially when international use of our approach procedures is considered.

RECOMMENDATION: Adopt the term "DA" to refer to the altitude (MSL) at which a landing/missed approach decision must be made during an ILS, MLS, Baro VNAV, or PAR instrument approach; i.e., an approach procedure providing vertical guidance. Revise the US Terminal Procedures publications landing minima format accordingly. Eliminate the term "DH" concurrently with the adoption of "DA." Adoption of this term usage will finally offer parallel presentations to pilots who are familiar with or use alternatively either the NOS, Jeppesen, or international formats, thus providing a significant degree of standardization and increasing safety in the process. This recommended change should occur concurrently with an FAA proposed change to landing minima format to be presented to this Forum this date.

COMMENT: Affects various CRF's, AC's, and FAA Orders.

Submitted by: Submitted by: David W. Eckles
Flight Procedures Branch, AFS-440
Date: 10/24/97

INITIAL DISCUSSION (MEETING 97-02): Jack Corman, AFS-420 presents a David Eckles, AFS-440 recommendation to adopt the term "DA" to mean Decision Altitude, an altitude (MSL) at which a landing/missed approach decision must be made during an ILS, MLS, BARO VNAV, or PAR instrument approach. The recommendation is for revised US Terminal Procedures publications landing minima format accordingly, and elimination of the term "DH" concurrently

with the adoption of “DA”. AFS-440 continues to develop the position and will provide an update brief at next meeting. **Action:** Item Open (AFS-440)

MEETING 98-01: Jack Corman, AFS-420, briefed that the proposed change has been distributed for comment. It is expected that the term “DH” will be dropped. Don Pate, AFS-420 is waiting the results of the comment period. Tom Schneider, AFFSA expressed concern about the change considering that the term DH is still in ICAO usage. AFS-420 will provide an update brief at next meeting. **Action:** Item Open (AFS-420)

MEETING 98-02: Howard Swaney, AFS-420, stated that a briefing paper on this issue had been circulated internally and discussed at other procedural meetings and no comments had been received to date. No one in the TERPS subgroup had seen the paper. Jim Terpstra, Jeppesen, noted that the ‘DA’ term is satisfactory; however, it is imperative that the terms DA, DH, and DA(H) be defined accurately to reflect charting. This will also probably require a rule making change. AFS-420 accepted the IOU to solidify the FAA position and circulate it for outside agency comments. AFS-420 will report on this issue at the next meeting. **Action:** Item Open (AFS-420).

MEETING 99-01: The issue was covered in the Don Pate, AFS-420, briefing on the new RNAV chart. The plan is to promulgate the term “DA” in the Notice to Airmen’s Publication (NTAP), and then process a rule change for harmonization with ICAO PANS OPS. AFS-420 will work the issue and report at the next meeting. **Action:** Item Open (AFS-420)

MEETING 99-02: Dave Eckles, AFS-420, presented a status update paper on the issue. With the introduction of the new RNAV approach and depiction, and as presented in a Special Notice in the NTAP, the U.S. is adopting the term “DA” vs. “DH”. “DA” will now be used on all IAP’s with vertical guidance. Order 8260.48, RNAV Criteria, incorporates this terminology; TERPS is being revised accordingly; and an initiative is underway to amend 14CFR, Part 1. He recommends the issue be closed, with group concurrence. **Status:** Item Closed.