

FAA online request for information:

The Emergency Procedures section of the application states that in the event of a C-3 contingency, "the RQ-4 will squawk (b) (3) and make an emergency landing at a previously established divert airfield or ditching waypoint." The guidance from the UAPO is that the COA is supposed to capture what airspace will be used as the operating area. If the plan is to request divert locations, then those locations must be specified in the COA application. Ditching points should be identified as well. The Service Center understands that there are (b) (3) divert locations that (b) (3) has Letters of Agreement (LOAs) to operate: (b) (3)

(b) (3) The ESC would recommend that (b) (3) attach those LOAs, appropriate charts, approach procedures, and etc. to the application. Additionally, please include any information that would assist the UAPO determine that adequate mitigations are in place to satisfy the "see and avoid" requirement outside restricted or warning area airspace. Preplanned ditching points should also be charted. The application has expanded into the Gulf of Mexico. If there are any divert/ditching locations associated with that area of operation, please include those locations.

Navy response:

The Navy at this time is not requesting divert locations as part of the operational area. The statement regarding C-3 contingency was general information in response to the emergency procedures section of the online COA application format. If an emergency situation arises, then the aircraft will respond to that emergency as stated in the COA, as per the agreements (MOUs) that have been made with local ATC and field representatives, with proper real-time coordination, with the affected ARTCC as per the LOAs (both existing and in draft), with affected ARTCCs, and the Navy GH team. Even though this ahead of time coordination via MOUs and LOAs has been done, the actual emergency divert is an unplanned event, and therefore should not be part of the COA operational area definition.

The Navy's approved Global Hawk West Coast COA (dated 2 June 2008), Special Provisions section states: "6. (b) (3) shall provide the Western Service Center, Operation Support Group with current emergency divert location and approach procedures for dissemination to affected field locations." The Navy recommends similar language for the next East Coast COA.