



Approved by the Tactical Operations Committee November 2013

NOTAM Activity Prioritization

*Report of the Tactical Operations Committee in Response to Tasking from
The Federal Aviation Administration*

October 2013

NOTAM Prioritization

Contents

Background/Introduction	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Methodology.....	4
Assumptions.....	5
Guiding Principles	5
Key Observations, Findings and Outcomes.....	6
Recommendations	9
Appendix A: Members of the NOTAM Task Group.....	11
Appendix B: FAA Tasking Letter	12
Appendix C: Pilot's Bill of Rights Public Law 112-153.....	15

Background/Introduction

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is required under Section 3(c) of Public Law 112-153 also known as the 2012 Pilot's Bill of Rights, to "establish a NOTAM Improvement Panel, which shall be comprised of representatives of relevant nonprofit and not-for-profit general aviation pilot groups, to advise the Administrator in carrying out the goals of the NOTAM Improvement Program." The FAA would like to build on the progress already derived from-previously established efforts to digitize NOTAMs to comply with the provisions of this law.¹

The Tactical Operations Committee (TOC) will serve as the NOTAM Improvement Panel to further assist the Administration in crafting specific goals and priorities to meet the law's intent and make needed enhancements to the NOTAM program. In this capacity, the TOC is relying on the NOTAM Task Group to provide specific recommendations on issues related to the NOTAM program.

The work of the panel will yield an increasing amount of standardized digital NOTAMs that can be more easily filtered, sorted, and prioritized. This should result in a significant reduction in the volume of NOTAMs pilots must currently review and allow pilots to focus only on those NOTAMs relevant to their flight plan/path. As a result, pilots will be more confident in the quality and accuracy of this focused NOTAM information and the safety of the National Airspace System (NAS) will be improved.

The FAA has requested the following activities:

NOTAM Activity Prioritization:

- a. Establish the NOTAM Improvement Panel as a chartered function of the TOC and review recent and planned future NOTAM modernization efforts of the FAA; To provide a report documenting the following actions:
 - i. Ensure needed stakeholders are identified and participate in any task groups formed (see Appendix A).
 - ii. Examine and make recommendations/comments on recent and planned /future NOTAM modernization activities underway at FAA and offer possible additional recommendations (this may include education and outreach).
 - iii. Assess the interoperability of FAA NOTAM improvement efforts with the United States Department of Defense (DoD) and international stakeholders and provide feedback and recommendations on any actions needed.
- b. Provide input and recommendations for success criteria and compliance metrics, while documenting the following actions:
 - i. Recommend the criteria FAA needs to follow to successfully comply with the Pilot's Bill of Rights with regards to NOTAMs.

¹ Letter from Elizabeth L. Ray (Vice President, Mission Support Services) to Margaret Jenny (RTCA President) dated July 10, 2013.

- ii. Recommend one or more metrics for success to ensure continued compliance and to enable reporting to outside entities.

Executive Summary

The NOTAM Improvement Panel was convened under the TOC in Response to the Pilot's Bill of Rights. The Task Group was charged with identifying relevant stakeholders to serve on the committee, review the FAA's existing NOTAM modernization efforts, and recommend future NOTAM improvements, including consideration of DoD NOTAM modernization solutions. An overarching principle guiding the work is the importance of the information contained in NOTAMS to the safety of the aviation system.

The Task Group reached consensus on all findings and recommendations outlined in this report.

Efforts to address the tasking assignments derived from the Pilot's Bill of Rights benefited greatly from a NOTAM improvement program already underway at the FAA's Aeronautical Information Management (AIM) office, specifically in the area of NOTAM digitization. Digitization of NOTAMs represents a critical first-step in providing a NOTAM product which can be customized for the individual user's needs. It is essential that this work continue.

The full exploitation of NOTAM digitization will likely occur beyond the scope of the FAA's NOTAM effort but it will fall on the FAA to educate and promote the efforts of those third-party entities that elect to capitalize on the potential of NOTAM digitization. In addition, the FAA must continue to provide (and improve) a base-level interface designed to allow all users to perform sorting and filtering functions with the goal of distilling a large amount of data (represented by NOTAMs in their entirety) to the specific and unique needs of that user and in so doing, increase awareness of those particular NOTAMs which are critical to safe flight operations.

Methodology

To complete this initiative, the Task Group took the following steps in creating the recommendation:

1. Determined and reached consensus on the scope of the task that guided the process of deliberations and subsequent outcome of the Task Group recommendation.
2. Decided and identified the necessary participants from the broader aviation community to cover the scope of interests for the Task Group and asked members from additional organizations to join the Task Group.
3. Assessed recent and planned FAA NOTAM modernization efforts. This included evaluating the implementation timeframes.
4. Received briefing on DoD NOTAM System improvements to consider interoperability and best practices for FAA solution.
5. Established a set of assumptions which in turn led to the development of guiding principles from which recommendations were established for the purpose of this report.
6. Discussed and responded to questions received from the FAA.

7. Evaluated other possible approaches to improving NOTAMs and origination/distribution processes.
8. Developed the final recommendation.

Assumptions

The NOTAM Task Group made the following assumptions as a basis for its work:

- NOTAMs are necessary for aviation safety by providing information (not known sufficiently in advance to publicize by other means) concerning the establishment, condition, or change in any component (facility service or procedure of or hazard in the NAS) the timely knowledge of which is essential to personnel concerned with flight operation.
- The legacy method of NOTAM distribution² has limited functionality and needs continued improvement as the NAS evolves.
- The sheer volume of NOTAMs can distract the user which can in turn, deemphasize NOTAMs of a critical nature.
- A significant number of irrelevant NOTAMs can create a distraction for the user which can, in turn, contribute to a reduction in safety.
- Operators would benefit from Information selected on the basis to their particular needs.
- The ability to easily filter and sort NOTAMs has the potential of greatly increasing the relevancy of NOTAMs for that user.
- The information contained in NOTAMs is important and useful to any individual, entity or organization and not simply airmen alone.
- Full exploitation of the digital NOTAM effort will likely occur within the commercial marketplace from third-party developers.
- Any effort to further the development of a NOTAM user-interface must recognize the value of simplicity in making such a tool relevant to a wide range of potential users.

Guiding Principles

The NOTAM Task Group established the following principles to provide the FAA with responses to the questions and issues requested by the Tasking letter and Terms of Reference:

- The overriding goal of all future developments in NOTAM distribution is to make NOTAMs more specific and relevant, delivered to interested parties at the correct location, and at the appropriate time. This will have the important benefit of enhancing safety.

² Direct Feed (non-digitized), Teletype, Flight Service Station & Direct User Access Terminal(System)

- The digitization³ of NOTAM information is a critical step in creating modern tools to better manage the flow of information. (Baseline data used to extract digital NOTAMS should be done in accordance with RTCA DO-272.)
- The FAA should continue to provide basic NOTAM services equal to or better than current practices while modernizing the NOTAM system and while third-party development is likely, it is incumbent on the FAA to continue to provide sorting and filtering tools as part of their basic service.
- Full participation/adoption by NOTAM originators of the Federal NOTAM System (FNS) is critical to ensure the success of any effort to improve NOTAM distribution. (The non-NOTAM Manager participants should have a mechanism for filing NOTAMs that could be digitized (i.e., FSS)).
- The FAA should make standards-based data (i.e., AIXM) available for third parties use, including domestic and international users, and continue to promote such developments.
- Metrics are essential to evaluate the success of the NOTAM Modernization effort and should be consistent with established statistical practices.

Key Observations, Findings and Outcomes

The NOTAM Task Group discussed questions and/or statements provided by the FAA related to the NOTAM Modernization Effort and developed the following responses to each one.

An important first step was reaching a common understanding of the following terms to accurately determine options for NOTAM distribution:

- Sort - Customized ordering of information based on user preference.
- Filter - A tool that presents (or withholds) NOTAMs meeting specific user-defined criteria.
- Search - Request for specifically-defined information.
- Prioritize - Information organized into a specific hierarchy based on user preference.

FAA: Search options are needed to improve NOTAM distribution

Task Group Response:

An ideal NOTAM search option would include the ability draw all pertinent information from one web location and would include the following options (requested singularly or in combination):

- Airports/Aerodrome
- Runways
- Regions

³ Digitization: Refers to the direct digital entry, storage and dissemination of NOTAM data, in a machine-to-machine, standards-based, interpretable format. The information used to create a digital NOTAM may be geo-referenced and linked to static baseline data, versus a simple text string, used for analog NOTAMs.

- FIRs
- NOTAM Number
- Procedures
- NAVAIDs
- Text Search
- Effective Dates and Times
- By Specific Route

FAA: Filters needed to prioritize flight safety information

Task Group Response: An ideal NOTAM filter option would include the ability to draw all pertinent information from a single source location and would include the following options (requested singularly or in combination):

- Class
- Effective Dates and Times
- Procedure (i.e. SIDs, STARs)
- Altitude/Flight Level
- Keywords

FAA: Criteria needed to present NOTAMs that are specific and relevant to the airman's route

Task Group Response:

- Flight Plan Route
- Altitude
- Desired Route Width
- Time Based to include Departure and Enroute Time
- Specific Airport Criteria along the airman's route

FAA: Filtering mechanisms used by the DoD to be incorporated into FNS

Task Group Response: The DoD has demonstrated an enroute filtering option whose characteristics are described in the question/answer above.

FAA: Characteristics of a user-friendly format for the airman

Task Group Response: All future developments related to product interface must recognize and reflect the value of simplicity in creating a user-friendly format that will be accessible to a wide range of users and applications such as an Electronic Flight Bag and/or Multi-function Display. Such characteristics would include:

- Plain Text (when desired)
- “Smart” Capitalization (Capitalization consistently and exclusively used to highlight specific words or abbreviations for emphasis purposes)
- Graphical NOTAMs⁴ to the maximum extent possible
- Integration of Artificial Intelligence technology to facilitate ease of use (e.g. pattern recognition)
- The ability to create a user profile option that would help customize, abbreviate and simplify the user’s experience
- Print friendly
- Appropriate notation that once NOTAMs have been filtered, all NOTAMs may no longer be visible.

FAA: Uses of a public archive

Task Group Response: Uses of a public archive include, but are not limited to:

- Operational Analysis
- Statistical Analysis
- Trends
- Event Reconstruction
- Enforcement Action
- Training
- Design and Development

FAA: NOTAM information to be archived

Task Group Response: All NOTAMs in their entirety should be retained.

FAA: Length of time for NOTAM information to remain in archive

Task Group Response: Digital data storage is increasingly economical and there are significant benefits in having the ability to research historic NOTAM data. To best utilize the value in historic NOTAM data, the Task Group recommends that original FAA provided NOTAMs be archived consistent with FAA policy for similar types of information, but no less than 3 years.

FAA: Search options needed for the public interface of the NOTAM archive

Task Group Response: All search and filter mechanisms available for real-time NOTAM retrieval should be made available for the NOTAM archive with the addition of a date-ranging option.

⁴ Recognizing that not all NOTAM information is presented graphically.

Recommendations

Consistent with the direction from the FAA in the Tasking to the Tactical Operations Committee to serve as the NOTAM Improvement Panel as created under the Pilot's Bill of Rights (Public Law 112-153), the Task Group includes representatives from the following areas of the aviation industry⁵:

- Air Carriers
- Airline Pilots
- Airports
- Cargo Operators
- Department of Defense
- Airline Dispatchers and others involved in operations
- Helicopter Operators
- General Aviation (Pilots and Business Aviation Operators)
- Labor Organizations
- Aviation Research and Development
- State Aviation Officials
- NOTAM producers

The FAA should:

- Continue to promote and support NOTAM modernization through the AIM office.
- Develop filter options leveraging the DoD's prototype characteristics to define a flight route request in terms of planned routing, altitude/flight level, width of search, departure and Enroute times, and customization selections designed to identify "suitable" airports Enroute (e.g. runway length, width, load bearing capability, approach capabilities).
- Define, create and support a base-level NOTAM interface that combines the elements described in the "Key Observations, Findings and Outcomes" section of this report and that test groups from various aviation backgrounds be employed to beta-test and refine any developments in this area prior to deployment. Organizations representing various segments of the aviation community could be enlisted to help identify volunteers who would be willing to participate in efforts to test and refine NOTAM developments thereby helping to reduce the likelihood that unproductive and inefficient tools reach production status.

⁵ The Task Group reserves the right to reach out to other relevant participants in the future (i.e., Alaska FSS, Lockheed Martin (FSS), DUAT(S), and individual airport operators).

- Continue the efforts already underway to educate third-party developers in the potential of products based on digitized NOTAMs.
- Develop a plan to educate users in the practice of sorting and filtering NOTAMs with emphasis on those tools currently available and that additional training be provided as both a refresher and as an introduction to new features. Such an effort could take the form of a tutorial, ideally in video format, which could be accessed from the FAA's NOTAM website. In addition, a quick reference guide should be developed for download in PDF format.
- Undertake an effort to communicate to and educate U.S. airport operators in the use and value of NOTAM Manager as a means of creating NOTAMs and that goals be established in support of these efforts. It may be necessary to establish a date beyond which NOTAMs could only be created using NOTAM Manager. In such a case, it would fall on the FAA to create a timeline which allows for such a conversion in an orderly manner. While benefits of the NOTAM digitization effort will become increasing apparent in the coming years, complete exploitation of this potential will not occur until all NOTAMs are created through an interface, such as NOTAM Manager, which digitizes the information at point of origin.
- Modify NOTAM Manager to allow Flight Service Specialist to use as an interface for creating NOTAMs from those originators who are not immediately capable of doing so themselves.
- Expedite the effort to digitize all remaining NOTAM categories to include airspace, procedures, TFR, pointer NOTAMs, international, and military.
- Provide funding in support of efforts to create geo-referenced data for all taxiways and ramps within the NAS thereby expanding the potential use of graphical NOTAMs.
- Develop a comprehensive approach to aeronautical information in which required flight information is not necessarily categorized and sourced separately but is instead drawn and assembled from all available information and is based on the unique needs of a particular flight. While this goal may not be immediately achievable, steps can be taken now to begin to digitize and organize all flight information with the goal of creating an interface where all pertinent flight information (not just NOTAMs) is provided upon user request.

Appendix A: Members of the NOTAM Task Group

Members of the NOTAM Task Group

Chris Baum	Air Line Pilots Association	Bob Lamond	National Business Aviation Association
Dave Bradshaw	Federal Aviation Administration	Christopher Langone	ARINC Incorporated
Mark Cardwell	FedEx Express (Co-Chair)	Jeffrey Miller	International Air Transport Association
Andy Cebula	RTCA, Inc.	Jim Mills	U.S. Air Force
Adam Gerhardt	TASC, Inc.	David Newton	Southwest Airlines
Matt Griffin	Airports Council International – North America	Henry Ogrodzinski	National Association of State Aviation Officials
Steve Habicht	Federal Aviation Administration	Steve Serur	Air Line Pilots Association
Shaelynn Hales	Federal Aviation Administration	Glenn Sigley	Federal Aviation Administration
Kathlyn Hoekstra	Federal Aviation Administration	Ashish Solanki	Maryland Aviation Administration
Jack Hurley	Delta Air Lines, Inc.	Edwin Solley	Southwest Airlines
Ezra Jalleta	The MITRE Corporation	Harold Summers	Helicopter International Association
Christian Kast	United Parcel Service	Brandi Teel	RTCA, Inc.
Des Keany	American Airlines, Inc.	Robert Utley	National Air Traffic Controllers Association
Tom Kramer	Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (Co-Chair)	David von Rinteln	Hewlett Packard
		Michael Williams	Hewlett Packard
		Diana Young	Federal Aviation Administration

Appendix B: FAA Tasking Letter



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Mission Support Services
800 Independence Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20591

JUL 10 2013

Ms. Margaret T. Jenny
President
RTCA, Inc.
1150 15th Street, NW
Suite 910
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Ms. Jenny:

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is required under Section 3(c) of Public Law 112-153, also known as the 2012 Pilot's Bill of Rights, to "establish a NOTAM Improvement Panel, which shall be comprised of representatives of relevant nonprofit and not-for profit general aviation pilot groups, to advise the Administrator in carrying out the goals of the NOTAM Improvement Program." The FAA would like to build on the progress already made with "digital NOTAMs" to comply with the provisions of this law. We believe having the Tactical Operations Committee (TOC) serve as the NOTAM Improvement Panel will further assist the Agency in crafting specific goals and priorities to meet the law's intent and make needed enhancements to the NOTAM program.

We believe the work of the panel will yield an increasing amount of standardized digital NOTAMs that can be more easily filtered, sorted, and prioritized. This result should yield significant reductions in the volume of NOTAMs pilots must currently review and allow pilots to focus only on those NOTAMs relevant to their flight plan/path. As a result, pilots will be more confident in the quality and accuracy of this focused NOTAM information and the safety of the NAS will be improved.

We request the Tactical Operations Committee complete the following tasks:

Task 1 – Establish the NOTAM Improvement Panel as a chartered function of the TOC and review recent and planned future NOTAM modernization efforts of the FAA

We will provide documentation as needed as well as subject matter expertise to assist the TOC and task groups in its deliberations.

- To ensure needed stakeholders are identified and participate in any task groups formed.
- To examine and make recommendations/comments on recent and planned /future NOTAM modernization activities underway at FAA.

- To assess the interoperability of FAA NOTAM improvement efforts with the United States Department of Defense (DoD) and international stakeholders to provide feedback and recommendations on any actions needed.

FAA requests completion of this task by October 2013.

Task 2 – Provide input and recommendations for success criteria and compliance metrics

As stated in Section 3(b) of Public Law 112-153, the goals of the NOTAM Improvement Program are:

- (1) To decrease the overwhelming volume of NOTAMs an airman receives when retrieving airman information prior to a flight in the national airspace system.
- (2) To make the NOTAMs more specific and relevant to the airman's route and in a format that is more useable to the airman.
- (3) To provide a full set of NOTAM results in addition to specific information requested by airmen.
- (4) To provide a document that is easily searchable.
- (5) To provide a filtering mechanism similar to that provided by the DoD Notices to Airmen.

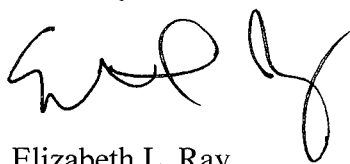
The FAA and industry stakeholders need to understand what criteria need to be established to ensure compliance under the law and there needs to be common metrics to easily ascertain whether FAA is successful in achieving the above listed goals. We request that the TOC:

- Recommend the criteria that the FAA needs to follow to successfully comply with the Pilot's Bill of Rights with regards to NOTAMs.
- Recommend one or more metrics for success to ensure continued compliance and to enable reporting to outside entities.

We request the TOC provide an interim report on this tasking in October 2013 with completion of this task in January 2014.

We believe there could be additional opportunities to involve the TOC in taskings to make improvements to the FAA's NOTAM system but initial efforts will focus on those related to the mandates in the Pilot's Bill of Rights.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth L. Ray
Vice President, Mission Support Services
Air Traffic Organization

Appendix C: Pilot's Bill of Rights Public Law 112-153

Public Law 112–153
112th Congress

An Act

To amend title 49, United States Code, to provide rights for pilots, and for other purposes.

Aug. 3, 2012
[S. 1335]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Pilot’s Bill of Rights”.

Pilot’s Bill of Rights.
49 USC 40101 note.

SEC. 2. FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS AND ELIMINATION OF DEFERENCE.

49 USC 44703 note.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Any proceeding conducted under subpart C, D, or F of part 821 of title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, relating to denial, amendment, modification, suspension, or revocation of an airman certificate, shall be conducted, to the extent practicable, in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Federal Rules of Evidence.

(b) **ACCESS TO INFORMATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided under paragraph (3), the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration (referred to in this section as the “Administrator”) shall provide timely, written notification to an individual who is the subject of an investigation relating to the approval, denial, suspension, modification, or revocation of an airman certificate under chapter 447 of title 49, United States Code.

Notification.

(2) **INFORMATION REQUIRED.**—The notification required under paragraph (1) shall inform the individual—

(A) of the nature of the investigation;

(B) that an oral or written response to a Letter of Investigation from the Administrator is not required;

(C) that no action or adverse inference can be taken against the individual for declining to respond to a Letter of Investigation from the Administrator;

(D) that any response to a Letter of Investigation from the Administrator or to an inquiry made by a representative of the Administrator by the individual may be used as evidence against the individual;

(E) that the releasable portions of the Administrator’s investigative report will be available to the individual; and

(F) that the individual is entitled to access or otherwise obtain air traffic data described in paragraph (4).

(3) EXCEPTION.—The Administrator may delay timely notification under paragraph (1) if the Administrator determines that such notification may threaten the integrity of the investigation.

(4) ACCESS TO AIR TRAFFIC DATA.—

(A) FAA AIR TRAFFIC DATA.—The Administrator shall provide an individual described in paragraph (1) with timely access to any air traffic data in the possession of the Federal Aviation Administration that would facilitate the individual's ability to productively participate in a proceeding relating to an investigation described in such paragraph.

(B) AIR TRAFFIC DATA DEFINED.—As used in subparagraph (A), the term “air traffic data” includes—

- (i) relevant air traffic communication tapes;
- (ii) radar information;
- (iii) air traffic controller statements;
- (iv) flight data;
- (v) investigative reports; and

(vi) any other air traffic or flight data in the Federal Aviation Administration's possession that would facilitate the individual's ability to productively participate in the proceeding.

(C) GOVERNMENT CONTRACTOR AIR TRAFFIC DATA.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Any individual described in paragraph (1) is entitled to obtain any air traffic data that would facilitate the individual's ability to productively participate in a proceeding relating to an investigation described in such paragraph from a government contractor that provides operational services to the Federal Aviation Administration, including control towers and flight service stations.

(ii) REQUIRED INFORMATION FROM INDIVIDUAL.—The individual may obtain the information described in clause (i) by submitting a request to the Administrator that—

- (I) describes the facility at which such information is located; and
- (II) identifies the date on which such information was generated.

(iii) PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO INDIVIDUAL.—If the Administrator receives a request under this subparagraph, the Administrator shall—

- (I) request the contractor to provide the requested information; and
- (II) upon receiving such information, transmitting the information to the requesting individual in a timely manner.

(5) TIMING.—Except when the Administrator determines that an emergency exists under section 44709(c)(2) or 46105(c), the Administrator may not proceed against an individual that is the subject of an investigation described in paragraph (1) during the 30-day period beginning on the date on which the air traffic data required under paragraph (4) is made available to the individual.

(c) AMENDMENTS TO TITLE 49.—

(1) AIRMAN CERTIFICATES.—Section 44703(d)(2) of title 49, United States Code, is amended by striking “but is bound by all validly adopted interpretations of laws and regulations the Administrator carries out unless the Board finds an interpretation is arbitrary, capricious, or otherwise not according to law”.

(2) AMENDMENTS, MODIFICATIONS, SUSPENSIONS, AND REVOCATIONS OF CERTIFICATES.—Section 44709(d)(3) of such title is amended by striking “but is bound by all validly adopted interpretations of laws and regulations the Administrator carries out and of written agency policy guidance available to the public related to sanctions to be imposed under this section unless the Board finds an interpretation is arbitrary, capricious, or otherwise not according to law”.

49 USC 44709.

(3) REVOCATION OF AIRMAN CERTIFICATES FOR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE VIOLATIONS.—Section 44710(d)(1) of such title is amended by striking “but shall be bound by all validly adopted interpretations of laws and regulations the Administrator carries out and of written agency policy guidance available to the public related to sanctions to be imposed under this section unless the Board finds an interpretation is arbitrary, capricious, or otherwise not according to law”.

49 USC 44710.

(d) APPEAL FROM CERTIFICATE ACTIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Upon a decision by the National Transportation Safety Board upholding an order or a final decision by the Administrator denying an airman certificate under section 44703(d) of title 49, United States Code, or imposing a punitive civil action or an emergency order of revocation under subsections (d) and (e) of section 44709 of such title, an individual substantially affected by an order of the Board may, at the individual’s election, file an appeal in the United States district court in which the individual resides or in which the action in question occurred, or in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. If the individual substantially affected by an order of the Board elects not to file an appeal in a United States district court, the individual may file an appeal in an appropriate United States court of appeals.

(2) EMERGENCY ORDER PENDING JUDICIAL REVIEW.—Subsequent to a decision by the Board to uphold an Administrator’s emergency order under section 44709(e)(2) of title 49, United States Code, and absent a stay of the enforcement of that order by the Board, the emergency order of amendment, modification, suspension, or revocation of a certificate shall remain in effect, pending the exhaustion of an appeal to a Federal district court as provided in this Act.

(e) STANDARD OF REVIEW.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In an appeal filed under subsection (d) in a United States district court, the district court shall give full independent review of a denial, suspension, or revocation ordered by the Administrator, including substantive independent and expedited review of any decision by the Administrator to make such order effective immediately.

(2) EVIDENCE.—A United States district court’s review under paragraph (1) shall include in evidence any record of the proceeding before the Administrator and any record of the proceeding before the National Transportation Safety

Board, including hearing testimony, transcripts, exhibits, decisions, and briefs submitted by the parties.

49 USC 44701
note.

SEC. 3. NOTICES TO AIRMEN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) DEFINITION.—In this section, the term “NOTAM” means Notices to Airmen.

Deadline.

(2) IMPROVEMENTS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration shall begin a Notice to Airmen Improvement Program (in this section referred to as the “NOTAM Improvement Program”)—

(A) to improve the system of providing airmen with pertinent and timely information regarding the national airspace system;

(B) to archive, in a public central location, all NOTAMs, including the original content and form of the notices, the original date of publication, and any amendments to such notices with the date of each amendment; and

(C) to apply filters so that pilots can prioritize critical flight safety information from other airspace system information.

(b) GOALS OF PROGRAM.—The goals of the NOTAM Improvement Program are—

(1) to decrease the overwhelming volume of NOTAMs an airman receives when retrieving airman information prior to a flight in the national airspace system;

(2) make the NOTAMs more specific and relevant to the airman’s route and in a format that is more useable to the airman;

(3) to provide a full set of NOTAM results in addition to specific information requested by airmen;

(4) to provide a document that is easily searchable; and

(5) to provide a filtering mechanism similar to that provided by the Department of Defense Notices to Airmen.

Establishment.

(c) ADVICE FROM PRIVATE SECTOR GROUPS.—The Administrator shall establish a NOTAM Improvement Panel, which shall be comprised of representatives of relevant nonprofit and not-for-profit general aviation pilot groups, to advise the Administrator in carrying out the goals of the NOTAM Improvement Program under this section.

Deadline.

(d) PHASE-IN AND COMPLETION.—The improvements required by this section shall be phased in as quickly as practicable and shall be completed not later than the date that is 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

49 USC 44703
note.

SEC. 4. MEDICAL CERTIFICATION.

(a) ASSESSMENT.—

Deadline.

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall initiate an assessment of the Federal Aviation Administration’s medical certification process and the associated medical standards and forms.

(2) REPORT.—The Comptroller General shall submit a report to Congress based on the assessment required under paragraph (1) that examines—

(A) revisions to the medical application form that would provide greater clarity and guidance to applicants;

(B) the alignment of medical qualification policies with present-day qualified medical judgment and practices, as applied to an individual's medically relevant circumstances; and

(C) steps that could be taken to promote the public's understanding of the medical requirements that determine an airman's medical certificate eligibility.

(b) GOALS OF THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION'S MEDICAL CERTIFICATION PROCESS.—The goals of the Federal Aviation Administration's medical certification process are—

(1) to provide questions in the medical application form that—

(A) are appropriate without being overly broad;

(B) are subject to a minimum amount of misinterpretation and mistaken responses;

(C) allow for consistent treatment and responses during the medical application process; and

(D) avoid unnecessary allegations that an individual has intentionally falsified answers on the form;

(2) to provide questions that elicit information that is relevant to making a determination of an individual's medical qualifications within the standards identified in the Administrator's regulations;

(3) to give medical standards greater meaning by ensuring the information requested aligns with present-day medical judgment and practices; and

(4) to ensure that—

(A) the application of such medical standards provides an appropriate and fair evaluation of an individual's qualifications; and

(B) the individual understands the basis for determining medical qualifications.

(c) ADVICE FROM PRIVATE SECTOR GROUPS.—The Administrator shall establish a panel, which shall be comprised of representatives of relevant nonprofit and not-for-profit general aviation pilot groups, aviation medical examiners, and other qualified medical experts, to advise the Administrator in carrying out the goals of the assessment required under this section. Establishment.

(d) FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION RESPONSE.—Not later than 1 year after the issuance of the report by the Comptroller Deadline.

General pursuant to subsection (a)(2), the Administrator shall take appropriate actions to respond to such report.

Approved August 3, 2012.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S. 1335:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 158 (2012):

June 29, considered and passed Senate.

July 23, considered and passed House.

