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FEDERAL AVIATION AGENCY
BUREAU OF AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C.

May 2, 1961

CIVIL AIR REGULATIONS DRAFT RELEASE NO. 61-9

SUBJECT: Regulation of Aircraft Speed

The Bureau of Air Traffic Management has under consideration a proposal which would regulate the speed of arriving aircraft in the airspace below 14,500 feet mean sea level within 50 nautical miles of the destination airport. The reasons therefor are set forth in the explanatory statement of the attached proposal which is being published in the Federal Register as a notice of proposed rule making.

The Agency desires that all persons who will be affected by the requirements of this proposal be fully informed as to its effect upon them and is therefore circulating copies in order to afford interested persons ample opportunity to submit comments as they may desire.

Because of the large number of comments which we anticipate receiving in response to this draft release, we will be unable to acknowledge receipt of each reply. However, you may be assured that all comments will be given careful consideration.

It should be noted that comments must be submitted in duplicate to the Docket Section of the Federal Aviation Agency, Room B-316, 1711 New York Avenue, N. W., Washington 25, D. C., prior to July 10, 1961.

D. D. Thomas

Director, Bureau of Air Traffic Management

FEDERAL AVIATION AGENCY
BUREAU OF AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

[14 CFR Part 60]

[Reg. Docket No. 728 ; Draft Release No. 61- 9]

AIR TRAFFIC RULES

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING

Regulation of Aircraft Speed

Pursuant to the authority delegated to me by the Administrator (14 CFR Part 405), notice is hereby given that the Federal Aviation Agency has under consideration a proposal to amend Part 60 of the Civil Air Regulations to establish a rule to regulate the speed at which aircraft shall be flown during the arrival phase of instrument flight rules (IFR) and visual flight rules (VFR) operations.

Interested persons may participate in the making of the proposed rule by submitting such written data, views or arguments as they may desire. Communications should be submitted in duplicate to the Docket Section of the Federal Aviation Agency, Room B-316, 1711 New York Avenue, N. W., Washington 25, D. C. All communications received prior to July 10, 1961, will be considered by the Administrator before taking action upon the proposed rule. The proposals contained in this notice may be changed in the light of comments received. All comments submitted will be

available for examination by interested persons in the Docket Section when the prescribed date for the return of comments has expired. Because of the large number of comments which we anticipate receiving in response to this draft release, we will be unable to acknowledge receipt of each reply.

There are currently no specific requirements relative to aircraft speed in Part 60 with the exceptions of the speed limitations of Sections 60.30 (c) and 60.18 (f) which apply to helicopters operating at reduced speed and to operations conducted within a High Density Air Traffic Zone. Draft Release 60-17, published in the Federal Register on October 7, 1960 (25 F.R. 9868), proposes to eliminate High Density Air Traffic Zones and, among other things, establish a maximum speed limit in the vicinity of certain airports. Draft Release 60-17 is limited in that it applies only to a small segment of airspace around certain airports and therefore does not deal with all of the problems toward which this proposal is directed.

Reduced aircraft speed increases the ability of the pilot to see and avoid other aircraft during flight in visual flight rules (VFR) weather conditions. It also

enhances the pilot's capability to comply with the procedures associated with instrument flight rules (IFR) operations. Since the air traffic situations in terminal areas are constantly changing, the pilot operating under IFR within such areas must be prepared, with little prior notice, to enter a holding pattern, to turn his aircraft to a new course or in other ways to interrupt an unrestricted descent from en route cruising altitude to landing. To readily comply with such air traffic control clearances or instructions, the speed of the aircraft must be limited in such a manner as to permit maneuvering without using the excess amount of airspace typically required by operations at high speeds.

This proposal would simplify the provision of separation between aircraft by a greater standardization of speed and would facilitate the application of control procedures by improving the response of aircraft to pilot actions.

Aircraft performance characteristics are such that the great majority of aircraft can safely descend at 250 knots or less indicated air speed with a minimum penalty in

increased flight time and increased fuel consumption. However, certain types of jet aircraft, such as tactical jet aircraft, may not be operated safely or effectively at 250 knots indicated air speed. In recognition of operational requirements, this proposal considers the necessity for maintenance of high power settings to preclude windshield icing and loss of maneuverability. Another factor in considering a speed limit for high performance jet aircraft is the low rate of descent which would result if these aircraft were required to descend at lower speeds. Such a requirement would result in lengthening the flight paths of descending aircraft, thus increasing the airspace required for high altitude approaches. In consideration of these factors, the speed limit for those aircraft which are unable to comply with the 250 knot limitation would be the minimum speed required by the operating limitations or military normal operating procedures.

It is proposed that the speed limitation be made applicable to both IFR and VFR operations in both controlled and uncontrolled airspace within 50 nautical miles of the airport at which the aircraft will land or practice approaches. This area would encompass the airspace

within which terminal holding and maneuvering normally begins. It would also include the area wherein a concentration of arriving and departing aircraft creates congestion of air traffic.

The altitude of 14,500 feet mean sea level is proposed as the upper limit of applicability. This would coincide with the base of the continental control area and would recognize the more stringent VFR weather minimums applicable to flight in that area. It would permit descent from cruising or holding altitude to traffic pattern altitude with a minimum penalty in time and fuel consumption.

Aircraft operating at speeds in excess of 250 knots indicated air speed would be required to reduce speed prior to entering the applicable airspace. Since the air traffic controller may be effecting longitudinal separation between aircraft based upon a ground speed being made good by the arriving aircraft, it is necessary that Air Traffic Control be informed at the time cruising air speed is reduced. This is consistent with a current statement in the Flight Information Manual that "... At any time the airspeed at cruising

altitude between reporting points varies or is expected to vary from that given in the flight plan by plus or minus 10 knots, this information should be forwarded to Air Traffic Control."

The proposed rule would apply to aircraft proceeding to an airport for the purpose of conducting practice approaches, regardless of whether landing is effected. The word "arriving" as used to establish applicability in the proposed rule is intended to include aircraft conducting, or proposing to conduct, practice approaches.

In consideration of the foregoing, it is hereby proposed that Part 60 of the Civil Air Regulations be amended by adding a new Section 60.27, Aircraft Speed , to read as follows:

60.27 Aircraft Speed. Below 14,500 feet mean sea level and within 50 nautical miles of the airport of destination, no person shall operate an arriving aircraft at an indicated air speed in excess of 250 knots (288 mph) unless the operating limitations or

military normal operating procedures require a greater minimum air speed, in which case the aircraft shall not be flown in excess of such speed.

D. D. Thomas

Director, Bureau of Air Traffic Management

Issued in Washington, D. C., on May 2, 1961

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