

File

Cancelled

HQ-650

Federal Aviation Agency



ADVISORY CIRCULAR

AC NO: 73-1

SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE

EFFECTIVE :
3/11/68

SUBJECT : ESTABLISHMENT OF ALERT AREAS

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1. **PURPOSE.** This Advisory Circular announces the establishment of alert areas and sets forth the procedures which the Federal Aviation Administration will follow in establishing such areas.
 2. **REFERENCES.** Section 307(b) of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958; Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) Part 73.
 3. **BACKGROUND.** The special use airspace structure has been altered periodically since the FAA initiated its airspace program in 1959. Policies relating to the designation of prohibited areas and restricted areas have been changed; intensive student jet training areas have been established; flight test areas have been abolished; and special rules have been promulgated which limit freedom of flight in varying degrees. However, warning areas and caution areas have remained unchanged.

Warning areas will continue to be charted as a separate category of airspace within international airspace to inform pilots of areas in which hazards may exist.

Caution areas, prior to 1959, were established by the military services with the recommendation of the former Air Coordinating Committee and, to a limited degree, are still recognized. None, however, have been established since the FAA initiated its airspace program. C-488, Pensacola, Florida, is the only remaining caution area and will be reassigned as an alert area or restricted area - thus eliminating the term "caution area" from the airspace structure.

As the result of a comprehensive two-year study, the FAA decided to modify the special use airspace structure. The first step was the addition of Subpart C, Prohibited Areas, to FAR Part 73. This is the second step, the establishment of alert areas. The FAA is still studying restricted areas.

4. POLICY. The FAA will establish and chart alert areas to inform pilots of concentrated student training or other unusual aerial activity of operational significance. The number of alert areas will be kept to a minimum; otherwise they become meaningless. They will only be established after a determination that information concerning the activity would be of operational value to the flying public.

There are no special rules for flight in an alert area; for example, the right-of-way rules of FAR Sec. 91.67 apply there as elsewhere. The establishment of alert areas does not impose any flight restrictions or communication requirements, although Flight Service Stations in the vicinity may broadcast information regarding the use being made of the area as circumstances dictate.

Operations which may be hazardous to other aircraft are not conducted within alert areas; such activity is confined within restricted areas.

5. CRITERIA. These are the criteria for determining whether an alert area should be established;
- a. General. The activity must be nonhazardous, with all flight activity conducted under visual flight rules.
 - b. Horizontal Boundaries. To the extent possible, alert areas will be established so as to avoid Federal airways, jet routes, major terminal areas, and high volume VFR flyways. After an alert area is established, the designation of Federal airways and jet routes through these areas will be kept to a minimum.
 - c. Vertical Dimensions. The ceiling and floor will be established at levels which contain the activity within the minimum airspace. The ceiling will not extend into positive control area. Within a control zone, the floor will be established at least 4,000 feet above ground level.

d. Time Assignment. Hours of regular scheduled use will be specified.

e. Types of Operations. Only the following types of operations will be considered.

(1) Concentrated Student Training. A high volume of flight operations at one or more airports at a given location. Singly or jointly, the volume of activity should exceed 250,000 local operations annually and be generated primarily by student training (fixed-wing and/or rotary-type aircraft). A local operation is an aircraft arrival at or departure from an airport in which the aircraft:

(a) Operates in the local traffic pattern or within sight of the tower.

(b) Is known to be departing for, or arriving from, flight in local practice areas.

(c) Executes simulated instrument approaches or low passes at the airport.

(2) Unusual Aerial Activity. This type of activity is harder to define and must be individually considered as to its operational significance to the flying public. As an example, an alert area may be established where a recognized VFR flyway transits an area which regularly contains a specialized type of air traffic and where prior knowledge of such traffic would significantly enhance aviation safety.

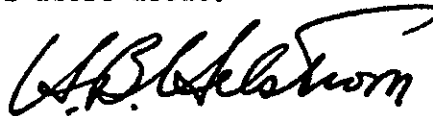
6. ESTABLISHING ALERT AREAS.

a. Initiating Action. Proposals for the establishment of alert areas should be submitted to the appropriate regional or area office at least four months in advance of the desired effective date. They will be processed under nonrule-making procedures. Proposals should include the information listed in Attachment 1.

b. Processing. Upon receipt of a proposal for an alert area, the regional or area office will process the proposal under established FAA procedures and forward it to FAA Washington Headquarters for final action.

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- c. Charting. Alert areas will be depicted on aeronautical charts and flagged with information regarding time of use, altitudes employed, and type of activity conducted. They will be identified by the letter "A" followed by two or more digits.
7. REVIEW AND REASSIGNMENT OF EXISTING AREAS. All special use airspace areas established by nonrule-making action which qualify for alert areas will be so converted. Other special use airspace will not be affected by the establishment of alert areas.



Harold B. Helstrom
Acting Director
Air Traffic Service

INFORMATION TO BE SUBMITTED
WITH ALERT AREA PROPOSAL

A proposal to establish an alert area will include the following information:

1. Title - A short definitive description of the proposal.
2. Purpose - A comprehensive explanation as to why the action is proposed.
3. Location and Dimensions
 - a. A description of the airspace requested by geographic coordinates or other appropriate references that clearly defines the area's perimeter.
 - b. Minimum and maximum altitude in feet above mean sea level or flight level, as appropriate.
 - c. A graphic presentation of the proposal on maps and aeronautical charts, as appropriate.
4. Data on Activities to be Conducted
 - a. A detailed list of activities to be conducted in the area by all organizations using the area for the purpose for which it is requested.
 - b. Time, expressed in local time, daily operations normally are scheduled to begin and end.
 - c. Average number of hours (daily) during which the area will be used.
 - d. Days per week, weeks per month, or months per year (as appropriate) the area will be used.
 - e. If the area is to be used for aircraft operations:
 - (1) Number and type of aircraft normally involved in performing activities for which the area is established.
 - (2) Altitudes to be used in daily aircraft operations (expressed in feet MSL or flight levels, as appropriate).