Cancelled See 22.1

Federal Aviation Agency

ADVISORY CIRCULAR

AC NO: AC 90-22
AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL AND GENERAL OPERATIONS
EFFECTIVE: 2/17/65

SUBJECT: AUTOMATIC TERMINAL INFORMATION SERVICE (ATIS)

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1. PURPOSE. This circular provides information concerning the establishment and operation of Automatic Terminal Information Service (ATIS).

2. BACKGROUND.

   a. Terminal controllers are required to transmit routine noncontrol weather and airport information to each arriving and departing aircraft contacted. These messages may become so complex and lengthy that the meaning and value of subsequent control instuctions might be seriously impaired. The requirement to exchange this information between the controller and pilot is resulting in critical radio frequency channel congestion at high activity terminal locations.

   b. The Federal Aviation Agency conducted operational tests at San Francisco, Chicago O'Hare and New York Kennedy Airports to determine the feasibility of automatically broadcasting routine noncontrol information in the terminal area. The tests concluded that ATIS provided relief to the problem of frequency channel congestion, provided the controller more time for solving traffic problems and permitted the pilot to obtain the information at times when cockpit duties were least pressing and to listen to as many repeat broadcasts as he may desire.

3. DESCRIPTION.

   a. Automatic Terminal Information Service (ATIS) is the continuous broadcast of recorded noncontrol information in high activity terminal areas. Its purpose is to improve controller effectiveness and to relieve frequency congestion by automating the repetitive transmission of essential but routine information.

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b. ATIS messages contain routine information such as ceiling, visibility, wind, altimeter setting, instrument approach and runways in use, and an identifying code word.

Example:

"THIS IS WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT INFORMATION BRAVO. CEILING MEASURED TWO THOUSAND, OVERCAST, VISIBILITY SIX, SMOKE. WIND ONE SIX ZERO DEGREES AT FIVE. ALTIMETER TWO NINER NINER TWO. VOR RUNWAY ONE FIVE APPROACH IN USE. LANDING RUNWAY ONE EIGHT. DEPARTURES ON RUNWAY ONE FIVE. NOTAM, GEORGETOWN RADIO BEACON OUT OF SERVICE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. INFORM WASHINGTON APPROACH OR GROUND CONTROL ON INITIAL CONTACT THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION BRAVO."

c. Messages are automatically broadcast on the voice channel of a TVOR/VOR/VORTAC located on or near the airport, or on a discrete VHF control tower frequency. The messages are updated as necessary to keep the information current.

d. Pilots hearing the broadcast inform the tower or approach controller on initial contact that they have received the information by repeating the code word appended to the message, thus obviating the need for the terminal controller to issue the information.

Example:

"...I HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION BRAVO."

e. Terminal controllers issue pertinent information to pilots who do not acknowledge receipt of the ATIS message or who acknowledge receipt by a code word which differs from that assigned to the current message.

4. CRITERIA. FAA personnel will be guided by the following criteria in originating and updating ATIS messages:

a. Message Content and Sequence of Information.

(1) Airport identification and phonetic alphabet code.

(2) Weather information (ceiling, sky condition, visibility, wind direction and velocity and pertinent remarks).

(3) Altimeter setting.

(4) Instrument approach in use.

(5) Landing runway/s.

(6) Take-off runway/s.

(7) Pertinent NOTAMs and Airman Advisories.

(8) Pertinent information unique to individual terminal area.

(9) Repeat of phonetic alphabet code with request that pilot acknowledge receipt of ATIS message on initial contact.

Note: Time and RVR measurements will not be included in ATIS messages, but will be issued to pilots in accordance with current practices.

b. Updating ATIS Messages.

(1) Every effort will be made to keep ATIS messages as brief and concise as practicable. NOTAMs can undesirably increase the length of the message. Therefore, only those NOTAMs which affect the departure and arrival system should be included. Normally, an ATIS message will not exceed 30 seconds.

(2) Each ATIS message will be identified by a specific phonetic alphabet code. The first recording of each day will be coded ALPHA. Subsequent updated messages will be assigned succeeding alphabet codes (BRAVO, CHARLIE, etc.); thus, the same alphabet code will not be used again until all code letters in the alphabet have been used sequentially.

(3) A new recording will be made when there is a:

(a) Regular hourly weather report issued that differs from the previous broadcast.

(b) Special weather report issued.

(c) Change in the type of instrument approach.

(d) Change in take-off or landing runways.

(e) Change in other information of the previous broadcast.

Important Note: Whenever the ceiling or visibility is below the highest circling minimum published for the airport, and frequently changing weather conditions exist, the broadcast may contain the following information in lieu of the ceiling and visibility elements.

"CEILING AND VISIBILITY WILL BE ISSUED BY APPROACH CONTROL."

5. IMPLEMENTATION.

a. Initially, ATIS is being established at the following FAA tower airports:

Boston	Kansas City Municipal
New York Kennedy	St. Louis
Washington National	Chicago O'Hare
Atlanta	Denver
Miami	Van Nuys
Houston	Los Angeles
Dallas Love Field	San Francisco

b. A national program has been developed to provide ATIS at approximately 60 locations by the end of 1965.

c. A listing of locations currently providing ATIS, hours of operation and frequencies of voice outlets is contained in the Airman's Information Manual.

6. PILOT PARTICIPATION. The success and effectiveness of ATIS is largely dependent upon cooperation and participation of airspace users. Although participation is voluntary, pilots are urged to cooperate in the ATIS program since it relieves frequency congestion on approach control, ground control and local control channels.

for Lee E. Warren, Director
Air Traffic Service