

FILE

Cancelled
See - 38A

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ADVISORY CIRCULAR

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT: USE OF PREFERRED IFR ROUTES

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1. PURPOSE. This Advisory Circular outlines the background, intent and requested actions pertaining to the use of preferred IFR routes.
 2. REFERENCES.
 - a. Order 7430.1, Subject: Preferred Airways/Routes for IFR Operations (Preferred IFR Routes).
 - b. Notice N 7430.67, Subject: Use of Preferred IFR Routes.
 - c. Airman's Information Manual, Part 3.
 3. BACKGROUND.
 - a. There has always been and there will always be a "preferred route." Orville Wright in his historic flight of 120 feet selected a preferred route. Usually the preferred route is selected because it provides the most favorable weather or is better economically. These "best" routes are invariably selected by the majority of the users. So long as the volume of traffic is not too high, the routes desired can be accommodated. However, once the volume increases to a point of presenting control problems, e.g., overloading a particular sector, causing traffic delays, etc., an improved means of systemically routing the traffic is necessary.
 - b. The ATC system of preferred routes for the low altitude stratum was implemented several years ago when the buildup in traffic in this stratum required some positive action. At that time it was not necessary to include the high altitude traffic in the preferred route system because of the relatively low volume. The tremendous growth of the jet fleet has changed this. In the northeast section of the United States alone the volume of high altitude traffic has increased 300 percent during the period 1963-1967.

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- c. To alleviate the problems being encountered in the centers, various means of restrictions are placed into effect by several centers through the issuance of flow control messages. Since many of these flow control messages imposed "preferred routes" which often were incompatible with the flow of traffic in adjacent centers, it was necessary to issue reference a.

4. OPERATIONAL POLICY. It is our intent in the following subparagraphs to establish some broad guidelines on the application of preferred routes. Two important ingredients to a successful ATC system are understanding and cooperation with the other party; in your case, the controller. He has his problems, too. A companion directive, reference b, is being issued to promote a better understanding of the objectives of this program to the air traffic control facilities. Therefore, we solicit the cooperation of the pilots to use the preferred routes judiciously and to consider the following:

- a. Filing for an Inappropriate Direction Route. Many of the preferred IFR routes are established for one direction only. If a pilot should inadvertently file for a route in a direction opposed to the flow of traffic, the ATC facility will undoubtedly reclear the aircraft via the preferred route conforming to the flow of traffic. If the pilot, however, does not wish to follow the preferred IFR route, ATC facilities will attempt to provide the pilot with an alternate route in proximity to the route desired.
- b. Adverse Weather on Preferred IFR Route. Often there may be weather present or forecast for a segment of the preferred route. You, as a pilot in planning your flight, know this but the controller does not unless the adverse weather is within his own area. We could not expect controllers to know the weather throughout the entire country. If the adverse weather is within the center's area of the departure airport, the ATC facility will attempt to provide an alternate route to avoid the undesirable weather. However, if the adverse weather is several centers away, we request that the preferred IFR route be filed and a rerouting requested en route from the center adjacent to the center where the weather exists. In reference b, we have requested that ATC facilities have such alternate routes readily available. The questions of what is considered adverse weather for flight and who makes the determination must be decisions of the pilot. We can only expect judicial application of the pilot's prerogative to request rerouting.

c. Mandatory Use. The use of preferred IFR routes by pilots is not mandatory. There is no regulation requiring their use nor is it intended to issue a rule making them mandatory. This has been stated in reference a and b. Again, we solicit pilot cooperation and understanding of the problem in handling the vast volume of traffic through the ATC system.

5. MISCELLANEOUS. The importance of cooperation and understanding in the use of preferred routes cannot be overemphasized. We know some small problems may occur but we believe confidently these can be resolved directly with the facility. Those problems which appear to be continual should be brought to our attention for action. You may address your letters to: Director, Air Traffic Service, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue, Washington, D.C. 20590.


William M. Flener, Acting Director
Air Traffic Service