



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

InFO

Information for Operators

InFO 19001
DATE: 2/4/19

Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info

An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.

Subject: Global Aeronautical Distress Safety System (GADSS) and Aircraft Tracking (AT)

Purpose: This InFO provides guidance and information to all commercial operators on AT when conducting international operations.

Background: After the Malaysian flight MH370 aircraft disappeared on March 8, 2014, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) initiated a committee to review and make recommendations for improving AT and GADSS. The committee incorporated their findings into ICAO Annex 6 Part I Operation of Aircraft, International Commercial Air Transport-Aeroplanes, Section 3.5 with an effective date of November 8, 2018.

Discussion: The AT recommendations are now in effect and apply to any commercial operator with a takeoff mass over 27,000 Kilogram (kg) (60,000 Pounds (lbs)) and a seating capacity greater than 19 seats when operating in international airspace. When operating in Oceanic areas the recommendations apply to aircraft with a takeoff mass greater than 45,500 kg (100,300 lbs) and a seating capacity greater than 19 seats. The GADSS recommendations will be addressed in future Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) guidance. For AT the operator should:

1. Establish a 4D (latitude, longitude, altitude and time) AT capability to track airplanes throughout its area of operations;
2. Track the position of the airplane through automated reporting at least every 15 minutes for that portion of the operation where Air Traffic Services position information is greater than 15 minute intervals whether in oceanic airspace or over remote continental airspace; and
3. Establish procedures approved by the local certificate holding district office, for the retention of tracking data to be used in determining the last known position of the aircraft and assist in search and rescue operations if needed.

For additional guidance, reference ICAO Circular 347 Aircraft Tracking Implementation Guidelines.

Recommended Action: Directors of Safety and Directors of Operations should ensure AT procedures are established, any appropriate risk assessments are completed and the retention of this information is coordinated and shared during a search and rescue operation.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this InFO should be directed to the Air Transportation Division's Air Carrier Operations branch at 202-267-8166.

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