



STATE OF FLORIDA

DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

RICK SCOTT
Governor

BRYAN W. KOON
Director

Approved: SERT Air Operations Branch

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AIRSPACE CONTROL AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

1. AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT

The role of the Air Operations Branch (AOB) in airspace management is to implement and maintain a system of positive coordination and communication throughout the aviation response operation, taking into account the vast differences in mission capabilities and roles of various aviation organizations. The AOB works closely with the FAA and other partners to ensure effective controls are established to enhance the safety of flight and provide efficient airspace management.

The procedures within this plan are designed to ensure flight safety and minimize impacts on standard ATC operating procedures. Pilots shall operate in accordance FAA regulations and published Notice to Airmen (NOTAMS), which may include Temporary Flight Restrictions and Airspace Coordination Areas. The AOB has established a plan for airspace control de-confliction to be used during an initial response.

The AOB may provide Special Instructions (SPINS) or other appropriate documents as required such as an example of a pilot kneeboard card. The kneeboard should identify points of contact for Air Mission Requests, flight tracking, emergency procedures, TFR's, and communications requirements for each operational area. The information packet will also provide for the coordination of appropriate transponder MISSION codes and communications frequencies for aircraft operating in the designated areas.

It is imperative that all pilots and aviation support personnel are briefed on airspace and frequency information. This information should be disseminated to all aircraft operators via county EOCs, local EMS and law enforcement, local Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS), airports and FBOs.

Current FAA NOTAMs as well as current and forecast weather briefing information for the disaster area will be made available to aircraft operators supporting Sate Emergency Response Team (SERT) missions.

2.1 AIRSPACE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

All charted airspace remains in effect unless otherwise stated in a NOTAM. Pilots are reminded to comply with all Code of Federal Regulations and comply with all airspace requirements. The most critical elements needing proper execution for the success of this plan are reiterated in the SPINS. The SPINS have been distributed to all emergency responder groups for their internal distribution. Also included in the SPINS is an airspace de-confliction plan for the responder groups to reference for operating within saturated, uncontrolled airspace. This also assists in developing a collaborative de-confliction plan in areas where ATC services are rendered unavailable due to outages and issues debilitating the ATC system.

2.2 AIRBORNE COMMAND AND CONTROL (C2)

All airborne command and control platforms such as P3/E3/E2/CRCs will provide “mission code” assignments and asset tracking. **They SHALL not perform any type of Air Traffic Control Services and are not authorized to do so.**

3.0 Aircraft Operations

3.1. TRAFFIC ADVISORIES: Due to the high volume of rotary wing aircraft operations, air traffic advisories are on a workload permitting basis by ATC. Pilots must remain vigilant and utilize “See and Avoid” at all times. All aircraft will use the local altimeter setting as directed by the appropriate Air Traffic Control facility.

3.2. FLIGHT TRACKING PROGRAM: All agencies conducting aircraft operations on an air mission request form from the Florida Air Operations Branch should provide call sign, aircraft type (fixed/rotary), aircraft model, departure location and associated data (SAR/hoist capable for planned aircraft operations for the next 24 hours for a pre-assigned discrete beacon code to the Florida Air Operations Branch. This information will be used by the Crisis Response Center and the airborne C2 to provide mission assignments. E-mail the information to airops@em.myflorida.com not later than 3:00 p.m. daily.

3.3. DISCRETE BEACON CODE: All VFR aircraft will be on a discrete beacon code as assigned by the Air and Marine Operations Center, Crisis Response Center for mission assignments. Aircraft operations not on the flight tracking program must contact the Crisis Response Cell at (951)867-3354/3353/3352/3333/3332 or e-mail AMOC.CRC@CBP.DHS.GOV. **ALL ISSUED “MISSION” BEACON CODES SHALL EXPIRE at MIDNIGHT.**

3.4. AIR MISSION REQUEST ASSIGNMENTS: Air mission request will be made available to the Crisis Response Center once entered into EM Constellation and assigned to the FL Air Operations Branch. Upon completion, pilots should contact the

airborne on the air-to-air sector to close out missions. Dynamic SAR missions should provide information to the appropriate airborne command node on the VHF air-to-air frequency for the appropriate air sector. When the assigned air mission request is complete; pilots advise the airborne command of their availability for the next mission assignment in addition to providing the mission summary to close the completed Air Mission Request. Example: Coast Guard helicopter departs from base and checks-in with airborne C2 node on air-to-air frequency: “Omaha 20, this is CG6014, HH-60, checking in. CG6014, Omaha 20, mission assignment 234, squawk Mode 3 5214” (and passes mission information). CG6014 repeats confirmation back to airborne command node and proceeds on with mission. Once mission completed; “Omaha 20, CG6014 checking-out mission number 234, 3 rescued and dropped at Miami Hospital, awaiting next mission” or “RTB for fuel”.

3.5 EXAMPLE PILOT COMMS TO ATC (FOR KNEEBOARD):

Request to enter ATC controlled airspace (A, B, C, D, TFR, etc.):

“MIA approach, G12345, UH-60, mission code XXXX, requests to enter the Class (X) from the (direction), destination (hospital, downtown building, landing zone, etc.).”

Upon completion of initial mission and departing for a subsequent assignment or leaving the airspace:

“MIA approach, G12345, UH-60 at the (hospital, downtown building, landing zone, etc.) on mission code XXXX requesting to depart the Class (X) to the northwest, altitude XXXX or proceed to (next location: hospital, downtown building, landing zone, etc.)”

NOTE: If the controller attempts to change your beacon code, advise the controller you are on an assigned discrete “mission code” which must remain unchanged throughout your flight.