

not be assigned the same altitude during turn-on to the final approach course. Therefore, each aircraft being turned on to the triple, simultaneous final approach courses will be assigned altitudes that differ by a minimum of 1,000 feet. In order to accommodate increased aircraft operations, the Houston Class B airspace area must be modified to provide additional altitudes in the lower stratum to the east and west of IAH.

Six commenters stated that aircraft from satellite airports west of Houston would have to travel significantly further than they presently do to get to practice areas. The FAA does not agree with these commenters. The FAA estimates that these aircraft would only have to fly approximately five additional nautical miles (NM) to remain clear of the Houston Class B airspace area. The planned modifications should not significantly increase the cost to pilots who wish to conduct practice maneuvers clear of the planned areas of the Houston Class B airspace area.

Four commenters stated that the FAA should use additional prominent landmarks instead of radials to describe the boundaries of the Class B airspace area. Specifically, it was suggested that the west boundary of Area C (southwest of HOU) could be described by using Highway 59 instead of radials and DME's from the Point Of Origin at HOU. This suggestion would increase the size of the Houston Class B airspace area approximately three NM and overlies the Sugar Land Airport Class D airspace area to the southeast. After consideration by FAA and users in the Sugar Land area, it was determined that additional restrictions to users would be created with minimal benefit. Additionally, the availability of prominent landmarks in the Houston Class B airspace area is minimal. Therefore, this suggestion is not being incorporated into the proposal. The current and planned boundary descriptions consist of a combination of prominent landmarks, latitude/longitude coordinates, and radials/arcs from the Humble VORTAC and the Point of Origin. The FAA believes that this mix of descriptors effectively assists pilots in identifying the lateral boundaries of the Houston Class B airspace area.

One commenter recommended that the FAA establish a VFR corridor directly above IAH to aid VFR aircraft transiting the Houston area. The FAA does not agree with the recommendation to establish a VFR corridor. The establishment of a corridor would reduce the efficiency of

managing aircraft operations in the Houston Class B airspace area. The airspace over and between IAH and HOU is the busiest area due to aircraft departing and arriving IAH and HOU. Adding additional complexity to this area would not be in the best interest of safety or management of aircraft operations.

One commenter suggested developing north-south VFR flyways to the east and west of IAH to help pilots transition the Houston terminal area while remaining clear of the Houston Class B airspace area. Since the inception of the Houston Class B airspace area, several low altitude VFR transition routes have been published on the reverse side of the Houston VFR terminal area chart to assist pilots.

Four commenters expressed concern with the planned VFR flyway west of the airport because the area is already heavily traveled by VFR aircraft arriving and departing the busy west satellite airports. These commenters felt that the flyway would encourage pilots to fly in an already congested area and would not enhance safety or expedite travel. The FAA has withdrawn its plan for a north-south VFR flyway to the west of IAH. If the proposed modifications are implemented, most of the existing flyways remain the same except for adjustments to the suggested altitudes in Area C and Area D, to the east and west of IAH.

Notwithstanding the proposed modifications in this notice, we will continue to work with affected users to develop new and/or modify current flyways to assist in navigating in this busy terminal area.

The Proposal

The FAA is proposing an amendment to part 71 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR part 71) to modify the Houston Class B airspace area. Specifically, this action (depicted in the attached chart) proposes to expand the lateral limits of Area A to the east of IAH; expand the lateral limits of Area B to the east and west of IAH; expand the lateral limits of Area C to the east and west of IAH and to the southwest of HOU; and expand the lateral limits of Area D to the southwest of HOU to improve the containment of turbo-jet aircraft operating within the Houston Class B airspace area.

Area A. The FAA proposes to modify Area A by expanding the boundary of Area A to the northeast of IAH. This modification would incorporate into Area A, one segment of the Class B airspace that is currently contained within Area B. Specifically, to the northeast of IAH, the FAA proposes to

extend Area A to the north incorporating that part of Area B airspace that lies to the east on the extended instrument landing system (ILS) localizer course for Runway 26R, between the IAH 8 and 10 NM arcs. The effect of extending Area A as described would be to lower the floor of the Class B airspace in the affected segment from the current 2,000 feet mean sea level (MSL) to the surface. The reason for this change is to provide additional airspace needed to ensure that aircraft on the ILS approach to Runway 26R are contained within the Houston Class B airspace area.

Area B. The FAA proposes to modify Area B to the east and west of IAH. This modification would incorporate into Area B, two segments of the Class B airspace that are currently contained within Area C. Specifically, to the east of IAH, the FAA proposes to extend Area B to the east incorporating that part of Area C airspace that lies to the east on the extended ILS localizer course and downwind legs for Runway 26R, 26L, and 27, between the IAH 15 and 20 NM arcs. To the west of IAH, the FAA proposes to extend Area B to the west incorporating that part of Area C airspace that lies west on the extended ILS localizer course and downwind legs for Runway 8L, 8R, and 9, between the IAH 15 and 20 NM arcs. The effect of extending Area B as described would be to lower the floor of the Class B airspace in the affected segments from the current 3,000 feet MSL to 2,000 feet MSL. The reason for this change is to provide additional airspace needed to ensure that aircraft vectored for triple, simultaneous ILS approaches (with the required 1,000 feet vertical separation between aircraft) remain within the Houston Class B airspace area.

Area C. The FAA proposes to modify Area C to the east and west of IAH. This modification would incorporate into Area C, two segments of the Class B airspace that are currently contained within Area D. Specifically, to the east of IAH, the FAA proposes to extend Area C to the east incorporating that part of Area D airspace that lies to the east on the extended ILS localizer course and downwind legs for Runway 26R, 26L, and 27, between the IAH 20 and 30 NM arcs. To the west of IAH, the FAA proposes to extend Area C to the west incorporating that part of Area D airspace that lies to the west on the extended ILS localizer course and downwind legs for Runway 8L, 8R, and 9, between the IAH 20 and 30 NM arcs of the airport. The effect of extending Area C as described would be to lower the floor of the Class B airspace in the affected segments from the current 4,000