

Southeast Alaska. The Capstone initiative will establish Special GPS/WAAS enroute IFR airways that permit flight at significantly lower altitudes than those available on airways constructed from land based Navigational Aids (NAVAIDS). In addition, both Special and Public Standard Instrument Approach and Departure Procedures will be developed to/from airports throughout the region. The Special IFR enroute and arrival/departure procedures will be authorized for specific operators who have FAA approved equipment and training.

Additional Class E airspace is needed to enable operations under IFR to support the Capstone initiative. Specifically, this action proposes to establish controlled airspace extending from 1,200 feet above ground level (AGL) upwards, to the base of the Class E airspace extending upward from 14,500 feet above the ground, within an area beginning at lat. 58°54'25.2" N., long. 137°31'55.3" W. to lat. 58°38'33.2" N., long. 138°12'21.25" W., thence southeast along the offshore airspace 12 nautical miles west of and parallel to the shoreline to the point of intersection with the Alaska/Canada Border, thence along the Alaska/Canada Border to the point of beginning excluding that airspace designated for federal airways.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before January 5, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Send comments on the proposal to the Docket Management System, U.S. Department of Transportation, Room Plaza 401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590-0001. You must identify the docket number FAA-2003-16342/Airspace Docket No. 03-AAL-15, at the beginning of your comments. You may also submit comments on the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>. You may review the public docket containing the proposal, any comments received, and any final disposition in person in the Dockets Office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The Docket Office (telephone 1-800-647-5527) is on the plaza level of the Department of Transportation NASSIF Building at the above address.

An informal docket may also be examined during normal business hours at the office of the Regional Air Traffic Division, Federal Aviation Administration, Manager, Operations Branch, AAL-530, Federal Aviation Administration, 222 West 7th Avenue, Box 14, Anchorage, AK 99513-7587.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Derril Bergt, AAL-531, Federal Aviation Administration, 222 West 7th Avenue, Box 14, Anchorage, AK 99513-7587;

telephone number (907) 271-2796; fax: (907) 271-2850; e-mail: Derril.Bergt@faa.gov. Internet address: <http://www.alaska.faa.gov/at>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

Interested parties are invited to participate in this proposed rulemaking by submitting such written data, views, or arguments as they may desire. Comments that provide the factual basis supporting the views and suggestions presented are particularly helpful in developing reasoned regulatory decisions on the proposal. Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, aeronautical, economic, environmental, and energy-related aspects of the proposal.

Communications should identify both docket numbers and be submitted in triplicate to the address listed above. Commenters wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments on this notice must submit with those comments a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: "Comments to Docket No. FAA-2003-16342/Airspace Docket No. 03-AAL-15." The postcard will be date/time stamped and returned to the commenter.

All communications received on or before the specified closing date for comments will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposal contained in this notice may be changed in light of comments received. All comments submitted will be available for examination in the public docket both before and after the closing date for comments. A report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerned with this rulemaking will be filed in the docket.

Availability of Notice of Proposed Rulemaking's (NPRM's)

An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded through the Internet at <http://dms.dot.gov>. Recently published rulemaking documents can also be accessed through the FAA's web page at <http://www.faa.gov> or the Superintendent of Document's web page at <http://www.access.gpo.gov/nara>.

Additionally, any person may obtain a copy of this notice by submitting a request to the Federal Aviation Administration, Office of Air Traffic Airspace Management, ATA-400, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591 or by calling (202) 267-8783. Communications must identify both docket numbers for this notice. Persons interested in being placed on a mailing list for future

NPRM's should contact the FAA's Office of Rulemaking, (202) 267-9677, to request a copy of Advisory Circular No. 11-2A, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Distribution System, which describes the application procedure.

The Proposal

The FAA is considering an amendment to the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR Part 71) to establish additional Class E airspace over Southeast Alaska. The intended effect of this proposal is to: (1) Provide adequate controlled airspace for commercial air carriers and others conducting Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) operations in Southeast Alaska, (2) Validate new operational procedures and equipment in the IFR environment, (3) Provide an enroute IFR structure for operations that can be flown safely at significantly lower altitudes than those permitted on airways based on land based NAVAIDS, and (4) Provide IFR access via Public and Special approach and departure procedures to airports not otherwise able to connect to the IFR infrastructure. The Flight Standards Division within the Alaskan Region will authorize the use of specific Special procedures for properly equipped aircraft where the flight crews have received the appropriate training.

Satellite-based navigation and positioning is a core element of our National Airspace System (NAS) modernization plans, and is critical to achieving a seamless, efficient global aviation system. Over the period of the past few years, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has been working with commercial, military, and general aviation (GA) users to develop a global satellite-based navigation system independent of conventional ground based navigation aids. Alaska was selected to expand this program through a Research & Development demonstration program called Capstone.

The selection of Alaska for the demonstration project was recommended by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) in their 1995 "Safety Study of Aviation Safety in Alaska." In part this study concludes:

To the Federal Aviation Administration—Implement * * * a model program in the Arctic and southeast regions of Alaska to demonstrate a low altitude instrument flight rules (IFR) system that better fulfills the needs of Alaska's air transportation system. The model program should include the following components:

(1) The use of the global positioning system (GPS) as a sole source of navigational information for en route navigation and for nonprecision instrument approaches at a representative number of airports where