



Federal Aviation Administration

Memorandum

Date: **JAN 16 2015**

To: ARP Division Managers, ARP-610s, ARP-620s, Airport Planners, and Environmental Specialists
ATO Service Centers, Mission Support, Planning and Requirements:
AJV-E38, AJV-C39, and AJV-W39

From: Elliott Black, Director of Airport Planning and Programming, AF
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Subject: Requests for Release of FAA Recorded, Historical National Airspace System (NAS) Data for Airport Planning and Environmental Studies



This memorandum provides guidance to Office of Airports (ARP) field offices on the release of recorded, historical radar track and flight plan data that are commonly used by airports in a planning or environmental study that requires accurate operational flight data. These data are known as 'Recorded NAS Data.' An airport can request that recorded, historical NAS data be released by FAA using the data release process described below.

Note the subject of this memorandum is distinct from requests for 'real-time' NAS data that may be needed for surface surveillance or noise monitoring systems. Such requests are addressed under a separate APP-400 memorandum titled 'Requests for Release of FAA real-time NAS Data to Airports for Surface Situational Awareness and Noise Monitoring Programs' and dated 16-January-2015.

FAA Data Release per Order 1200.22E

FAA Order 1200.22E, dated January 20, 2012, outlines the requirements for FAA release of NAS data to external users, including airports.¹ The release of recorded historical data was presented to the NAS Data Release Board (NDRB) in July 2014, as outlined in FAA Order 1200.22E. The NDRB decided that release of historical information would not require additional NDRB review or approval. Based on this decision, a streamlined data release process for airport sponsors that require recorded NAS data to conduct a planning or

¹ Alternatively, data release can be requested with a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) on the web at www.faa.gov/foia. Data can also be purchased from external vendors, which does not require FAA approval. However, the primary means of data release for airport studies should be per FAA Order 1200.22E.

environmental study that will benefit the air transportation system has been developed and documented herein.

Data release requests should be initiated at the beginning of the planning or environmental project, so as to not delay the project schedule. This data release process should be utilized for AIP funded projects. The airport sponsor will submit a written request (email is preferred) for data release to their Airport District Office (ADO) or Regional Office (RO). The request must:

- Specify the dates, range around airport, and data fields needed;
- Briefly describe how the data will be used in the project; and
- Come from the airport sponsor and not the project consultant.

If the data release will support any planning or environmental study at an airport or system of airports, the ADO will endorse the data release. The data release request from the airport sponsor, and the ARP endorsement, is then be forwarded to the ATO Data Management Directorate (AJR-D) and APP-400:

- AJR-D: AJRDdatarequests@faa.gov
- APP-400: Kent Duffy

The typical timeframe for transmittal of the data to the airport sponsor is 10 business days, from the date the request is received by AJR-D.

Effectively, this is a streamlined process that affects how NAS data can be accessed by airports. Prior practices, such as an airport sponsor or its consultant directly contacting an Air Traffic Control (ATC) facility to request NAS data release, are not permitted by FAA Order 1200.22E.

An FAA Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), being conducted under the direction of the FAA, complies with FAA Order 1200.22E as the data being requested is recorded historical NAS data, as previously described. ARP should request the data release directly from AJR-D. A written request from the airport sponsor is not required.

FAA Sources of Recorded NAS Data

FAA maintains two primary repositories of recorded, historical NAS Data: [1] National Offload Program (NOP) and [2] Performance Data Analysis and Reporting System (PDARS). Both repositories collect and store similar IFR flight track data from FAA air surveillance systems. Availability of VFR flight track data is often limited as FAA does not always retain this data. Sensitive flight data, such as military operations or aircraft that have submitted a Block Aircraft Registration Request (BARR), will be filtered out. However, anonymized flight track data for military aircraft can be provided if needed by the project with additional coordination between the ADO/RO, AJR-2, AJR-D, and APP-400.

Data requests submitted to AJR-D will be fulfilled using NOP data. Generally, there is no cost to the airport sponsor for the NOP data, except in the case of an unusually complex data request. For AIP-funded projects, NOP data is the appropriate data source.

PDARS data is available for a discreet set of airports only. An airport sponsor can request to use PDARS data if supported by an FAA sponsoring office, including ARP. However, there is a charge for PDARS data and a reimbursable agreement must be coordinated with the FAA sponsoring office in advance. Coordination for accessing PDARS data can be originated by contacting the PDARS Program Office, AJR-G0 once an FAA sponsoring office has been identified. Note, an airport or its consultant may not directly purchase recorded NAS data from an FAA contractor that has access to such data by way of Government Furnished Information.

	National Offload Program (NOP)	Performance Data Analysis and Reporting System (PDARS)
ATO Office	ATO Data Management Directorate (AJR-D).	ATO System Operations, Performance Analysis Directorate (AJR-G)
Coverage	Available at most airports with radar coverage (as provided by either FAA or Department of Defense)	Available at numerous but not all airports
Data Refinement and Cost Implications	No cost to airport sponsors, except for extraordinary requests. Project consultant will need to refine the data for incorporation into geospatial datasets and spreadsheets for analysis.	While PDARS data can be a refined source for airport studies, coordination and funding in advance is required for the data release. Typically this requires a reimbursable agreement, or AIP grant funding per 49 USC 47173.