



# Advisory Circular

---

**Subject: ASSIGNMENT OF AIRCRAFT  
CALL SIGNS AND ASSOCIATED  
TELEPHONIES**

**Date: 09/10/2018  
Initiated by: AJR-2**

**AC No: 120-26M**

---

## SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1.1. PURPOSE

This Advisory Circular (AC) describes the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Air Traffic Organization (ATO) requirements and procedures for the assignment and authorization for use of aircraft call signs in the National Airspace System (NAS), specifically, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) three-letter designators (3LD), U.S. special designators, and local designators, and their associated telephonies. Guidance is provided to aircraft operators for requesting call signs and explains the assignment and the authorization process for their use domestically within the NAS and internationally.

### 1.2. AUDIENCE

The audience for this Advisory Circular includes, but is not limited to, anyone using ATO policy directives, including civil and governmental aircraft operators, FAA ATO employees, FAA Flight Standards, and any other persons involved within the aviation community.

### 1.3. CANCELLATION

This Advisory Circular cancels Advisory Circular 120.26L, dated Aug 25, 2016.

### 1.4. REGULATORY SOURCE

The regulatory sources for the assignment and authorized use of call sign designators and associated telephonies are published in FAA Order JO 7610.12, *Assignment and Authorization of Call Sign Designators and Associated Telephonies*.

### 1.5. EXPLANATION OF CHANGES

a. FAA Order JO 7610.12, *Assignment and Authorization of Call Sign Designators and Associated Telephonies*, is now the source document for this advisory circular. Subsequently, the procedures for assignment of call signs contained in FAA Order 7610.4, Chapter 17, Section 2, will be removed.

- b. Qualified flight schools can now request ICAO 3LDs. U.S. special call signs will no longer be issued to flight schools.
- c. New procedures are added for call sign requests by civil aircraft flights contracted through the Department of Defense (DOD) and call sign requests by U.S. Army National Guard/Reserve units.
- d. A clarification is added that flight servicing companies and charitable organizations require an FAA ATO System Operations Security approved security agreement before allowing 3<sup>rd</sup> party use of their company or organizational ICAO 3LD/telephony.
- e. New procedures are added for requesting a modification to an existing ICAO 3LD/Telephony or company name/address.
- f. Included are general edits and clarifications of the assignment processes for ICAO 3LDs and U.S. special call signs.
- g. A new paragraph is added with information regarding the FAA requirement for programmable ADS-B equipage.
- h. When section and paragraph titles in this advisory circular refer to aircraft call signs, the sections and paragraphs will discuss both aircraft call sign designators and associated telephonies.

## **SECTION 2. AIRCRAFT CALL SIGNS EXPLAINED**

### **2.1. WHY AIRCRAFT CALL SIGNS ARE USED**

The ability of air traffic control (ATC) to positively identify aircraft is fundamental to ensuring the security and safety of the National Airspace System (NAS). The use of authorized call sign designators and associated telephonies also improves communication between pilots and ATC by reducing distractions and easing frequency congestion. The FAA ATO is responsible for ensuring that every call sign is properly assigned and authorized, clearly related to the type of operation permitted, and is used within the NAS in accordance with its authorization. In addition, aircraft operators that conduct international business flights may need to obtain an ICAO 3LD and associated telephony for enhanced identification and security purposes, if recommended by FAA Flight Standards or Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

### **2.2. WHO CAN USE AN AIRCRAFT CALL SIGN**

Call sign designators and associated telephonies can be assigned and authorized by FAA ATO for U.S. registered civil aircraft, U.S. governmental aircraft, and certain U.S. military aircraft. Aircraft operated by commercial companies, government agencies, and private organizations may need call signs and telephonies for operations within the air traffic control (ATC) system. Flight servicing companies and organizations may also need ICAO 3LDs for addressing flight messages.

### 2.3. TYPES OF AIRCRAFT CALL SIGNS

The three types of call sign designators and telephonies authorized for use by FAA ATO and described in this advisory circular are as follows:

- a. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) three-letter designator (3LD) and associated telephony (see Section 4);
- b. U.S. Special call sign designator and associated telephony (see Section 5); and
- c. Local call sign designator and associated telephony (see Section 6).

**NOTE-**

*Except for certain ICAO 3LDs, this AC is not applicable for the assignment of military call signs which are assigned by the Department of Defense (DOD). The point of contact for U.S. Army aviation units requesting a call sign is the U.S. Army Aeronautical Services Agency via email at (<mailto:usarmy.belvoir.tradoc.list.usaasops@mail.mil>). For call sign requests from other military Services, contact ATO System Operations Security via email at [9-ATOR-HQ-IFOS@faa.gov](mailto:9-ATOR-HQ-IFOS@faa.gov) for the appropriate military representative.*

### 2.4. PRIORITY HANDLING FOR CIVILIAN AIR AMBULANCE FLIGHTS

For civilian air ambulance flights requesting priority handling by ATC, the pilot must state the word “MEDEVAC” in conjunction with the aircraft identification in radio transmissions. When the pilot states “MEDEVAC” before its FAA authorized call sign (ICAO 3LD, US Special, or local) or aircraft registration numbers/letters, ATC will provide priority handling in accordance with FAA Order JO 7110.65 as referenced below. For any MEDEVAC flight, there is no additional flight plan filing requirement, such as entering “MEDEVAC” in the remarks section. A “MEDEVAC” entry in the remarks section can be made for informational purposes only but is not considered a request for priority handling. The pilot will only receive priority handling from ATC by stating the word “MEDEVAC” in conjunction with the aircraft identification in radio transmissions.

**NOTE 1-**

*EXAMPLE OF A FLIGHT USING THE AIRCRAFT REGISTRATION NUMBER:*

- **NO PRIORITY:** For radio transmissions, use “November One Two Three Four Five”; when filing a flight plan, file as N12345.
- **PRIORITY HANDLING REQUESTED:** For radio transmissions, use “MEDEVAC One Two Three Four Five”; when filing a flight plan, file as N12345.

*EXAMPLE OF A FLIGHT USING AN ICAO 3LD AND ASSOCIATED TELEPHONY:*

- **NO PRIORITY:** For radio transmissions, use “AMERICAN One Twenty-Eight”; when filing a flight plan, file as AAL128.
- **PRIORITY HANDLING REQUESTED:** For radio transmissions, use “MEDEVAC AMERICAN One Twenty-Eight”; when filing a flight plan, file as AAL128.

*EXAMPLE OF A FLIGHT USING A LOCAL CALL SIGN:*

- **NO PRIORITY:** For radio transmissions, use “MID-ATLANTIC Three”; when filing a flight plan, file as MA3.
- **PRIORITY HANDLING REQUESTED:** For radio transmissions, use “MEDEVAC MID-ATLANTIC Three”; when filing a flight plan, file as MA3.

**NOTE 2-**

*VFR civilian air ambulance aircraft requesting priority handling via use of the word “MEDEVAC” in radio transmissions are not required to file a flight plan.*

**REFERENCE-**

*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 2-1-4, Operational Priority*

*FAA Order JO 7110.65, Para 2-4-20, Aircraft Identification*

*Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM), Para 4-2-4, Aircraft Call Signs*

## **SECTION 3. BEFORE REQUESTING AN AIRCRAFT CALL SIGN**

### **3.1. PROGRAMMABLE ADS-B EQUIPAGE REQUIREMENT**

Effective January 1, 2020, in accordance with provisions set forth in 14 CFR 91.225 and 14 CFR 91.227, authorization for use of a new or existing FAA authorized call sign (ICAO 3LD, U.S. special, local) in the NAS will require the aircraft operator’s ADS-B Flight Identification (FLT ID) to correspond with the aircraft identification filed in the flight plan. Use of an ADS-B transponder that has a pilot changeable call sign feature is strongly recommended. However, if an aircraft operator does not have a pilot programmable ADS-B transponder, the FAA authorized call sign may be used by presetting the FLT ID in the ADS-B equipment before flight. Otherwise, the pilot must use the aircraft registration number as their aircraft identification when filing their flight plan and for use during radio communications. If a holder of an FAA authorized ICAO 3LD, U.S. special call sign, or local call sign is unable to meet the ADS-B equipage requirements, the FAA may rescind the call sign. Additional information pertaining to ADS-B equipage is available on the FAA website at [https://www.faa.gov/nextgen/equipadsb/installation/call\\_sign/](https://www.faa.gov/nextgen/equipadsb/installation/call_sign/).

**NOTE-**

*1. Operators with a need to regularly change their call sign and/or flight number should utilize an ADS-B transponder with a pilot changeable (programmable) call sign feature. Example: N12345 flies as AAL128 on Mondays, AAL3020 on Tuesdays, and AAL148 and AAL510 on Wednesdays. It is likely unworkable for a mechanic to make all those ADS-B FLT ID changes before flight; therefore, the pilot must be able to enter the call sign and flight number into the ADS-B equipment from the cockpit prior to each flight.*

*2. Operators who never need or seldom need to change their call sign and flight number combination can use other methods to preset the permanent or seldom changed call sign and flight number combination in the ADS-B equipment so that it is configured to transmit correctly prior to flight. Example: N34567 always operates as RDDDL14, and never as RDDDL with a different flight number, and never as N34567; therefore, configuring the ADS-B equipment so that RDDDL14 is always transmitted as the ADS-B FLT ID is acceptable, and use of the RDDDL14 call sign and flight number will continue to be authorized after January 1, 2020.*

## **SECTION 4. ICAO 3LD CALL SIGNS**

### **4.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR ICAO THREE LETTER DESIGNATORS (3LD) AND ASSOCIATED TELEPHONIES**

a. ICAO 3LDs and associated telephonies are registered with and approved by ICAO, but aircraft operators must receive authorization from FAA ATO prior to use. ICAO 3LDs and associated telephonies are assigned in accordance with applicable policy and provisions set forth and specified in FAA instructions (including those in the aircraft operator's FAA operating certificate), security agreements, and this AC. ICAO 3LDs and associated telephonies are appropriate for:

(1) Scheduled Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 121 and part 135 aircraft operators.

**NOTE-**

1. *Part 121 aircraft operators are governed by 14 CFR, specifically, 14 CFR 121 "Operating Requirements: Domestic, Flag, and Supplemental Operations."*

2. *Part 135 aircraft operators are governed by 14 CFR, specifically, 14 CFR 135 "Operating Requirements: Commuter and On Demand Operations and Rules Governing Persons on Board Such Aircraft."*

(2) Chartered aircraft operators under any part of 14 CFR engaged in commercial international flight operations; or

(3) Other entities, such as corporations, qualified flight schools, flight servicing companies, government agencies, and charitable organizations.

b. Third party use of an FAA authorized ICAO 3LD and associated telephony, assigned to a flight servicing company or charitable organization, may only be approved via security agreement with ATO System Operations Security for aircraft operations within the NAS.

c. U.S. aircraft operators may require use of their ICAO 3LD and associated telephony by another aircraft operator (that operates under 14 CFR part 121, part 129, or as otherwise approved by ATO System Operations Security) for services contracted.

**NOTE-**

*AJR-2 approval authority for the use of a call sign does not constitute approval for any regulatory requirement of Department of Transportation (DOT) and/or Department of Homeland Security (DHS).*

d. When operating outside of their ICAO 3LD authorization, pilots are required to use the aircraft registration number as the aircraft identification for flight plan filing and radio communications.

e. ICAO requires ATO to conduct periodic audits to identify ICAO 3LDs/telephonies that are assigned to U.S. aircraft operators and registered with ICAO, but are no longer in use. An ICAO 3LD/telephony may be revised, reassigned, rescinded, or cancelled if not used for 3 years or more.

## 4.2. REQUESTING AN ICAO THREE LETTER DESIGNATOR (3LD) AND ASSOCIATED TELEPHONY

a. Applicants must submit requests (including modifications) for ICAO 3LDs and associated telephonies to FAA ATO as follows:

(1) Civil aircraft operators submit the request to ATO Aeronautical Information Services (AIS) via email ([callsigns@faa.gov](mailto:callsigns@faa.gov));

(2) Governmental aircraft operators (Federal, state, local, tribal, and law enforcement aircraft) submit the request to ATO System Operations Security via email ([9-ATOR-HQ-IFOS@faa.gov](mailto:9-ATOR-HQ-IFOS@faa.gov)).

b. Applicants must submit the following information to the appropriate ATO office (listed above) for validation that the request meets FAA requirements:

(1) Name and address of the aircraft operator or organization;

(2) Type of aircraft operation or service provided by the company or organization;

(3) Type of ADS-B (flight deck programmable or non-programmable) and transponder (see paragraph 3.1 for the FAA Programmable ADS-B equipage requirement);

(4) Identification of the 14 CFR part under which aircraft operations are to be conducted and, if applicable, a copy of the aircraft operator's FAA operating certificate;

(5) **(Civil applicants only)** Provide a copy of the aircraft operator's monthly published or projected flight schedule, including routes or areas of operation;

(6) (Optional) Provide a list of up to five preferred ICAO 3LDs and associated telephonies, listed in their desired order.

### **NOTE-**

*FAA ATO will consider the applicant's preferred list before assigning an ICAO 3LD/telephony. However, an alternate ICAO 3LD/telephony may be recommended for reasons of safety and security of the NAS (including conflict with duplicate call signs, similar sounding call signs, and military call signs).*

### **c. Civil applicants only:**

(1) ATO AIS will advise the civil applicant of the ICAO 3LD purchase fee (<mailto:https://www4.icao.int/3LD/Home/Fees>) and request the applicant consent to the fee prior to processing the ICAO 3LD request.

### **NOTE-**

*ICAO charges civil applicants a significant fee to purchase a Personal Identification Number (PIN), which is used to register a proposed ICAO 3LD/telephony or modify an existing ICAO 3LD/telephony. Civil applicants should not purchase a PIN on the ICAO 3LD web site until instructed by ATO AIS, otherwise the applicant risks forfeiture of the PIN fee.*

(2) If the civil applicant consents to the ICAO fee, ATO AIS will process the initial FAA request requirements (as described in subparagraph 4.2.b above) for validation. If the civil applicant does not consent to the ICAO fee, ATO AIS will not process the request.

(3) If the initial FAA request requirements are met, ATO AIS coordinates the request with ATO System Operations Security to further validate that use of the proposed ICAO 3LD/telephony is compliant with FAA security policies.

(4) If the request is unable to be validated, ATO AIS will provide an explanation to the civil applicant.

(5) If the request is validated, ATO AIS will assign the ICAO 3LD/telephony and direct the civil applicant to the ICAO 3LD web site (<mailto:http://www.icao.int/3LD>) to purchase a PIN for registration of the new ICAO 3LD/telephony.

(a) If ICAO approves the ICAO 3LD/telephony request, ATO AIS will issue a letter of authorization to notify the civil applicant of the effective date when the assigned ICAO 3LD/telephony is authorized for use.

**NOTE-**

*ICAO approval does not authorize the use of an ICAO 3LD/telephony. ICAO approval only registers the ICAO 3LD/telephony with ICAO. Only FAA ATO can provide the authorization for a U.S. operator to use an ICAO 3LD and associated telephony.*

(b) If ICAO disapproves the ICAO 3LD/telephony request, ATO AIS will recommend a different ICAO 3LD/telephony for the civil applicant to register on the ICAO web site.

**d. Governmental applicants only:**

(1) If the applicant's initial FAA request requirements (as described in subparagraph 4.2.b above) are validated, ATO System Operations Security will further review the request to validate that use of the proposed ICAO 3LD/telephony is compliant with FAA security policies.

(2) If the request is unable to be validated, ATO System Operations Security will provide an explanation to the governmental applicant.

(3) If both the initial FAA request requirements and FAA security policies are validated, ATO System Operations Security will assign the proposed ICAO 3LD/telephony to the governmental applicant.

(4) ATO System Operations Security will register the assigned ICAO 3LD/telephony directly on the ICAO 3LD web site.

**NOTE-**

*Governmental applicants are exempt from the ICAO 3LD fee and should not attempt to access the ICAO 3LD web site.*

(a) If ICAO approves the ICAO 3LD/telephony request, ATO System Operations Security will issue a letter of authorization to notify the governmental applicant of the effective date when the assigned ICAO 3LD/telephony is authorized for use.

(b) If ICAO disapproves the ICAO 3LD/telephony request, ATO System Operations Security will recommend a different ICAO 3LD/telephony to the governmental applicant prior to further ICAO registration.

## SECTION 5. U.S. SPECIAL CALL SIGNS

### 5.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR U.S. SPECIAL CALL SIGNS

U.S. special call sign designators and associated telephonies may be assigned and authorized by ATO System Operations Security for certain flight operations, normally of a short or limited duration, to enable special handling by ATC. ATO System Operations Security determines if U.S. special call sign designators and associated telephonies are operationally appropriate for use in the NAS.

a. ATO System Operations Security may authorize a U.S. special call sign designator/telephony for:

(1) Non-DOD governmental aircraft operations (federal, state, local, tribal, and law enforcement);

(2) Civil aircraft supporting governmental activities (non-DOD), including law enforcement (the contracting governmental agency must request the U.S. special call sign);

(3) Civil aircraft supporting emergencies or disasters;

(4) Civil aircraft that require special handling for security or governmental test purposes;

(5) Commemorative flights; or

(6) Civil aircraft participating in activities or events that ATO System Operations Security determines as appropriate for reasons of safety and security of the NAS.

b. ATO System Operations Security does not authorize U.S. special call signs for the following:

(1) Civil aircraft flights contracted through the DOD. Call sign requests for these tactical flights must be submitted through the DOD or the aircraft operator may request an ICAO 3LD and associated telephony (as described in paragraph 4.2).

(2) U.S. Army aviation units (Active duty/National Guard/Reserve). Call sign requests must be submitted via the U.S. Army Aeronautical Services Agency email ([usarmy.belvoir.tradoc.list.usaasaops@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.belvoir.tradoc.list.usaasaops@mail.mil)).

(3) Qualified flight schools. Nationally recognized part 61 and/or part 141 flight schools seeking an FAA authorized call sign for flight operations may request an ICAO 3LD and associated telephony (as described in Section 4).

**NOTE-**

*Flight school requests for U.S. special call signs are no longer accepted. Flight schools assigned an existing U.S. special call sign are not immediately affected, but may be at a future date.*

c. U.S. special call signs are meant for flight operations of a short or limited duration (in accordance with 47 CFR 87.107, *Station Identification*), however flight operations may be considered for longer duration if deemed appropriate by ATO System Operations Security for reasons of safety and security of the NAS.

**d.** U.S. special call sign designators can be used for filing flight plans and may be issued for a designated area of operation corresponding to the duration of an event or circumstances requiring special handling.

**e.** U.S. special call sign designators are comprised of four to five letters. The U.S. special call sign designator combined with the flight number serves as the aircraft identification for the ATC system; must not exceed seven total characters; and is used instead of the aircraft registration number for ATC security and operational purposes.

**f.** The U.S. special call sign designator, when pronounced, is normally the telephony unless a unique telephony is assigned by ATO System Operations Security.

**g.** When operating outside of their U.S. special call sign authorization, pilots are required to use the aircraft registration number as the aircraft identification for flight plan filing and radio communications.

## **5.2. REQUESTING A U.S. SPECIAL CALL SIGN**

**a.** Aircraft operators must make requests for U.S. special call sign designators and associated telephonies to ATO System Operations Security via email ([9-ATOR-HQ-IFOS@faa.gov](mailto:9-ATOR-HQ-IFOS@faa.gov)).

**b.** Aircraft operators must submit the following information for validation that the request meets FAA requirements:

- (1) Name and address of the aircraft operator or organization;
- (2) Type, purpose, and description of flight, operation, or event;
- (3) Aircraft type and number of aircraft participating;
- (4) Type of ADS-B (flight deck programmable or non-programmable) and transponder (see paragraph 3.1 for the FAA Programmable ADS-B equipage requirement);
- (5) Routes or areas of flight, operation, or event; and
- (6) Duration of flight, operation, or event.

**c.** If ATO System Operations Security determines the request does not meet FAA requirements or FAA security policies, an explanation will be provided to the applicant. (In certain instances, ATO System Operations Security may recommend an alternate U.S. special call sign to the applicant.)

**d.** ATO System Operations Security will approve, administer final assignment, and issue a letter of authorization to notify the applicant when the U.S. special call sign designator and associated telephony is authorized for use.

## SECTION 6. LOCAL CALL SIGNS

### 6.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR LOCAL CALL SIGNS

Local call sign/telephony designators are authorized for use only for local flight operations as specified in a letter of agreement (LOA) between the local air traffic control (ATC) facility(ies) and the requesting aircraft operator. LOAs concerning the use of aircraft call signs by local flight operators must conform to the following standards:

- a. Local call signs must not be assigned a three-letter designator to ensure they do not conflict with ICAO 3LDs. Local call signs may be assigned 2, 4, 5, and 6 letter call sign designators.
- b. Local call sign/telephony designators must not conflict with call signs and/or telephonies in use by military aircraft and other aircraft that operate in the local area.
- c. Local call signs are only authorized for communications and operations with ATC facilities that are signatories on the LOA.
- d. Local call signs are not authorized for filing flight plans outside the local area designated in the LOA.

**NOTE-**

*Aircraft operators (for example, aircraft manufacturers and law enforcement) that require IFR flight operations outside the designated local area, may qualify for a U.S. special call sign designator/telephony (as described in Section 5).*

### 6.2. REQUESTING A LOCAL CALL SIGN

- a. Aircraft operators must submit requests for local call sign designators and associated telephonies to the appropriate local FAA ATC facility.

**NOTE-**

*According to Army Regulation (AR) 95-2, Air Traffic Control, Airfield/Heliport, and Airspace Operations, U.S. Army aviation units are not authorized to obtain call signs or enter into call sign agreements with local or regional ATC agencies (i.e., local FAA ATC facilities). The point of contact for U.S. Army aviation units requesting a call sign is the U.S. Army Aeronautical Services office via email at [usarmy.belvoir.tradoc.list.usaasops@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.belvoir.tradoc.list.usaasops@mail.mil).*

- b. The local ATC facility will provide the applicant with the FAA requirements for requesting local call sign designators and associated telephonies.

**NOTE -**

*See paragraph 3.1 for the FAA Programmable ADS-B Equipage Requirement.*

- c. Local call signs are authorized for use through an LOA between the ATC facility(ies) and the aircraft operator.

## SECTION 7. RULES FOR USING AIRCRAFT CALL SIGNS

### 7.1. HOW TO USE ANY AUTHORIZED AIRCRAFT CALL SIGN

**a. Aircraft Identification.** The proper use of authorized call signs and telephonies is essential to ensuring the safety and security of the NAS by providing distinct aircraft identification for ATC. The authorized call sign designator, together with a flight number (see subparagraph 7.1.b below for more details), serves as the aircraft identification for the ATC system and is used instead of the aircraft registration number for ATC security and operational purposes. ATC identifies each of these aircraft within the NAS as follows:

(1) When the call sign designator is combined with a flight number to make up the aircraft identification; and

(2) When the telephony, in conjunction with the flight number, is used as the aircraft identification for radio communications with ATC.

**NOTE –**

*See paragraph 3.1 for the FAA Programmable ADS-B Equipage Requirement.*

**b. Use of Authorized Call Sign Designators.** To ensure proper aircraft identification for ATC, authorized call signs must meet certain requirements for use in the NAS.

(1) FAA authorized call signs must incorporate the following characteristics:

(a) The combination of call sign designator and flight number must not exceed seven alpha-numeric characters;

(b) To avoid similar or same call sign confusion, the call sign designator letters must immediately be followed in sequence only by the numerals of the flight number;

(c) No additional letters of the alphabet are permitted after the call sign designator (except in (2) below).

**NOTE-**

**1.** *Examples of acceptable call sign designators with flight number are: MDSTR1, TORA172, ABX91, and SWA2604.*

**2.** *Examples of unacceptable call sign designators with flight number are: TORA1720, NEWS42G, BKA16CH, and LBQ17523.*

(2) For operational purposes, aircraft operators (as defined in subparagraph 4.1.a(1) or as approved by ATO System Operations Security) may use a letter as the final character of the aircraft identification as long as it is preceded by a numeral (i.e., AAL351A);

(3) When operating outside of their call sign authorization, pilots are required to use the aircraft registration number as the aircraft identification for flight plan filing and radio communications.

(4) Use of ICAO 3LDs for international telecommunications services, including the Aeronautical Fixed Telecommunications Network (AFTN), must be in accordance with ICAO Document Annex 10, *Aeronautical Telecommunications*.

**NOTE-**

*The AFTN system is an integrated, international system of aeronautical communications networks that uses ICAO 3LDs for identification, communication, and billing purposes. The AFTN system provides the exchange of messages and flight plans between aeronautical and fixed stations within the network.*

**c. Use of Telephonies.** Telephonies are used for aircraft identification purposes instead of phonetically pronouncing the call sign designator to expedite radio communication with ATC. To ensure proper aircraft identification for ATC, authorized telephonies must meet the following requirements for use in the NAS:

(1) To avoid confusion of similar sounding call signs, the telephony must be distinct and dissimilar from other known telephonies listed in FAA Order JO 7340.2 and assigned by DOD. The telephony should also incorporate the following characteristics:

(a) Ideally, the telephony should reflect a correlation between the call sign designator and the name of the aircraft operating agency or its function.

(b) To reduce potential for miscommunication with ATC, the telephony should be easy to pronounce in English, comprised of one or two words, and consist of two or three syllables.

(2) An ICAO 3LD must not be used in phonetic form as the telephony. However, existing telephonies that violate this rule will remain in effect (e.g., UPS).

(3) The aircraft operator must be prepared to confirm a new or changed telephony with ATC following the effective date of the new telephony.

## **7.2. RESOLUTION OF AIRCRAFT IDENTIFICATION PROBLEMS**

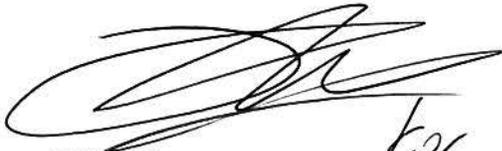
**a.** Aircraft operators should report occurrences of aircraft identification problems, such as similar-sounding or duplicate call signs, to the ATC facility where the occurrence took place.

**b.** For ATC facilities, ATO AIS ([callsigns@faa.gov](mailto:callsigns@faa.gov)) is the point of contact for aircraft identification issues or concerns directly involving FAA authorized ICAO 3LDs, U.S. Special call signs, and/or associated telephonies.

## SECTION 8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### 8.1. EFFECTIVE DATE AND PUBLICATION

FAA facilities and the general public are normally notified, via General Notice (GENOT) and other postings on the FAA Orders and Notices website, of the effective dates when ICAO 3LDs, certain U.S. special call signs, and associated telephonies are authorized for use. The authorizing ATO office must ensure these call signs are published in FAA Order JO 7340.2, Contractions.



*for ATR-2*

Brian Throop  
Director, System Operations Security  
Air Traffic Organization