

Chapter 7. ESCORT OF HIJACKED AIRCRAFT

Section 1. GENERAL

7-1-1. PURPOSE

The FAA hijack coordinator (the Director or his designate of the FAA Office of Civil Aviation Security) on duty at Washington headquarters will request the military to provide an escort aircraft for a confirmed hijacked aircraft to:

- a. Assure positive flight following.
- b. Report unusual observances.
- c. Aid search and rescue in the event of an emergency.

7-1-2. REQUESTS FOR SERVICE

The escort service will be requested by the FAA hijack coordinator by direct contact with the National Military Command Center (NMCC). Normally, NORAD escort aircraft will take the required action. However, for the purpose of these procedures, the term "escort aircraft" applies to any military aircraft assigned to the escort mission. When the military can provide escort aircraft, the NMCC will advise the FAA hijack coordinator the identification and location of the squadron tasked to provide escort aircraft. NMCC will then authorize direct coordination between FAA and the designated military unit. When a NORAD resource is tasked, FAA will coordinate through the appropriate SOCC/ROCC.

7-1-3. HANDLING PRIORITY

When the situation requires an expedited departure of the escort aircraft, the aircraft shall be afforded priority consideration over other departing aircraft.

7-1-4. CONTROL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR U.S. AIRSPACE

- a. When hijacked aircraft is within FAA radar coverage, escort aircraft shall be controlled by the appropriate FAA facility.
- b. When a hijacked aircraft is not within FAA radar coverage but within military radar coverage,

escort aircraft may be controlled by the military for the escort phase only.

- c. When escort aircraft are under military control, separation between the escort aircraft/hijacked aircraft and other IFR traffic is the responsibility of the FAA. Separation shall be provided through the application of appropriate altitude reservations as required.

- d. When escort aircraft is under FAA control, standard air traffic control separation shall be applied. In no case shall any clearance or instruction to the aircraft compromise ATC standards.

- e. When tanker aircraft are employed, the designated tankers and escort aircraft shall be under FAA control, and appropriate aerial refueling procedures shall apply.

7-1-5. CONTROL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CANADIAN AIRSPACE

Escort aircraft entering Canadian airspace from the U.S. shall be transferred to NORAD control in accordance with FAA/NORAD procedures prior to the aircraft entering Canadian airspace. Escort aircraft entering U.S. airspace from Canada will be transferred from NORAD control in the same manner when transfer of control is effected. When the hijacked aircraft is not within the coverage of the NORAD surveillance system in Canada, the escort mission will be discontinued.

7-1-6. AIR/GROUND COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY

Except when specifically directed otherwise by FAA headquarters, every precaution shall be taken to prevent the hijacker/s from gaining knowledge that an escort is being conducted. When communicating with escort aircraft, ensure that transmissions are made on a different frequency from the one being used to communicate with the hijacked aircraft and are not simultaneously broadcast on a frequency which can be overheard by the hijacked aircraft.

**7-1-7. WEATHER/FLIGHT SAFETY
LIMITATIONS**

If weather conditions or other flight safety factors make the escort mission impractical, the mission shall be terminated by the controller or the pilot, and the FAA headquarters hijack coordinator shall be advised immediately. The pilot of the escort

aircraft will keep the controller advised of adverse weather or any other hazardous conditions. The pilot will immediately terminate the mission if radio contact with the control facility is lost, maintaining the last assigned altitude and/or radio failure procedures unless the pilot has received specific instructions to the contrary.

Section 2. ESCORT PROCEDURES

7-2-1. FACILITY NOTIFICATION

The FAA hijack coordinator will advise the appropriate center/control tower of the identification of the military unit and location tasked to provide the hijack escort. The center/control tower shall coordinate with the designated NORAD SOCC/ROCC/military unit advising of the hijack aircraft's location, direction of flight, altitude, type aircraft and recommended flight plan to intercept the hijack aircraft. The center/control tower shall file the coordinated flight plan.

7-2-2. PILOT NOTIFICATION

a. The control tower, on initial contact with the aircraft, shall inform the pilot of the nature of the mission.

EXAMPLE-

"Red dog five, this is a hijack escort mission."

b. If the aircraft is an air defense or tactical aircraft, the controller shall also request the pilot to complete an armament safety check.

EXAMPLE-

"Perform armament safety check."

7-2-3. VECTORS

Escort aircraft shall be vectored to a position 5 miles directly behind the hijacked aircraft. The vectors shall be planned to approach the hijacked aircraft from the rear to avoid the possibility of being observed and to position the escort aircraft at the same altitude, speed, and heading as the hijacked aircraft.

7-2-4. RADAR REQUIREMENTS

Normally, radar contact with both aircraft is required. However, if the pilot of the escort aircraft has the hijacked aircraft in visual contact, the mission may continue without radar contact.

7-2-5. AIRPORT LIMITATIONS

When the hijacked aircraft descends for the purpose of landing at an airport within the continental U.S., the escort aircraft will not follow the hijacked aircraft into airspace delegated to an approach control facility. The FAA facility controlling the

aircraft or within whose airspace the aircraft is operating shall issue instructions to the pilot or to the military control facility for the aircraft to hold at a specified altitude and location and wait for further instructions.

7-2-6. RESPONSIBILITIES PRIOR TO JOIN-UP

Until the escort aircraft has joined-up with the hijacked aircraft, the pilot shall be kept informed of the hijacked aircraft heading, speed, altitude, and destination (if known); also, its range and position relative to the escort aircraft. For fighter/interceptor aircraft, the application of "optimum cruise" will normally ensure sufficient overtake during the "join-up" phase. Assign an altitude which is either the altitude of the hijacked aircraft or the optimum altitude requested by the escort aircraft pilot when the hijacked aircraft is at a lower altitude. Descend the escort aircraft to the altitude of the hijacked aircraft prior to reaching a point 30 miles from the target. When the hijacked aircraft is at a low altitude where communications between the escort aircraft and the control facility would be questionable, a second escort aircraft (which will normally be available when NORAD interceptors are being utilized) may be stationed at a higher altitude near the hijacked aircraft's position for relay of information between the control facility and the escort aircraft maintaining visual surveillance.

7-2-7. POSITIONING INSTRUCTIONS

Unless the escort pilot has a visual contact, plan the join-up at 30 miles and issue positioning instructions.

EXAMPLE-

"Echo Golf One Two, when contact is established, maintain surveillance. Approach no closer than five miles directly behind. Remain out of sight from cockpit or cabin, and report all actions observed."

NOTE-

The pilot will advise you when the hijacked aircraft has been acquired on airborne radar (if his aircraft is so equipped) and when visual contact has been achieved.

7-2-8. TERMINATION HEADING

When terminating the escort for purposes of recovery, repositioning, refueling, etc., issue a

heading of at least 90 degrees from the hijacked aircraft's heading.

Section 3. REPLACEMENT/RECOVERY OF ESCORT AIRCRAFT

7-3-1. REPLACEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Replacement of escort aircraft which must be recovered prior to hijack mission termination will be accomplished automatically by the military. To aid the military in planning for replacement aircraft and recovery airfields, "fuel state" shall be obtained from the pilot and relayed as requested. Replacement aircraft, if available, will be dispatched to assume the airborne escort role prior to the initiation of recovery procedures. When the escort aircraft is being controlled by an ARTCC/CERAP and replacement requirements are made known, the ARTCC/CERAP controlling the aircraft shall coordinate the replacement with the applicable NORAD Region/SOCC/ROCC as required. The hijack coordinator will be advised of replacement actions.

7-3-2. RECOVERY RESPONSIBILITIES

Recovery requirements and the selection of the

recovery field is the responsibility of the military command. The hijack coordinator will advise the ARTCC/CERAP controlling the escort when the escort is to be terminated. The facility will coordinate the recovery with the NORAD Region/SOCC/ROCC. The ARTCC/CERAP will relay to the pilot recovery decisions received from the NORAD Region/SOCC/ROCC; i.e., recovery base, base weather, and frequently inform the pilot of his position in relation to the selected recovery field.

7-3-3. RETURN-TO-BASE

Return-to-base shall be accomplished under FAA control. Escort aircraft under military control when the escort mission is terminated will be transferred to FAA control as soon as practicable.

7-3-4. REFUELING OPERATIONS

When refueling operations are conducted, the procedures in Chapter 10 shall apply.



Section 4. FORWARDING INFORMATION

7-4-1. FAA HEADQUARTERS REQUIREMENTS

FAA facilities shall respond to directions issued by the FAA hijack coordinator concerning hijack incidents and keep Emergency Operations Staff (ADA-20) informed of the progress of the escort missions. ADA-20 will establish communications conferencing as required.

7-4-2. POSITION REPORTS WITHIN NORAD RADAR COVERAGE

When the hijacking activity is within coverage of the NORAD surveillance system, position reports will be forwarded to the Cheyenne Mountain AFB/Air Defense Operations Center (CMAFB/ADOC) by NORAD units. To facilitate NORAD tracking, every attempt shall be made to ensure that the hijacked aircraft is squawking Mode 3/A, code 7500. The NORAD control facility shall be advised if the hijacked aircraft is squawking a different transponder code. The NORAD control facility will also be advised of the Mode 3/A code setting assigned to hijack escort aircraft when other than NORAD interceptor aircraft are being employed. This would assist NORAD control facilities in monitoring the ongoing situation when non-NORAD resources are used.

7-4-3. POSITION REPORTS OUTSIDE NORAD RADAR COVERAGE

When the hijacking activity takes place outside NORAD radar coverage within the continental

United States, the ARTCC/CERAP controlling the activity shall forward position reports to the appropriate NORAD/SOCC/ROCC Senior Director. The position reports shall be forwarded as follows:

a. The initial report from the ARTCC/CERAP to the NORAD/SOCC/ROCC Senior Director shall include the following:

1. Call sign of the hijacked aircraft.
2. Time (UTC).
3. Position in latitude and longitude.
4. Heading.
5. Speed.
6. Altitude.

7. Position of escort aircraft with respect to hijacked aircraft, if requested.

EXAMPLE-

"Universal Four Thirty-one, one seven three zero zulu, position, 34° 26'N - 81° 03'W, heading one seven five, true airspeed four eight zero knots, flight level three seven zero."

b. Subsequent reports shall include all of the items in subparagraph a, above, except that items 4, 5, and 6 shall only be reported if different from the initial information.

c. When control of the hijacked aircraft is transferred to another ARTCC/CERAP, the transferring facility shall notify the ATCSCC.



Section 5. MISSION TERMINATION

7-5-1. TERMINATION AUTHORITY

The escort mission may be terminated by FAA headquarters, the National Military Command Center, or major military command authority. Termination of the mission shall be relayed to the escort aircraft by the controlling facility.

7-5-2. OVERFLIGHT CLEARANCE

Escort aircraft shall not be cleared to overfly

boundaries of foreign countries other than Canada without overflight approval. The appropriate air traffic control facility will be informed of overflight approval prior to the hijacked aircraft exiting U.S. airspace. When the escort aircraft is being controlled by an FAA facility, overflight approval will be received through the FAA hijack coordinator. The pilot shall be informed of the overflight approval upon receipt.

