

FAA RELEASES PROPOSED CHANGES TO HUDSON RIVER AIRSPACE

September 16, 2009

What's at Issue

On September 16, 2009, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) released a Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) titled "Proposed Modification of the New York, NY, Class B Airspace Area; and Proposed Establishment of the New York Class B Airspace Hudson River and East River Exclusion Special Flight Rules Area."

Why It's Important

This NPRM will codify the rule changes suggested by the FAA task force and National Transportation Safety Board in response to the mid-air collision of two aircraft over the Hudson River on August 8, 2009. These proposed changes will affect pilots operating in the Hudson River and East River Class B airspace Exclusions and surrounding Class B airspace.

Major Provisions

This NPRM, if enacted, would make the following changes to 14CFR Parts 71 and 93:

- Modify 14 CFR 71 to establish a uniform Class B airspace floor of 1300 MSL above the Hudson River Class B Exclusion.
- Establish a Special Flight Rules Area (SFRA) in 14 CFR 93 covering the NY Class B airspace Hudson River and East River Exclusions. The SFRA would mandate that pilots follow certain operating practices that are currently voluntary.
 - The following, currently voluntary, practices would become mandatory when operating in the Hudson River and East River Exclusions
 - Indicated airspeed not to exceed 140kts
 - Turn on all anti-collision, position/navigation and/or landing lights
 - Self announce position on the appropriate radio frequency for the East River or Hudson River as depicted on the New York VFR Terminal Area Chart and/or New York Helicopter Route Chart
 - New procedures for both the East River and Hudson River Exclusions
 - Pilots must have a current New York TAC chart and /or New York Helicopter Route Chart in the aircraft and familiarize themselves with the information contained in the charts
 - New Procedures for operations in the Hudson River Exclusion
 - Pilots must self announce at the charted mandatory reporting points, the following information: aircraft type and color, current position, direction of flight and altitude.
 - Pilots must fly along the west shoreline of the Hudson River when southbound, and along the east shoreline of the Hudson River when northbound.
 - Aircraft overflying the area within the Hudson River Exclusion, but not landing or departing any of the Manhattan heliports or landing facilities, or conducting any local area operations, must transit the Hudson River Exclusion at or above an altitude of 1,000 feet MSL up to, but not including the floor of the overlying Class B airspace.

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(Major Provisions Continued)

- New procedures for operation in the East River Exclusion
 - VFR flight operations by fixed-wing aircraft (excluding amphibious fixed-wing aircraft landing or departing the New York Skyports, Inc., Seaplane Base) in the East River Exclusion (from the southwestern tip of Governors Island to the northern tip of Roosevelt Island) are prohibited unless authorized and being controlled by air traffic control. To obtain authorization, pilots must contact LaGuardia Airport Traffic Control Tower prior to Governors Island

NATA Position

NATA is pleased with the proposed rule changes and believes that the FAA has succeeded in finding simple, easy to implement policies and procedures that will enhance the safety of all operations in the Hudson River and East River Exclusions and associated Class B airspace. NATA will consult with its members and industry experts to ensure there are no unintended consequences to this NPRM.

Status

This NPRM is open for public comment until October 16, 2009. The NPRM is available for download [here](#).

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