

Leadplane Training Lesson Plan

Flight Following

02-06-N9065-HO

Objective:

To familiarize the student with flight following procedures (Phase 1).

To develop the student's proficiency in the use of flight following procedures (Phase 2).

Content:

There are two types of flights when determining flight following. Point to point flights and fire mission flights.

All flights require flight following and it is up to the pilot to initiate the flight following.

National flight following frequency, 168.650, transmit and receive, tone 110.9, transmit and receive, will be used for all flight following unless an alternate frequency has been assigned by dispatch.

Point to point flights:

Point to point flights include a fire dispatch where the aircraft is being prepositioned for a fire and not to a fire.

In these situations, the pilot usually has time to fill out an Aircraft Flight Request 9400-1a form and send it to dispatch prior to the flight. The 9400-1a serves as a manifest for the flight.

The pilot sends the 9400-1a to the local dispatch who forwards it to the GACC. If GACC boundaries are crossed, the GACC forwards the 9400-1a to NICC who forwards it to the receiving GACC and then it is sent to the receiving local dispatch. It is prudent to call the receiving GACC or local dispatch to let them know your itinerary. Some GACC's like to communicate directly with the leadplane pilot and some like to go through the local dispatch within the GACC. This preference can change with personnel changes and is determined by good communications and asking questions.

From the Interagency Standards for Fire and Aviation Operations (Red Book):

“NICC, in conjunction with the GACCs, is responsible for ensuring a coordinated response to wildland fire incidents and/or all-hazard incidents under the National Response Framework or other appropriate authorities. NICC positions resources (personnel, aircraft, supplies, and equipment) to meet existing and anticipated incident, preparedness, severity, wildland, and prescribed fire needs regardless

of geographic location or agency affiliation. NICC coordinates movement of resources across Geographic Area boundaries. NICC allocates resources according to National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) direction when competition for wildland fire resources occurs among Geographic Areas.”

Fire dispatches where the aircraft is being prepositioned for a fire and not to a fire tend to be flown on an IFR flight plan. This causes a duplication of flight following with agency dispatch and ATC. The priority for calls, in this situation, is with ATC. As time allows the pilot should call agency dispatch to establish flight following and monitor national flight following in case dispatch diverts the aircraft in flight.

If flight following with agency dispatch, AFF or 15 minute radio calls will be used (30 minutes in Alaska). When AFF is used, the pilot will initiate flight following with a radio call to dispatch utilizing the standard script found in the NWCG SAS. Further radio communications are not necessary. If AFF is not used, the pilot is responsible for radio communications with dispatch every 15 minutes (30 minutes in Alaska) after initiating flight following. The pilot will give dispatch the aircraft call sign, latitude, longitude and heading.

It is the pilot's responsibility to close out a flight plan.

Mission flights:

Mission flights are direct to an incident. These flights do not require the pilot to fill out an Aircraft Flight Request form or 9400-1a.

The pilot will flight follow with agency dispatch. When AFF is used, the pilot will initiate flight following with a radio call to dispatch utilizing the standard script found in the NWCG SAS. Further radio communications is not necessary. If AFF is not used, the pilot is responsible for radio communications with dispatch every 15 minutes (30 minutes in Alaska) after initiating flight following. The pilot will give dispatch the aircraft call sign, latitude, longitude and heading.

Completion Standards:

The lesson is complete when the student can demonstrate flight following in a training environment for Phase 1 and in a fire environment for Phase 2. Flight following will be established within 10 minutes after departing the airport environment with minimal deficiencies noted, considering traffic and airspace. The communications will be accomplished without the reliance on the evaluator.