



AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION

March 27, 2003

Docket Management System  
Docket No. FAA-2003-14449  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Room Plaza 401  
400 Seventh Street SW  
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Docket No. FAA 2003-14449, Enhanced Flight Vision Systems

The Air Transport Association of America, Inc. (ATA) on behalf of its member airlines<sup>1</sup> submits the following comments on the FAA proposal in Docket 14449 on Enhanced Flight Vision Systems (EFVS). We agree with FAA that EFVS can be an important improvement to flight safety, and we believe that guidance for its use by operators, and guidance for FAA inspectors is appropriate. However, we do not believe that the proposed change to 14 CFR 91.175 and other FARs, that would be impacted, is the proper course of action.

We are concerned that the proposed rule change will impose limitations on EFVS operational use that will stifle investment in EFVS by operators and manufacturers, and that EFVS safety benefits such as improvements to situational awareness and the ability to detect objects on runways, will not become a reality for airlines. Although business jet operators and others with operational experience with EFVS appear to be enthusiastic about its benefits, airlines that have relatively little experience with EFVS will be unnecessarily discouraged from investment in EFVS by this proposed rule-change. ATA recommends that FAA should issue guidance in accordance with FAR 91.175, such as an advisory circular, rather than issue a rule change as proposed. An advisory circular would provide more flexibility for FAA to modify guidance as needed when EFVS experience grows within the industry and FAA.

ATA members believe that collaboration with industry is an appropriate way for FAA to reveal its objectives for policy and rationale regarding EFVS operations to users and manufacturers without issuing a rule. Some ATA members have recommended that that collaboration could be accomplished through the TAOARC and/or the AWO.

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<sup>1</sup> Airborne Express, Alaska Airlines, Aloha Airlines, America West Airlines, American Airlines, ATA Airlines, Atlas Air, Continental Airlines, Delta Air Lines, DHL Airways, Emery Forwarding, Evergreen International Airlines, FedEx, Hawaiian Airlines, JetBlue Airways, Midwest Airlines, Northwest Airlines, Polar Air Cargo, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines, United Parcel Service and US Airways. Associate Members are: Aeromexico, Air Canada, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and Mexicana.

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FAA and industry, including ATA members, worked for years to establish AC120-29A, which was published just last year, and is widely accepted by the industry as a landmark document. We believe that the FAA should take great care to assure that this NPRM and others in the future are consistent with the intent of AC120-29A. However, the extent of changes with this EFVS NPRM are unknown because they depend on the FAA's disposition of the RNAV NPRM (2002-14002) which several commenting organizations have found to be confusing, and have requested an extension to the comment period. This EFVS NPRM, 2003-14449, "contains proposed EFVS-related changes to the FAA's previously published Area Navigation (RNAV) NPRM, which was published on December 17, 2002"<sup>2</sup>.

ATA Recommendations:

1. That FAA should issue another form of guidance such as an advisory circular, rather than a change to FAR 91.175 and other affected regulations, for the reasons stated above.
2. That EFVS use should be permitted for situational awareness, for visual approach conditions as well as for Category I, II, III approach conditions. This should apply to auto-land and to hand-flown approaches.
3. That EFVS use should be permitted in conjunction with Heads-Up-Guidance systems, but EFVS use should not be required by, or limited to, use with other equipment – it should be independent. This position is also supported by the comments of the U.S. Coast Guard, who does have operational experience with EFVS.
4. Requirements related to EFVS should be consistent with AC120.29A.
5. That FAA should collaborate with industry to reveal its objectives for policy and rationale regarding EFVS operations to users and manufacturers rather than issuing a rule.
6. That FAA clarify what is meant by "stringent reliability, redundancy and other criteria that would be applicable for use of EFVS for Category II and III ILS approaches" as is stated on page 6804 of the Federal Register.
7. FAA should ensure that EFVS systems and airport lighting are compatible.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

/S/

William N. Sears  
Director  
Communication, Navigation & Surveillance

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<sup>2</sup> EFVS NPRM, Summary, Federal Register, February 10, 2003, page 6802