Federal Aviation Administration

Memorandum

Date: ***December 1, 2014 (Original signed document on file)***

To: Air Traffic Organization Service Centers
Air Traffic Organization Air Traffic Service Area Directors

From: [redacted], Director, Air Traffic Procedures, AJV-8

Subject: Interpretation, JO 7110.65, Paragraph 7-4-3b, Clearance for Visual Approach, and Paragraph 4-7-10b(2), Approach Information

On July 14, 2014, the Air Traffic Procedures office issued an interpretation for the Western Service Area, on behalf of Denver Air Route Traffic Control Center (ZDV), regarding JO 7110.65, Paragraph 7-4-3b, Clearance for Visual Approach, and Paragraph 4-7-10b(2), Approach Information. Subsequently, a follow up question was submitted. This interpretation contains the body of the original interpretation, as well as the answer to the follow up question, and therefore cancels the interpretation dated July 14, 2014.

The original questions asked were: "What qualifies as ensuring the weather conditions at the airport are VFR (JO 7110.65 7-4-3b) and can a pilot report be used to ensure weather at an airport with reported weather is VFR?" The follow up question was, "Can an aircraft be cleared for a visual approach when the airport's reported weather is IFR, but the pilot reports the airport or runway in sight?"

JO 7110.65, paragraph 7-4-3b dictates that before a visual approach clearance is issued, "ensure that weather conditions at the airport are VFR or that the pilot has been informed that weather is not available for the destination airport." Paragraph 4-7-10b(2) states, "Controllers will consider the long-line disseminated weather from an automated weather system at an uncontrolled airport as trend information only and must rely on the pilot for current weather information for that airport." Furthermore, JO 7900.5C, Surface Weather Observing, paragraph 3-5b, defines long-line weather dissemination as "transmission of a weather report beyond the service area of the observing location."

Although airport weather reports typically take precedence over a pilot report, if an automated weather report at an uncontrolled airport indicates IFR conditions, and a pilot states the weather at that airport is VFR, a visual approach clearance may be issued. A pilot report of either the runway or airport in sight is not a report of weather conditions and would not suffice.

Please forward any questions or comments to [redacted], AJV-83 En Route Procedures, [redacted].