



**AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION**

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August 15, 2007

Mr. Michael A. Cirillo  
Vice President, System Operations  
Orville Wright Bldg. (FOB10A)  
FAA National Headquarters  
800 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20591

RE: FAA responsibility to provide Caribbean and Hawaiian Aeronautical chart products

Dear Mr. Cirillo;

In October of 2007, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGA) will discontinue public sales of its aeronautical charts, Digital Aeronautical File (DAFIF) and related aeronautical navigation publications. If the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) does not take action to provide equivalent products, there will be no publicly available government source of aeronautical information for Hawaii, the Caribbean, and Central and South America beyond October 2007. It is critical that the FAA take immediate action to provide this essential navigation data beyond October 2007.

These territories are included in the U.S. Flight Information Region (FIR) and the FAA is responsible for providing the navigation products. However, the NGA charts are currently the only official government source for this safety of flight information.

When the NGA announced its intentions in 2005, the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) requested that the FAA execute a plan to provide uninterrupted distribution of aeronautical charts and electronic data within the FIR for areas currently provided by the NGA.

Specifically, AOPA recommends that the FAA commit to providing aeronautical chart products including enroute charts and instrument approach charts for Hawaii, the Caribbean, Central and South America, a supplement of Caribbean airport information, and its own version of operational international navigation charts (ONC).

It is troubling that, despite NGA's agreement back in 2005 to work with the FAA and to allow for a phased implementation schedule, the FAA has yet to develop a transition plan or commit to providing the needed products for Hawaii, the Caribbean, Central and South America beyond October 2007.

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The FAA has an obligation to provide the data. According to 49 U.S.C. § 44721, (c) Authority of Office of Aeronautical Charting and Cartography. - Effective October 1, 2000, the [FAA] Administrator is vested with and shall exercise the functions, powers, and duties of the Secretary of Commerce and other officers of the Department of Commerce that relate to the Office of Aeronautical Charting and Cartography to provide aeronautical charts and related products and services for the safe and efficient navigation of air commerce.

Without continued availability of these navigational products, the general aviation community will be substantially impacted and safety and efficiency could be compromised. AOPA looks forward to the agency ensuring this critical safety of flight navigation data and products needed by the aviation community continue to be available as mandated by 49 U.S.C. § 44721.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'me R', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Melissa Rudinger  
Vice President  
Regulatory Affairs