Domestic Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum (DRVSM) Aircrew Training

Part II: Non-RVSM Aircraft

Air Force Flight Standards Agency
Part II Contents:
- DRVSM Mandate
- RVSM Authority
- DoD/FAA Memorandum of Understanding
- Flight Plan – Equipment Suffixes
- Pilot/Controller Phraseology
- Non-RVSM Aircraft Accommodation Procedures
- Climbs/Descents through DRVSM Airspace
- DRVSM Denial Reports
Domestic US RVSM Mandate

- RVSM authority is required for operation in DRVSM Airspace with limited exceptions:
  - Non-RVSM DoD, lifeguard, foreign state (government) and certification/development aircraft can be accommodated by providing 2,000 ft vertical/appropriate horizontal separation
  - Provisions made for non-RVSM compliant aircraft to climb to and descend from flight levels above RVSM airspace
  - **ALL** non-RVSM aircraft operations are conducted based upon workload and traffic conditions
USAF Major Commands grant RVSM Authority/Operational Approval to aircraft based on:

- RVSM Airworthiness Certification from Aircraft Program Office based on equipage/performance
- Implementation of proper training, logistics, maintenance and operational procedures
- Aircraft RVSM authority should be documented in Flight Manual (Dash-1), MDS-Specific AFI Vol. 3, or equivalent document
- For aircraft-specific questions, ask your MAJCOM

Aircraft which have not been granted MAJCOM authority for RVSM operations will be referred to as “non-RVSM” aircraft.
FAA and DoD Memorandum of Understanding

- Memorandum of Understanding signed between FAA and DoD in Dec 01 governs the use of DRVSM Airspace by DoD aircraft

- Policy: FAA will accommodate non-RVSM compliant military aircraft operation within DRVSM airspace, without mission degradation, to the extent practicable based upon existing traffic and safety considerations.

Vertical separation standard applied between non-RVSM aircraft and all other aircraft shall be 2,000 feet.
Non-RVSM aircraft must not use RVSM suffix ("/Q" or "/W") even if intending to operate in RVSM airspace

- Continue to use the appropriate non-RVSM equipment suffix indicating aircraft navigation capability
- ATC uses equipment suffix information to apply 2,000 vertical separation minimum to non-RVSM aircraft accommodated in RVSM airspace
The pilot of a non-RVSM aircraft will inform the controller of the lack of RVSM compliance using the phraseology “Negative RVSM”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Message</th>
<th>Phraseology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For non-RVSM aircraft, pilot will report lack of RVSM approval:</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. On the initial call on any frequency in the RVSM airspace and...</td>
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<td>b. In all requests for flight level changes pertaining to flight levels within the RVSM airspace and...</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. In all read-backs to flight level clearances pertaining to flight levels within the RVSM airspace and...</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. In read-back of flight level clearances involving climb and descent through RVSM airspace (FL290-410)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pilot: “Negative RVSM (supplementary information)” (e.g., “military”)</td>
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Non-RVSM Aircraft Accommodation

Methods For Non-RVSM Aircraft To Request Access To RVSM Airspace:

- Letter of Agreement (LOA) / Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- File-and-Fly
  - Includes designated “Priority Flights”

NOTE: Effective 12 May 05, pre-coordinated conditional approvals are eliminated

Priority for access to RVSM airspace will be afforded to RVSM compliant aircraft, then File-and-Fly flights
Non-RVSM Aircraft Accommodation, Cont’d

- **LOA/MOU**
  - Local flying wings/units may enter into agreements with ATC facilities for accommodation of regular, routine flights. Operators must comply with provisions in the LOA/MOU.

- **File-and-Fly**
  - Operators file the requested RVSM altitude on their flight plan to notify ATC of their intention to request access to RVSM airspace
  - No additional coordination with the FAA is required before departure
  - Once airborne, the pilot will request clearance into RVSM airspace from the appropriate ATC controller
Effective 12 May 05, certain high-priority non-RVSM flights may be designated as requiring special consideration for accommodation:

- Only mission-critical flights meeting designated criteria are eligible – see next slide for criteria.
- Flights are either “Priority” or they aren’t – no need to specify to FAA which criteria they fit into.
- Not intended for routine flights to circumvent the normal DRVSM File-and-Fly process.

While special consideration will be afforded to Priority Flights, accommodation of any non-RVSM flight is workload permitting.
The following non-RVSM aircraft flights are eligible to be designated as Priority Flights:

- Aircraft engaged in active continental defense or homeland defense missions; or
- Aircraft engaged in operations that will have an immediate effect upon combat operations or readiness of the Armed Forces; or
- Aircraft engaged in operations in accordance with approved federal and state emergency plans, medical evacuations or search and rescue; or
- Aircraft engaged in the transport of Combatant, Specified or Unified Commanders, Type/Major Command Commanders and key civilian personnel (i.e. 4-stars and equivalent or higher/code 3 or above)
The FAA is notified of each day’s priority flights via the DoD Priority Mission (DPM) website:

- http://www.fly.faa.gov/rvsm
- Designated wing/squadron personnel enter required information on eligible flights needing accommodation into the DPM website
- Flight information may be entered up to one business day prior to the flight

The following information must be entered:
- Call sign, point of departure, destination, requested altitude, POC, proposed departure time, and number of aircraft in formation (when applicable)
Priority Flight Procedures, Cont’d

- Priority Flight information should be entered into the DPM website at least one hour prior to the proposed departure time.
  - If information is entered less than one hour prior, the departure facility Traffic Management Unit (TMU) must also be called (phone #s in FLIP AP/1).
  - If the flight doesn’t depart within 8 hours of it’s proposed time, it must be re-entered into DPM website.
  - If the flight is cancelled, it should be cancelled from website also.
Priority Flight Procedures, Cont’d

- Priority Flights will file a flight plan using normal procedures – no special remarks needed.
- Once airborne, the pilot will request clearance into RVSM airspace from the appropriate ATC controller.
  - ATC will review the DPM website to determine the priority status of the flight.
  - No requirement for pilots to inform controllers of their priority status.
  - Controllers will pass priority status to next sector/center.
Climbs/Descents through DRVSM Airspace

- Non-RVSM aircraft requesting climb to and descent from flight levels above DRVSM airspace:
  - Can only be considered for accommodation provided:
    - Aircraft is capable of continuous climb/descent through DRVSM airspace and does not need to level off at an intermediate altitude for any operational consideration
    - Aircraft is capable of climb/descent at normal rate for the aircraft
  - Pilots of non-RVSM aircraft climbing/descending through DRVSM airspace must report “Negative RVSM” to controllers
DRVSM Denial Reports

- DRVSM Denial Report is located in FLIP AP/1 Chapter 3 and on DoD NOTAM website
- Intended for documentation and reporting of DRVSM airspace denial resulting in adverse mission impact
- Report is submitted to regional military rep (e.g. AFREP)
- Instructions are included with form
This concludes Part II of DRVSM Aircrew Training

For more information:
- FAA DRVSM Website: http://www.faa.gov/ats/ato/drvsm/Default.asp
- HQ AFFSA Website: https://private.andrews.amc.af.mil/AFFSA/affsa.htm
- DINS NOTAMs Website: https://www.notams.jcs.mil/