

Chapter 12

Memorandums of Understanding and Letters of Agreement

I. Introduction

When Special Use Airspace (SUA), Military Training Routes (MTR), Slow Routes (SR), and/or Low Altitude Tactical Navigation (LATN) Areas are located over lands within an agency's jurisdiction or within the area of an agency's normal flight operations (fire or nonfire), the agency should consider instituting a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a Letter of Agreement (LOA) with the DoD.

It is prudent that all agencies be a party to a common MOU/LOA with the DoD when land management or wildland firefighting agencies share or overlap boundaries within jurisdictions that underlie DoD managed or assigned airspace. Use and coordination with DoD Military Representatives (DARR, NAVREP, and AFREPS) as well as the appropriate agency Aviation Manager(s) is highly recommended.

MOU/LOAs provide local level leadership a tool within the interagency cooperative process to define protocols to consistently address recurring activities, coordination of time critical responses, and resolving unforeseen issues of mutual concern. MOU/LOAs strengthen interagency relationships since they provide continuity despite inevitable changes in agency leadership.

In addition to establishing procedural protocol for deconflicting airspace or coordinating TFRs, the MOU/LOA identifies each agencies specific responsibilities. This is particularly important in providing continuity when either local level resource management agency or DOD leadership changes. This Guide provides a wide array of cooperative methods and processes for local level leadership to tailor to meet their specific area's interagency challenges. MOU/LOAs should sufficiently define responsibilities, methods/procedures, and local points of contact.

If specific protocols contained in the MOU/LOA affect Tactical Aircrews (i.e. Air Tankers, Lead Planes, Air Tacticals, SEATs, and or Helicopter crews) ensure that Air Bases where these resources are likely to be deployed from are given a copy of the MOU/LOA and that aircrews are briefed.

Agency Personnel should be aware that several agencies specify mandatory clauses when drafting MOU/LOAs. Local level officials should ensure that the involved agencies mandatory clauses are integrated into the MOU/LOA.

The joint development of local coordination guides (Flip Charts) that distill the action items directed by the MOU/LOA into quick referral checklists is often a logical and prudent follow on to effectively implement the MOU/LOA. These action checklists facilitate interpretation and execution of time critical actions by dispatchers and military airspace scheduling offices.

A generic format for developing local level interagency airspace coordination MOU/LOAs is provided. To supplement the MOU, a local coordination guide's "Flip Chart" could segregate specific DoD/Land Management Airspace scenarios with specific operational directives contained within the body of the MOU/LOA.

Categories may include :

A. Dispatch Operational Procedures

- # Non-Fire Scheduled Missions
- # Fire Reconnaissance (No TFR in place).
- # Fire Operations (TFR in place)
- # Deconfliction of Airspace
- # Implementation of TFRs

B. Operational Procedures (Fire or Non-Fire) for Air and Flight Crews

C. DoD Operational Procedures

- # Non-Fire Planned Missions
- # Non-Fire Priority Missions
- # Fire Reconnaissance (No TFR in place)
- # Fire Operations (TFR in place)

II. Sample - Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) Or Letter Of Agreement (LOA)

A sample Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) Or Letter Of Agreement (LOA) follows.

**SAMPLE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) OR
LETTER OF AGREEMENT (LOA)**

List of applicable local organizations

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
OR
LETTER OF AGREEMENT**

Effective: _____

SUBJECT: Interagency Airspace Coordination

I. Purpose

Provide a one or two paragraph introduction outlining what specific organizations are involved, the goal they mutually seek to achieve, and where they wish to achieve it.

II. Cancellation

List any prior MOU/LOAs that are cancelled, superceded, or modified by the new MOA/LOA. List protocols for modification or cancellation of the MOU/LOA.

III. Scope

List the specific agency and DoD organizations/offices, airspace parcels, and resource management areas the MOU/LOA applies to.

IV. Responsibilities:

A. Management Authority And Responsibility

1. Agency Aviation Manager or Assigned Agency Airspace Coordination Specialist
 - a. Designate as the agency focal point to coordinate procedures and airspace scheduling through military airspace scheduling office.
 - b. Designate as the agency focal point for recommending amendments to the MOU/LOU.

- c. Designate as the point of contact for the military to coordinate amendments to the MOU/LOA.
 - d. Coordinator with military on all airspace conflicts or incident conclusions/findings regarding airspace conflicts.
2. Military Airspace Manager
- a. Designate as focal point for military on airspace matters and the MOU/LOA. POC for contact by resource agencies on matters pertaining to the MOU/LOA.
 - b. Designate, with military flight safety office as well as appropriate military command and control organization safety representatives as investigators of airspace incidents, conflicts when SUA is involved.

B. List Each Organizations Responsibilities

- 1. Agencies Involved (list for each agency)
 - a. POC's and roles
 - b. Air traffic control & coordination requirements
 - (1) FAA coordination concerning issuance of temporary flight restrictions
 - (2) Beacon codes/squawks
 - c. Coordination with military airspace scheduling offices.
 - (1) Long term, planned flight operations
 - (2) Rapid Response flight operations
 - d. Reporting incidents/accidents
 - e. Ensure all personnel involved are briefed on the purpose and procedures of the agreement.

2. DoD Organizations (list for each organization)
 - a. ATC, advisory, and/or monitoring services for airspace users (if applicable)
 - b. TFR NOTAM information dissemination to military units
 - c. Long-term and real-time scheduling of resource agency's air operations within MOU/LOA airspace.
 - d. Ensure all personnel involved are briefed on the purpose and procedures of the agreement.

V. Coordination Procedures (Non-Fire Or Fire Recon - Without a TFR)

A. Agency Responsibilities

1. Dispatchers or aviation managers coordination with Military Airspace Scheduling Office
 - a. Scheduling timeline protocols
 - b. Non-interference basis?
 - c. Forwarding of flight planning and area of operations information
2. Coordination & Communications with Military Air Traffic Control Facilities
 - a. IFF squawk protocols
 - b. Radio communications requirements
 - (1) Prior to entering MOU/LOA airspace
 - (2) While within airspace
 - (3) Exiting MOU/LOA airspace
3. Coordination with Range Operations Centers (If Applicable)

B. Military Airspace Scheduling Office Responsibilities

1. Advise resource management agency dispatchers or aviation managers of projected or known military flight activities within the times and areas they have forwarded.
2. Coordinate resource management agency flight activities with all DoD units scheduled to operate in the affected airspace.
3. Protocols to handle airspace scheduling conflicts
 - a. Within Restricted Areas
 - b. Within MOAs
 - c. Within MTRs

C. Military ATC (If Available) Responsibilities

1. IFF Beacon code assignment protocols
 - a. Assignment to aircraft
 - b. Relay to range control
2. Local altimeter setting
3. VFR flight advisory or flight following services
 - a. Level of service appropriate for radar equipment certification
 - b. Services provided on a time permitting basis?
 - c. Coordination of level of service provided to resource agency aircraft.

D. Range Operations Center Responsibilities (if available)

1. Resource agency aircraft within MOAs protocols
 - a. Communications
 - b. Coordination

2. Resource agency aircraft within Restricted Areas protocols
 - a. Communications
 - b. Coordination
3. Coordination with Military ATC (if available)
 - a. Resource agency aircraft route of flight, ranges/MOAs affected, status of ranges/MOAs

E. Military Range Control Responsibilities (if available):

VI. Coordination Procedures (Fire Response - With A TFR)

A. Agency Responsibilities

1. Immediately advise the Military ATC facility (if applicable), Range Operations Center (if applicable), and Range Control of the reported fire /requested TFR or reconnaissance route, to include latitude and longitude information if available.
2. Request a TFR with the appropriate ARTCC. Request that latitude and longitude information be included in the NOTAM.
3. Fax a hard copy of the approved TFR to Military ATC facility (if applicable), Range Operations Center (if applicable), and Range Control.
4. If deemed necessary, establish an agency liaison representative to, in concert with the appropriate military command and control agencies, establish ingree/egress routes/services required to facilitate emergency response activity.
5. Advise appropriate military command and control agencies of any modifications or cancellation of the TFR.
6. Ensure that resource agency aircraft contact the appropriate military command and control agencies prior to entering airspace and advise of type aircraft and proposed route to area of operations.

7. Ensure all resource agency aircraft obtain permission to operate within restricted areas.
 - a. Scheduling timeline protocols
 - b. Non-interference basis?
 - c. Forwarding of flight planning and area of operations information

B. Military ATC (If Available) Responsibilities

1. Notify Range Operations Center (if available) and/or Range Control of any TFRs that may affect operation to, from, or within SUA.
2. Notify Base Operations and supervisors of flying (SOF) upon receipt of information indicating establishment of a TFR. Repeat this notification when TFR is received.
3. Issue applicable TFR restrictions to aircraft flying in vicinity of a TFR area and facilitate with Range Operations Center and/or Range Control deconfliction/advisory information between DoD and resource agency aircraft.
4. Notify Base Operations and SOFs upon receipt of information indicating impending restrictions or closure of MTR(s) and SRs due to TFR. Repeat upon receipt of NOTAM information on restriction/closure of MTR(s) and/or SRs.
5. Provide an ATC liaison to coordinate ingree/egress routes and services as requested by the resource agency.
6. Be the approval authority for resource agency aircraft entry/exit of restricted areas.
7. Assign Mode 3/A discrete beacon codes to resource agency aircraft, advise them of MOA/Range status.
8. Local altimeter setting
9. VFR flight advisory or flight following services
 - a. Level of service appropriate for radar equipment certification
 - b. Services provided on a time permitting basis?
 - c. Coordination of level of service provided to resource agency aircraft.

C. Range Operations Center Responsibilities (if available):

1. Comply with TFRs as issued by the FAA and relay TFR establishment, changes, and cancellation to all aircraft on frequency.
2. Relay TFR restrictions to all Military ATC facility (if available) and aircrews airborne or scheduled.
3. Coordinate with MTR schedulers to restrict or close MTRs and SRs affected by TFR.

VII. Cancellation Of TFR.

Out line protocols for between applicable FAA ARTCC, Military ATC facility (if available), Range Operations Center (if available), and/or Range Control.

VIII. Incident/Accident

Outline protocols for incident or accident situations.

IX. Education And Awareness

Outline procedures to enhance education and awareness such are site visits, preseason meetings, year end meetings, training opportunities, etc.