INTRODUCTION OF PROCEDURE AMENDMENT REFERENCE DATE
(U.S. FAA APPROACH CHARTS)

Background

Flight operations involving the use of an electronic navigation database require that the database be current. Situations sometimes arise which involve the need to operate with an expired or out-of-date database. To cover these contingencies, regulatory documents (FAA and international) address the requirement to validate the navigation database to ensure the accuracy of the navigational data by referencing aeronautical charts, as well as the prohibition on the use of any instrument procedure if it has been amended.

According to the guidance, when confronted with a need to operate with an expired database, an acceptable means of compliance is to compare aeronautical charts – new to old – to the corresponding procedure coded in the database in order to verify the accuracy of navigation fixes and related navigation information prior to departure. If an amended chart has been published for the procedure and it includes changes to procedural information, the out-of-date database _cannot_ be used to conduct the operation.

Since pilots do not typically carry expired charts, and because it is very time consuming, this method of verification is impractical. Additionally, because navigation fixes can be moved without an associated name change, comparing charts to the database would not assure that a fix had not been relocated.

In the United States, the FAA assigns a procedure Amendment Number to each standard instrument approach procedure (SIAP) and subsequent modification. This number is shown in the lower left corner of Jeppesen Airway Manual approach charts. A pilot can determine if procedural information has changed by checking the chart Amendment Number against the expired chart Amendment Number.

However, approach charts are often updated for reasons other than procedural changes, such as for communication changes. Subsequent chart updates might involve a new effective date. The result is that there is no easy way to determine _when_ a procedural change was last applied to the chart. This is an important factor when attempting to compare the date of the procedural information on the chart to the corresponding information in a navigation database and its AIRAC Cycle date.

Purpose

To simplify and improve the chart–to–database validation process, a Procedure Amendment Reference Date will be added to U.S. FAA approach charts beginning with the 22 October 2009 effective date (AIRAC Cycle 0911). The inclusion of the Procedure Amendment Reference Date on U.S. approach charts is intended to assist pilots in determining the currency of individual procedures contained in their navigation database.

Unlike the chart revision date or chart effective date which inform pilots of the effectivity of _any_ change to _any information_ on the chart, the Procedure Amendment Reference Date, in conjunction with the Amendment Number, identifies _when procedural information_ was last amended on the chart. This includes flight paths, courses, and altitudes which correspond to the coded procedure in the navigation database. The Procedure Amendment Reference Date helps a pilot determine if a procedure amendment has been applied – and _WHEN_. It also reduces the need to perform a detailed comparison of new charts to old.

The Procedure Amendment Reference Date applies to U.S. SIAPs only, and is changed only when the procedure Amendment Number is up-numbered by official FAA sources. The Procedure Amendment Reference Date will not change unless the Amendment Number changes. This may result in a chart revision date or effective date that differs from the Procedure Amendment Reference Date.

In summary, if the Procedure Amendment Reference Date falls on or after the expiry date of the navigation database, the procedure should not be flown using the out-of-date database.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: This change is NOT intended to promote the use of expired databases. It is the responsibility of the pilot to comply with all applicable regulations.**

Application to Airway Manual Approach Charts (U.S. Only)

Beginning with the 22 October 2009 effective date (AIRAC cycle 0911), the Procedure Amendment Reference Date will be added to U.S. FAA approach charts on an as-revised basis. The date will be positioned outside the lower left margin on approach charts along with the TERPS procedure design criteria label and the procedure Amendment Number. The application of this date will be forward-looking and not retro-active. It will therefore take time before all approach charts in the U.S. include a Procedure Amendment Reference Date.

Example

The following example illustrates the location and appearance of the new Procedure Amendment Reference Date.

INTRODUCTION OF PROCEDURE AMENDMENT REFERENCE DATE
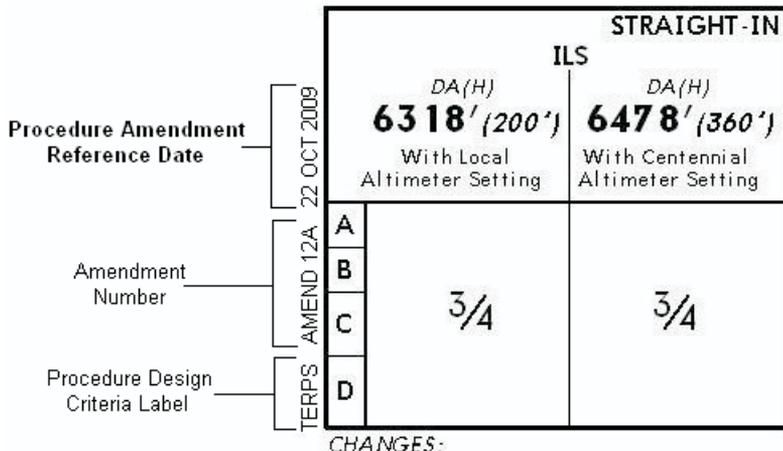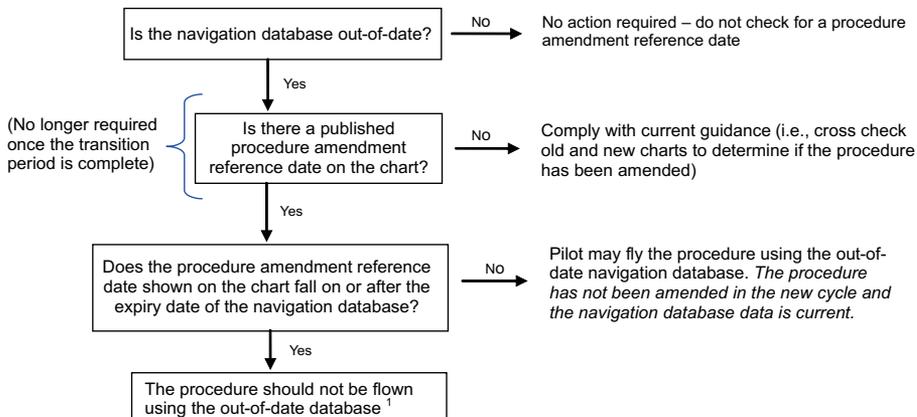## (U.S. FAA APPROACH CHARTS)

Chart – Navigation Database Decision Process

The following diagram illustrates the decision process for determining if a specific approach procedure can be used from an out-of-date database. The assumption below is that an out-of-date database is being compared to current paper or electronic charts.

[1] Operators, with FAA approval, may develop procedures to permit use of the database after ascertaining the reason for the amendment and determining the ARINC 424 (FMS) path is not affected.