

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Federal Aviation Regulation 93 Subpart U (14 CFR 93)

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Introduction Flight Crews operating in the Grand Canyon National Park Special Flight Rules Area (GCNP SFRA) must have a thorough understanding of Federal Aviation Regulation 93 Subpart U. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has issued the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) a FAA Form 7711-1 "Certificate of Waiver or Authorization" which allows aircraft engaged in official government flight operations for DOI (and their Interagency partners) to operate within the Special Flight Rules Area. DOI re-issues this authorization to each pilot-in-command (PIC) upon the successful completion of the GCNP SFRA training and testing program at <http://www.iat.gov/>. The information in the training program is provided for legal and safety purposes. Each PIC is responsible for complying with the DOI-issued FAA Form 7711-1 and its "Special Provisions." FAA Form 7711-1 does not constitute a waiver to deviate from other applicable Federal Aviation Regulations, such as "see-and-avoid" responsibilities and other portions of Part 91, Part 135, etc. This authorization must be reissued annually.

Additional requirements. Pilots authorized by DOI to conduct flight operations within the GCNP SFRA, who are planning missions (emergency response missions are excluded from this additional requirement) in the vicinity of one or more published commercial air tour operators routes, must coordinate those operations at least 7 days in advance of any operation with the DOI GCNP SFRA OVERSIGHT OFFICE at (208) 433-5088 in accordance with Special Provision #4.

Background. The GCNP SFRA became fully effective on November 1, 1988 and has been revised over the intervening years. The SFRA is codified in Federal Aviation Regulation 93, Sections 93.301 through 93.325 (14 CFR Part 93). The GCNP SFRA is clearly depicted on the Grand Canyon VFR Aeronautical Chart. Limited information regarding the Special Flight Rules Area is also contained on the Las Vegas Sectional Aeronautical Chart, and on some World Aeronautical Charts, such as CG-18 and CG-19. The Grand Canyon VFR aeronautical chart is a special chart and is not on any normal re-print cycle; i.e., it does not include an expiration date. Pilots can determine the most current version of the chart by checking the FAA's National Aeronautical Charting Office website at <http://www.naco.faa.gov/index.asp?xml=naco/does>.

The GCNP SFRA encompasses the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River and covers an area much larger than Grand Canyon National Park itself. This special use airspace stretches from near Lake Powell and Glen Canyon Dam, 277 river-miles down the Colorado River to Lake Mead, Pearce Ferry, and the Grand Wash Cliffs. The SFRA airspace extends from the surface up to but not including 18,000 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL).

Currently, the FAA has authorized about 19 flight routes or route segments in the GCNP SFRA. In the summer months, these routes are used almost continuously by nearly 240 aircraft from sunrise to sunset. Annual overflights of the park are estimated to be about 130,000, with 10,000 to 12,000 per month being the norm during the busy summer season. Operations at the Grand Canyon National Park Airport (GCN) can run between 70 and 90 operations per hour, or higher. Since a substantial portion of the air traffic in the GCNP SFRA consists of air tours, it is helpful to refer to the "AIR TOUR OPERATORS" side of the Grand Canyon VFR Aeronautical chart when operating in this special use airspace.

Minimum Sector Altitudes. The GCNP SFRA is divided into four sectors, each with two minimum flight altitudes: one for commercial sightseeing operations and another for transient and general aviation operations. From east to west, these sectors and minimum altitudes are:

Marble Canyon, from Lees Ferry to Boundary Ridge ("Marble Canyon Sector"): 6,000 feet MSL for air tour operations and 8,000 feet MSL for transient and general aviation operations.

Main Grand Canyon, from Boundary Ridge to Supai Point ("Supai Sector"): 7,500 feet MSL for air tour operations and 10,000 feet MSL for transient and general aviation operations.

From the Havasu Canyon area to Diamond Creek ("Diamond Creek Sector"): 6,500 feet MSL for air tour operations and 9,000 feet MSL for transient and general aviation operations.

From Diamond Creek to the Pearce Ferry/Grand Wash Cliffs region ("Pearce Ferry Sector"): 5,000 feet MSL for air tour operations and 8,000 feet MSL for transient and general aviation operations.

Flight-Free Zones. Four "flight-free zones" have been established in the GCNP SFRA to protect portions of the park. The three easternmost zones extend from the surface up to but not including 14,500 feet MSL and (from east to west) are Desert View, Bright Angel, and Toroweap/Shinumo. The fourth, westernmost flight-free zone extends from the surface up to but not including 7,999 feet MSL and is called Sanup.

Flight Corridors. Four "flight corridors" have been created to assist aircraft in navigating the SFRA while also avoiding any nearby flight-free zones. The names of these four corridors (from east to west) are Zuni Point, Dragon, Fossil Canyon and Tuckup. The Zuni Point and Dragon Corridors can be used by all aircraft (i.e., air tour, transient and general aviation operations). However, the Fossil Canyon and Tuckup Corridors are for transient and general aviation operations only. The Dragon Corridor, on the west side of the Bright Angel Flight-Free Zone, is the most active of the four flight corridors and can experience as many as 40 operations per hour.

In the Zuni Point and Dragon Corridors, air tour operations will be found between 7,500 feet and 10,000 feet MSL. Transient and general aviation operations should be located between 10,500 feet and 13,500 feet MSL. Only transient and general aviation aircraft are authorized to use the Fossil Canyon and Tuckup Corridors, and will be between the altitudes of 10,500 and 13,500 feet MSL. The air tour portion of the Zuni Point and Dragon Corridors is two nautical miles wide, and the transient and general aviation portion is four nautical miles wide. The Fossil Canyon and Tuckup Corridors are four nautical miles wide, and again, are for transient and general aviation operations only.

Radio Frequencies and Reporting Points. In addition to minimum flight altitudes, air tour operators have mandatory reporting points and discrete radio frequencies. The three radio frequencies assigned by the FAA for use in the GCNP SFRA are: 120.05 MHz for all of Marble Canyon and the main Grand Canyon (Marble Canyon Sector, and most of the Supai Sector); 127.05 MHz for the area just east of Havasu/Kanab Canyons westward to Diamond Creek (Diamond Creek Sector); and 121.95 MHz for that airspace which lies between Diamond Creek and the Pearce Ferry/Grand Wash Cliffs region (Pearce Ferry Sector). Except when in contact with the GCN Airport Traffic Control Tower or other emergency circumstances, pilots must continuously monitor the appropriate frequency while in the SFRA.

Coordination. All users of this authorization must notify GCNP at (928) 635-2601 prior to flying over or near any portion of the park. In addition, flights over non-GCNP lands within the SFRA should be coordinated with the agency or entity having jurisdiction over those lands. Applicable telephone numbers and radio frequencies for Grand Canyon National Park are: Fire Dispatch at (928) 635-2601, or call "Williams" on one of the following frequencies; South Rim Helibase at (928) 638-7823 or 638-7936, or call "South Rim Helibase" on one of the following frequencies; or Park Dispatch at (928) 638-7805:

NAME	RX FREQ	RX TONE	TX FREQ	TX TONE	COMMENTS
FIRE SIMP	172.5750		172.5750	127.3	GCNP Fire Simplex
FIRE HOPI	172.5750		169.6750	127.3	GCNP Fire Hopi Tower (Duplex)

Condors. There are currently between 40 and 50 free flying condors in the Grand Canyon region. Future releases of condors are planned until a population of 150 is achieved.

Contacts. If questions develop before, during or after the training, please contact one of the following:
DOI Aviation Management (Boise ID): Susie Bates at (208) 433-5091
DOI National Park Service (Boise ID): Tom Monterastelli at (208) 387-5244
Grand Canyon Zone Interagency Dispatch Center (Williams AZ) at (928) 635-2601