

AIRCRAFT FLASH CALLS FROM GROUND OBSERVERS

The purpose of Aircraft Flash service is to enable ground observers to observe and report to military authorities the movement of friendly and hostile planes. To this end, observation posts have been established at selected points throughout an Air Defense Control Area. Each area is subdivided into identification zones, each of which in turn is served by one or more filter centers. Filter centers cover an area which is subdivided into one or more reporting areas, the latter being designated by a distinctive name which is used by operators in completing Aircraft Flash calls.

Authorized civilian observers at fixed observation posts will report aircraft movement by telephone to a Filter Center serving the area in which the observation posts are located, all calls being placed on a station basis.

When calling a Filter Center, the observer will place his call by saying, "Aircraft Flash," followed by the calling telephone number. He will place his call with the operator he reaches first. If the call is given to a local operator, she will advance it to the toll board unless she can establish the connection, in which case she will do so. In either case, the call will be advanced and completed with all possible speed over locally specified routes.

Position information includes reporting area identification and the telephone numbers of authorized observation posts served.

Aircraft Flash calls will be accepted ~~only~~ from telephones at observation posts and each line used for this purpose will be specially designated at the answering jack if it so terminates, so that operators may give exceptional attention to line and recall signals, which should be answered before any other signals, including recall signals on other connections. ~~If such a call originates at other than an authorized telephone, it will not be accepted.~~

It is possible that the Filter Center may be moved from one location to another upon short notice and, in this case, directions to reroute Aircraft Flash calls will be given by telephone to all offices involved and the operating procedures will then be considered as applying to the new location.

To facilitate the handling of Aircraft Flash messages at a Filter Center, it is important that all calls be routed to the proper positions at the Filter Center. Therefore, an operator shall include the reporting area identification assigned to the area in which the calling telephone is located when she passes the order to the terminating operator as, for example, "Aircraft Flash, Adam." This will enable the terminating operator to establish connection to the position at the Filter Center which is to receive reports from the reporting area. An operator advancing a call by means of a dial or keyset will use a locally designated code or number to accomplish this purpose.

To avoid delay, alternate routes will be available where possible to the terminating office. Routing information and reporting area identification will be provided at all offices on special Aircraft Flash feature cards or as otherwise decided locally.

Aircraft Flash calls are handled in general as other calls except as modified by this section.

1. TICKETING AND TIMING. Ticket and time toll calls in the usual way except that the entry "Aircraft Flash" may be abbreviated to "A FL." As soon as you receive an order, at the first opportunity without delaying the advancement of the call, enter the calling number in the calling number space, the name of the place where the Filter Center is located as the called place or office, and "A FL (reporting area identification)" as the called number.

Ticket local calls only if locally directed to do so.

2. AIRCRAFT FLASH CALL RECEIVED. If you are to pass the call to Long Distance, immediately advance the call in the hearing of the calling party as "Aircraft flash (reporting area identification) (clg. no.)."

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If you are to handle and ticket the call, immediately attempt to establish connection in one of the following ways, depending upon the route:

On a dial or key pulsing trunk connection, dial or set up the special code which will route the call to the inward operator at the office at which the Filter Center is reached or dial or set up the special number assigned to the reporting area as shown on your position routing directions. If you are to reach an inward operator at the Filter Center office over the trunk, remain cut in and when she answers, proceed as for a ringdown trunk connection.

On a built-up ringdown trunk connection, say to any intermediate operator, "Aircraft flash (cld. pl.)." Having reached the place at which the Filter Center is located, say "Aircraft flash (reporting area identification)."

On a straightforward trunk connection, pass the order "Aircraft flash (reporting area identification)," unless locally directed otherwise.

On a manual toll tandem or full straightforward tandem trunk connection, pass the order "Aircraft flash (cld. pl.)" and wait for the next office to answer. Pass subsequent orders on the connection as "Aircraft flash (reporting area identification)" or "Aircraft flash (cld. pl.)" depending on whether or not you have reached the terminating operator.

In addition be guided by the following:

- a. If you encounter NC on all authorized routes out of your office or at an intermediate office, proceed as hereafter provided for such a condition.
- b. Having reached the called telephone, monitor long enough to assist in starting conversation if necessary and if switchhook supervision is not received from either telephone, monitor at frequent intervals, at least once every 15 seconds, for the end of conversation.
- c. If BY is encountered, give the report to the calling party and ask him to hold the line.

If you received the report from an inward operator, say "I will hold the circuit," and hold the trunk in all cases without cutting out until the connection is completed. When the inward operator secures a line, she will ring the telephone at once instead of reporting ready.

If you received the busy signal, release the trunk and if an overflow group is provided, at once try to establish connection to an idle line in the overflow group, passing the order as "Aircraft flash overflow." If you establish connection to the overflow group, cut out.

If no overflow group is provided or if all overflow lines are busy, make repeated attempts to establish the connection until the called telephone is reached, alternating attempts to reach the desired reporting area group and the overflow group if provided.

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~~d. If you receive an aircraft flash call from a telephone other than one locally designated to originate such calls, make no attempt to complete the connection but obtain the calling party's name and telephone number and say, for example, "We do not complete aircraft flash calls unless made from authorized telephones." If the calling party disconnects, release the calling line, but if he still wishes the call, connect him with the service assistant. In any case, write a memo covering the case and give it to the service assistant.~~

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~~S.A. Explain that by request of the Air Defense Command, such calls are not accepted from unauthorized telephones, regardless of any reason advanced by the calling party. As soon as possible, refer the memo covering the case to the Chief Operator.~~

~~C.O. At once refer any attempt to place an aircraft flash call from an unauthorized telephone to the locally specified civilian defense authorities. Include the name as well as the telephone number of the calling party if possible, the time the attempt was made, and other pertinent information such as the details furnished by the calling party. Also refer the case to the man in charge.~~

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d. If you receive an aircraft flash call from a telephone other than one locally designated to originate such calls, say for example, "We do not complete aircraft flash calls unless made from authorized telephones." If the calling party still wishes the call or explains that he is an authorized observer, proceed with the call in the usual way except that you pass "observer check" instead of the reporting area identification to the inward operator at the TTC. Notify the supervisor as an overlap.

Supervisor. Monitor on the connection and at the end of the conversation, cut in and challenge by saying for example, "This is the supervisor." Thereafter, proceed as directed by the filter center officer. If you are told that the calling telephone is at an authorized observation post, tell the operator to proceed with the call in the usual way. Then refer the calling party's name, number, and any other desirable information to the Chief Operator. If you are told that the calling telephone is not at an authorized observation post, take no further action.

C.O. Take the necessary steps to identify the calling line as one to originate aircraft flash calls and report the case to the man in charge and to other locally specified employees or civil defense authorities.

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e. If the called telephone has not answered at the end of 30 seconds on a connection which you have established direct, and you do not know that the filter center is activated, reach the inward operator at the TTC and proceed as for ringdown operation or if locally directed, pass the call details to Long Distance.

After you have passed an order to the TTC inward operator, if the latter tells you to route the call to the Air Defense Headquarters at (pl.) (no.), understand that the called telephone has not answered. Acknowledge, correct the called details on the ticket, and at once proceed as on a new call. At first opportunity without delaying the handling of this call, say to the calling party, for example, "I will connect you with the Air Defense Headquarters at (pl.). Will you report there, please?"

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However, if you do not at once recognize whether or not the call is from an authorized telephone, advance the call immediately but as an overlap, check the calling number with the list of authorized observer's telephones. If the number is not shown, abandon the attempt to complete the connection and proceed as above.

e. ~~If the call is from a coin telephone, proceed as on a call from a non-coin telephone, since the call will be billed, and return the deposit if necessary.~~

3. NC ENCOUNTERED ON ALL AUTHORIZED ROUTES. Understand that such calls take precedence over emergency calls as well as calls of a lower class but not over air defense calls, and that conversations on existing connections are not to be interrupted.

a. When you give an NC report, ask the calling party to hold the line. Continue attempts to secure a circuit and notify the service assistant as an overlap.

S.A. Ascertain if a trunk to the called office can be made available, enlisting the aid of other service assistants if necessary.

b. If you have a completed aircraft flash call to the called place at your position or if there is one on an adjacent position, monitor or have the adjacent operator monitor the completed connection continuously, if possible, until conversation ends and then proceed with the new call, using the same circuit or trunk. In this case, the inward operator will challenge on a ringdown trunk connection when a disconnect signal is received from the Filter Center, but if she does not challenge promptly, ring.

4. CIRCUIT SECURED AFTER ENCOUNTERING NC. When you secure a circuit or trunk, if you have more than one uncompleted aircraft flash call to the same place, first complete the last call received and at the end of conversation, the preceding call, remaining cut in continuously. Follow this order of procedure until all aircraft flash calls have been completed.

5. NOTIFICATION RECEIVED OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OBSERVATION POST. C.O. In the event of hostilities, if a calling party reports that his telephone has been designated to originate aircraft flash calls from a newly established observation post, secure and record his name and telephone number, the name of the reporting area, and the filter center office to which calls are to be routed. Then at once proceed as follows:

a. Notify the locally designated employee of the report, giving all details received.

b. Arrange for any answering jack marking or position information necessary, and for posting the routing directions for reaching the filter center office, in the latter case, first consulting the man in charge who will arrange for any desirable alternate routes.

c. Make sure that all operators in your office who may handle such calls are familiar with the proper operating procedures.

d. Having determined all authorized routes, notify the Chief Operator of each intermediate office concerned if any, that army flash calls may originate from your office for the filter center office.