

## SAFETY ALERT

### Concerning operations outside of Class B airspace

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ALPA-International continues to receive pilot reports stating that, at a number of high-density U.S. airports, air traffic controllers have issued clearances to pilots of arriving aircraft that have caused these flights to:

1. exit the side of the top tier of the Class B airspace, or
2. descend below the floor of the Class B airspace.

Additionally, controllers rarely issue the required advisories that inform pilots when they are leaving or reentering Class B airspace. FAA Order 7400.2, Procedures for Handling Airspace Matters, states, "***The primary purpose of a Class B airspace area is to reduce the potential for midair collisions in the airspace surrounding airports with high-density air traffic operations***".

Supporting this document are items in **FAR Part 91** and the Aeronautical Information Manual (**AIM**):

- **FAR 91.131** requires pilots of large turbine-powered aircraft to remain at or above the floor of Class B airspace **unless advised otherwise by ATC**.

NOTE: The FAA air traffic controllers' handbook, **FAA Order 7110.65R**, says that, when controllers direct pilots out of Class B airspace for separation purposes, such events should be the exception rather than the rule and requires them to advise pilots when they exit or reenter Class B airspace.

- The **AIM** states that clearance for a visual approach is not authorization for pilots of turbine-powered airplanes to operate below the designated floor of Class B airspace.

ALPA has found several inconsistencies in the documents relating to ATC procedures and Class B airspace. The Association has brought them to the attention of the FAA and the rest of the aviation community.

#### Recommendations:

Until the FAA permanently resolves this problem, ALPA-I recommends:

- Whenever possible, have a chart depicting the Class B airspace in which you will operate available for reference.
- If it appears you may exit the Class B airspace, advise the controller that you want to remain within it.
- If you find yourself operating below a Class B upper shelf, **DO NOT EXCEED the FAR 91.117 SPEED LIMIT OF 200 kts IAS**. Controllers do not have the authority to issue a clearance to fly faster than this limit.