



THE FLIGHT SERVICE STATION POSITION (FSS)

1. Introduction

The Flight Service Station (called FSS) position has the responsibility of ensuring the provision of aeronautical information and service to aircraft pilots before, during, and after flights.

The people who communicate with pilots from an FSS are referred to as Flight Service Specialists.

The **FSS** controller is responsible for:

- Providing flight information in his airspace which can cover a flight information region (FIR) or a part of it.
- Providing flight assistance and information for aviation safety.
- Monitoring activities to ensure that aircraft are moving and events are occurring as expected
- Relaying ATC clearances when applicable (approach, arrival, departure...)

The **FSS** controller deals with:

- Each aircraft in his area of responsibility which wants to obtain traffic information and alerting service.

The **FSS** controller is never responsible for:

- Giving any control instructions (route, level)
- Giving any landing and take-off clearance
- Giving his own clearance (approach, arrival, departure ...)
- Giving instruction to provide separation

The Flight Service Station agent is not a controller. He has no rights to give control instructions and clearances except for oceanic Flight Service Station which can give ATC clearance when applicable.

This position is mainly available in North America.

Some countries, such as Canada and the United States, have been consolidating flight services into large regional centres with remote communications outlets (RCOs) connected to the centres.

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2. Tasks

The precise services offered by stations vary by country.

Usual FSS services may provide:

- Pre-flight briefings including weather and notices to airmen (NOTAMs)
- Filing, opening, and closing flight plans (Not available for IVAO as there is no flight plan service)
- Monitoring navigational aids (NAVAIDs) (Not applicable for IVAO as NAVAIDs are always active)
- Collecting and disseminating pilot reports (Not available for IVAO)
- Airport surface weather observations (METAR)
- Offering traffic advisories to aircraft on the ground or in flight
- Relaying instructions or clearances from air traffic control which FSS station depends
- Relaying information from or about airborne aircraft
- Providing weather advisories to aircraft in flight,
- Initiating search and rescue on missing VFR aircraft (Only during special event in IVAO)
- Providing assistance in an emergency.
- Transponder code if there is a radar monitoring available.

In many countries, flight service stations also operate at mandatory frequency airports to help co-ordinate traffic in the absence of air traffic controllers.

The FSS agent should prioritize tasks using the following order as guideline:

- Emergency situations
- Inflight services
- Preflight services

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3. Special IVAO procedures

All special IVAO procedures are mandatory since they fit to situations or special IVAO features which cannot happen in real life while they may occur on the network because of its proper limitations.

3.1. Availability of the position

It is the responsibility of the division to create a **FSS** position in their flight information regions. As this position is mainly available in North America, this position is not commonly used in IVAO.

3.2. Flight strips clearance

The **FSS** controller shall verify that flight strips are correctly filled. In the case of a sudden pilot disconnection, the **FSS** controller must **refill the flight strip before transferring the traffic** to the next controller.

3.3. Release to UNICOM

With the absence of nearby ATC or FSS station and when aircraft leaves its area of responsibility, the **FSS** agent transfers traffic to **UNICOM 122.800**.

3.4. Use of FORCE ACT

As **FSS** position is not a controlled position and the radio contact between aircraft and the FSS station is optional. **FORCE ACT is not allowed** (except for oceanic station which require clearance to enter)

3.5. Transponder

The **TWR** controller ensures that the transponder is **set to**:

- **TX mode** when entering an active runway.
- **STAND BY mode** when vacating the active runway

Setting the transponder to TX mode at the holding point and to STANDBY on the runway just after landing is permitted.

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