ALERT BULLETIN

TO: FAA (ATM ZME ARTCC, ATM BNA TRACON)

INFO: FAA (Director of Air Traffic Operations ESA South, AVP-1, AVP-200, AFS-280, AFS-200), A4A, ALPA, AOPA, APA, ASAP, ATSAP, ATSG, CAPA, IATA, ICAO, ICASS, IFALPA, IPA, NATCA, NBAA, NTSB, RAA, SWAPA

FROM: Becky L. Hooey, Director
        NASA Aviation Safety Reporting System

SUBJ: ZME/BNA Handoff Coordination Issues

We recently received ASRS reports describing a safety concern that may involve your area of operational responsibility. We do not have sufficient details to assess either the factual accuracy or possible gravity of the report. It is our policy to relay the reported information to the appropriate authority for evaluation and any necessary follow-up. We feel you should be aware of the following:

ZME ARTCC Controller reported handoff coordination issues with BNA TRACON involving a general aviation aircraft being denied an approach into BNA airport resulting in course reversal and entering a sector without approval. ZME Controller stated per LOA with BNA TRACON the aircraft was descended to 8,000 feet at which point the handoff procedure was initiated. BNA TRACON then called the ZME Controller stating that practice approaches are not allowed at BNA. The aircraft was subsequently turned around on a 180 degree heading without proper coordination. Reporter stated other ZME controllers have experienced the same situation and that "...this is a very unsafe situation to just turn an aircraft and reverse his course without approval... I had other BNA arrivals descending and I had to keep Aircraft X on the 180 heading for about 5 more minutes before I was able to put the aircraft on course."

To properly assess the usefulness of our alert message service, we would appreciate it if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the value of the information that we have provided. Please contact Dr. Becky Hooey at (408) 541-2854 or email at becky.l.hooey@nasa.gov.

ACN 1828551

DATE / TIME

Date of Occurrence	202108
Local Time Of Day	0601 to 1200

PLACE

Locale	ZME.ARTCC
State	TN
Altitude - MSL	8000

AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - Center	ZME
Make Model Name	Small Transport, Low Wing, 2 Turboprop Eng

PERSON 1

Function - Air Traffic Control	Enroute
ASRS Report Number	1828551

EVENTS

Anomaly	ATC Issue - All Types
Anomaly	Deviation - Track / Heading - All Types
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Clearance
Detector - Person	Air Traffic Control
Result - Flight Crew	Returned To Departure Airport
Result - Air Traffic Control	Provided Assistance

NARRATIVE 1

I was working the R-side [Radar Controller] position on Shelbyville Low Sector 60. I was working Aircraft X who was headed to BNA. The aircraft came to me descending to 12,000 from ZTL. Per the LOA with Nashville I descended the aircraft to 8,000 [feet] and initiated the handoff to Nashville Approach. I switched the aircraft to the correct frequency. When Aircraft X was about 5 miles outside my airspace, the controller at Nashville called me to say that no practice approaches were allowed at BNA and that Aircraft X was being put on a heading of 180 and coming back to me to return to his airport. I asked the Controller what was his airport? I had no flight plan information on this aircraft, just that he was going to BNA. The Controller said he would call back. When he called back a couple of minutes later, he said there was a flight plan for a BNA departure to ZZZ. The Controller told me they put him on his new squawk code and was coming to me on that 180 heading. Nashville never entered a departure message on the new flight plan. I had to remove the flight plan on the Nashville arrival and then enter the departure message for the new flight plan. I was able to tag up the aircraft and then I had to re-clear the aircraft back to ZZZ.

My main issue with this event, is that this is a very unsafe situation to just turn an aircraft and reverse his course without approval from the new sector. I had other BNA arrivals descending and I had to keep Aircraft X on the 180 heading for about 5 more minutes before I was able to put the aircraft on course. Another issue I have is the Controller at Nashville refusing to help an IFR aircraft. I get it if you are busy and cannot approve practice approaches at your airport. Nashville has 6 more airports in their airspace, maybe send someone there. Just to reverse this aircraft's course is pretty bad. How are aircraft supposed to know that no practice approaches are allowed at BNA? I have been working traffic for XX years and this had only come up in the past two weeks of me being at ZME. The area across from me, Area 6, had a similar situation a few weeks ago with an aircraft being refused to be worked by the Nashville Approach Controller and had to spin for about 20 minutes until they knew exactly what was happening.

One of my fellow controllers overheard what was going on and he stated that Nashville did the same thing to him about two weeks ago as well. This time it was a general aviation aircraft that Nashville refused to have the aircraft enter their airspace, and the controller had to spin the aircraft at the last minute and he returned just back to somewhere in Alabama. In Aircraft X's case he flew from Georgia all the way towards Nashville, gets 35 miles out and is turned right back around back to Georgia. I felt bad for the aircraft that we were not able to provide a service to the aircraft. There are no NOTAMs for BNA saying anything about practice approaches. There were no comments in Aircraft X's flight plan saying he wanted a practice approach at BNA. How are these aircraft supposed to know this procedure? I am not real sure the process to help alleviate this issue. Again, how is any aircraft supposed to know about this? And how am I supposed to know this exists as I am working traffic to Nashville? There needs to be more clarification on this procedure.

SYNOPSIS

ZME Controller reported a BNA TRACON Controller refused to let an aircraft make an approach into BNA.