

6/26/2024

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

2024-123/6-8

To: FAA (ATM ZDC ARTCC, AJV-A)

2117432

Info: FAA (AVP-1, AVP-200, AFS-200, AFS-260, Director of Air Traffic Operations ESA North), A4A, ALPA, AOPA, APA, ASAP, ATSAP, ATSG, CAPA, IATA, IBT, ICAO, ICASS, IFALPA, IPA, NATCA, NBAA, NTSB, RAA, SWAPA

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

Re: ATC Radio Coverage Between SAGGY and CHIEZ

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 enclosed deidentified report.

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](mailto:becky.l.hooey@nasa.gov).



Aviation Safety Reporting System  
P.O. Box 189 | Moffett Field, CA | 94035-0189



**ACN 2117432****DATE / TIME**

|                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Date of Occurrence | 202405       |
| Local Time Of Day  | 1201 to 1800 |

**PLACE**

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Locale         | ZDC.ARTCC |
| State          | VA        |
| Altitude - MSL | 29000     |

**ENVIRONMENT**

|                   |     |
|-------------------|-----|
| Flight Conditions | VMC |
|-------------------|-----|

**AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X**

|                          |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| ATC / Advisory - Center  | ZDC              |
| Make Model Name          | Medium Transport |
| Operating Under FAR Part | 135              |

**PERSON 1**

|                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| Function - Flight Crew | Captain          |
| Function - Flight Crew | Pilot Not Flying |
| ASRS Report Number     | 2117432          |

**PERSON 2**

|                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Function - Flight Crew | First Officer |
| Function - Flight Crew | Pilot Flying  |
| ASRS Report Number     | 2117431       |

**EVENTS**

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Anomaly              | ATC Issue - All Types  |
| Anomaly              | Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published Material / Policy |
| Anomaly              | Inflight Event / Encounter - Weather / Turbulence                  |
| Detector - Person    | Air Traffic Control  |
| Detector - Person    | Flight Crew  |
| Result - Flight Crew | Requested ATC Assistance / Clarification                           |

**NARRATIVE 1**

Loss of communications with ATC enroute from ZZZ to HPN. Approximately between intersections SAGGY and CHIEZ at FL290 we were contacted by Washington Center to contact them. On first contact with Washington they mentioned Jacksonville Center was attempting to reach us. No further conversation with ATC was conducted. We proceeded without incident.

Prior to departure we briefed the large weather system and the possibility of route diversion may be needed around the weather. The flight conditions were turbulent at altitudes FL310 and above so we decided to maintain FL290. On the handover between two Jacksonville controllers we attempted to reach the new controller several times before making initial contact. This has happened on previous flights in the same area. Maybe the convective activity and lower altitude contributed to the communication issue. Once we approached the coast communications were clear once again.

Maybe we can note the frequencies and handover locations when flying this route out over the water. If we do not have any contact with ATC after a specified time shorter than the time ATC would contact us at least we can be proactive in contacting them on the frequency we know they use in that area.

## **NARRATIVE 2**

As we transmitted east of the military warning areas off the coast, we lost radio communications with ATC at FL290 between the SAGGY and CHIEZ fixes. Since we did not receive a frequency switch, we were unaware of the lost communications. We received a call from Washington Center directing us to contact them and an email from our Operations team directing us to contact Jacksonville Center. We contacted Washington Center before entering their airspace and continued the flight without incident.

A large weather system was moving east off the coast. We were passing east of this system when we lost communications. Due to reported turbulence along our route of flight, we chose to cruise at FL290. We had to call Jacksonville Center multiple times on a previous check in. We have had issues communicating with ATC in this area on previous flights. ATC has acknowledged this limitation and given us expected frequencies and points to switch in the past.

It is likely we were in a radio blind spot, leading to lost communications. We debriefed the incident, talking about the importance of monitoring 121.5 throughout the flight, especially during over water legs. In the future, we will conduct radio checks with ATC if we have not heard them transmit for more than 10 minutes in this area. We will also ensure we have a frequency for ATC before transiting Center boundaries.

## **SYNOPSIS**

Air taxi flight crew reported losing radio communications with ATC between the fixes SAGGY and CHIEZ and noted this was a reoccurring problem.