

10/15/2025

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

2025-254/10-22

2279878

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

Info: FAA (AFS-260, AFS-200, AVP-1, AVP-200, Director of Air Traffic Operations, CSA),
A4A, AAAE, ALPA, APA, ASAP, ATSAP, ATSG, CAPA, IATA, IBT, ICAO, ICASS,
IFALPA, IPA, NATCA, NTSB, RAA, SWAPA, Jeppesen Sanderson Inc.

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

Re: Similar Sounding Fix Names - SUPER/SOUPR

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.



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



ACN 2279878**DATE / TIME**

Date of Occurrence	202508
Local Time Of Day	0601 to 1200

PLACE

Locale	ZAU.ARTCC
State	IL
Altitude - MSL	23000

AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - Center	ZAU
Make Model Name	Military
Operating Under FAR Part	91

AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT Y

ATC / Advisory - Center	ZAU
Make Model Name	Military
Operating Under FAR Part	91

COMPONENT 1

Aircraft Component	GPS & Other Satellite Navigation
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PERSON 1

Function - Air Traffic Control	Enroute
ASRS Report Number	2279878

EVENTS

Anomaly	Aircraft Equipment Problem - Less Severe
Anomaly	Airspace Violation - All Types
Anomaly	ATC Issue - All Types
Anomaly	Deviation - Track / Heading - All Types
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published
	Material / Policy
Detector - Automation	Air Traffic Control
Detector - Person	Air Traffic Control
Result - Flight Crew	Returned To Clearance
Result - Air Traffic Control	Issued New Clearance

NARRATIVE 1

I was working the 3 SE area lows all combined because the traffic volume at the time permitted it. There was a line of ORD arrivals that I was sequencing and not much else going on so I had started a relief briefing to another controller. During the briefing, there were at least 3 departures off of the ZZZ airport, 2 of which were military aircraft.

The HILLTOP MOA, military airspace in our area was scheduled to go active around this time, but neither of the two military departures were routed towards our scheduled airspace. Aircraft X, a military flight of 2, was the first military departure that was on a northeast bound heading in the climb and I climbed them to their requested altitude of FL230 on check in because I did not have any traffic in their way. Their route was ZZZ..SUPER..ZZZ. The "SUPER" waypoint in our database was showing a direct line to the west.

About a minute later, Aircraft Y also takes off on a northeast heading, but their route is ZZZ..BAX..ZZZ, and BAX is to the northeast. After seeing Aircraft X still on their northeast heading, I'm assumed they were assigned a heading with ZZZ approach and did not tell me about it. However, they were actually traversing towards the "SOUPR" fix, which is to the northeast. I recleared Aircraft X direct SUPER because it looked like they were going the wrong direction and continued with the relief briefing.

After seeing that clearing Aircraft X direct SUPER did not change their heading, I inquired on how to spell the waypoint they were direct to. To which they told me the correct fix. The controller I was giving the briefing to was quick to get on the D-side to help with coordination while I continued to do the other control instructions throughout the other parts of my airspace.

The aircraft were traveling so fast over the ground that I did not have enough time to coordinate with the C15 and sector 81 in time before getting into their airspace with both military planes.

Recommendation: ZZZ approach should be careful with the spellings of their routes. In addition, the three immediate departures off the same airport added more workload than I was able to accomplish in the short amount of time when military aircraft are going northeast bound out of the OLK sector.

Splitting of the OLK sector only would have helped with the situations, but I believe that if it was BEARZ/OLK (the configuration we normally run), the situation would have been the same and there would not have been enough time to coordinate the necessary information and fix the inappropriate route.

There also was not enough staffing to support the split of the low sector at that time because overall, the traffic count was light and not difficult. The biggest complexity factor was the wrong route, speed of the planes, and short proximity to entering other controllers airspace. Doing a relief briefing during the situations also took our focus away from the potential situation, but it helped having another person get the coordination done while other things were happening in the sector.

SYNOPSIS

ZAU Controller reported similar sounding airspace fixes - SUPER and SOUPR.