

ALERT BULLETIN

2026:29/6-4

9/15/2026

2392032

TO: FAA (ATM C90 TRACON, AJW-19)

INFO: FAA (Director of Air Traffic Operations CSA, AVP-1, AVP-200, AGL-600, AFS-260, AFS-200), A4A, AAAE, ALPA, AOPA, APA, ASAP, ATSAP, ATSG, CAPA, IATA, ICASS, IFALPA, NATCA, NBAA, NTSB, RAA, SWAPA

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

SUBJ: C90 STARS System Anomalies

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:

ASRS received a report from a C90 TRACON Controller expressing concern about numerous unnecessary STARS (Standard Terminal Automation Replacement System) alerts. Reporter stated the large volume of these alerts is distracting and increases workload. Reporter suggested the STARS system be disabled during operations with less than three runways in use.

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 2392032**DATE / TIME**

Date of Occurrence	202607
Local Time Of Day	0001 to 0600

PLACE

Locale	C90.TRACON
State	IL
Altitude - MSL	6500

AIRCRAFT / EQUIPMENT X

ATC / Advisory - TRACON	C90
Make Model Name	Commercial Fixed Wing
Operating Under FAR Part	121

PERSON 1

Function - Air Traffic Control	Approach
ASRS Report Number	2392032

EVENTS

Anomaly	ATC Issue - All Types
Anomaly	Deviation / Discrepancy - Procedural - Published
	Material / Policy
Detector - Automation	Air Traffic Control
Detector - Person	Air Traffic Control
Result - General	None Reported / Taken

NARRATIVE 1

C90 STARS (Standard Terminal Automation Replacement System) continues to alert controllers via forcing a yellow full or limited data block on arrival scopes any aircraft that is deemed an early decent on an ILS/RNAV final between selected altitudes of approximately 6200-6800 feet outside the 7000 crossing fix on all approaches into ORD. Since implementation this system has created more false alerts than identifying real problems for me. It continues to create distractions and unnecessary nuisance alerts to other controllers, often unrelated to the operation at hand.

Controllers are trained and conditioned that yellow aircraft (yellow data blocks) are special, point outs, or otherwise needing special attention. This is not useful during flow changes, configuration changes, or single/dual runway arrival situations where aircraft can legally and procedurally be at those flagged altitudes.

Displaying aircraft unnecessarily as special aircraft via yellow highlight will soon cause controllers to get fatigue from the constant yellow alerts and start ignoring it, and become complacent. We have already seen this throughout the field with the nuisance CA-CA alerts (conflict alert).

Specifically, during a two runway arrival operation when the high runway controller can use 5-11000 to join their final/localizer, it is entirely possible an aircraft will (and should) be joining the final at 6000 or higher to allow a base turn ahead of the wider traffic at 5000 for positive separation. Positive separation without nuisance alerts should be absolutely possible.

It should also be noted that random miscellaneous VFR aircraft also show up yellow. But only between the flagged altitudes. This could easily lead a controller to miss other VFRs not within the altitude filter or EDAA box because they are expecting them to be yellow.

On Day 0 Aircraft X was being vectored for an approach to runway 10C in a two runway operation. The W controller was using their assigned altitudes in their assigned airspace but the entire arrival line received a false warning that Aircraft X had descended early while at 6500 feet. This alert was a false positive.

Recommendation: Disable the EDAA entirely as it is an unnecessary distraction in the operation. Make the function pre-settable or controller selectable. Enable at supervisory positions only (similar to ARV (Approach Runway Verification)). Disable during <3 runway operations. Select to only the high runway. Exclude VFRs.

SYNOPSIS

C90 TRACON Controller reported when traffic is properly separated, STARS shows false alerts on final approach which are overly distracting.