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Maintenance

**LOW ALTITUDE OPERATIONS (LAO) AND
VERY LOW ALTITUDE OPERATIONS (VLAO)**

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This McConnell Air Force Base Instruction (MAFBI) implements AFI 21-101, *Aircraft and Equipment Maintenance Management* and 1C-135A-6, outlining responsibilities and procedures for the identification and inspection of aircraft performing low or very low altitude air refueling missions. The 22d Operations Group, 22d Maintenance Group and 931st Air Refueling Group will ensure compliance with all procedures outlined in this instruction. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with AFMAN 37-123 (will convert to AFMAN 33-363), *Management of Records*, and disposed of in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule (RDS) located at <https://afrims.amc.af.mil/>. Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) using the AF IMT 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route AF IMT 847s from the field through the appropriate functional's chain of command.

1. Definitions:

1.1. Low Altitude Operations (LAO) and Very Low Altitude Operations (VLAO) do not include normal departures, arrivals or traffic pattern operations. Properly classifying operations, documenting flying schedules with intended operations and documenting aircraft AFTO 781A, *Maintenance Discrepancy and Work Document*, forms after operating in LAO or VLAO are required to ensure aircraft airworthiness.

1.2. The LAO environment is defined as aircraft operating at airspeeds above 240 knots indicated airspeed (KIAS) and at altitudes from 3,000 to 6,000 feet Above Ground Level (AGL). Substantial visual airframe special inspections are required upon accumulation of 25 flight hours of LAO.

1.3. The VLAO environment is defined as aircraft operating above 240 KIAS and at altitudes below 3,000 feet AGL. Substantial visual and non-destructive inspection (NDI) airframe special inspections are required to be performed by maintenance personnel prior to aircraft operating in VLAO. Once

complete, aircraft are cleared to operate for an accumulation of 50 flight hours in VLAO environments. Upon accumulation of 50 VLAO flight hours, the aircraft must be removed from service and re-inspected.

2. Responsibilities:

2.1. It is imperative schedulers, operators and maintenance supervisors coordinate the following actions as appropriate whether at home-station, on temporary duty, or deployed. These home-station procedures apply wherever 22 ARW aircraft are operated.

2.2. Contact lead command for VLAO approval, contact OC-ALC/LCRA for any overdue individual aircraft tracking program (IATP) inspections that must be performed prior to any VLAO operations.

2.3. LAO and VLAO missions must be pre-coordinated. 22d Operations Support Squadron scheduling (OSS/OSOS) will notify 22d Maintenance Operations Squadron Plans, Scheduling and Documentation (PS&D) of all anticipated LAO or VLAO missions.

2.4. OSOS will annotate "IMPLEMENT MAFBI 21-101 for LAO" or "IMPLEMENT MAFBI 21-101 for VLAO" as applicable in the remarks block of the flying schedule.

2.5. PS&D will coordinate with 22d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (AMXS) to ensure aircraft are properly identified and inspections are tracked/accomplished for use in LAO and VLAO environments.

2.6. AMXS will track LAO and VLAO hours and perform inspections as required in accordance with TO 1C-135A-6.

2.7. The aircraft commander will annotate a pilot reported discrepancy in the AFTO Form 781A (Red Diagonal "/") anytime LAO or VLAO operations are conducted. The discrepancy will include a statement including: LAO or VLAO, aircraft configuration (gear & flap positions) and duration in the LAO/VLAO environment.

2.8. During post-flight debriefing, AMXS will enter a Red Dash "-" ground-found discrepancy stating, "Post LAO or VLAO -6 inspections required" in the next available AFTO Form 781A discrepancy block upon accumulation of LAO or VLAO inspection hour criteria.

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