

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Aviation Administration****TSO-C163, VDL Mode 3 Communications Equipment Operating Within the Frequency Range 117.975 to 137.000 Megahertz (MHz)**

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of availability and requests for public comment.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of, and request comments, on a proposed Technical Standard order (TSO) for VDL Mode 3 Communications Equipment Operating within the Frequency Range 117.975 to 137.000 Megahertz (MHz). The proposed TSO tells manufacturers seeking TSO authorization or letter of design approval what minimum performance standard (MPS) their VDL Mode 3 Communications Equipment Operating within the Frequency Range 117.975 to 137.000 MHz must first meet to obtain approval and identification with the applicable TSO markings. Note that this proposed VDL Mode 3 TSO is drafted to recognize RTCA document (RTCA/DO)—271A, Minimum Operational Performance Standards (MOPS) for Aircraft VDL Mode 3 Transceiver Operating in the Frequency Range 117.975 to 137.000 Megahertz (MHz).

DATES: Comments must identify the TSO and arrived by February 5, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Send all comments on the proposed TSO to: Federal Aviation Administration, Aircraft Certification Service, Aircraft Engineering Division, Avionic Systems Branch, AIR-130, Room 815, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591. ATTN: Mr. Gregory Frye, AIR-130. Or, you may deliver comments to: Federal Aviation Administration, Room 815, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Gregory Frye, Federal Aviation Administration, Aircraft Certification Service, Aircraft Engineering Division, Avionic Systems Branch, AIR-130, Room 815, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591, Telephone (202) 385-4649, FAX (202) 385-4651. E-mail gregory.e.frye@FAA.GOV.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Comments Invited**

You may comment on the proposed TSO listed in this notice by sending such written data, views, or arguments to the above listed address. You may also examine comments received on the proposed TSO, before and after the

comment closing date, in Room 815, FAA Headquarters Building, 800 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20591, weekdays except Federal holidays, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The Director of the Aircraft Certification Service will consider all communications received by the closing date before issuing the final TSO.

Background

The steady growth of aviation has brought about the corresponding growth in air/ground communications requirements. Further, the growing diversity of air traffic has resulted in an increasing complex air traffic control environment, which adds to the demand for spectrum efficiency, necessitates the impending relief granted with the usage of this VDL Mode 3 communication enhancement.

The current Very High Frequency (VHF) air/ground communications system lacks the channel capacity for future air traffic integrated voice and data communications demands. Deficiencies in the existing communication system includes:

- Lack of additional channels for voice services.
- Lack of integrated data link capacity.
- Insufficient ability to significantly improve NAS safety and efficiency.
- Increase radio frequency interference susceptibility.
- Outdated equipment and infrastructure.
- System maintenance concerns.

The VDL Mode 3 system is designed to address deficiencies in the current air traffic management system as well as utilizing technological advances in communications equipment design in order to meet future air traffic system voice and data demands.

How To Get Copies

You may get a copy of the proposed TSO from the Internet at <http://av-info.faa.gov/tso/Tsoro/Proposed.htm>, or by contacting the person listed in the section titled **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**. You may inspect the RTCA document at the FAA office listed under **ADDRESSES**. Because RTCA documents are copyrighted and may not be reproduced without the written consent of RTCA, Inc., you may purchase a copy of RTCA/DO-271A from: RTCA Inc., 1828 L Street, NW., Suite 807, Washington, DC 20036.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 19, 2003.

Susan J.M. Cabler,

Assistant Manager, Aircraft Engineering Division, Aircraft Certification Service.

[FR Doc. 03-32088 Filed 12-30-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**Federal Highway Administration****Environmental Impact Statement: Chittenden County, Vermont**

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that a new supplement to a final environmental impact statement will be prepared for a proposed highway project in Chittenden County, Vermont, and that a 1984 supplement to the final environmental impact statement will not be completed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rob Sikora, Environmental Program Manager, Federal Highway Administration, P.O. Box 568, Montpelier, Vermont 05601. Telephone: 802-828-4433.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FHWA, in cooperation with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and the City of Burlington, will prepare a supplement to the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on a proposal to construct a new highway known as the Southern Connector/Champlain Parkway in the City of Burlington, Chittenden County, Vermont. The original EIS for the Southern Connector (FHWA-VT-EIS-77-02-F) was approved on July 3, 1979. As described in the 1979 EIS, the proposed improvements provide an undivided four-lane, limited access highway on new location, commencing at the interchange of I-189 with Shelburne Street (U.S. Route 7) and extending westerly and northerly to the intersection of Battery and King Streets in the Burlington Central Business District for a distance of about 2.5 miles.

A portion of the proposed project has been constructed. Preliminary design and right-of-way acquisition for an additional portion has been completed. The remaining segment has been delayed due to the fact that it traverses an EPA Superfund Site.

On August 29, 1984, FHWA issued a Notice of Intent to prepare a Supplemental EIS to address any additional environmental impacts caused by constructing the new