

**FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**  
**ALASKA FLIGHT SERVICES INFORMATION AREA GROUP**  
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**Alaskan Flight Service Stations Implement Automated Flight Following**

Using a web-based satellite communication application which tracks participating aircraft with near real-time position displays, Federal Aviation Administration Flight Service Stations in Alaska recently implemented Automated Flight Following (AFF) for participating aircraft.

Aircraft with AFF devices generally transmit location, speed, heading and altitude information every other minute and can be monitored in areas where radio communications and RADAR tracking are unavailable. In an agreement between the FAA and the Alaska Interagency Aviation Working Group, position information on federal and federally contracted AFF equipped aircraft will be monitored by Flight Service personnel so that in the event an aircraft is overdue on its flight plan, enhanced Search and Rescue (SAR) coordination can immediately be conducted.

Flight Service Stations with destination responsibilities for flight plans must first begin with a communications search for overdue aircraft to determine the aircraft's last known position. AFF will provide enhanced position information in near real-time, which is expected to improve SAR coordination and response efficiency by narrowing the area which would need to be searched, potentially down to the exact location of a disabled aircraft.

Alaska flight operations are conducted in a harsh environment. Every minute counts in a rescue. Ultimately, lives are anticipated to be saved from successful implementation of this test program.

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**EXAMPLE OF AFF EQUIPPED AIRCRAFT FLIGHT TRACK DISPLAY**

