

### §91.173

to check the VOR equipment (the maximum permissible indicated bearing error is plus or minus 4 degrees); or

(2) Use, at the airport of intended departure, a point on the airport surface designated as a VOR system checkpoint by the Administrator, or, outside the United States, by an appropriate authority (the maximum permissible bearing error is plus or minus 4 degrees);

(3) If neither a test signal nor a designated checkpoint on the surface is available, use an airborne checkpoint designated by the Administrator or, outside the United States, by an appropriate authority (the maximum permissible bearing error is plus or minus 6 degrees); or

(4) If no check signal or point is available, while in flight—

(i) Select a VOR radial that lies along the centerline of an established VOR airway;

(ii) Select a prominent ground point along the selected radial preferably more than 20 nautical miles from the VOR ground facility and maneuver the aircraft directly over the point at a reasonably low altitude; and

(iii) Note the VOR bearing indicated by the receiver when over the ground point (the maximum permissible variation between the published radial and the indicated bearing is 6 degrees).

(c) If dual system VOR (units independent of each other except for the antenna) is installed in the aircraft, the person checking the equipment may check one system against the other in place of the check procedures specified in paragraph (b) of this section. Both systems shall be tuned to the same VOR ground facility and note the indicated bearings to that station. The maximum permissible variation between the two indicated bearings is 4 degrees.

(d) Each person making the VOR operational check, as specified in paragraph (b) or (c) of this section, shall enter the date, place, bearing error, and sign the aircraft log or other record. In addition, if a test signal radiated by a repair station, as specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, is used, an entry must be made in the aircraft log or other record by the repair station certificate holder or the certifi-

### 14 CFR Ch. I (1–1–07 Edition)

cate holder's representative certifying to the bearing transmitted by the repair station for the check and the date of transmission.

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### §91.173 ATC clearance and flight plan required.

No person may operate an aircraft in controlled airspace under IFR unless that person has—

(a) Filed an IFR flight plan; and

(b) Received an appropriate ATC clearance.

### §91.175 Takeoff and landing under IFR.

(a) *Instrument approaches to civil airports.* Unless otherwise authorized by the Administrator, when an instrument letdown to a civil airport is necessary, each person operating an aircraft, except a military aircraft of the United States, shall use a standard instrument approach procedure prescribed for the airport in part 97 of this chapter.

(b) *Authorized DH or MDA.* For the purpose of this section, when the approach procedure being used provides for and requires the use of a DH or MDA, the authorized DH or MDA is the highest of the following:

(1) The DH or MDA prescribed by the approach procedure.

(2) The DH or MDA prescribed for the pilot in command.

(3) The DH or MDA for which the aircraft is equipped.

(c) *Operation below DH or MDA.* Except as provided in paragraph (1) of this section, where a DH or MDA is applicable, no pilot may operate an aircraft, except a military aircraft of the United States, at any airport below the authorized MDA or continue an approach below the authorized DH unless—

(1) The aircraft is continuously in a position from which a descent to a landing on the intended runway can be made at a normal rate of descent using normal maneuvers, and for operations conducted under part 121 or part 135 unless that descent rate will allow touch-down to occur within the touchdown zone of the runway of intended landing;

(2) The flight visibility is not less than the visibility prescribed in the

standard instrument approach being used; and

(3) Except for a Category II or Category III approach where any necessary visual reference requirements are specified by the Administrator, at least one of the following visual references for the intended runway is distinctly visible and identifiable to the pilot:

(i) The approach light system, except that the pilot may not descend below 100 feet above the touchdown zone elevation using the approach lights as a reference unless the red terminating bars or the red side row bars are also distinctly visible and identifiable.

(ii) The threshold.

(iii) The threshold markings.

(iv) The threshold lights.

(v) The runway end identifier lights.

(vi) The visual approach slope indicator.

(vii) The touchdown zone or touchdown zone markings.

(viii) The touchdown zone lights.

(ix) The runway or runway markings.

(x) The runway lights.

(d) *Landing.* No pilot operating an aircraft, except a military aircraft of the United States, may land that aircraft when—

(1) For operations conducted under paragraph (l) of this section, the requirements of (l)(4) of this section are not met; or

(2) For all other part 91 operations and parts 121, 125, 129, and 135 operations, the flight visibility is less than the visibility prescribed in the standard instrument approach procedure being used.

(e) *Missed approach procedures.* Each pilot operating an aircraft, except a military aircraft of the United States, shall immediately execute an appropriate missed approach procedure when either of the following conditions exist:

(1) Whenever operating an aircraft pursuant to paragraph (c) or (l) of this section and the requirements of that paragraph are not met at either of the following times:

(i) When the aircraft is being operated below MDA; or

(ii) Upon arrival at the missed approach point, including a DH where a DH is specified and its use is required, and at any time after that until touchdown.

(2) Whenever an identifiable part of the airport is not distinctly visible to the pilot during a circling maneuver at or above MDA, unless the inability to see an identifiable part of the airport results only from a normal bank of the aircraft during the circling approach.

(f) *Civil airport takeoff minimums.* Unless otherwise authorized by the Administrator, no pilot operating an aircraft under parts 121, 125, 129, or 135 of this chapter may take off from a civil airport under IFR unless weather conditions are at or above the weather minimum for IFR takeoff prescribed for that airport under part 97 of this chapter. If takeoff minimums are not prescribed under part 97 of this chapter for a particular airport, the following minimums apply to takeoffs under IFR for aircraft operating under those parts:

(1) For aircraft, other than helicopters, having two engines or less—1 statute mile visibility.

(2) For aircraft having more than two engines—½ statute mile visibility.

(3) For helicopters—½ statute mile visibility.

(g) *Military airports.* Unless otherwise prescribed by the Administrator, each person operating a civil aircraft under IFR into or out of a military airport shall comply with the instrument approach procedures and the takeoff and landing minimum prescribed by the military authority having jurisdiction of that airport.

(h) *Comparable values of RVR and ground visibility.* (1) Except for Category II or Category III minimums, if RVR minimums for takeoff or landing are prescribed in an instrument approach procedure, but RVR is not reported for the runway of intended operation, the RVR minimum shall be converted to ground visibility in accordance with the table in paragraph (h)(2) of this section and shall be the visibility minimum for takeoff or landing on that runway.

(2)

RVR (feet)	Visibility (statute miles)
1,600 .....	¼
2,400 .....	½
3,200 .....	⅝
4,000 .....	¾
4,500 .....	⅞

§91.175

14 CFR Ch. I (1-1-07 Edition)

RVR (feet)	Visibility (statute miles)
5,000 .....	1
6,000 .....	1¼

(i) *Operations on unpublished routes and use of radar in instrument approach procedures.* When radar is approved at certain locations for ATC purposes, it may be used not only for surveillance and precision radar approaches, as applicable, but also may be used in conjunction with instrument approach procedures predicated on other types of radio navigational aids. Radar vectors may be authorized to provide course guidance through the segments of an approach to the final course or fix. When operating on an unpublished route or while being radar vectored, the pilot, when an approach clearance is received, shall, in addition to complying with §91.177, maintain the last altitude assigned to that pilot until the aircraft is established on a segment of a published route or instrument approach procedure unless a different altitude is assigned by ATC. After the aircraft is so established, published altitudes apply to descent within each succeeding route or approach segment unless a different altitude is assigned by ATC. Upon reaching the final approach course or fix, the pilot may either complete the instrument approach in accordance with a procedure approved for the facility or continue a surveillance or precision radar approach to a landing.

(j) *Limitation on procedure turns.* In the case of a radar vector to a final approach course or fix, a timed approach from a holding fix, or an approach for which the procedure specifies “No PT,” no pilot may make a procedure turn unless cleared to do so by ATC.

(k) *ILS components.* The basic ground components of an ILS are the localizer, glide slope, outer marker, middle marker, and, when installed for use with Category II or Category III instrument approach procedures, an inner marker. A compass locator or precision radar may be substituted for the outer or middle marker. DME, VOR, or non-directional beacon fixes authorized in the standard instrument approach procedure or surveillance radar may be substituted for the outer marker. Ap-

plicability of, and substitution for, the inner marker for Category II or III approaches is determined by the appropriate part 97 approach procedure, letter of authorization, or operations specification pertinent to the operations.

(l) *Approach to straight-in landing operations below DH, or MDA using an enhanced flight vision system (EFVS).* For straight-in instrument approach procedures other than Category II or Category III, no pilot operating under this section or §§ 121.651, 125.381, and 135.225 of this chapter may operate an aircraft at any airport below the authorized MDA or continue an approach below the authorized DH and land unless—

(1) The aircraft is continuously in a position from which a descent to a landing on the intended runway can be made at a normal rate of descent using normal maneuvers, and, for operations conducted under part 121 or part 135 of this chapter, the descent rate will allow touchdown to occur within the touchdown zone of the runway of intended landing;

(2) The pilot determines that the enhanced flight visibility observed by use of a certified enhanced flight vision system is not less than the visibility prescribed in the standard instrument approach procedure being used;

(3) The following visual references for the intended runway are distinctly visible and identifiable to the pilot using the enhanced flight vision system:

(i) The approach light system (if installed); or

(ii) The following visual references in both paragraphs (l)(3)(ii)(A) and (B) of this section:

(A) The runway threshold, identified by at least one of the following:

(1) The beginning of the runway landing surface;

(2) The threshold lights; or

(3) The runway end identifier lights.

(B) The touchdown zone, identified by at least one of the following:

(1) The runway touchdown zone landing surface;

(2) The touchdown zone lights;

(3) The touchdown zone markings; or

(4) The runway lights.

(4) At 100 feet above the touchdown zone elevation of the runway of intended landing and below that altitude, the flight visibility must be sufficient for the following to be distinctly visible and identifiable to the pilot without reliance on the enhanced flight vision system to continue to a landing:

(i) The lights or markings of the threshold; or

(ii) The lights or markings of the touchdown zone;

(5) The pilot(s) is qualified to use an EFVS as follows—

(i) For parts 119 and 125 certificate holders, the applicable training, testing and qualification provisions of parts 121, 125, and 135 of this chapter;

(ii) For foreign persons, in accordance with the requirements of the civil aviation authority of the State of the operator; or

(iii) For persons conducting any other operation, in accordance with the applicable currency and proficiency requirements of part 61 of this chapter;

(6) For parts 119 and 125 certificate holders, and part 129 operations specifications holders, their operations specifications authorize use of EFVS; and

(7) The aircraft is equipped with, and the pilot uses, an enhanced flight vision system, the display of which is suitable for maneuvering the aircraft and has either an FAA type design approval or, for a foreign-registered aircraft, the EFVS complies with all of the EFVS requirements of this chapter.

(m) For purposes of this section, “enhanced flight vision system” (EFVS) is an installed airborne system comprised of the following features and characteristics:

(1) An electronic means to provide a display of the forward external scene topography (the natural or manmade features of a place or region especially in a way to show their relative positions and elevation) through the use of imaging sensors, such as a forward-looking infrared, millimeter wave radiometry, millimeter wave radar, and low-light level image intensifying;

(2) The EFVS sensor imagery and aircraft flight symbology (*i.e.*, at least airspeed, vertical speed, aircraft attitude, heading, altitude, command guidance as appropriate for the approach to

be flown, path deviation indications, and flight path vector, and flight path angle reference cue) are presented on a head-up display, or an equivalent display, so that they are clearly visible to the pilot flying in his or her normal position and line of vision and looking forward along the flight path, to include:

(i) The displayed EFVS imagery, attitude symbology, flight path vector, and flight path angle reference cue, and other cues, which are referenced to this imagery and external scene topography, must be presented so that they are aligned with and scaled to the external view; and

(ii) The flight path angle reference cue must be displayed with the pitch scale, selectable by the pilot to the desired descent angle for the approach, and suitable for monitoring the vertical flight path of the aircraft on approaches without vertical guidance; and

(iii) The displayed imagery and aircraft flight symbology do not adversely obscure the pilot’s outside view or field of view through the cockpit window;

(3) The EFVS includes the display element, sensors, computers and power supplies, indications, and controls. It may receive inputs from an airborne navigation system or flight guidance system; and

(4) The display characteristics and dynamics are suitable for manual control of the aircraft.

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**§ 91.177 Minimum altitudes for IFR operations.**

(a) *Operation of aircraft at minimum altitudes.* Except when necessary for takeoff or landing, no person may operate an aircraft under IFR below—

(1) The applicable minimum altitudes prescribed in parts 95 and 97 of this chapter; or

(2) If no applicable minimum altitude is prescribed in those parts—

(i) In the case of operations over an area designated as a mountainous area in part 95, an altitude of 2,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a horizontal distance of 4 nautical miles from the course to be flown; or