

## Regulatory Report

# ***FAA ISSUES PROPOSED RULE ALLOWING PILOTS TO UPDATE NAVIGATIONAL DATABASES***

October 20, 2011

### ***What's at Issue***

Yesterday, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking titled [\*Pilot Loading of Navigation and Terrain Awareness Database Updates\*](#).

### ***Why It's Important***

This proposed rule would amend federal regulations to allow all pilots to perform updates to certain aircraft navigational databases. Current regulations only allow pilots of aircraft operating under Part 91 to perform these updates

### ***Major Provisions***

This rule would allow pilots to perform navigational database updates on “self-contained, front-instrument panel-mounted and pedestal-mounted air traffic control (ATC) navigational system database[s].” Presently, the updating of navigational databases is considered to be preventative maintenance, thereby allowing pilots to perform the updates only on aircraft operating under Part 91. Current regulations require that certificated maintenance personnel or a certificated repair station, not pilots, perform preventative maintenance on aircraft operated under Part 135.

The language of this rule change limits its actual applicability to Part 135 and fractional aircraft operators, as only navigational databases loaded directly into front instrument panel-mounted or pedestal-mounted systems would be affected. Avionics systems utilizing a data loader would not be covered by this proposed rule.

### ***NATA Position***

As technological advances simplify the operation of aircraft and their systems, it is imperative that the FAA respond accordingly to prevent outdated regulations from becoming burdensome upon the industry. The updating of navigational databases is one of those issues, and NATA is pleased that the FAA has begun this rulemaking project. However, NATA believes that the FAA has not fully addressed the issue. Numerous aircraft flight management systems that utilize a

data loader to update their navigational databases are not included in this proposed rule. NATA will provide detailed comments to the FAA to help ensure that this proposed rulemaking project eliminates the burdens of outdated regulations on the industry.

### ***Status***

This notice of proposed rulemaking is open for public comment until December 19, 2011.

**Staff Contact:** Michael France  
Director, Regulatory Affairs  
mfrance@nata.aero