



# Interagency Aviation Information Bulletin



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**Subject:** Frequency Management: Use of National Flight Following and National Guard frequencies

**Area of Concern:** All Aviation Operations

**Distribution:** All aviation users, flight followers and Dispatch Centers

**Discussion:** Recently, the issue of unauthorized use of the National Flight Following (NFF) frequency was reported in SAFECOM ([18-0332](#)). This is not the first time that NFF or National Air Guard frequencies have been used inappropriately. NFF was reportedly used for aviation ordering, fire size-ups, frequency requests, and aircraft management. Misuse can delay rescue response during an AFF failure through frequency congestion that would prevent a pilot from being able to report their location. Authorized use of these two frequencies is stated (below) in the Interagency Standards for Fire & Aviation Operations (Redbook) Chapter 15. Some operations established a dedicated frequency for cooperator aircraft initial communication which has also been misused.

## **NATIONAL FLIGHT FOLLOWING (168.6500 MHz)**

The National Flight Following frequency is used to monitor interagency and contract aircraft. All aircraft on point-to-point or mission flights should establish/terminate flight following, and confirm Automated Flight Following (AFF) on the National Flight Following frequency.

The National Flight Following frequency is to be used for flight following, dispatch, or redirections of aircraft. No other use is authorized.

## **NATIONAL AIR GUARD (168.6250 MHz)**

A National Interagency Air Guard frequency for aircraft will be used for emergency aviation communication. Continuous monitoring of the frequency in narrowband mode is mandatory by agency dispatch centers.

This frequency, 168.6250 MHz is only used for:

- Air-to-Air emergency contact and coordination;
- Ground-to-Air emergency contact; and
- Initial call, recall and redirection of aircraft when no other contact frequency is available.

If the FCC Enforcement Bureau finds an individual in violation, the fines top out at \$19,246 for a single violation and up to \$144,344 for an ongoing violation. The FCC can also seize the offending radio equipment and impose criminal sanctions.

Please ensure your Dispatch Centers, flight following and field personnel understand and adhere to the authorized uses of NFF, National Air Guard and local aircraft hailing frequencies.

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