

1. PURPOSE:

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the procedures to be used by controllers working positions to ensure that IFR releases are performed in a safe and orderly fashion.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

This SOP was originally signed by Jeff Clark, ZLA Facility Chief on June 18, 2001, and amended on November 25, 2002, and August 08, 2008. It was further amended on September 17th, 2023 by Matthew Kramer (DATM) and Nick Christopher (ATM).

3. DISTRIBUTION:

This SOP is intended for use by tower, departure, and center controllers.

4. EXPLANATION OF CHANGES

Version	Date	Explanation of Changes
2.20	17SEP23	Formatting change to PDF. Adjusted anticipating future rundown list.

5. REQUIREMENTS:

1. All Class B and Class C towers
 - a. All Class B and Class C towers coordinate releases with departure control using a *rolling/boundary* notification system. The 7110.65 section 5-3-2 (a) states that radar identification may be achieved by:
 - i. Observing a departing aircraft target within 1 mile of the takeoff runway end at airports with an operating control tower, provided one of the following methods of coordination is accomplished.
 1. A verbal rolling/boundary notification is issued for each departure, or
 2. A nonverbal rolling/boundary notification is used for each departure aircraft. NOTE: *nonverbal notification can be accomplished via the use of the controller chat box or coordination/rundown list.*
 - ii. This coordination is normally accomplished on text. The information in the rolling boundary should include the DP the aircraft is on or "vectors for XXX" if they have been cleared via a heading, and are expecting vectors for XXX.
 - iii. This coordination may be accomplished using the STARS Coordination (known as Rundown) list if enabled.
 - iv. "Rolling/boundary" means that the aircraft must be already "rolling" or at the airport "boundary". For the purposes of VATSIM, the notification should be done immediately after takeoff clearance has been issued. You should also advise which runway they will be departing.
 1. Example: *LAX_S_TWR: WJA1701 24L LS*
 - v. No acknowledgement by Departure Control is necessary, since the aircraft is already rolling. As long as a "rolling/boundary" notification is issued, TWR does not need to obtain release for any departures from departure, unless specifically asked to. Tower is required to provide adequate initial spacing between IFR departures so that they do not create an operational error (hand a "deal") to approach (for example, an IFR Learjet departing on the same route right behind a Cessna). Note that this doesn't mean that the tower must always provide 3 miles between all departures, a tower may use visual separation, diverging headings, or any of a number of other separation techniques outlined in FAA Order 7110.65, which allow tighter spacing of departures.
2. Other Towered Facilities:
 - a. All other facilities must- obtain an IFR release for departures from the appropriate departure controller. The phraseology to be used when coordinating this is:
 - i. "SOCAL, Montgomery Tower, request release SWA747, Mission Bay." (In other words, provide the name of the plane, and the first fix on their route.)
 - ii. Departure should respond with: "SWA747 released," "SWA747, maintain 3000 released" or "SWA747 hold, expect 10 minutes," or other information as required.
 - b. This coordination may be accomplished using the STARS Coordination (known as Rundown) list if enabled.
3. IFR Releases from Uncontrolled/Non-Towered Airports:
 - a. Procedures and phraseology examples regarding IFR releases from non-towered airports may be found in the 7110.65 4-3-4 or in the [ZLA STM](#).
4. Transfer of Communications (Tower to Approach/Departure/Center):
 - a. Transfer of communications to departure should occur as soon as the aircraft starts climbing (you observe altitude increase in the data block), unless there's a potential traffic conflict that tower needs to resolve.