SANTA MONICA TOWER
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

This Order prescribes air traffic control procedures and phraseology for use by all controllers staffing Santa Monica Tower (SMO_GND/TWR). Controllers are required to be familiar with the provisions of this Order that pertain to their operational responsibilities and to exercise their best judgment if they encounter situations not covered by it.

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Changelog

Initial release.

- 01/02/2021: Minor updates to departure procedures. Added appendix for Mini Route. Initial release in PDF format.
- 09/19/2022: Added miniroute tracking procedures. Added TEC route heading procedures.
- 07/14/2023: Corrected LAX IFR Release Window
- 09/02/2023: Updated procedures for IFR releases and arrivals
- 09/17/2023: Formatting and organization updates; updated position names to align with CRC; updated initial IFR altitude to 3000 to align with RW operations

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CHAPTER 1. GENERAL

1-1. FACILITY IDENTIFICATION

Controllers will use “Santa Monica” for radiotelephony/facility identification.

Examples:

“Santa Monica Ground…”
“Santa Monica Tower…”

1-2. RADIO FREQUENCY ASSIGNMENTS

The following frequencies are assigned for use at Santa Monica Tower unless otherwise noted.

POSITION	POSITION ID	FREQUENCY	INTERPHONE	CALLSIGN
Local Control (LC)	6O	120.100	LOCAL	SMO_TWR
Ground Control (GC)		121.900	GROUND	SMO_GND
ATIS		119.150		KSMO_ATIS

1-3. RUNWAY USE PROGRAM

South Operations:
Arrive and depart runway 21.
Preferred operation.

North Operations:
Arrive and depart runway 03.
Use when the wind is from the northeast at 5 kts or greater.
During east operations at KLAX, runway 03 will be used for all IFR departures.

CHAPTER 2. GROUND CONTROL

2-1. GENERAL

a. Primary Frequency:
    i. 121.90
b. TEC routes must be issued to all aircraft arriving at airports covered by the TEC route system.
c. Reference the ZLA Initial Altitude Assignments SOP for proper initial altitude assignments.

2-2. IFR OPERATIONS

a. IFR departures shall be given an initial altitude of 3000 or filed cruise altitude if lower. Aircraft going to other Southern California destinations shall be routed according to the appropriate TEC routing. Deviations from this must be approved by SCT Malibu (LAX_N_DEP).
b. When Los Angeles is in Normal or Noise Operations, Santa Monica Tower shall use runway 21 for IFR departures. If an aircraft is unable to depart runway 21, departure instructions shall be coordinated with SCT Valley (BUR_V_APP).
c. When Los Angeles is in East Operations, Santa Monica Tower shall have IFR departures depart from runway 3. If an aircraft is unable to depart runway 3, departure instructions shall be coordinated with SCT Stadium (LAX_U_APP) and LA Local Control North (LAX_N_TWR).
d. Aircraft unable to accept a SID or flying a TEC route shall be issued the following departure procedure:
    i. RWY21: “Fly runway heading until reaching LAX 320 radial, then turn right heading 260.”
    ii. RWY03: Runway Heading

2-3. VFR OPERATIONS

a. VFR departures from runway 21 shall fly a 225 heading until over water due to noise abatement considerations.
b. VFR departures from runway 3 shall fly runway heading until over the freeway due to noise abatement considerations.
c. South bound fixed wing VFR departures must either fly the mini route transition, or fly through the Los Angeles Special Flight Rules Area.
d. Aircraft requesting VFR flight following shall be instructed:
    “*Remain outside of Class Bravo airspace, squawk <code>”*
e. Mini Route aircraft shall be instructed as follows:
    i. RWY21: “*N12345, make right two-seventy, join the Mini Route at 2,500. Remain outside Bravo airspace until advised, squawk <code>.”*
    ii. RWY03: “*N12345, at the 405 freeway, make left two-seventy, join the Mini Route at 2,500. Remain outside Bravo airspace until advised, squawk <code>.”*

CHAPTER 4. LOCAL CONTROL

4-1. GENERAL

a. Primary Frequency:
   i. 120.10
b. Airspace
   i. Santa Monica LC owns airspace that extends to a 2.7 nautical mile radius from the airport and the airspace within 1.8 nautical miles of the Santa Monica VOR 056 radial, from 2.7 to 4.3 nautical miles from the airport from the surface to 2700' MSL. Santa Monica airspace excludes any airspace within the Los Angeles Class B airspace.

4-2. IFR OPERATIONS

a. Arrivals
   1. SMO LC shall pass IFR arrival information to LAX Local North (LAX_N_TWR) on initial contact. This may be accomplished by flashing the tag, using an automated pointout, or via voice coordination.
   2. In the event of a missed approach aircraft shall be instructed to fly the published missed approach procedure and contact SCT Malibu (LAX_N_DEP).
b. IFR Release Procedures
   1. SMO LC is required to obtain a release for IFR departures. This release is valid for three (3) minutes.
      i. Runway 21 departures when LAX is WEST: Obtain release from LAX Local North (LAX_N_TWR).
      ii. Runway 3 departures via the SANTA MONICA SID or CHOII SID: Obtain release from SCT Valley (BUR_V_APP) regardless of LAX configuration.
      iii. Runway 3 departures via the TPANGA ODP: Obtain release from LAX Local North (LAX_N_TWR) regardless of LAX configuration.
      iv. Runway 21 departures when LAX is EAST: Obtain release from SCT Stadium (LAX_U_APP).

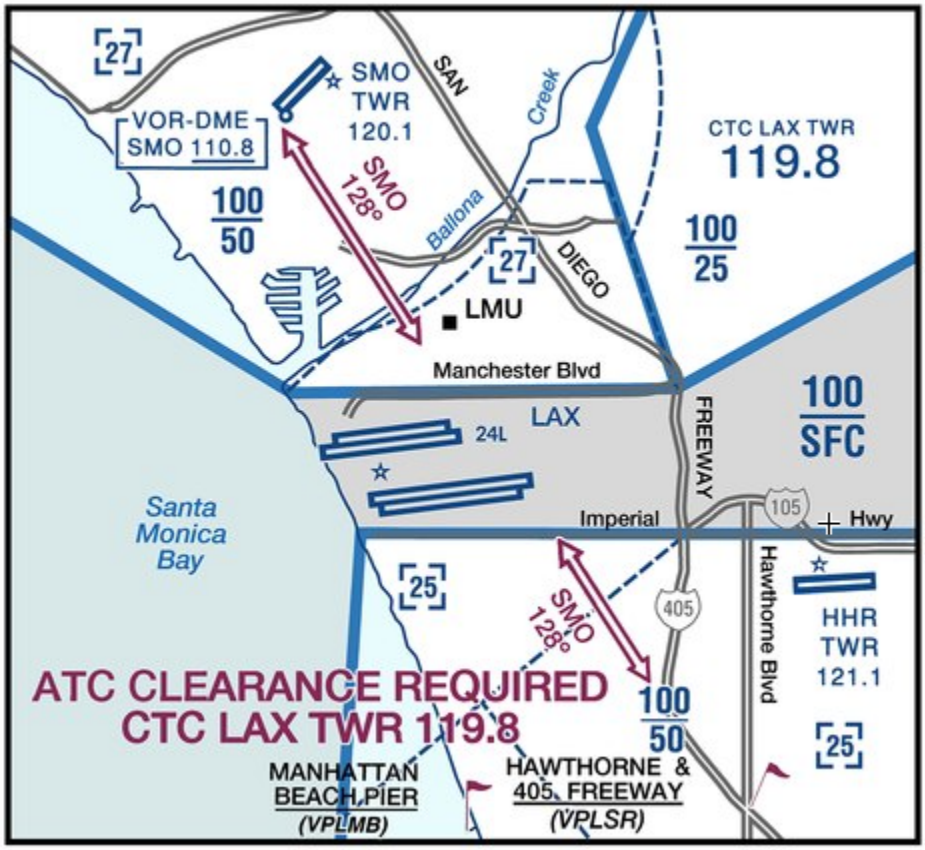
4-3. VFR OPERATIONS

a. Arrivals
   i. VFR arrivals from the south will usually be coordinated by LAX Local prior to entering Santa Monica Delta Airspace. LAX Local should hand the track to SMO LC.
   ii. Fixed wing aircraft that are received from LAX Local will be at 2500 feet on a direct course to SMO inbound on the Santa Monica 128 Radial. When these aircraft are clear of the Los Angeles Class Bravo Airspace they should have their altitude restriction canceled and merged into the appropriate pattern. Over flights of Santa Monica should be told to resume own navigation.
   iii. Helicopter arrivals from the South will either be flying along the shoreline at or below 150 feet or over midfield at 1000 feet. In either case, these aircraft should have their altitude restriction canceled when clear of the Los Angeles Bravo Airspace and merged into the appropriate pattern.
   iv. Fixed wing arrivals arriving from the Los Angeles Special Flight Rules Corridor will not be coordinated by LAX Local. These aircraft shall not be given any instructions until clear of the Special Flight Rules Area. When clear these aircraft should be advised to squawk 1200 and merged into the appropriate pattern.
   v. VFR arrivals not from the south shall be sequenced into the appropriate traffic pattern.

4-4. MINI ROUTE OPERATIONS

a. The Mini Route is available when LAX is in a west or over ocean configuration reporting a ceiling of at least 3,500’ and visibility of at least three miles. The weather minima for HHR and SMO must be the same.
b. SMO LC must receive approval from LAX Local North (LAX_N_TWR) prior to departure for all Mini Route transitions.
c. Mini Route aircraft must be assigned a discrete beacon code.
d. Upon departure these aircraft shall be instructed as follows:
    i. RWY21: “*N12345, make right two-seventy, join the mini route at 2,500. Remain outside Bravo airspace until advised. Runway 21, cleared for takeoff.”*
    ii. RWY03: “*N12345, at the 405 freeway, make left two-seventy, join the mini route at 2,500. Remain outside Bravo airspace until advised. Runway 3, cleared for takeoff.”*
e. SMO LC shall start a track on Mini Route aircraft (Note: SMO LC shall not provide radar services). As soon as practical, flash the tag and transfer communications to LAX Local North (LAX_N_TWR).

Appendix A - Mini Route



VFR departures are issued a left/right 270 to join the SMO 128 radial as depicted above. As soon as practical, transfer communications to Los Angeles Tower for radar service through Bravo airspace.