



**U.S. Department  
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Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# InFO

Information for Operators

InFO 26010

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Flight Standards Service  
Washington, DC

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*An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements, with relatively low urgency or impact on safety. This is a guidance document. Its content is not legally binding in its own right and will not be relied upon by the Department as a separate basis for affirmative enforcement action or other administrative penalty. Conformity with the guidance document is voluntary only. Nonconformity will not affect rights and obligations under existing statutes and regulations.*

**Subject:** Speeds Greater than 250 Knots Indicated Airspeed (KIAS) Below 10,000 Feet Mean Sea Level (MSL).

**Purpose:** This InFO explains the conditions under which pilots operating transport category aircraft may operate at airspeeds greater than 250 KIAS below 10,000 feet MSL.

**Background:** Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) Part 91, § 91.117(a) prohibits an indicated airspeed in excess of 250 KIAS when operating below 10,000 feet MSL. Section 91.117(d) provides a general exception to the prescribed speed limit when the minimum safe airspeed for any particular operation is greater than the maximum speed prescribed in this section. In such cases, the aircraft may be operated at the minimum safe airspeed.

**Discussion:** Some transport category airplanes require climb speeds exceeding 250 KIAS below 10,000 feet MSL when operating in the clean wing configuration. The introduction of these aircraft has caused some confusion about how to best comply with the airspeed limits of § 91.117(a).

Section 91.117(a) does not distinguish requirements based on the aircraft's configuration during different portions of the operation and, therefore, if the aircraft can be configured to operate in accordance with the speed limit published in § 91.117(a), the pilot must operate the aircraft in the configuration to meet that speed limit, unless the minimum safe airspeed for that operation in any configuration is greater than 250 KIAS specified in § 91.117(a).

Air Traffic Control (ATC) neither approves nor disapproves any request to operate at a speed in excess of 250 KIAS below 10,000 feet MSL. Filing "H" (heavy) on the flight plan indicates to the controller that operational speeds in excess of 250 KIAS below 10,000 feet MSL during departure may be required. Pilots operating those aircraft with a clean wing configuration at a minimum maneuvering speed of more than 250 KIAS should notify ATC of their intent to operate at a higher speed using the following recommended phraseology:

*"SoCal Departure, Call Sign 136 Heavy, minimum safe (climb) speed is 270 knots."*

ATC will acknowledge this notification.

**Note:** Compliance with speed restrictions published on an Obstacle Departure Procedure (ODP) or Standard Instrument Departure (SID) is mandatory. Published speed restrictions allow compliance with the limitations published in § 91.117. Since these restrictions may be published to meet procedure design criteria, terrain and obstacle clearance, or airspace containment, flight on these procedures at a higher airspeed may not be possible. If an airspeed in excess of the published airspeed is required due to aircraft performance, (i.e. “minimum safe airspeed is greater than 250 KIAS), the pilot should advise ATC and request a different departure procedure or alternative radar vectors for departure.

**Recommended Action:** Directors of Operations, Chief Pilots, Directors of Training, Directors of Safety, Check Pilots, and pilots should be aware of this InFO and incorporate this guidance into pilot training programs and operational procedures.

**Contact:** Direct questions or comments regarding this InFO to the Air Transportation Division at [9-AFS-200-Correspondence@faa.gov](mailto:9-AFS-200-Correspondence@faa.gov).