above the surface or where VFR cruise altitudes are at or near the floor of higher levels. Observance of this precaution will reduce the potential for encountering an aircraft operating at the altitudes of Class B floors. Additionally, VFR aircraft are encouraged to utilize the VFR Planning Chart as a tool for planning flight in proximity to Class B airspace. Charted VFR Flyway Planning Charts are published on the back of the existing VFR Terminal Area Charts.

3–2–4. Class C Airspace

a. Definition. Generally, that airspace from the surface to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation (charted in MSL) surrounding those airports that have an operational control tower, are serviced by a radar approach control, and that have a certain number of IFR operations or passenger enplanements. Although the configuration of each Class C airspace area is individually tailored, the airspace usually consists of a 5 NM radius core surface area that extends from the surface up to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation, and a 10 NM radius shelf area that extends no lower than 1,200 feet up to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation.

b. Charts. Class C airspace is charted on Sectional Charts, IFR En Route Low Altitude, and Terminal Area Charts where appropriate.

c. Operating Rules and Pilot/Equipment Requirements:

1. Pilot Certification. No specific certification required.

2. Equipment.

(a) Two-way radio; and

(b) Unless otherwise authorized by ATC, an operable radar beacon transponder with automatic altitude reporting capability and operable ADS–B Out equipment.

NOTE–
See paragraph 4–1–20, Transponder and ADS–B Out Operation, subparagraph f for Mode C transponder/ ADS–B requirements for operating above Class C airspace.

3. Arrival or Through Flight Entry Requirements. Two-way radio communication must be established with the ATC facility providing ATC services prior to entry and thereafter maintain those communications while in Class C airspace. Pilots of arriving aircraft should contact the Class C airspace ATC facility on the publicized frequency and give their position, altitude, radar beacon code, destination, and request Class C service. Radio contact should be initiated far enough from the Class C airspace boundary to preclude entering Class C airspace before two-way radio communications are established.

NOTE–
1. *If the controller responds to a radio call with, "(aircraft callsign) standby," radio communications have been established and the pilot can enter the Class C airspace.*

2. *If workload or traffic conditions prevent immediate provision of Class C services, the controller will inform the pilot to remain outside the Class C airspace until conditions permit the services to be provided.*

3. *It is important to understand that if the controller responds to the initial radio call without using the aircraft identification, radio communications have not been established and the pilot may not enter the Class C airspace.*

4. *Class C airspace areas have a procedural Outer Area. Normally this area is 20 NM from the primary Class C airspace airport. Its vertical limit extends from the lower limits of radio/radar coverage up to the ceiling of the approach control's delegated airspace, excluding the Class C airspace itself, and other airspace as appropriate. (This outer area is not charted.)*

5. *Pilots approaching an airport with Class C service should be aware that if they descend below the base altitude of the 5 to 10 mile shelf during an instrument or visual approach, they may encounter non–transponder/non–ADS–B VFR aircraft.*

EXAMPLE–
1. *[Aircraft callsign] "remain outside the Class Charlie airspace and standby."*

2. *"Aircraft calling Dulles approach control, standby."*

4. Departures from: