

Section 4. Arrival Procedures

5-4-1. Standard Terminal Arrival (STAR) Procedures

a. A STAR is an ATC coded IFR arrival route established for application to arriving IFR aircraft destined for certain airports. STARs simplify clearance delivery procedures, and also facilitate transition between en route and instrument approach procedures.

1. STAR procedures may have mandatory speeds and/or crossing altitudes published. Other STARs may have planning information depicted to inform pilots what clearances or restrictions to “expect.” “Expect” altitudes/speeds are not considered STAR procedures crossing restrictions unless verbally issued by ATC. Published speed restrictions are independent of altitude restrictions and are mandatory unless modified by ATC. Pilots should plan to cross waypoints with a published speed restriction, at the published speed, and should not exceed this speed past the associated waypoint unless authorized by ATC or a published note to do so. 11STAR procedures may have mandatory speeds and/or crossing altitudes published. Other STARs may have planning information depicted to inform pilots what clearances or restrictions to “expect.” “Expect” altitudes/speeds are not considered STAR procedures crossing restrictions unless verbally issued by ATC. Published speed restrictions are independent of altitude restrictions and are mandatory unless modified by ATC. Pilots should plan to cross waypoints with a published speed restriction, at the published speed, and should not exceed this speed past the associated waypoint unless authorized by ATC or a published note to do so. A chart note used to transition from Mach to IAS may also be published. Pilots should maintain their cruise Mach number during the descent until reaching the published transition speed in knots, then continue the descent at that speed until the next published speed restriction on the STAR, or until it is necessary to comply with the speed limits published in 14 CFR §91.117.

NOTE-

The “expect” altitudes/speeds are published so that pilots may have the information for planning purposes. These altitudes/speeds must not be used in the event of lost communications unless ATC has specifically advised the pilot to expect these altitudes/speeds as part of a further clearance.

REFERENCE-

14 CFR Section 91.185(c)(2)(iii).

2. When an IFR cleared route includes a STAR, pilots must maintain the last assigned altitude until receiving authorization to descend so as to comply with all published/issued altitude restrictions. This authorization may contain the phraseology “DESCEND VIA.” If vectored or cleared to deviate off a STAR, pilots must consider the STAR canceled. If the STAR contains published altitude restrictions, speed restrictions, or a chart note used to transition from Mach to IAS, those restrictions are also canceled and pilots will receive an altitude to maintain and, if necessary, a speed. If ATC intends to clear the aircraft back onto the STAR, controllers will advise pilots where to expect to resume the procedure. Pilots should then be prepared to rejoin the STAR at the subsequent fix or procedure leg.

(a) Clearance to “descend via” authorizes pilots to:

- (1) Descend at pilot’s discretion to meet published restrictions and laterally navigate on a STAR.
- (2) When cleared to a waypoint depicted on a STAR, to descend from a previously assigned altitude at pilot’s discretion to the altitude depicted at that waypoint.
- (3) Once established on the depicted arrival, to descend and to meet all published or assigned altitude and/or speed restrictions.

NOTE-

1. *When otherwise cleared along a route or procedure that contains published speed restrictions, the pilot must comply with those speed restrictions independent of any descend via clearance.*

2. *ATC anticipates pilots will begin adjusting speed the minimum distance necessary prior to a published speed restriction so as to cross the waypoint/fix at the published speed. Once at the published speed, ATC expects pilots will maintain the*