

Modeling Best Practices for Super Bowl Sunday

January 30 -- America will see some great plays on Super Bowl Sunday, Acting COO Teri Bristol says in this week's message, and to handle the expected 1,100 more aircraft in the New York area "we'll be calling some great plays of our own."

Super Bowl preparation is modeled after some of the best practices Cessna uses for its Special Olympics Airlift, another event supported by the ATO, scheduled for June and based at Trenton, N.J., Mercer Airport. "In whatever role we play in the ATO," Bristol says, "let's all think about how we can model the best practices of others."

Hello everybody. It's Teri Bristol with this week's message. As everyone knows, this Sunday is Super Bowl Sunday. America will see some great plays on the field. And to handle the expected 1,100 additional aircraft in the New York area, we'll be calling some great plays of our own.

I was at New York TRACON on Wednesday when the first day of Super Bowl events began. I saw firsthand all of our preparations, and it's very impressive. There's a great deal of coordination between the Command Center, New York Center, New York TRACON, many other facilities, and with local airport and fixed-based operators. I want to thank Leo Prusak, manager of tactical operations Northeast, for his leadership in this effort.

The planning started 18 months ago. The first step was to meet with co-workers who were involved with previous Super Bowl preps to learn how they went about it and what lessons they learned. Then the various planning teams continued to meet monthly as we approach game day. All together, we have about 120-140 co-workers involved in this event. Our work is helping enable access for all aircraft, keep delays to a minimum and ensure event security as well.

On game day, we'll have a temporary flight restriction, or TFR, in place from noon to about 5 p.m. It'll be one nautical mile around the stadium and 5,000 feet high. Before kickoff, we'll expand that with an inner ring of eight nautical miles around the stadium, and an outer ring of 30 miles. Frank Hatfield, director of system operations security, is up there to support these efforts. He'll be answering questions about setting up and enforcing the TFR, and discussing our outreach efforts to inform pilots about it.

When the game ends, we expect heavy departure demand for an 18- to 20-hour period. We're going to make use of programs and routes normally employed to manage delays and bad weather--like ground-delay programs, airspace flow programs, the Severe Weather Avoidance Plan, and routes like Snowbird, where we use offshore routes off Long Island heading south.

We've also had regularly monthly meetings with airport and fixed-based operators including at places like Teterboro Airport and Morristown Municipal Airport. We're trying to enlist their support to help manage their traffic flow and manage their customers' expectations about how

soon they can depart after the game. The smoother the operation goes, the fewer traffic management initiatives we'll have to deploy. If and when we need it, a "hotline" has been set up between the airports, FBOs and all affected air traffic facilities.

For the Super Bowl prep, we're modeling some of the best practices that Cessna uses when it schedules flights and runs slots for its Special Olympics Airlift - another national event supported by the ATO.

It's going to take place in June, and like the Super Bowl, it's happening in New Jersey. We expect to support about 200 flights carrying about 800 athletes and coaches into and out of Trenton Mercer Airport. It's a tight operation. There are going to be a lot of press events to recognize these great athletes, and we're going to help get them there on time.

Mike Artist, manager of tactical operations Southeast, is the lead for the ATO's support of the Cessna airlift. Mike managed the previous two airlifts and also happens to be a veteran of past Super Bowl prep teams. Rick Kettel, Susquehanna terminal district manager, and his team are also playing a big role. They're coordinating with multiple air traffic facilities, including Philadelphia TRACON, so we can segregate the airlift traffic to and from Trenton, so it doesn't interfere with commercial traffic to and from Philadelphia and Newark airports.

The ATO is a truly great organization - because of what we do every single day and because of the special national events we enable. This is why other nations seek our advice to handle traffic volume for major events.

In closing, I'd like to draw attention to an important organizational practice - modeling the success of others. This year's Super Bowl prep team learned from co-workers who had done it in the past. They also borrowed from the best practices used by Cessna's flight scheduling for its Special Olympics airlift.

In whatever role we play in the ATO, let's all think about how we can model the best practices of others. What can we learn from more experienced colleagues? How can we tap the expertise and insight of outside experts to support the work we're doing? As we answer these questions, we'll be an even more successful organization.

Thanks everybody. And enjoy the game!

Teri Bristol, acting ATO Chief Operating Officer
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