

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
**Special Committee (SC) 246**  
**Standards for Air Traffic Data Communication Services**

Revision -

**SC LEADERSHIP:**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliatio</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>eE-mail</b>	<b>Change</b>
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**BACKGROUND:**

The PMC established Special Committee 246 (SC-246) on February 13, 2026, named Standards for Air Traffic Data Communication Services. SC-246 was formed to continue the work that SC-214 performed by developing ATS Datalink Application standards. This was in response to a request from the FAA for a new Special Committee to develop documents in support of the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) for services in defined environments through 2040.

RTCA SC-246 works with EUROCAE WG-78 to develop technically equivalent standards for the safety, performance and interoperability requirements for the Air Traffic Services (ATS) supported by data communications to be implemented in the United States by the NextGen Data Communications Program and in Europe as part of the Single European Sky ATM Research (SESAR) operational improvements.

**PRODUCT DELIVERABLES:**

Product	Description	FRAC Completion Due Date*	RAC or FRAC	Projected Publication Date**	Change
DO-XXX, ATS Data Communication Verification Test Standard	Verify aircraft and ground Implementations	April 2027	FRAC	June 2027	FRAC Completion was October 2025
DO-350C, Safety and Performance Requirements Standard for ATS Data Communications (SPR Standard)	See SPR Drafting Guide	September 2028	FRAC	December 2028	New
DO-351C, Interoperability Requirements Standard for Baseline 2 ATS Data Communications (Baseline 2 Interop Standard)	See INTEROP Drafting Guide	September 2028	FRAC	December 2028	New
DO-352C, Interoperability Requirements Standard for Baseline 2 ATS Data Communications, FANS 1/A Accommodation (FANS 1/A - Baseline 2 Interop Standard)	See INTEROP Drafting Guide	October 2028	FRAC	December 2028	New

Product	Description	FRAC Completion Due Date*	RAC or FRAC	Projected Publication Date**	Change
DO-353C, Interoperability Requirements Standard for Baseline 2 ATS Data Communications, ATN Baseline 1 Accommodation (ATN Baseline 1 - Baseline 2 Interop Standard)	See INTEROP Drafting Guide	October 2028	FRAC	December 2028	New

\*Note: Final Review and Comment (FRAC) Completion Due Date refers to the date that the committee plenary approves the document after completing the FRAC Process. SCs should submit the final document at least 45 days before the PMC meeting where it will be considered for approval.

\*\* Projected Publication Date refers to the date that the item will be approved by the PMC and officially published by RTCA.

### SCOPE and COORDINATION:

#### Datalink Communication System Standards:

SC-246 / WG-78 developed guidance material to define the safety, performance and interoperability requirements for Air Traffic Services (ATS) supported by data communications. The guidance should advance CNS/ATM concepts and support data communication developments for the Next Generation Air Transportation System and the Single European Sky ATM Research (SESAR) initiatives. SC-246/WG-78 shall work jointly and establish close working relationships with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) panels, regional coordinating groups and other standards organizations as appropriate.

The committee's current work plan includes the following tasks:

Develop an industry standardized verification test to support the development and verification of the datalink systems application layer of an aircraft and/or ground implementation based on the following Interop and SPR Standards:

- DO-258A/ED-100A and DO-350B/ED-228B for FANS 1/A+,
- DO-280B/ED-110B and DO-350B/ED-228B for ATN B1, and
- DO-351B/ED-229B and DO-350B/ED-228B for B2.

Develop Revision C of DO-350/ED-228, DO-351/ED-229, DO-352/ED-230, and DO-353/ED-231 with the following main objectives:

- Introduce the airborne response timer (TTR),
- Process the observations stemming from the review of Revision B of the standards,
- Align with the latest ICAO GOLD edition, and

- Support the European Commission Common Project 2 (CP2).
  - CP2 content is expected to be finalized in 2026.
  - The scope of work, and therefore the publication date, for Revision C of the standards may be impacted by CP2.

Details of the above objectives are included in the 2025 SC-246/WG-78 Internal Report.

#### **ENVISIONED USE OF DELIVERABLES:**

The primary use of the committee work products shall be to establish internationally harmonized technical requirements for the development, government acceptance, and certification of aeronautical data link systems in support of the air traffic service as part of the NextGen and SESAR initiatives.

The FAA Air Traffic Organization used the documents developed by SC-246/WG-78 to develop specifications for acquisition of the supporting ground-based infrastructure. Airworthiness and operational authorities intend to use these documents to develop advisory circulars to qualify aircraft and operations that use air traffic data communication services. The ATS authorities intend to use these documents to establish safety and performance requirements, interoperability requirements, and verification tests to qualify related ground-based ATS systems and operations.

#### **SPECIFIC GUIDANCE:**

In performing its duties, RTCA SC-246/WG-78 shall:

Develop **DO-xxx/ED-yyy** to support development and verification of ATN B1, FANS 1/A+, and B2 datalink system application layers against realistic operational scenarios developed per DO-350B/ED-228B.

Develop **DO-350C/ED-228C** to improve SPR for Data Communications for globally harmonized operations.

Develop **DO-351C/ED-229C**, **DO-352C/ED-230C**, and **DO-353C/ED-231C** to incorporate B2 INTEROP improvements in accordance with the SPR.

Coordinate with other organizations as necessary, including but not limited to:

ICC	RTCA Integration and Coordination Committee – Facilitating interworking between SC-246, SC-186, SC-206 and SC-227 as needed
EUROCAE	European Organization for Civil Aviation Equipment – Joint development of deliverables with Working Group 78 and with Working Group 92
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration – Work product requirements
EASA	European Aviation Safety Agency
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization – Preparation of Information Papers for consideration by ICAO Panels
EUROCONTROL	European Organization for the Safety of Air Navigation – Work product requirements
AEEC	ARINC Airlines Electronic Engineering Committee – Consultation on revision of VDL Mode 2 MOPS and MASPS.

*Initial Documentation – input documents that will be made available to this committee.*

<b>Document</b>	<b>Intended Use</b>
<b>DO-350B</b>	Support Verification Test development
<b>DO-351B including Change 1</b>	Support Verification Test development
<b>DO-352B</b>	Support Verification Test development
<b>DO-353B including Change 1</b>	Support Verification Test development
<b>LINK2000+/LIT/Avionics Test Plan</b>	EUROCONTROL verification test for ATN B1
<b>ICAO Doc 9869</b>	Revise to support SPR Standard improvements.
<b>ICAO Doc 10037</b>	Revise to support Interop Standard improvements.

**TERMINATION:**

When the scope of this Terms of Reference is complete, the committee will recommend either that the committee Sunset, going into Active Monitoring Mode, or spend a period of time in Hiatus. Any change/extension in the committee’s work program requires prior PMC approval.