

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
PHOENIX TERMINAL RADAR APPROACH CONTROL
3500 E SKY HARBOR BOULEVARD
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85034-4400**

ISSUED: January 18, 2012

EFFECTIVE: February 18, 2012

PHOENIX TERMINAL RADAR APPROACH CONTROL LETTER TO AIRMEN NO. 12-01

SUBJECT: Air Traffic Operations in the Vicinity of Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (IWA)

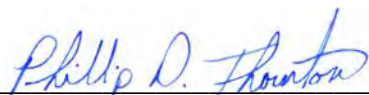
CANCELLATION: February 17, 2014

The Phoenix Terminal Area is home to a large general aviation community in addition to a large professional pilot flight training industry. During peak periods, the airspace surrounding Phoenix is some of the busiest in the nation, with several thousand aircraft movements per day in the terminal area.

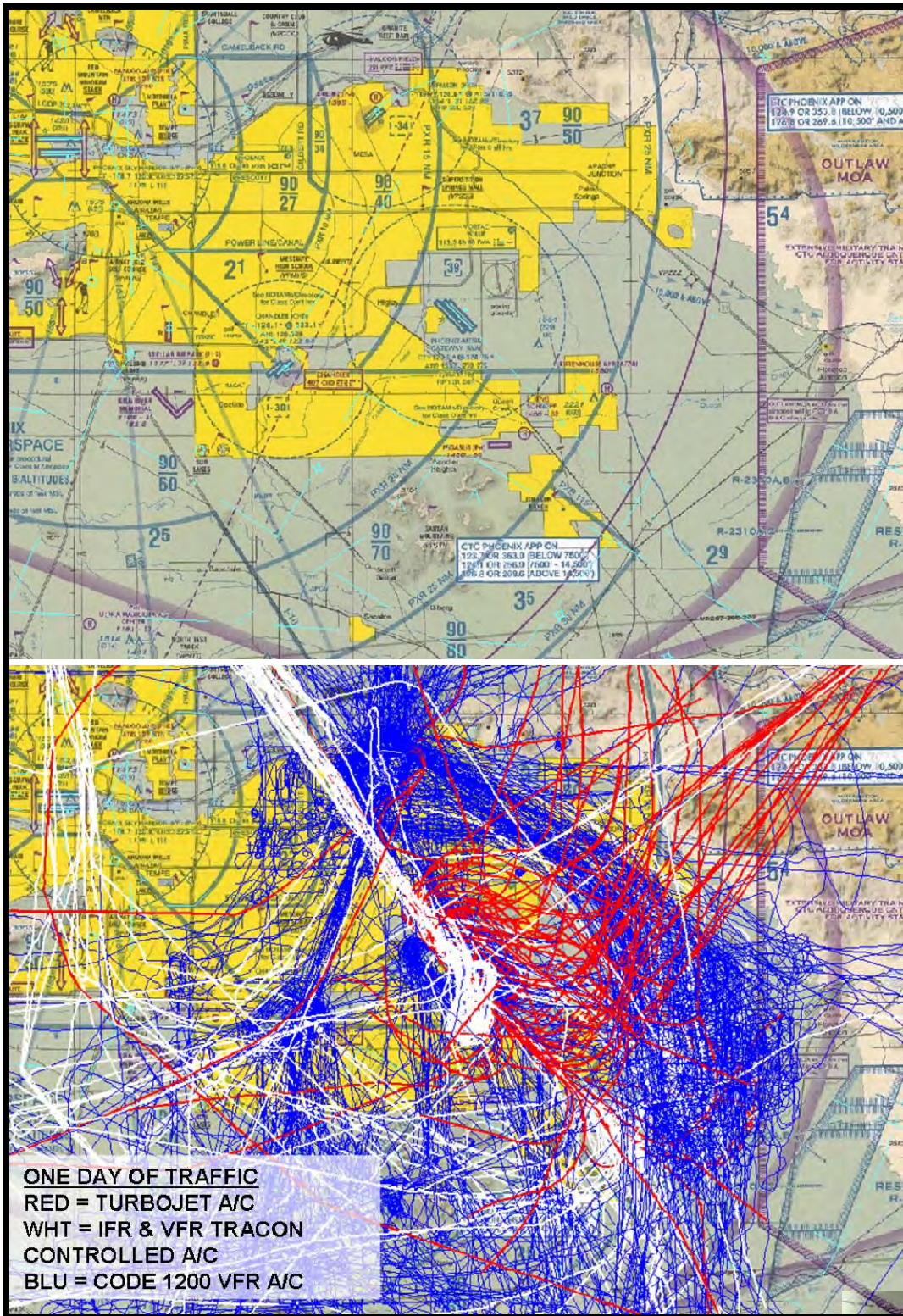
Air traffic volume and complexity southwest of the Superstition Mountains, near Chandler, Arizona has increased markedly over the past several years. This airspace includes the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (IWA), several practice areas and areas known to contain acrobatic flight activity. IWA is a small hub commercial service airport. During calendar year 2010, approximately 400,000 passengers boarded commercial aircraft at IWA. In addition, general aviation flight training activity remains the larger percentage of aircraft operations.

Recently, the Phoenix Airspace Users Working Group assigned an ad-hoc workgroup to review activity and safety in this airspace, identify any safety issues and recommend mitigation strategies if possible. As one of the mitigation strategies, the ad-hoc group has recommended the information on the following pages be disseminated to airmen.

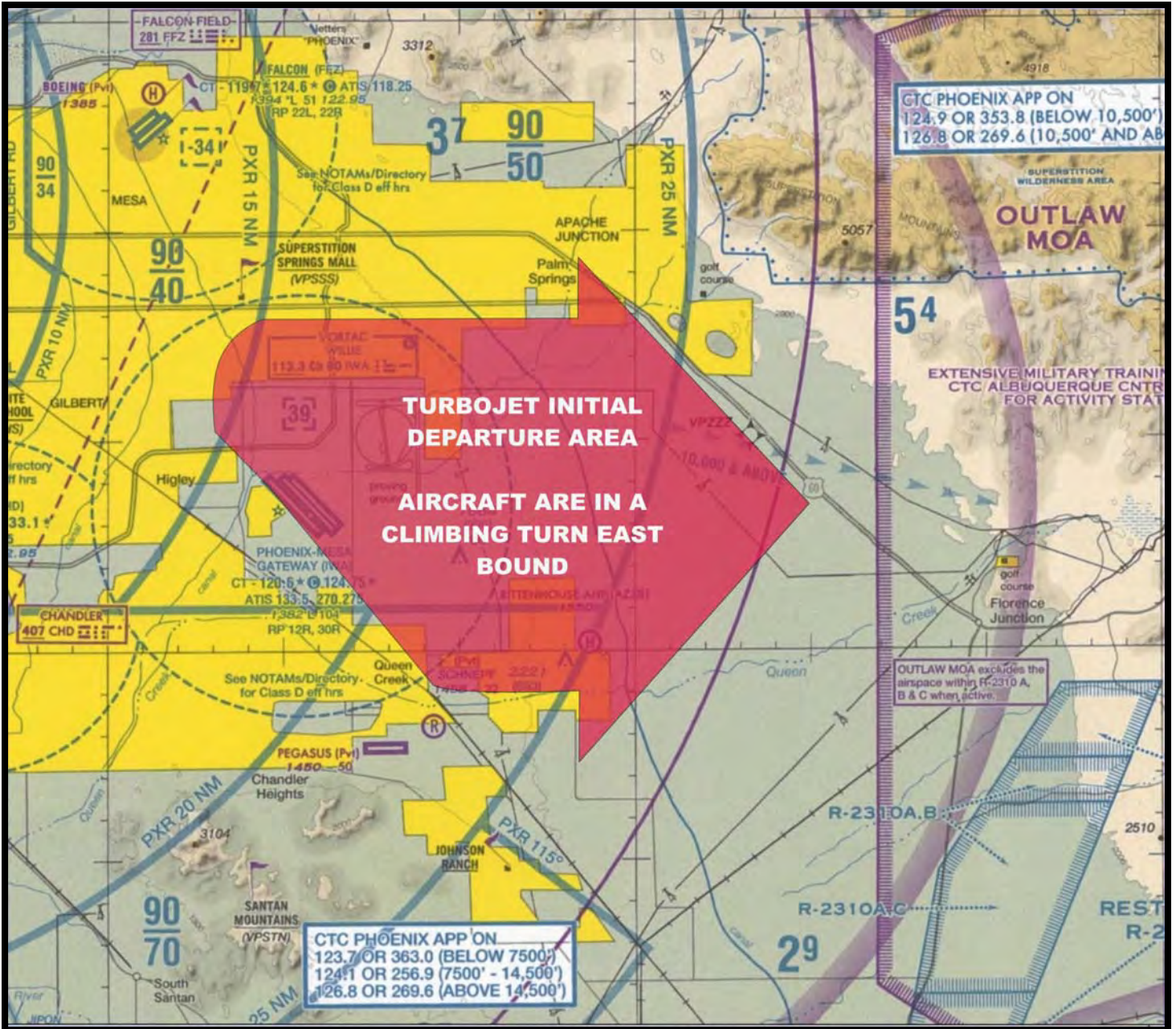
Questions regarding the content of this Letter to Airmen may be directed to Mr. Curt Faulk, Operations Support Manager, Phoenix Terminal Radar Approach Control, (602) 306-2514 or by email to curt.faulk@faa.gov.



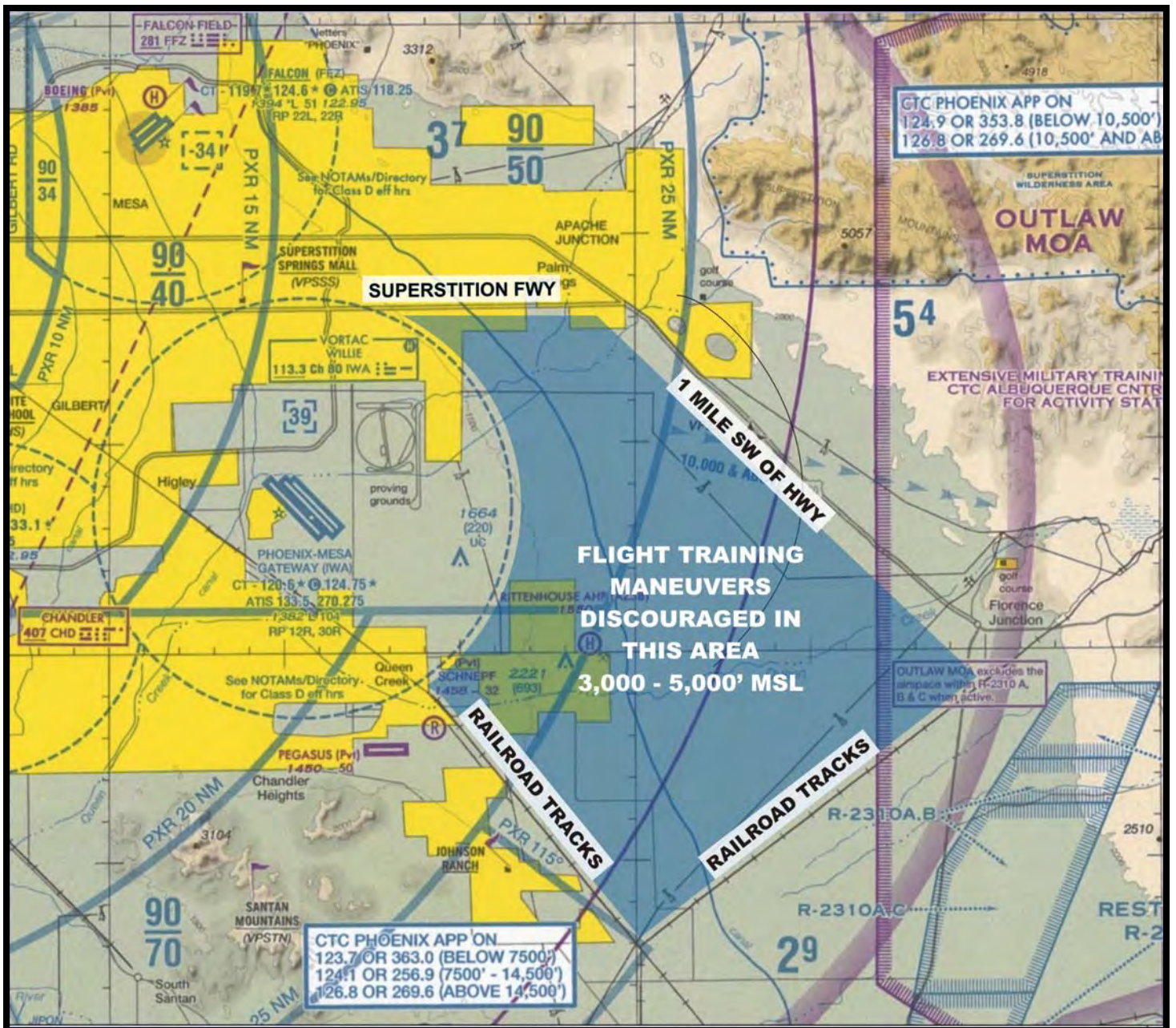
Phillip D. Thornton
Air Traffic Manager
Phoenix Terminal Radar Approach Control



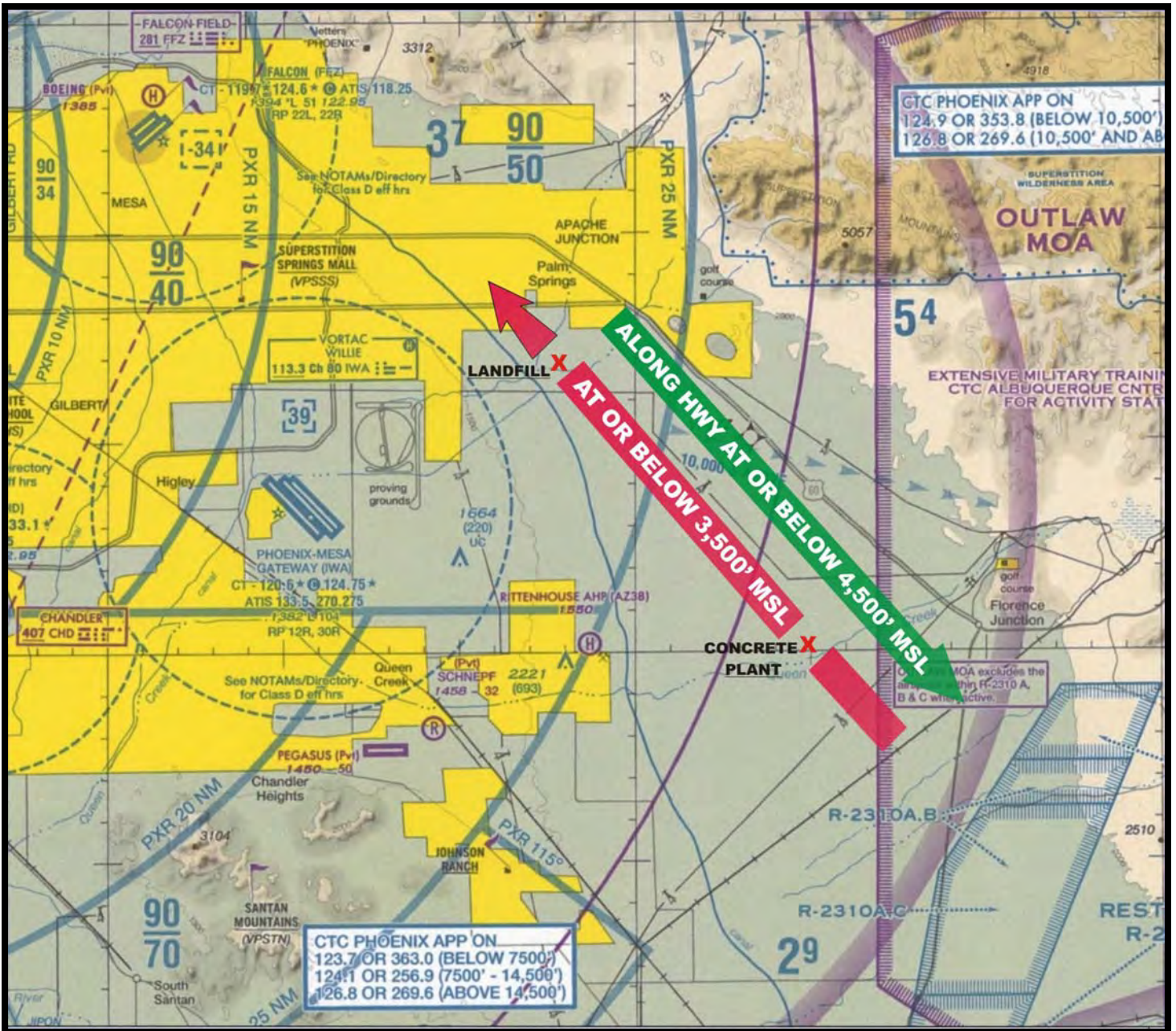
Pilots operating in the airspace near IWA should be aware of the density of air traffic operations in the area. Approximately 800 aircraft operations a day transit the airspace depicted above at or below 5,000' MSL (excluding Phoenix Sky Harbor traffic). The blue tracks indicate VFR aircraft squawking 1200, red tracks depict large turbine aircraft arriving or departing IWA, and white tracks represent other aircraft being provided air traffic services by Phoenix TRACON.



The area highlighted above depicts where VFR aircraft are most likely to encounter high performance aircraft arriving and departing IWA and other aircraft in the instrument approach traffic pattern controlled by Phoenix TRACON.



Analysis of air traffic activity in this area suggests that pilots on flight training missions should plan flights to avoid the shaded area depicted between the altitudes of 3,000' to 5,000' MSL.



Some members of the flight training community are now using specific routes to practice areas at altitudes that avoid large turbine-powered aircraft.