

- Protect declared national disasters for humanitarian reasons;
- Protect the President, Vice President, or other public figures; and
- Provide a safe environment for space agency operations.

Since the events of September 11, the use of TFRs has become much more common. There have been a number of incidents of aircraft incursions into TFRs, which have resulted in pilots undergoing security investigations, and certificate suspensions. It is a pilot's responsibility to be aware of TFRs in their proposed area of flight. One way to check is to visit the FAA's web site, at [www.tfr.faa.gov](http://www.tfr.faa.gov), and verify that there is not a TFR in the area. [Figure 5-16]



**Figure 5-16.** A temporary flight restriction (TFR) imposed at Boston's Logan Airport to general aviation and restricting operations at surrounding airports.

Another TFR issue that the balloon pilot needs to be aware of are the restrictions imposed under 14 CFR part 91, section 91.145. In this regulation, the FAA has codified restrictions against the overflight of major outdoor events, such as the World Series, the Rose Bowl, and NASCAR events. Several years ago, it was relatively common to see hot air balloons promoting products or services being flown over these events, providing exposure for the commercial sponsor. Now, there are significant distance and altitude restrictions for such events, and any operations inside the TFR area must be conducted under the provisions of a waiver. Should such an operation be contemplated, the balloon pilot should consult with the local Flight Service District Office (FSDO) well in advance of the event.

## National Security Areas

National security areas (NSAs) consist of airspace with defined vertical and lateral dimensions established at locations where there is a requirement for increased security and safety of ground facilities. Flight in NSAs may be temporarily prohibited by regulation under the provisions of 14 CFR part 99, and prohibitions will be disseminated via NOTAM.

## Radio Communications

When utilizing the NAS, there are many occasions when it is necessary to communicate with a control tower, a controlling agency, or another aircraft. Balloon pilots should have a working knowledge of correct radio procedures in order to properly exercise their privileges, and not interfere with other aviation traffic.

Aviation very-high-frequency (VHF) radios may be used for communications between the balloon pilot and towers, pilot to FSS, air to air (pilot to pilot), air to ground in some circumstances, and to get information from weather facilities and automated stations. VHF radios are not to be used as a "telephone service" or in a Citizen's Band-type of operation; this use is specifically prohibited by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and may result in monetary fines.

There is no license requirement for a pilot operating in the United States; however, a pilot who may be operating outside the country is required to hold a restricted radiotelephone permit issued by the FCC. There is also no station license requirement for a handheld radio used in a balloon, as it is not permanently mounted. A station license may be required when a balloon is operated outside the country; it is best to check with the appropriate local authorities before contemplating such an operation.

The single most important aspect of radio communication is clarity. Keeping one's transmissions brief, and using correct terminology and phraseology when operating an aircraft radio is imperative. All frequencies are shared with others; a pilot's idle chatter to a chase crew could inadvertently block another pilot's emergency transmission at an airfield many miles away. A good pilot will minimize radio requirements, and think before speaking.