



Advisory Circular

Subject: Pilot Readback Requirements

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1.0 Introduction

- (1) This Advisory Circular (AC) is provided for information and guidance purposes. It describes an example of an acceptable means, but not the only means, of demonstrating compliance with regulations and standards. This AC on its own does not change, create, amend or permit deviations from regulatory requirements, nor does it establish minimum standards.

1.1 Purpose

- (1) The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to pilots on new regulatory requirements to provide readbacks during voice communications with Air Traffic Services (ATS) personnel. These new requirements will become applicable in November 2026. The exact date will be one year following the day on which the regulations are published in the Canada Gazette Part II.

1.2 Applicability

- (1) This document applies to all pilots operating aircraft in Canadian Domestic Airspace.

1.3 Description of changes

- (1) Not applicable.

2.0 References and requirements

2.1 Reference documents

- (1) It is intended that the following reference materials be used in conjunction with this document:
 - (a) [Aeronautics Act](#) (R.S.C., 1985, c. A-2)
 - (b) Part IV, Subpart 1 of the *Canadian Aviation Regulations* (CARs) — Flight Crew Permits, Licences and Ratings
 - (c) Part VI, Subpart 2 of the CARs — Operating and Flight Rules
 - (d) Transport Canada Aeronautical Information Manual (TC AIM) - TP 14371.

2.2 Cancelled documents

- (1) Not applicable.
- (2) By default, it is understood that the publication of a new issue of a document automatically renders any earlier issues of the same document null and void.

2.3 Definitions and abbreviations

- (1) The following **definitions** are used in this document:
 - (a) **Appropriate ATS unit:**
 - (i) With respect to aircraft operations within a control zone or on the movement area of an aerodrome,
 - (A) the ATC unit identified in the Canada Air Pilot or Canada Flight Supplement as providing air traffic control services to the aerodrome, or
 - (B) if the ATC unit referred to in paragraph a) is not in operation, or an ATC unit is not identified, the FS unit identified in the Canada Air Pilot or

Canada Flight Supplement as providing air traffic services to the aerodrome;

- (ii) With respect to aircraft operations within an MF area or on the movement area of an aerodrome, the FS unit identified in the Canada Air Pilot or Canada Flight Supplement as providing air traffic services to the aerodrome; and
 - (iii) With respect to any other situation, the ATS unit identified in an aeronautical publication as providing ATS in the airspace concerned.
- (b) **ATC unit or air traffic control unit:** an ATS unit that provides air traffic control services.
 - (c) **ATIS:** an automated service, called an “Automatic Terminal Information Service”, that is provided by an ATS unit and that provides current information to aircraft arriving and departing at an aerodrome.
 - (d) **ATS unit or air traffic services unit:** an operational facility that provides air traffic services related to the movement of aircraft on the manoeuvring area of an aerodrome or to the operation of aircraft within airspace and for which an ATS site manual has been approved by the Minister under Subpart 1 of Part VIII.
 - (e) **FS unit or flight services unit:** an ATS unit that provides services, other than air traffic control services, for the safe movement of aircraft.
 - (f) **WILCO:** an expression used in radiocommunication meaning “I understand your message and will comply with it.”
- (2) The following **abbreviations** are used in this document:
- (a) **ATC:** Air Traffic Control
 - (b) **ATIS:** Automatic Terminal Information Service
 - (c) **ATS:** Air Traffic Services
 - (d) **CARs:** Canadian Aviation Regulations
 - (e) **ICAO:** International Civil Aviation Organization
 - (f) **TCCA :** Transport Canada Civil Aviation.

3.0 Background

- (1) When communicating safety related information in aviation, the accuracy of that information is verified by pilots and ATS personnel, and readbacks are a vital part of this process.
- (2) Pilots can acknowledge information and instructions by simply stating their call sign or using expressions such as WILCO, but doing so is not as effective as readbacks are. When a pilot reads back the information or the instruction instead of just acknowledging it, it provides an opportunity for ATS personnel to perform a “hearback”, meaning they verify that the readback is correct. This AC explains the new readback requirements for pilots, but also serves as a reminder to ATS personnel, that verifying the accuracy of a readback is part of effective communication and provides an additional safety net.
- (3) Existing regulations require that pilots read back Air Traffic Control (ATC) clearances under certain conditions. Even though pilots often readback information that is not part of an ATC clearance, those readbacks were not required under the *Canadian Aviation Regulations* (CARs). It is also common practice for pilots to state, on initial contact, the identification of the Automated Terminal Information Service (ATIS) they have received, but this also was not a CARs requirement.

- (4) To align with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 11 regarding the pilot readbacks of safety related information and to reduce the risk of runway incursions, Transport Canada Civil Aviation (TCCA) has amended Subpart 602 of the CARs. The new requirements for pilot readbacks will improve overall aviation safety and target the risk of runway incidents.
- (5) To reduce frequency congestion and to manage radio transmissions more effectively, TCCA has added a requirement in Subpart 602 of the CARs for pilots to state, on initial contact with the appropriate ATS unit, the identification of the ATIS they have listened to.

4.0 New Requirements

4.1 New Readback Requirements of Safety Critical Information

- (1) Even though the ATIS provides some of this information, it is common practice for ATS units to state the runway in use or the assigned runway, and the current altimeter setting; when that information (including a transponder code) is given directly to the pilot, they must read it back. When received directly from ATS personnel, pilots must now readback the safety critical information listed below.
 - (a) runway in use or assigned runway
 - (b) altimeter setting
 - (c) transponder code

Example of landing information given to a pilot (with ATIS) after they make the initial contact:

FS unit: *“MIKE ECHO CHARLIE, GATINEAU RADIO, RUNWAY TWO-SEVEN, WIND TWO-EIGHT-ZERO AT TEN, ALTIMETER TWO-NINER-NINER-ONE, TRAFFIC, CESSNA ONE-SEVEN-TWO IN THE CIRCUIT.”*

Pilot: *“RUNWAY TWO-SEVEN, ALTIMETER TWO-NINER-NINER-ONE, MIKE ECHO CHARLIE.”*

4.2 New Readback Requirements of an ATC Instruction to Hold Short of a Runway

- (1) A pilot’s situational awareness is critical when taxiing at an aerodrome especially when they must cross a runway or when a runway forms part of their taxi route. ATC will always issue specific instructions to the pilot when they must HOLD SHORT or CROSS a runway during any part of their taxi route. When a pilot receives an ATC instruction to HOLD SHORT of a runway, the instruction must be read back in accordance with Subpart 602 of the CARs. Even though a readback is not mandatory when a pilot is instructed to CROSS a runway, TCCA strongly recommends reading back the instruction to improve situational awareness.

Example of taxi instructions with a runway crossing after landing:

ATC unit: *“INDIA ZULU VICTOR, TAXI VIA BRAVO, HOLD SHORT RUNWAY TWO-SIX.”*

Pilot: *“HOLD SHORT RUNWAY TWO-SIX (**mandatory readback**), INDIA ZULU VICTOR,”*

When traffic permits:

ATC unit: *“INDIA ZULU VICTOR, CROSS RUNWAY TWO-SIX, CONTINUE TAXI VIA BRAVO TO APRON ONE.”*

Pilot: *“CROSS RUNWAY TWO-SIX (**recommended readback**), INDIA ZULU VICTOR.”*

4.3 New Requirement for Pilots to State, on Initial Contact with the Appropriate ATS Unit, the ATIS Identification they Have Received

- (1) At many aerodromes, an ATIS is used to transmit a recording that contains information to assist pilots with their arrivals and departures. An ATIS can help pilots and ATS personnel minimize radio transmissions and can provide standard information that would otherwise need to be repeated to every pilot. The confirmation that a pilot has listened to the current ATIS is important to ATS personnel; it not only confirms that the pilot has received safety critical information, but it also reduces frequency congestion. It is not sufficient for a pilot to state that they have “the ATIS”; stating the ATIS identification (“with BRAVO”) allows ATS personnel to confirm that the most recent recording was listened to. On initial contact with the appropriate ATS unit, the pilot must state the identification of the ATIS they have received, in accordance with Subpart 602 of the CARs.

Example of an initial contact made by a pilot after listening to the ATIS:

Pilot: “SASKATOON TOWER, CESSNA GOLF JULIET VICTOR CHARLIE WITH INFORMATION BRAVO.”

5.0 Information management

- (1) Not applicable.

6.0 Document history

- (1) Not applicable.

7.0 Contact us

For more information, please contact:

Chief, Flight Standards (AARTA)

E-mail: TC.FlightStandards-Normsvol.TC@tc.gc.ca

We invite suggestions for amendments to this document. Submit your comments to:

AART Documentation Services / Services de documentation AART

E-mail : AARTDocServices-ServicesdocAART@tc.gc.ca

Document signed by

Jamie-Lee MacDermid,
Executive Director, Standards Branch,
Civil Aviation