



# *Camden Air Traffic Control*

## *Newsletter*

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Welcome to Camden from your friendly team of Air Traffic Controllers who reside in the Control Tower at the western area of the complex. We have decided to publish this newsletter as an adjunct to the other publications that allow you to safely and enjoyably fly to and from this semi-rural airport.

This is our second newsletter. We hope you found the first one informative on our staff and some of the mysteries of NAIPS. We haven't heard of anybody doing anything to upset the Tower team of late, so everything must be going smoothly. Either that or you are all seeking legal advice on the matter.

Last newsletter we looked at the 'trail' of our Flight Plan and electronic Flight Data Record for our IFR flight from Camden to the Birdsville races. This newsletter will look at what happens between you, the Air Traffic Controller and the various components of the Australian Advanced Air Traffic System (TAAATS) on you leaving Controlled Airspace, going OCTA and leaving radar coverage.

A quick rehash. We are an IFR Cessna 182 planned Camden to Birdsville at A080 via all the usual suspects after Katoomba. We have departed Camden and are now cruising at A080 in radar contact with Sydney Departures. It's a fairly cool day and we have reached A080 well before the Katoomba NDB.

A couple of miles east of Katoomba, we leave Controlled Airspace but are still within radar coverage and still identified on radar. At this point the Sydney Controller will say 'ABC, contact Melbourne Centre on





135.25'. Adjunctly, the Sydney Controller will electronically hand over responsibility of your Flight Data Record to the Melbourne Controller at the TAAATS Centre in Melbourne. Both Controllers will use a 3-button mouse to effect this transfer of control responsibility.

You are still 'painting' on radar. On the Melbourne Controller's radar screen, your displayed data will be coloured light green. You will be a black colour on the Sydney Controller's screen as he/she is not really interested in you any more and it has been found that the black colour of the information label tends to put it into the background. This is nothing personal; it is just the way life is. If you remember back to our last newsletter, the RDP and FDP are both doing their mathematical amendments to your trajectories and updating their estimates of where you will be at any given time. This is a very valuable tool for ATC and yourself, the reasons for which will become known shortly.

All is going along merrily until somewhere around Dubbo you will begin to leave radar coverage. Shortly thereafter, the friendly Melbourne Controller says 'ABC, radar services terminated'. Almost immediately you disappear from the radar screen. Remember that ATC radars are line of sight instruments. They normally can't see over the horizon. One of the things that you now have to do is remember to give position reports. These are not normally required when you are radar identified and controlled.

At the instance that the radar loses contact with either your transponder (secondary radar) or the skin return from your aircraft (primary radar), the RDP and FDP do a trajectory recalculation of all enroute estimates expected to be made by you and an estimate for your arrival at destination. For this flight, your first landing point is Bourke to refuel. The RDP then updates our old friend the FDP.

The Melbourne Controller now uses a 'picture' of you based purely on what the FDP calculates to be your position. At the final radar return calculation on leaving radar coverage, your known radar derived groundspeed, lateral trajectory history (track keeping), forecast and known winds downloaded from various sources (met balloons, high altitude aircraft, etc) are applied to the FDP predictions. Also applied are your own transmitted position reports. All of this information is applied and a very accurate presentation of your flight is presented to the Controller in almost the same way as your normal radar return.





This tool is very useful in that when you give your estimate for an enroute position or your arrival at Bourke, the Controller can 'see' on his/her radar screen any other IFR aircraft subject to these trajectory events that are a traffic information situation and advise you and other aircraft appropriately. It is very accurate and greatly enhances safety in non-radar coverage areas. I am stretching my feeble memory here but I believe that the FDP can manage over 9,000 individual traffic events at any given time.

Finally, you have landed at Bourke and you say 'ABC has landed Bourke, cancel SARWatch'. Melbourne replies 'ABC, Bourke SARWatch terminated'. The Controller can then do one of two things. Firstly, he/she may choose to do nothing and let your FDR expire. This will happen automatically 10 minutes after the FDP estimated time of arrival at Bourke. Secondly, the Controller may choose to manually terminate the FDR by hitting the FDR cancellation button. In both cases, you have ceased to be a known entity. However, there is a record of everything that has happened to your flight. Your enroute charges are calculated by the amount of time you have been receiving radar and enroute IFR services. On the termination of your FDR, a message is sent from the FDP to the AVCHARGES computer and the cost is calculated.

As a point of interest, at any time in radar coverage you can request lots of good bits of information. If you don't have GPS or can't use it, you can request an extremely accurate ground speed readout. Wind drift is available from the Controller by a simple press of a mouse button. Lots of good stuff available. All you have to do is ask.

The next newsletter will cover what happens to your flight as you cruise along on your merry way returning from the Birdsville races and requesting ATC Clearance into Controlled Airspace. If there is anything you want information on as far as ATC goes, feel free to give me a call or email me. Don't forget however, that I will not enter any arena that contradicts the teachings of your Instructors or Operating Procedures.

Talk to you on 121.9, 120.1 or even on 281. Next newsletter will be out on 19 April.

Mike

PS What is the difference between a ***RUNWAY*** and a ***RUNWAY STRIP***?

