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Safety Net

PILOT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR OBTAINING INFORMATION IN-FLIGHT

Pilots are responsible for obtaining information necessary to make operational decisions.

Obtaining information pre-flight and in-flight to make operational decisions is important to the conduct of safe flight. It is important to understand what responsibilities you have to obtain information pre-flight, what information needs to be requested in-flight and what is given automatically by air traffic control (ATC). Pre-flight information requirements are detailed in AIP GEN 3.3 and AIP ENR 1.10.

In-flight

There are three sources of in-flight information available to the pilot:

- ATC initiated Flight Information Service (FIS)
- Automatic Broadcast Services
- an on-request service.

These are designed to support your responsibility to obtain information in-flight on which to base operational decisions in relation to your flight.

ATC initiated FIS

ATC initiated FIS includes the provision of operational information such as:

- meteorological conditions and the existence of non-routine MET products
- changes to serviceability of navigation facilities
- changes in conditions of aerodrome and associated facilities.

This service is mainly designed to inform you of unexpected or non-routine information. It is also important to understand what you must request and what ATC will inform you of.

You will not automatically receive routine TAF information showing deteriorating weather conditions if you are en route to a location. This information must be requested.
Automatic broadcast services

Pilots should take advantage of Automatic Broadcast Services to obtain information on which to base operational decisions. The automatic broadcast services available are:

- Automatic Terminal Information Service (ATIS)
- Automatic En Route Information Service (AERIS)
- Aerodrome Weather Information Service (AWIS)
- Meteorological Information for Aircraft in Flight (VOLMET).

Consult AIP for more information on these services. Remember ATC will not alert pilots to the availability of aerodrome weather reports that are available from an automatic broadcast service.

On request service

An on-request FIS is available to aircraft in all classes of airspace on ATC VHF or HF frequencies.

Pilots must prefix any request for FIS on ATC VHF frequencies with the call sign of the appropriate ATC unit and the generic call sign 'FLIGHTWATCH', eg. 'MELBOURNE CENTRE FLIGHTWATCH'.

Due to workload considerations, ATC may re-direct pilot requests for FIS to an alternative VHF frequency or Flightwatch HF.

Further information is available in AIP GEN 3.3. Understanding your responsibilities for obtaining information is important to conducting a safe flight.

For more information

Safety Services

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