

Instructor's view – airspace changes from 3 June

CTAF

Prior to 3 June CTAF's were identified as either "CTAF", such as Northam and Cunderdin, or "CTAF(R)" such as Albany and Kalgoorlie. The difference between the two was that radio was mandatory in a CTAF(R), usually because airline operations take place at those aerodromes. As of 3 June, "CTAF(R)" is no longer used, and all non-towered aerodromes are CTAF's. The ones at which radio is mandatory are the ones identified in ERSA as certified or registered or military. In ERSA, underneath the aerodrome designator (eg. YNTM), it says CERT, REG, MIL or UNCR. UNCR means uncertified, and these are the only aerodromes where you can get away without a radio.

Note: finding these labels will require an up-to-date ERSA, which is a rare species in many country aerodrome clubhouses and briefing rooms!

There are a couple of changes to operations at CTAF aerodromes:

- The turn onto crosswind must be no lower than 500 ft AGL. This is going back to the rules prior to November 2005. They no longer say to climb to within 300 ft of circuit height (which, let's face it, was a pretty dumb rule to start with because all it meant was bigger circuits.).
- Joining the circuit on base is allowed. It is not a recommended procedure – joining on crosswind or at 45° to the downwind leg are still the recommended procedures – but you may join on base as long as you have determined the wind and runway in use, you give way to other traffic (ie. don't barge in) and you broadcast that you're joining on base. Joining straight-in is still allowed, provided you are lined up by 3 nm from the runway and you broadcast your intentions.

CAAP 166-1(0) and 166-2(0) provide CASA's advice on flying at non-towered aerodromes, and are available on the CASA website. There's also a booklet describing it all in plain English. Go to the front page of CASA's website and click on the "Guides – Visual Pilot" link or cut and paste this URL: http://www.casa.gov.au/wcmswr/assets/main/pilots/download/nta_booklet.pdf

Changes at Jandakot

What's even scarier than flying into Jandakot? Change! As of 3 June, Jandakot is no longer GAAP airspace, it's Class D. Prior to 3 June, Class D airspace meant primary aerodromes without radar control, such as Hobart, Alice Springs or Albury. Class D now includes all the GAAP's, which means there are a few little changes to the way things are done at Jandakot.

Taxi clearances

In Class D airspace you need a taxi clearance before getting to the manoeuvring area. At Jandakot the manoeuvring area starts at Taxiway Bravo (the long one that runs parallel to Runways 06/24.) The runup bays are not part of the manoeuvring area, so you can taxi from the Southern Apron

(where RACWA is) apron to the runup bay for Runways 06 without a taxi clearance, but to taxi to the runup bay for Runways 24 you need to taxi along Bravo, so you need a clearance.

When requesting your taxi clearance, say your location on the apron and your first tracking point. Eg. "Jandakot Ground, PGL, Cessna 172, received Charlie, at the southern apron, for Fremantle Golf Course, request taxi." The clearance will probably be to the holding point, and Tower will say the taxiway. Eg. "PGL taxi to holding point Delta, hold short Runway 24R."

That clearance allows you to enter Taxiway Bravo, taxi to the runup bay, do your runups, and taxi to the holding point on Taxiway Delta. Read back: "Taxi to holding point Delta, hold short Runway 24R, PGL."

When you give your Ready call, it's now just "PGL, ready, Runway 24R." You don't need to say the ATIS code or your first tracking point because you've already said all that in your taxi call.

When you land and exit the runway, change to Jandakot Ground and request taxi clearance to the apron. Ground will then clear you as required, including clearance to cross runways.

Airways clearances

In Class D airspace you need an airways clearance. That's always been the case at Jandakot too, but because of the volume of radio traffic, the rules have always been that you don't have to actually say "Request airways clearance." Instead, a take-off clearance or an instruction to enter the GAAP given to you at Powerhouse or Boatyard or 6 South has been your airways clearance.

For take-off, that hasn't changed. A take-off clearance is your clearance to operate in the Jandakot CTR. The departure routes – via Murdoch Uni to Fremantle golf course, via Armadale etc. – haven't changed.

When approaching Jandakot, the old GAAP approach points are now VFR approach points, and while the AIP says they're no longer mandatory, Jandakot is different. Nothing's changed – ERSA tells you to contact Tower on 118.1 at 6 South or Boatyard or Powerhouse, then report at Adventure World or Forrestdale Lake. The first radio call is the same as before eg. "Jandakot Tower, Cessna 172 PGL, 6 South, 1500, inbound."

One difference on arrival is than in Class D, a clearance to enter is a clearance to descend to circuit height unless ATC specifically says otherwise. So if Tower doesn't want you to descend to 1000 ft straight away, they may say "Overfly, maintain 1500", then when they're happy for you to descend they'll say "Descend to 1000, join downwind/base/make straight-in approach" or "Make visual approach." "Make visual approach" is a common phrase at Perth but it's new to VFR pilots at Jandakot. Basically it means you're cleared to descend as necessary to join the circuit – there are no further altitude restrictions from ATC.

Also, being Class D, the VMC criteria for Jandakot have changed. The required visibility is still 5 km, but the distances from cloud are now 600 metres horizontally, 1000ft above and 500 ft below, so you won't be doing circuits with a 1200 ft cloud ceiling unless ATC is prepared to give you Special VFR.

In all of this, remember ATC will separate you from IFR aircraft but will only give you information on other VFR aircraft. Separation from other VFR aircraft is your responsibility. See or be hit!

CASA has another booklet describing these changes, also available via the “Guides – Visual Pilot” link or: http://www.casa.gov.au/wcmswr/_assets/main/pilots/download/classd_booklet.pdf

So if you’re flying at Jandakot and you haven’t done it for a while, make sure you have a look at ERSA. Also, Phil’s and my mobile numbers are on the club website, so give us a call if you have any questions.

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