

FROM THE TOWER

Hello and welcome to the Apr-May 07 “*From the Tower*”, Bankstown Airport’s Air Traffic Control news circular. The aim of “*From the Tower*” is to provide you, the Bankstown aviation community, with a bi-monthly source of news and information from an air traffic control point of view. Our aim is to keep you all informed of interesting and important events happening in and around the airport.

Well it is hard to believe but we are already a quarter of the way into the New Year. For February and March the movements were 27527 and 32728. This bodes well for the rest of the year and hopefully winter will be kind to us with

plenty of good flying weather.



Here at Bankstown the new construction is going at a frenetic pace. The new hangars are

looking closer to completion each week as is the new perimeter road at the Bunnings end of the field.

Apart from the construction things have been pretty quiet with the business of aviation going on as normal. In early March we had our busiest day in quite some time with 1511 movements. This is especially interesting as it was on a Friday as opposed to the generally busier weekends. As you can imagine the staff working that day all slept very well that night.

So with the news out of the way let’s get into the operational stuff....This issue I would like to take the opportunity to investigate the many mysteries of radiotelephony (R/T).

Bankstown airport and its surrounding airspace can be very busy both in aircraft and radio traffic. This can



make it extremely difficult to pass on important operational information to the pilots that need it. On a busy weekend it is a familiar sound to here the squeal of over-transmissions. Sometimes this is unavoidable and is going to happen when so many aircraft are operating in close proximity. But other times a pilot is in the middle of a long transmission when someone else will come straight over the top and block out the frequency.

Here are some tips that may help us all in avoiding these issues. Firstly, listen out. This means several things. It means listening to what other aircraft and the tower are saying to avoid over transmits. It also means paying attention to what other aircraft around you are doing and what their intentions are. This helps in our situational awareness. A good example of

this is when an aircraft calls up prior to you at one of our inbound reporting points. Lots of our pilots will acknowledge this when they in turn make their inbound report e.g. “*DEF Cherokee inbound at prospect received information delta copied ABC called ahead*”.



This has a roll on effect in that the tower transmission to DEF is shorter because the pilot has already told us he knows about the traffic. By minimizing transmission time we can reduce frequency congestion. Listen out also means to be listening for your callsign. This would seem like common sense but when you listen to the number of times the tower needs to repeat instructions to aircraft or sometimes having to chase an aircraft that is not responding you will be amazed at how much “airtime” is lost.

Correct read backs are another way we can minimize frequency congestion. The whole point of a read back is to ensure the correct transmission of information from controller to pilot. This is important for obvious reasons. Simply reading back a callsign is not correct and causes the tower to have to call the aircraft back to get the correct read back. This creates AT LEAST another 2 transmissions, again adding to the congestion.

By applying these simply strategies to our R/T procedures we can make it much easier to communicate with each other and thereby making it a lot easier to operate within the busy BK control zone.

Frequently at BK an aircraft will call up ready for departure and request a delay after lining up. This presents us a problem in the tower if we are not informed of this prior to giving a line-up clearance. As you can imagine with BK being busy we base our decisions to line-up after looking out the window and making an assessment of the space available for a departure. If the request is not made with the initial call to tower we will not always be able to accommodate you. So we suggest using the following phraseology to make your intentions known to us. We can then issue a clearance that will allow you the delay. *“BK tower, ABC Cherokee ready holding short of runway 11L with information Delta for a downwind departure request 10 second delay in the lined-up position”*.

“.....Cross wind alert, do not pass through final for your assigned runway, wind.....” This sentence would be familiar to most pilots operating at Bankstown and anyone who would have heard an ATIS over the summer months. But what does it mean? When is it put in the ATIS?

Whenever crosswinds from either direction reach 15 knots the cross wind alert must be put on the ATIS. It



is important because at Bankstown our runway centrelines are only 106m apart. As you can imagine with several aircraft on final for different

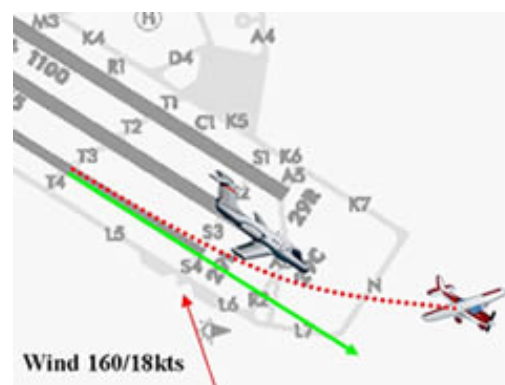
runways it could only take a second or two to drift onto final for another runway.

The other issue that arises from strong crosswinds is that of drifting into the upwind leg of an adjacent

runway. Understandably it is very difficult, with the limited visibility to the rear of a lot of GA aircraft to maintain runway centreline, but it is important. As you would know, a large number of our departures off runway centre are those of high performance aircraft such as Kingairs, Citations and other business jets. For examples sake let us consider a Cessna and a Citation operating in the runway 11 direction. The wind is 160/18kts, crosswind maximum 15kts.

The Cessna in the circuit has just completed a touch and go on runway 11R and is just airborne in an early upwind position.

After the Cessna has passed the upwind end of the threshold the Citation is cleared for take-off on runway 11C.



In this situation the Citation is going to accelerate very quickly and start gaining on the Cessna. If the Cessna accidentally begins to drift to the left with the crosswind it won't be long before it is directly in front of the citation. From here it takes little imagination to see the ramifications of not maintaining runway centreline. Thankfully this situation does not present itself too often but it is something to be cautious and aware of.

Well that's it for this issue of From the Tower. Keep your eyes out for the next one. Until then I will catch you all on the airwaves.

From the Tower is written for news and information purposes only. It does not in any way replace or supersede any of the applicable aviation regulatory documents and as such should not be used as a substitute. Contributions are most welcome and should be sent to Scott Ginnane (BK TWR) at:

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(for your contribution!)