

FROM THE TOWER

Hello and welcome to the Feb-Mar07 "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.

Welcome to the February/March issue of From the Tower. I can't believe we are already a month and a bit into the New Year. December and January saw 26018 and 27319 movements respectively giving us a total of 330714 movements for the 2006 calendar year. Hopefully we can better that this year.

Now for the news.....

Bollywood comes to Bankstown. You may have noticed Citation VH-SCC parked in the 1 hour parking bays a couple of days last month with a large number of people, vehicles and tents set up around it. This has

been for the filming of Heyy Babyy a Bollywood movie about 3 guys who find a baby dumped in their apartment. They then travel to Sydney to find their ex girlfriends who they think left the baby.

On a recent bad weather day, Wagga air 682 (one of our bank-runner Chieftains) after landing, reported a man walking between runways 11L and 11C. Car 2 was called out and shepherded the man clear of the runways but had to be assisted by police. The man was

uncooperative to say the least. Thankfully incidents like this are very rare but we all need to be vigilant when it comes to security.



With the ongoing construction of the Toll hangers there have been some more changes around the field. The new compass swing area is down in the south-western corner of the main apron. This is more centrally located than the previous one near taxiway A4. Also due to some works in or around the 29R run-up bays, the bays were temporarily relocated to the southern end of the A2 apron in front of the terminal building. This was only for a day or so and mostly after hours.

Over the last few weeks we have seen a number of serious incidents where aircraft have declared an emergency. I would like to take the opportunity to explain a little bit of how our emergency response system works.

For the purpose of explanation I will use the incident of a Cherokee returning from the training area missing its engine cowling and with a rough running engine. It is a CAVOK day with fairly light traffic. The controller is talking to another aircraft when Cherokee ABC (not the actual callsign) transmits that he has a rough running engine and is declaring an emergency. The pilot states that he was about 5 NM west of BK, had 4 POB and that he wants the services in attendance. At this point our In-flight Emergency Response System (IFER) swung into action.

Thankfully the pilot is calm and able to communicate. The controller then starts to clear the path for the Cherokee by getting aircraft in the circuit to land and also by not allowing other aircraft into the zone. At this point the controller asks the pilot if he wants to come straight in and land or hold overhead until the services arrive. The pilot elects to land straight away. The aircraft lands safely, taxis clear and is met by the safety car.

An incident like this can be broken up into several different types that all required different actions from

the controller: on or off field with either services to attend or services not required.

Firstly we must deal with the initial response. This would be finding out as much as possible from the pilot about the location, nature of emergency, aircraft type, people on board and any dangerous substances carried. As you can imagine a lot of the time it is simply not possible to get this information as the pilot can be extremely busy. (How's that for an understatement?) In this case the pilot was quite calm and pretty much did our job for us in his initial call.

After this we need to decide if the emergency services need to be called. The pilot or the controller can make this decision. To determine if the services are to be called you will hear a controller ask "There are no on airport emergency services; what services do you require?". A lot of the time the pilot will not require the services for minor issues say, a high oil pressure indication, for example. The aircraft will simply return and land normally. In this case the pilot stated straight off that he wanted the services in attendance.

Once the initial situation is as stable as possible the controllers must then assist the aircraft in distress by keeping everybody else out of the way. This can mean go rounds or full stops for circuit traffic. It could also mean keeping inbound aircraft out of the zone as it did in this case. This gave the aircraft a clear path back to the field and the choice of runways that best suited the pilot. Sometimes if the ability to control the aircraft is impaired then this can be very important. At this point the ground controller will stop everybody from taxiing and tell them to shut down where they are until the situation is resolved.

From here on in it is a waiting game for us in the tower. We could see the aircraft and had done all that



could be done until it reached the field. The main thing we do at this point is to try to keep the pilot calm and be ready to re-route the services should the

situation deteriorate with the aircraft unable to make the field. Should the aircraft not be able to make the field we will immediately call AusSAR and hand over responsibility to them. In this case the pilot indicated he could get back. Once the aircraft is on short final and all other aircraft are on the ground the runways will be released to Car2. This allows him to cross runways without clearances to get to a crash as soon

as possible. It also means the services can do the same.

Finally once the situation has been controlled and the safety Car is satisfied that everyone is clear of the runways and that operations can resume he will hand over control of the runways back to us in the tower and operations will resume. From here all we need to do is an incident report and all the appropriate notifications to CASA and the ATSB.

This scenario was as close to the best case as you can get. The pilot was calm and in control, the aircraft was controllable and there was time to prepare. Hopefully you now have some idea of what we do in an emergency to assist you should the unthinkable occur.

Just a bit of a reminder regarding the Runway Safety team. Over the next few issues of From the Tower we will be looking into Runway safety issues. This is part of an ongoing process to reduce runway incursions and their related problems. As part of the process the Runway safety team wants input from you, the pilots of Bankstown. Any ideas or questions you may have can be emailed to:

RST_Bankstown@airservicesaustralia.com

So keep your eye out for the next issue of From the Tower.

From The Tower is intended 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!)