

FROM THE TOWER

Hello and welcome to the February / March 2008 “From the Tower”, Bankstown airports’ 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.

It is turning out to be a great summer for aviation and our recent movements certainly support that fact. In December and January we had 30418 and 29705 movements respectively, and our 2007 grand total was 371911. Well done to everyone involved.

So what has been happening around the grounds? For those of you that don’t know, the new Schofields clubhouse is almost completed, and with the paint dry, operations will soon be on the way. This will however see more congestion on the northern taxiways so take care when taxiing around, particularly in the run-up bays.



Unfortunately we lost General Flying Services in December as they head back to Moorabbin to concentrate on their operations down there. GFS operated here for 5 years running courses up to CPL and Instrument Rating. We bid farewell to VH-TSP, USP and VSP and hope they enjoy their new home south of the border.

With their departure, we also welcome a new entrant to the Bankstown scene. Pacific Flight Services opened their doors up at the old Craneair building recently. We wish them the best of luck as they settle in for what is expected to be a bumper 2008.

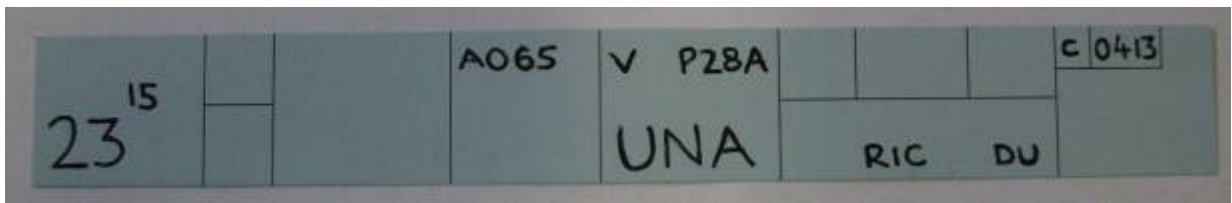


A few of the future newsletters will now start explaining some of the happenings that go on inside the tower. This edition will look at how clearances are issued to aircraft, and the step-by-step procedure we go through at Bankstown to get you on your way.

For this example, let's borrow one of the University's aircraft, Cherokee VH-UNA. They have planned a VFR flight to Dubbo via Richmond at A065 and have submitted a flightplan accordingly. In the tower, via CADAS (COMSOFT Aeronautical Data Access System), we'll get a copy of the plan in the following format:

(FPL-UNA-VG
 -P28A/L-S/C
 -YSBK2315
 -N0125A065 DCT YSRI DCT
 -YSDU 0120
 -REG/VHUNA)

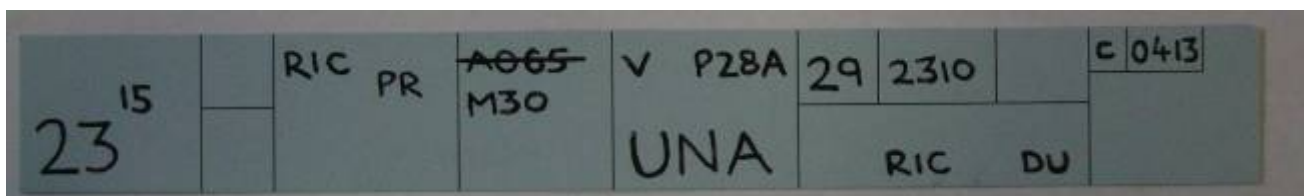
Basically, for every flight into or out of Bankstown we will get sent a copy of the plan. It is then up to the ground (or SMC/CO-ORD) controller to determine if a strip needs to be raised for each flight. If the flightplan was via Parramatta at A015, the aircraft would be departing OCTA and not require a clearance or strip. As UNA is departing at A065, the aircraft will more than likely be requesting a clearance so a strip will be drawn up and look a little something like this.



It takes about 30 minutes from sending the plan through NAIPS for us to get a copy, which is why it's best not to taxi out straight after hitting the 'send' button. However, whilst we can receive your plan hours before the flight, the randomly assigned transponder code is issued just 45 minutes prior to the ETD.

Once drawn up, the strip is placed on the console where it awaits a taxi call. The wheels really start turning once UNA starts up and requests a clearance. The SMC controllers common reply will be a time check followed by "report ready from the run-up bay, this frequency", followed by the strip being moved to the 'taxiing' bay on the console. From here we start talking to the Sydney controllers, since once UNA passes 1500ft, it will be in Sydney airspace.

The first controller will be Sydney Planner (SPL) who commonly also works the 124.55 frequency in the training area. We will let him know UNA is taxiing and he/she will issue a clearance accordingly, during which time the Bankstown SMC will be writing it down on the strip. As controller readbacks are just as important as pilot readbacks, the SPL will listen that we have copied the clearance correctly. From here, the strip waits until UNA reports ready.



99% of the time, aircraft out of Bankstown will get assigned 'maintain 3000'. This is an agreement with Sydney so they can descend their jets to 4000ft.



“UNA ready in the run-up bay”. Now it is time to obtain departure instructions from Sydney Departures West (DEPW). This controller is responsible for issuing departure instructions into the Class C airspace above Bankstown and to the west on frequency 118.4. We will advise this controller UNA is ready and he/she will either issue an assigned heading (often “heading 290 visual”) or simply a right turn for Richmond, depending on the traffic situation.

23 ¹⁵ ✓	RIC PR	A065 M30	V P28A	29	2310		C 0413
	H290V	U	UNA			RIC DU	

Alternatively, in the RWY 11 direction, common departure instructions are either “left turn” or “left, heading 290 visual”. For VFR aircraft, the ‘left’ and ‘visual’ are just as important to be readback as the 290. The big “U” under M30 means unrestricted climb to A030.

With everything ready to go, the SMC will pass the clearance on to UNA and instruct it to taxi to the holding point and contact tower. The tower controller or “ADC” (Aerodrome Controller) will then pass on the departure instructions and issue the takeoff clearance. As it passes A020, UNA will be transferred to DEPW who will already be expecting it.

	Transfer Time				RWY	Taxi time	T/O time	TXDR Mode
23 ¹⁵ ✓	20	RIC PR	A065 M30✓	V P28A	29	2310	17	C 0413✓
		H290V✓	U	UNA			RIC DU	

Whenever an element of a clearance is readback, it is ticked to show the pilot has received that information. Above, the pilot has read back the clearance, transponder code and departure instructions. The ETD is ticked when the pilot reports ready and that tick is crossed when the controller co-ordinates the ready call with Sydney. The large tick in the far right box indicates the aircraft has been transferred to the next frequency (118.4).

To finish off, just another reminder about the upcoming Industry Forum Meeting at Camden Airport. A good chance to discuss with others issues facing G.A today. The details are outlined below:

Where: Airborne Aviation hangar or Southern Cross Gliding Club (weather dependant)

When: Saturday, 2nd February

Time: 1700 – 1900 (approx.)

A BBQ and soft drinks will be provided. Hope to see you all there!

Till next time, safe flying.

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.