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## Newsletter - August 11th, 2010

### Understanding & Using TAFs (Terminal forecast) on FltPlan.com

Even after looking at them for years, TAFs (Terminal Aerodrome Forecast) leave many pilots scratching their heads.

First, some Notam basics to get you up to speed:

- A) Terminal forecasts are for a 24-hour period. (If you want forecasts beyond that, use our NWS 7 day forecast feature.)
- B) TAFs use the same abbreviations as METARs. If you know the abbreviations for METARs, you know them for TAFs.
- C) TAFs are scheduled for issuance four times a day - at 0000Z, 0600Z, 1200Z, and 1800Z.
- D) There are three types of TAF Reports:
  - TAF (standard, regularly scheduled)
  - TAF AMD (amended forecast) - when the scheduled TAF is no longer going to cut it.
  - TAF COR (correction)
- E) There are two types of time reporting:
  - 1. A specific time
  - 2. A time range
- F) There are three types of changes to a forecast.

They are:

  - FM** (FROM) indicates a change of weather starting at the noted time in hours and minutes. It is not a time period. Its ending period is the beginning of the next change group, or the end of the forecast period.
  - BECMG** (BECOMING) refers to a time period during which a gradual change will occur. BECMG 0912/0918 means that the change will occur between 12Z and 18Z.
  - TEMPO** (TEMPORARILY) refers to any change over a short period (i.e. occasional) during the associated forecast period.

Most people can decode the weather portion, but the confusion usually comes in understanding what time periods the TAF forecasts are referring to.

Here's a TAF from KISM on Sunday August 8th 2010:  
(Numbers that refer to a specific time are colored blue and numbers that refer to a time range are green.)

=====  
TAF AMD KISM **081323Z** **0813/0912** 23004KT P6SM VCSH SCT025 BKN035  
**TEMPO 0813/0814** 3SM SHRA BKN020  
**FM081400** 26005KT P6SM VCSH SCT025CB BKN120 **TEMPO**  
**0814/0815** VRB15G25KT 2SM +TSRA SCT010 BKN025CB  
**FM081600** 26006KT P6SM VCSH SCT025CB BKN080 **TEMPO**  
**0816/0818** 3SM TSRA BKN025CB OVC050  
**FM082000** 28006KT P6SM VCSH SCT025 BKN060 **TEMPO 0820/0824**  
3SM SHRA BKN025  
=====

The confusion starts with the time after the forecast location (KISM).  
Some see **081323Z** as a time range (the 8th from 13Z to 23Z) and others see it as a specific time (the 8th at 1323Z).  
The correct answer is it is a specific time. It is when the forecast was actually prepared.

Specific times are written in the format of **ddhhmm**.  
Another example of a specific time is **FM081400**, which is the 8th at 1400Z.

**0813/0912** is a time range from the 8th at 13Z to the 9th at 12Z. These are written in the format **ddhh/ddhh**.  
Another example is **BECMG 0820/0824**, which is a time range of the 8th at 20Z to the 8th at 24Z.

Hopefully you get the point. So how does one really know? It's easy.  
If it is six numbers long, it is a specific time. (**ddhhmm**)  
If it's four numbers followed by a slash and four more numbers, it is a time range using day and hour. (**ddhh/ddhh**)

On the route weather briefing, FltPlan.com will give you your departure and arrival times in Zulu for you to compare to the forecast.  
FltPlan.com gives you the option to view TAFs in several locations (creating a Flight Plan, Airport Info, Quick Info). However, the most common and recommended location is the **Weather** page.



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## New Enhancements - Expanded Recent ATC Routes Listing and Mapping

On the Flight Plan Entry page (where you enter route, ETE, route of flight, etc.) we have added some additional features.

### A.) New category of Planned ATC Routes.

In the past, we provided

#### **a.) Recent Routes used by FltPlan.com users.**

As the title states, these are last 5 routes that users of FltPlan.com used in creating their flight plan. It does not necessarily mean they filed the flight plan, only that they created the flight plan and saved a NavLog with the associated route. We include with this the type of aircraft and distance of the route.

#### **b.) Recent Planned ATC Routes.**

These were the last five routes that ATC assigned between the two airport codes. They can all be the same (if the same route was issued as a clearance for the last 5 flights)

Now, FltPlan.com provides a new category labeled

#### **c.) Other Recent Planned ATC Routes.**

This section will give you up to 10 unique routes that have been given by ATC between these airports.

The purpose of this is to provide valid:

- i.)** alternate routing for weather and winds.
- ii.)** if available, recent Victor Airway routes for aircraft flying below 18,000.

This is especially helpful for routes that are long enough for jets and turboprops to fly in the flight levels, but short enough for piston aircraft to fly non-stop in the low altitude structure.

### B.) Winds Aloft Charts

As part of the enhancement to the Planned ATC Route section, we are now providing a link to four Winds Aloft charts that correspond to your trip date and altitude. With these charts you can get a better picture of the winds aloft for the different altitudes.

C.) Route Map and Route Map with Weather

Next to each one of the routes listed above we now provide a link to show the route of flight on a map. This will help visualize where the route is taking you (which can be used with the Winds Aloft Charts), or you can use the route with WX to check a possible route with current radar images.

The 5 Most Recent Planned ATC Routes between KTEB - KHOU	WIND CHARTS	No Radar	With Radar	Display Route
WHITE J209 SBY J79 KATZN J193 WEA VR J121 BARTL J4 CAE J52 VUZ JAN AEX.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
LANNA J48 MOL J22 VUZ AEX.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
LANNA J48 MOL J22 VUZ JAN AEX.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
LANNA J48 HAAGN MURPH J75 GVE J37 SJI.CL MBA1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
LANNA J48 HAAGN MURPH J75 GVE J37 SJI.CL MBA1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>


  

Other Recent Planned ATC Routes between KTEB - KHOU	WIND CHARTS	No Radar	With Radar	Display Route
COATE J36 WAAKE J29 PXV J131 LIT J180 SWB.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
LANNA J48 EMI LDN PSK SOT GQO VUZ JAN AEX.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
LANNA J48 HAAGN MURPH J75 GVE J37 SJI.CL MBA1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
LANNA J48 MOL J22 VUZ JAN AEX.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
LANNA J48 MOL J22 VXV GQO IGB J52 SQS SWB.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
LANNA MOL VUZ AEX.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
PARKE J6 BWG ARG FSM BYP CVE. TEXNN4		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
PARKE J6 LRP CSN J48 MOL J22 MCB J50 AEX.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>
WHITE J209 SBY J79 KATZN J193 WEA VR J121 BARTL J4 CAE J52 VUZ JAN AEX.ROKIT1		<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<a href="#">ROUTE MAP</a>

## Flight Schedule Calendar

It's easy to memorize your own schedule, but don't you ever wish your family, friends and coworkers could also know what you're up to? With websites like Facebook and Twitter, it's clear that people want to let everyone know where they are and what they're doing. With our Flight Schedule Calendar, it's simple for you to not only keep track of your own schedule, but also notify others of your plans. You can send an email to twenty people with your flight schedule-plus any other events you would like to include. You can also make a unique webpage calendar link that can be sent to your people. All you need to do is bookmark the webpage and then click on it whenever you want to see your schedule. Using this feature is easy.

1. Create your flight plans like you always do.
2. Enter any EVENTS that you wish - like company meeting, doctor appointments, your child's school events, etc. You name, you can enter it.
3. Go to the Make Calendar section  
To email your schedule or create a webpage with your schedule:
  - i.) Enter the parameters you wish:  
i.e. for the city names to appear associated airport ID, select Display City names.
  - ii.) Select the number of weeks to display on the Calendar in either the standard section or create/update webpage section.
  - iii.) Enter a title for your Calendar (i.e. Waldo's Flight Schedule).

<b>Flight Schedule Calendar</b> (Display your Flight Schedule in Calendar Format)						 <b>Calendar at a Glance</b>				
<input type="button" value="Add an Event"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Event"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Display City Names	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Display SOB	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Display PIC	<input type="checkbox"/> Display Future Flight Time & Cycles Information					
<input type="radio"/> 1 Week	<input type="radio"/> 2 Weeks	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 3 Weeks	<input type="radio"/> 4 Weeks	<input type="radio"/> 5 Weeks	<input type="radio"/> 6 Weeks	<input type="radio"/> 7 Weeks	<input type="radio"/> 3 Months	<input type="radio"/> 4 Months	<input type="radio"/> 5 Months	<input type="radio"/> 6 Months
Create/Update a Web Page with your Schedule. <input type="radio"/> 2 weeks <input type="radio"/> 4 weeks <input type="radio"/> 7 weeks <input type="radio"/> 3 Months <input type="radio"/> 4 Months <input type="radio"/> 5 Months <input type="radio"/> 6 Months										
Calendar Title: <input type="text" value="Waldo's Schedule for next three weeks"/>						<input type="button" value="Press Here for Calendar"/>				

To display a calendar for viewing, printing or emailing, use one of the buttons in the red outlined area.

To display or update a web based calendar, use one of the buttons in the blue outlined area.

You can create a calendar that spans from one week up to six months! The Flight Schedule Calendar will make a great addition to your Internet routine!

## SMS Coming Soon

FAA SMS (AC 120-92 Safety Management System) Coming October 2010.

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## Blocking Your Tail Number is Free through the NBAA

The NBAA will block your tail number from the public for free (whether you are a NBAA member or not).

[Click here for info on blocking your tail number.](#)

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## Runway Analysis is Here

FltPlan.com now offers Runway Analysis, integrated with your flight plans.

[Click here for more info.](#)

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