There are times when you especially recognize the importance of communications. During the Oshkosh EAA Convention, departing IFR is efficient but not according to conventional rules. During the busiest times, IFR clearances have been received by telephone on the ground, then the clearances to taxi and takeoff are done by listening only and by watching FAA controllers with large colored paddles on the ramp and near the runway end. After departing, the tower will then give the clearance to contact departure control. This is the first time the microphone is needed.

After takeoff, imagine reaching down for the mike and finding it missing. This is one of the many true stories about Oshkosh and actually happened in IFR conditions. That’s when you realize how important it is to talk to ATC.

In the last article in the series, we began our discussions on the approach chart heading which includes the communications available at the airport. In this issue, we continue discussing communications.

The CTAF is the frequency designed for the purpose of carrying out airport advisory practices while operating to or from an uncontrolled airport. The CTAF may be a UNICOM, Multicom, FSS, or tower frequency. UNICOM is included on the approach chart only when it is the CTAF.

When an airport has no control tower, the flight service station and its frequencies will be placed in the communications area. When neither a tower nor an FSS is at the airport, other available frequencies such as UNICOM or Multicom may be listed. Refer to the ILS Rwy 12 approach at Huron, South Dakota, which has an FSS on the airport and can be contacted by calling “Huron Radio.” The Huron Flight Service Station provides local airport advisories at Huron which is indicated by the letters “LAA” included within the parentheses. Even though Huron Radio has other frequencies, the frequency of 123.6 MHz is the CTAF, so 123.6 should be used when operating at the Huron airport. A call for airport advisories would be to Huron Radio.

Ground Control

The ground control frequency (most of which are in the 121.6 to 121.9 MHz bandwidth) is listed in the far right box labeled “ground.” If there are different ground control frequencies for different parts of the airport, they will be listed in the ground control box with the area where they are to be used.

Since clearance delivery is a departure frequency, it will be shown only on the airport chart when it is available at an airport.

Approach Control

When the services normally provided by approach and departure controllers are provided by a center, the center information will be included in the approach box. At locations such as Huron, South Dakota, an approach control is not available at the airport or nearby. In these cases, the air traffic route control center in the area usually provides the functions normally provided by approach control. At Huron, Minneapolis Center provides the approach control service on 126.25 MHz.

In other locations such as Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, the approach control is not a 24-hour facility, so the Jacksonville Center provides the approach control services on 128.7 MHz. At both the Myrtle Beach and Yankton airports, the Center has radar capability, but the radar is not usable down to the FAF crossing altitude. You should not expect vectoring service or other radar services. So the (R) is not included with the Center name.

Unicom

At Yankton, South Dakota, the CTAF frequency is 122.9 MHz. This is an unusual case where Jeppesen provides the UNICOM frequency on an IFR approach chart. The official call sign for the UNICOM is Chan Gurney Municipal UNICOM, but you probably will not hear all those words spoken by local pilots when calling UNICOM.

Altimeter Settings

In the design of instrument approach procedures and the applicable minimums, the FAA bases their specifications on an altimeter setting from the local airport. With these criteria, it is very important to have a local altimeter setting. There are many methods used on the approach charts to indicate the altimeter source, depending on the type used.

In addition to the ATIS, ASOS and AWOS-3 are shown when available. At Huron, the ASOS (Automated Service Observation System) is available on 118.12 MHz. At Myrtle Beach, the altimeter is available on both the ATIS on 123.92, and the AWOS-3 (Automated Weather Observing System) on 124.5 MHz.

Since an altimeter setting is necessary for flying the approach, the remote altimeter source is specified when the local altimeter setting is not available. The remote altimeter is included in the notes box on the new Briefing Strip charts and in the heading box on the earlier charts.
As a bit of interesting trivia, a remote altimeter setting source is not authorized for a remote distance greater than 75 NM, or for an elevation differential between the remote altimeter source and the landing area that is greater than 6,000 feet. You can see the importance of local altimeter settings and the ability to know how to obtain remote altimeter settings when a local one is not available.

Legend Pages
The approach chart legend pages have no more recreational reading value than the enroute legend pages, but they are there. They are also some of the most important recommended reading you can do. The details of the symbols and their meanings are included with some explanatory comments when appropriate.

Remember when reading the legend that it is written to satisfy international requirements, not just those for the United States. Most countries have not adopted the U.S. TERPs (United States Standard for Terminal Instrument Procedures), so the definitions of various approach segments may not be what you learned in ground school. Most countries have adopted the ICAO approach procedure design criteria called PansOps.

Chart NOTAMs
When there are temporary changes to enroute or terminal charts, these changes are included in Jeppesen’s Chart NOTAMs under the “Chart NOTAM” tab. Changes to the enroute charts are listed first, followed by changes to the terminal charts. The Chart NOTAMs are sometimes used for last-minute changes that missed the cutoff dates for changes. These NOTAMs are usually produced every two weeks. It is important to note that the Chart NOTAMs only highlight changes to the Jeppesen charts and do not substitute for the NOTAMs issued by a briefer or received through an online service.

Area Charts and Class B Airspace Charts
As you probably noticed, Area charts and Class B Airspace charts use the approach chart index number system. Many people prefer to file the Area charts and Class B Airspace charts behind the enroute charts since area and Class B Airspace charts normally serve a larger area than just one city. Others prefer to take the Area and Class B Airspace charts out of the enroute chart binder and place them with each city in front of the Departure and STAR charts. The index numbering system on these charts is compatible with the approach chart series, so this second filing system is quite easy.

Approach Charts and Airport Diagram Philosophy
Since the approach charts are used for arriving at the airport, we have listed the communication frequencies in the order of use when flying to the airport. Included with the approach charts are the airport diagram charts and they are designed to be used both at the end of the approach and for departing the airport. All the communication frequencies on the airport diagram are listed in the order of use when departing the airport. The airport charts also include takeoff and alternate minimums and IFR Departure Procedures (now Obstacle Departure Procedures) to keep airplanes away from rock piles on climb out.

In the next article, we will begin exploring the approach chart plan view.