

# AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION CIRCULAR 30/18

## AREA NAVIGATION AS PRIMARY APPROACH ON AUTOMATIC TERMINAL INFORMATION SERVICE

(Replaces AIC 13/16)

### Introduction

With the continued successful expansion of performance-based navigation (PBN), area navigation (RNAV) approach procedures are becoming the predominant and preferred approach type at many airports across Canada. Also, as more PBN procedures are developed and implemented, more than one RNAV approach procedure may be available for an active runway.

As such, NAV CANADA conducted an advertising trial to raise awareness of available RNAV approaches on automatic terminal information service (ATIS) as the primary approaches at several airports across the country. As a result of the trial and through extensive consultation with airline customers and operational staff, NAV CANADA will now adopt the practice of advertising RNAV approaches, where available and in suitable weather conditions, as the primary instrument flight rules (IFR) approach on ATIS.

### Purpose and Benefits

An ATIS broadcast is used by air traffic control (ATC) to reduce frequency congestion and provide essential, accurate and current information, such as local weather, active runways, approaches in use, and more. It is expected that pilots will also use the information to plan their arrival and approach.

Having RNAV as the primary approach can provide the following benefits:

- Avoids instrument landing system (ILS) glide path (GP) interruption and/or flight profile guidance interference from ground traffic.
- Provides for seamless transition from area navigation standard terminal arrival (RNAV STAR) to RNAV approach.
- Takes advantage of global navigation satellite system (GNSS) space-based systems and advancing aircraft avionics capabilities.
- Reduces the length and complexities of ATC clearances.

### Notifying Air Traffic Control on Initial Contact of Requested Approach Procedure

Pilots should plan their arrival based on the information on ATIS. Therefore, if RNAV is advertised as the primary approach, ATC will expect the aircraft to be set up for the RNAV approach.

At some airports in Canada, more than one RNAV approach (RNAV GNSS or RNAV RNP) may be available for one or more runways. Based on this, the ATIS message at airports where multiple RNAV approaches are available shall direct aircrews to inform ATC on initial contact of the requested approach procedure. ATC makes use of different control methods depending on the type of approach—failing to communicate the requested approach on initial contact may result in inefficient flight profiles, increased flying distances, and additional crew workload. When pilots inform ATC on initial contact of the requested approach, this assists ATC in planning and sequencing considerations, and reduces transmissions on the ATC frequency.

The intent of this inclusion to the ATIS message is for pilots to advise ATC of the requested approach on the **ACTIVE** IFR runway advertised on the current ATIS message. If planning to fly any procedure other than the one advertised on ATIS, pilots are reminded of the requirement to advise ATC regardless of the reason (training, weather, equipment, preference, etc.).

## ATIS message format

At airports where Terminal Control service is provided and RNAV approach procedures are being advertised as the primary approach on ATIS, the ATIS message shall request pilots to inform the Arrival controller on initial contact of their requested approach. At airports without a designated Terminal or Arrival controller, the ATIS message shall stipulate an ATC unit and frequency for pilots to inform ATC of their requested approach procedure.

ATIS message examples:

**Visual Metrological Conditions (VMC) weather conditions (Cloud ceiling 500 feet or more above minimum IFR altitude and visibility 3 miles or better):**

IFR APPROACH RNAV Z OR RNAV Y RWY XX, **PILOTS SHALL INFORM <ATS UNIT> ARRIVAL** OF REQUESTED APPROACH ON INITIAL CONTACT. LANDING AND DEPARTURES RWY XX

or

IFR APPROACH RNAV Z OR RNAV Y RWY XX, **PILOTS SHALL INFORM <ATS UNIT> CENTRE ON FREQUENCY 119.0** OF REQUESTED APPROACH ON INITIAL CONTACT. LANDING AND DEPARTURES RWY XX

**Instrument Metrological Conditions (IMC) weather conditions (Cloud ceiling less than 500 feet above minimum IFR altitude or visibility less than 3 miles – Include “ILS”**

IFR APPROACH RNAV Z, RNAV Y OR ILS RWY XX, **PILOTS SHALL INFORM ARRIVAL** OF REQUESTED APPROACH ON INITIAL CONTACT. LANDING AND DEPARTURES RWY XX

or

IFR APPROACH RNAV Z, RNAV Y OR ILS RWY XX, **PILOTS SHALL INFORM WINNIPEG CENTRE ON FREQUENCY 119.0** OF REQUESTED APPROACH ON INITIAL CONTACT. LANDING AND DEPARTURES RWY XX

In IFR weather conditions, pilots must not assume that ATC is expecting the flight to be setup for an ILS approach. Notifying ATC of the requested approach as per the ATIS message instruction is essential.

## Sample Phraseology

“Generic Airlines 123 ...FL 200 for 16,000, information Delta, request RNAV Y Runway 32”

“Generic Airlines 123 ...FL 200 for 16,000, information Delta, request ILS Runway 32”

The requested approach information should be included in the very first radio transmission with the unit/frequency identified in the ATIS message that will sequence the arrival to final and issue the approach clearance.

## Further Information

For further information, please contact:

NAV CANADA  
Customer Service  
77 Metcalfe Street  
Ottawa, ON K1P 5L6

Tel.: 800-876-4693  
Fax: 877-663-6656  
E-mail: [service@navcanada.ca](mailto:service@navcanada.ca)



Jeff Dawson  
Director, Standards, Procedures and International Coordination