AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION CIRCULAR 013/2026

CHANGE TO CANADA AIR PILOT (CAP) AND RESTRICTED CANADA AIR PILOT (RCAP) IDENTIFICATION OF PRECISE FINAL APPROACH FIX ON PROCEDURE CHARTS

Purposes of the Circular

This circular provides information to pilots, dispatch, ATS personnel and other stakeholders who refer to the Canada Air Pilot (CAP) and Restricted Canada Air Pilot (RCAP) for operational or business use.

Background

Historically, the final segment of an ILS procedure began where the glide slope intercepted the procedure turn altitude. This point is known as the Precise Final Approach Fix (PFAF).

The PFAF is a calculated WGS-84 geographic position located on the final approach course where the designed glidepath (APV and PA procedures) intercepts the intermediate segment altitude (glidepath intercept altitude). The PFAF marks the beginning of the Final Approach Segment (FAS). The calculation of the distance from the Landing Threshold Point (LTP) to PFAF includes the earth curvature.

The PFAF was not explicitly identified on approach charts and was not located at a named fix. Some confusion arose due to its position being different from the Final Approach Fix (FAF) of the Localizer procedure depicted on the same chart.

NAV CANADA will introduce a new depiction standard to the Canada Air Pilot (CAP) and Restricted Canada Air Pilot (RCAP) to assist users to identify the Precise Final Approach Fix (PFAF) on vertically guided approach procedures, i.e. Precision Approach (PA) and Approach Procedures with Vertical Guidance (APV).

What is changing

NAV CANADA's depiction will be similar to the "lightning bolt" zigzag line and altitude symbol used on FAA charts for the same purpose. Some minor differences in depiction from the American usage are adopted to align with the ICAO standard used by NAV CANADA to depict the minimum altitude of the intermediate segment, which differs from the FAA method.

At the same time, NAV CANADA will begin redesigning ILS procedures to ensure the PFAF is located at a named fix and, when paired with a LOC procedure, is collocated with the FAF.

Just as the FAF is identified in the profile view with the Maltese cross symbol (✠), the PFAF will now be identified using the lightning bolt (Figure 1):

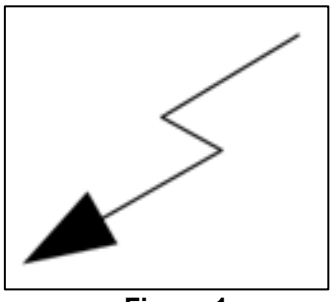

Figure 1.

On ILS charts, the Glidepath (GP) check altitude will be replaced by the glidepath intercept altitude, which will be depicted at the tail of the lightning bolt. Based on modern design criteria, the glidepath intercept altitude, unlike the GP check altitude, will be calculated using earth curvature.

Within the profile view of the instrument approach procedure, the space where the GP check altitude was previously depicted on the chart (i.e. below the name of the fix) will be occupied by the Constant Descent Angle (CDA) altitude associated with the fix, just as it is on area navigation (RNAV) procedures and at other fixes in the profile view.

Although there may appear to be some duplication since the glidepath intercept altitude and CDA altitude will be the same value (and these will match the Intermediate Segment altitude also), they represent distinct data points that have different use cases for flight management systems.

On charts using the new depiction, the Maltese cross symbol will be depicted on procedures without vertical guidance, the lightning bolt symbol will be shown on procedures with vertical guidance (Figure 2), and both will be included on combination or co-charted procedures (e.g. ILS with LOC, LPV with LNAV; Figure 3).

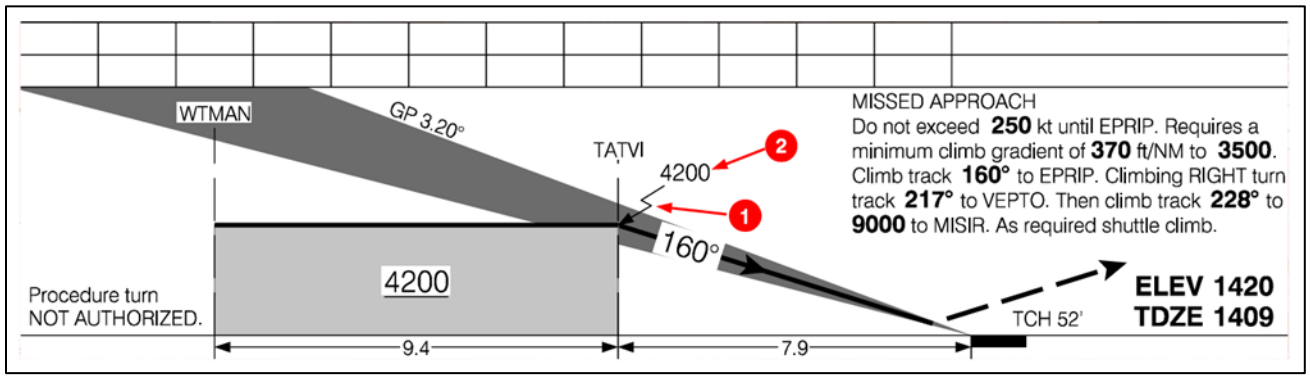

Figure 2. Example of an ILS procedure showing new "lightning bolt" symbol pointing to the PFAF with glidepath intercept altitude.

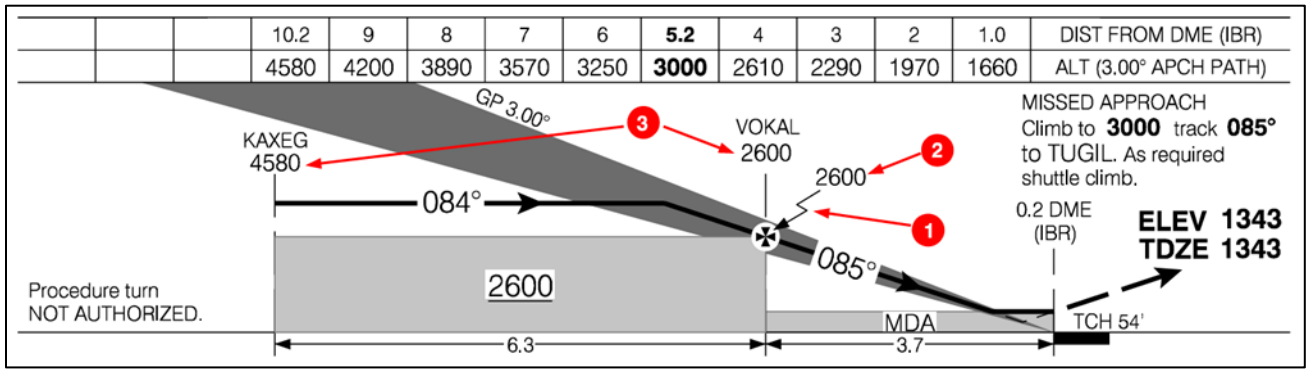

Figure 3. Example of an ILS/LOC procedure showing new "lightning bolt" symbol pointing to the PFAF, glidepath intercept altitude, and location of CDA altitude at the FAF.

1. PFAF Indicator
2. Glidepath Intercept Altitude
3. CDA Altitudes

The CAP GEN will be amended to include appropriate graphics and definitions.

GLIDEPATH INTERCEPT ALTITUDE

> The published minimum altitude to intercept the glidepath in the intermediate segment of a vertically guided instrument approach, depicted with the lightning bolt symbol at the Precise Final Approach Fix.

NAV CANADA will implement this change incrementally, with the first publication 29 October 2026.

For further information, please contact:

NAV CANADA
Customer Service Centre
151 Slater Street
Ottawa, ON K1P 5H3

Tel.: 800-876-4693
E-mail: service@navcanada.ca

Chris Bowden
Director, Aeronautical Information Management and Flight Operations