

CENTENNIAL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER

General Operating Tips

Communication with ATC: Centennial tower and ground frequencies often have a great deal of frequency congestion. The following reminders help greatly reduce this problem

- Do not turn down radio volume while operating under ATC. This includes all times within class D airspace
- Listen to the frequency before you transmit. If you “step” on another transmission, all that gets broadcast on the frequency is a loud squeal. Everyone must now start over as no one was heard. If the frequency is so congested that there are absolutely no breaks, unless an emergency exists, refrain from broadcasting for 2-3 minutes until a break develops.
- Listen closely to the ATIS late at night or early in the morning. Often all services (clearance delivery, ground control, tower control) will be offered on one frequency of 118.9. When one controller is working all positions, this prevents transmissions occurring simultaneously on multiple frequencies. The ATIS will notify you if this is in effect.
- Inform ATC if unable to comply with an instruction issued. Controllers will plan other actions around your acceptance of an instruction (e.g. assigned runway, “turn right at alpha 9”).
- There is no need to request a frequency change after you exit class D airspace.

Ground Control

Request to Taxi: Give all information on initial contact. The frequency congestion at Centennial makes multiple transmissions problematic. Give type aircraft and call sign, precise position on airport current ATIS and assigned runway. We have a requirement to ensure readback of the assigned runway due to the potentially dire consequences of your taxiing to the wrong runway.

Taxi request (example): “Centennial Ground Cessna 91590, at Hotel with ATIS “Tango” Request Tax Runway 17 left, Eastbound”

Use caution on inner ramp areas, as they are uncontrolled areas. Service vehicles, cars aircraft under tow, and pedestrians are often present. Most taxiways are only wide enough for one aircraft. Therefore, specific routings may be issued.

IFR Aircraft: Aircraft smaller than turboprops should advise the ground controller, on initial contact, that they are IFR.

Monitor: Pertinent information about your flight will be forwarded directly to the tower controller prior to takeoff. Advise the **ground controller** when you are ready for departure. After advising Ground Control that you have completed your run-up and are ready for departure, instructions will be issued to monitor tower frequency. Promptly change to and maintain a listening watch on the tower frequency. **Do not call the tower; the tower will call you** when traffic conditions permit departure clearance. Position your aircraft up to the hold line and be ready to access the runway when called.

Tower Control

Departing: The volume of traffic at Centennial leaves us limited windows of time to depart aircraft. Once you have advised the ground controller you are ready for departure, the tower controller will expect that you are ready to depart without delay. Your help in being “ready to go” will ensure minimal delays for you and fellow pilots attempting to arrive and depart Centennial. Advise the tower controller prior to entering the runway if you should need to delay on the runway for any reason.

Runway Entering: Only **the tower controller** will issue clearances that will allow you to enter the runway. **No instructions by the ground controller should ever be misconstrued as authorization to enter the runway or cross a runway hold line for departure.**

Class D Airspace: We recommend establishing initial contact with the tower between 8 and 10 miles from the airport. This point is close enough for us to determine your position on radar, yet far enough from us to begin planning for your arrival. There is a requirement to establish two-way radio communications with the tower prior to entering Centennial airspace. If you work with Denver approach, either on an instrument flight plan or VFR flight following, you are still required to establish radio communication with the tower prior to entering class D airspace.

Touch and go pattern: Help by keeping patterns in close, especially when several aircraft are making touch and go's. Unless otherwise instructed, down winds should remain east of Interstate 25. Advise if you prefer full stop taxi backs or option approaches. Pattern altitude is 6800 feet MSL. This altitude allows other aircraft to over fly the airport for other runways at 7300 feet. Be careful not to over shoot turns to final, as the parallel runway centerlines are only 700 feet apart.

Calling Inbound: Give all information on initial contact. The frequency congestion at Centennial makes multiple transmissions problematic. Give type aircraft and call sign, precise geographical position or distance and direction from field, current ATIS code, and your intentions (full stop, touch and go's etc.)

Phraseology (example): Centennial Tower Cessna 91590 over Franktown, with ATIS "Tango" Request Touch and Go's.

Runway Utilization: Since Centennial is an extremely busy airport, controllers strive to use all the runways when wind conditions allow. Initial runway assignments may change in order to expedite traffic. Wind permitting, acceptance of Runway 10 for departure and/or Runway 28 for arrival can decrease departure/arrival delays.

Pattern Entry Points: Listen carefully to pattern entry instruction and reporting points. Controllers are projecting traffic sequences based on your pattern entry point. Be accurate in position reporting and use geographical landmarks when able. If you desire an entry point other than the one issued, ask and we will do our best to accommodate the request. Adjust your airspeed to fit into the traffic flow.

Landing: After landing, please exit the runway at the first available taxiway. The only exception to this rule is Runway 35R. Normally controllers prefer you exit RY35R at Alpha 9 to avoid opposite direction traffic on Taxiway Alpha. Requests for long landings can usually be accommodated, but need **to be requested**. This may not be the closest taxiway to your parking area, but early exiting will open the runway for other traffic. A request for expeditious taxi is made to insure proper runway spacing between aircraft.

Runway Exiting: We have requirements to protect runway safety areas. When exiting the runway, move your aircraft entirely beyond the runway hold lines to insure your aircraft is clear of the runway safety area. Listen carefully to the exiting instructions of the tower controller as they are intending to protect these safety areas. If you land Runway 17R/35L, do not switch to ground frequency. Begin taxiing, as instructed by the tower controller, without delay. Your movement ensures the next aircraft turning off behind you can move clear of the runway safety area. If you land Runway 17L/35R or Runway 10/28 and the tower controller instructs you to "taxi to the ramp," do not stop until you have entered the inner ramp. If the tower controller instructs you to contact ground, do not delay in establishing contact with the ground controller. **After landing checklists should be accomplished only after entering the inner ramp when you are in uncontrolled areas.**

Hold short: When hold short instructions are issued, we are required to obtain a readback of these instructions. This requirement exists because of the potentially dire consequences that can occur with a misunderstanding of these instructions. A simple response of "N123" will hold short of Runway 17L," as an example, will suffice.

Instrument Approach: Centennial tower works a large number of VFR practice ILS/NDB approaches. When we are landing and departing Runway 17, this creates opposite direction traffic with the practice approach. Denver Approach provides radar vector service for practice approach. Advise on initial contact how you will terminate the approach (missed approach, full stop, touch and go, etc.) It is imperative that the issued missed approach turn be started at the point the tower stipulates, as traffic is being separated based upon your compliance. If you are unable to get on the frequency to let the tower know you are inside of CASSE of the approach, do not go any further than the power lines and exit the airspace VFR immediately until you can establish communications. Due to increased separation requirements, IFR practice approaches will not be approved except in very light traffic conditions.

General Information

Radio Problems: Listen closely to the frequency while in class D airspace. Hearing no radio communications at Centennial is rare and may be indicative of you having a stuck microphone. If you believe you have a radio problem and are not receiving an initial response from tower, accomplish additional radio checks on clearance delivery frequency (128.6) or ground control frequency (121.8). Situations have arisen where a pilot's receiver goes inoperative but the transmitter is functioning. Pilots have made 20 or more calls to tower, in an attempt to determine if the problem has been fixed, and blocked out the tower controller's ability to use the tower frequency. This becomes extremely dangerous if there are high volumes of aircraft or a go around is required and you are rendering the frequency unusable with your checks.

If you are experiencing a radio problem, squawk 7600. Approaching the field from a point 5 miles east or 5 miles west is best. Approaching the field, no radio from the north or south can be dangerous due to high volume of jet traffic arriving and departing through these areas. When you enter the class D airspace, stay above the pattern altitude (7300) to avoid conflict, check out the windsock and how aircraft are landing. Just because you departed on a particular runway, does not mean we will still be using that runway for your arrival. Orbit the field until you receive a green light from the tower then enter the downwind. Make sure you are close enough to the tower to see the light gun as you come into the airspace. You have authorization to land after you receive a green light. Rock your wings to acknowledge the signal. Keep an eye on the tower as you join the final to determine whether you still have a green light or whether it has changed to a red go around.

Radio Quality: We try to be as descriptive as possible when commenting on radio quality to help in identifying the problem. Be aware that aircraft on the ground can be adversely affected by hangers being in line of site between the aircraft and the tower antennas. Please write up and bring to the attention of the flight school/owner that a radio problem exists. Poor radios greatly add to frequency congestion. Aircraft that continue to attempt to operate without addressing the radio problem may be denied clearance to operate in Centennial airspace.

Flight Plan: Don't forget to close your flight plan.

Pilot/Controller Education

We may request that you call the tower on the telephone after parking. We probably want to follow up on some operational element of your flight that will be helpful for future trips. We frequently use the telephone to pass on such information for our mutual benefit. Conversely, if you have the need to discuss any operational situation with us, feel free to call and talk to the supervisor on duty. It is the cooperation between controllers and pilots that makes the air traffic system work smoothly. Centennial is fortunate to have a high degree of user support. Your input can only serve to improve our services.