

PeachState Aerodrome, Home of Candler Field Museum

Coping with High Volume Traffic Patterns

We would like to welcome you to our special events at Candler Field Museum, and look forward to seeing you fly in for the day. As you know, we have several events per year that generate higher than normal traffic volume. It is our wish that you attend and enjoy these events and operate safely every time.

PeachState is one of 12,000+ airports in the U.S. with no operating control tower and as a pilot, you are probably very familiar with non-towered airport procedures, both Part 1 AIM and common sense. **See and avoid** is still the standard by which we operate in the traffic pattern at these airports, but when traffic volume increases, we want to provide whatever assistance we can in helping you cope with the operation. This letter will present several suggestions to help you adjust not only to the increased traffic volume, but the unique environment of PeachState. Along with these suggestions, please find the attached airport diagrams which offer graphic depictions of our operation. Our objective here is to offer suggestions that will result in an organized flow of traffic, where a mix of fast or slow, large or small aircraft as well as experienced or inexperienced pilots may operate safely and efficiently.

Past incidents have highlighted several areas of concern. These include pattern entry, maintaining visual contact with other aircraft in the pattern, proper position reporting, and safe ground operations on the runway as well as in the parking areas.

First: Please refer to the annotated sectional chart. There are several suggested reporting points indicated along with their Lat/Long and bearing/distance to the field. Reporting over one of these (CTAF 122.72) will give the Field Radio (if used) and other pilots near you, a much better picture of where you are. Reporting your altitude would also be of great help in putting another pilot's eyes on you. From this point until landing, it is recommended that you have **all lights illuminated**, especially strobes and landing lights. Sorry to have to say this but, the map is not to be used for navigation. There.

Second: As you approach the pattern, keep a listening watch on the CTAF and be aware of other aircraft near you. And when you talk, use brevity. There may be many pilots trying "get a word in" on the frequency. A short and fully descriptive transmission will be greatly appreciated. Also, Tara Field and Pickens County use the same frequency, so be courteous in your use of the radio.

Third: Enter the pattern using standard non-towered airport entry procedures when traffic is light. Be predictable! Other pilots will be looking for you. **When traffic volume increases**, Field Radio may ask aircraft approaching from the east side of the field to enter an "Upwind Leg," (rather than flying over the top of the field), proceed to a point abeam the departure end of the active runway, then turn toward downwind keeping a look out for aircraft entering the downwind from a 45 as well as aircraft already on downwind. Then turn your downwind leg. This procedure should alleviate the situation where aircraft end up nose to nose entering the pattern. Incidentally, you should be looking for traffic where they are *not* supposed to be, as well. Downwind leg should be 1/2 to 3/4 mile from the runway. If you are more than a mile or two from the runway, don't report on downwind (see graphic). It is suggested that you fly upwind at 2500' and enter the downwind at 1800' MSL. If wind isn't a significant factor, we prefer to use Rwy 13 for landing. It runs uphill and will slow you much faster than a 5 kt wind upon landing. It also yields a much less complicated taxi-in. Helicopters will avoid the flow of fixed-wing traffic and proceed direct to the landing point as indicated by Field Radio and/or Flagmen.

Fourth: Once on the ground, clear the runway as soon as speed and safety permits. Always be aware of who may be behind you. Join the taxi route as shown on the graphic and watch for Flagmen in orange vests, who will direct you toward a parking slot. Since this is a special event, antique and classic aircraft may be parked in front of the restaurant. During ground operations please be aware of who is around you. Many people from the general public (including children) may be in attendance who may not be familiar with airplanes, so it is especially important to watch out for them. There will be ground personnel to help, but as usual, pilots-in-command are responsible for the operation of their aircraft. We are trying hard to make sure the young people acting as ground safety personnel know proper signals, etc., but they are learning, so please take that into account.

Fifth: When you are ready to depart, ask an orange-vested helper to stand "prop guard" if you are in a congested area. We hope to have enough folks to have wing-walkers for taxi out from crowded areas, so please taxi slowly and allow them to help you. Call on CTAF and state your intentions when near the runway. We prefer to depart on Rwy 31, since this requires a much shorter taxi, and it is downhill. Watch the temperature and check density altitude, if applicable, especially if your aircraft is fully loaded and/or lower performance. Also, we hope to have a flagman present to alert departing aircraft to the presence of aircraft or vehicles beyond visual range on the runway. If you are in position on the runway and see a red flag at midfield, hold your position. We want to emphasize the fact that this does not constitute air traffic control. If present, the flag will only be an alert to departing aircraft to exercise extreme caution as there may be an aircraft or vehicle on the runway over the hill. It is recommended that you not depart if you see this warning flag. We have marked a takeoff position on runway 31 that will provide you with approximately 2000' of runway remaining, and sufficient visibility over the hill to see this area for yourself. If you are not performance-limited, it is recommended that you taxi to this spot prior to applying takeoff power. The full runway is 2400' with trees on both ends. Depart the pattern straight out or via a 45° turn in the direction of flight. Have a safe flight home.

We appreciate everyone who attends our events, and hope that you will fully enjoy all the museum has to offer. This will be assured only if our flight and ground operation is safe and accident-free. Thank you for helping us achieve this goal.