

Glossary

A

14 CFR. See Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

100-hour inspection. An inspection identical in scope to an annual inspection. Conducted every 100 hours of flight on aircraft of under 12,500 pounds that are used to carry passengers for hire.

Absolute accuracy. The ability to determine present position in space independently, and is most often used by pilots.

Absolute altitude. The actual distance between an aircraft and the terrain over which it is flying.

Absolute pressure. Pressure measured from the reference of zero pressure, or a vacuum.

A.C. Alternating current.

Acceleration. Force involved in overcoming inertia, and which may be defined as a change in velocity per unit of time.

Acceleration error. A magnetic compass error apparent when the aircraft accelerates while flying on an easterly or westerly heading, causing the compass card to rotate toward North.

Accelerate-go distance. The distance required to accelerate to V_1 with all engines at takeoff power, experience an engine failure at V_1 , and continue the takeoff on the remaining engine(s). The runway required includes the distance required to climb to 35 feet by which time V_2 speed must be attained.

Accelerate-stop distance. The distance required to accelerate to V_1 with all engines at takeoff power, experience an engine failure at V_1 , and abort the takeoff and bring the airplane to a stop using braking action only (use of thrust reversing is not considered).

Accelerometer. A part of an inertial navigation system (INS) that accurately measures the force of acceleration in one direction.

ADC. See air data computer.

ADF. See automatic direction finder.

ADI. See attitude director indicator.

Adiabatic cooling. A process of cooling the air through expansion. For example, as air moves up slope it expands with the reduction of atmospheric pressure and cools as it expands.

Adiabatic heating. A process of heating dry air through compression. For example, as air moves down a slope it is compressed, which results in an increase in temperature.

Adjustable-pitch propeller. A propeller with blades whose pitch can be adjusted on the ground with the engine not running, but which cannot be adjusted in flight. Also referred to as a ground adjustable propeller. Sometimes also used to refer to constant-speed propellers that are adjustable in flight.

Adjustable stabilizer. A stabilizer that can be adjusted in flight to trim the airplane, thereby allowing the airplane to fly hands-off at any given airspeed.

ADM. See aeronautical decision-making.

ADS-B. See automatic dependent surveillance-broadcast.

Advection fog. Fog resulting from the movement of warm, humid air over a cold surface.

Adverse yaw. A condition of flight in which the nose of an airplane tends to yaw toward the outside of the turn. This is caused by the higher induced drag on the outside wing, which is also producing more lift. Induced drag is a by-product of the lift associated with the outside wing.

Aerodynamics. The science of the action of air on an object, and with the motion of air on other gases. Aerodynamics deals with the production of lift by the aircraft, the relative wind, and the atmosphere.

Aeronautical chart. A map used in air navigation containing all or part of the following: topographic features, hazards and obstructions, navigation aids, navigation routes, designated airspace, and airports.

Aeronautical decision-making (ADM). A systematic approach to the mental process used by pilots to consistently determine the best course of action in response to a given set of circumstances.

Agonic line. An irregular imaginary line across the surface of the Earth along which the magnetic and geographic poles are in alignment, and along which there is no magnetic variation.

Ailerons. Primary flight control surfaces mounted on the trailing edge of an airplane wing, near the tip. Ailerons control roll about the longitudinal axis.

Aircraft. A device that is used, or intended to be used, for flight.

Aircraft altitude. The actual height above sea level at which the aircraft is flying.

Aircraft approach category. A performance grouping of aircraft based on a speed of 1.3 times the stall speed in the landing configuration at maximum gross landing weight.

Air data computer (ADC). An aircraft computer that receives and processes pitot pressure, static pressure, and temperature to calculate very precise altitude, indicated airspeed, true airspeed, and air temperature.

Airfoil. Any surface, such as a wing, propeller, rudder, or even a trim tab, which provides aerodynamic force when it interacts with a moving stream of air.

Air mass. An extensive body of air having fairly uniform properties of temperature and moisture.

AIRMET. Inflight weather advisory issued as an amendment to the area forecast, concerning weather phenomena of operational interest to all aircraft and that is potentially hazardous to aircraft with limited capability due to lack of equipment, instrumentation, or pilot qualifications.

Airplane. An engine-driven, fixed-wing aircraft heavier than air that is supported in flight by the dynamic reaction of air against its wings.

Airplane Flight Manual (AFM). A document developed by the airplane manufacturer and approved by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). It is specific to a particular make and model airplane by serial number and it contains operating procedures and limitations.

Airplane Owner/Information Manual. A document developed by the airplane manufacturer containing general information about the make and model of an airplane. The airplane owner's manual is not FAA approved and is not specific to a particular serial numbered airplane. This manual is not kept current, and therefore cannot be substituted for the AFM/POH.

Airport diagram. The section of an instrument approach procedure chart that shows a detailed diagram of the airport. This diagram includes surface features and airport configuration information.

Airport/Facility Directory (A/FD). See Chart Supplement U.S.

Airport surface detection equipment (ASDE). Radar equipment specifically designed to detect all principal features and traffic on the surface of an airport, presenting the entire image on the control tower console; used to augment visual observation by tower personnel of aircraft and/or vehicular movements on runways and taxiways.

Airport surveillance radar (ASR). Approach control radar used to detect and display an aircraft's position in the terminal area.

Airport surveillance radar approach. An instrument approach in which ATC issues instructions for pilot compliance based on aircraft position in relation to the final approach course and the distance from the end of the runway as displayed on the controller's radar scope.

Air route surveillance radar (ARSR). Air route traffic control center (ARTCC) radar used primarily to detect and display an aircraft's position while en route between terminal areas.

Air route traffic control center (ARTCC). Provides ATC service to aircraft operating on IFR flight plans within controlled airspace and principally during the en route phase of flight.

Airspeed. Rate of the aircraft's progress through the air.

Airspeed indicator. A differential pressure gauge that measures the dynamic pressure of the air through which the aircraft is flying. Displays the craft's airspeed, typically in knots, to the pilot.

Air traffic control radar beacon system (ATCRBS). Sometimes called secondary surveillance radar (SSR), which utilizes a transponder in the aircraft. The ground equipment is an interrogating unit, in which the beacon antenna is mounted so it rotates with the surveillance antenna. The interrogating unit transmits a coded pulse sequence that actuates the aircraft transponder. The transponder answers the coded sequence by transmitting a preselected coded sequence back to the ground equipment, providing a strong return signal and positive aircraft identification, as well as other special data.

Airway. An airway is based on a centerline that extends from one navigation aid or intersection to another navigation aid (or through several navigation aids or intersections); used to establish a known route for en route procedures between terminal areas.

Airworthiness Certificate. A certificate issued by the FAA to all aircraft that have been proven to meet the minimum standards set down by the Code of Federal Regulations.

Airworthiness Directive. A regulatory notice sent out by the FAA to the registered owner of an aircraft informing the owner of a condition that prevents the aircraft from continuing to meet its conditions for airworthiness. Airworthiness Directives (AD notes) are to be complied with within the required time limit, and the fact of compliance, the date of compliance, and the method of compliance are recorded in the aircraft's maintenance records.

Alert area. An area in which there is a high volume of pilot training or an unusual type of aeronautical activity.

Almanac data. Information the global positioning system (GPS) receiver can obtain from one satellite which describes the approximate orbital positioning of all satellites in the constellation. This information is necessary for the GPS receiver to know what satellites to look for in the sky at a given time.

ALS. See approach lighting system.

Alternate airport. An airport designated in an IFR flight plan, providing a suitable destination if a landing at the intended airport becomes inadvisable.

Alternate static source valve. A valve in the instrument static air system that supplies reference air pressure to the altimeter, airspeed indicator, and vertical speed indicator if the normal static pickup should become clogged or iced over.

Altimeter. A flight instrument that indicates altitude by sensing pressure changes.

Altimeter setting. Station pressure (the barometric pressure at the location the reading is taken) which has been corrected for the height of the station above sea level.

Altitude engine. A reciprocating aircraft engine having a rated takeoff power that is producible from sea level to an established higher altitude.

Ambient pressure. The pressure in the area immediately surrounding the aircraft.

Ambient temperature. The temperature in the area immediately surrounding the aircraft.

AME. See aviation medical examiner.

Amendment status. The circulation date and revision number of an instrument approach procedure, printed above the procedure identification.

Ammeter. An instrument installed in series with an electrical load used to measure the amount of current flowing through the load.

Aneroid. The sensitive component in an altimeter or barometer that measures the absolute pressure of the air. It is a sealed, flat capsule made of thin disks of corrugated metal soldered together and evacuated by pumping all of the air out of it.

Aneroid barometer. An instrument that measures the absolute pressure of the atmosphere by balancing the weight of the air above it against the spring action of the aneroid.

Angle of attack. The angle of attack is the angle at which relative wind meets an airfoil. It is the angle that is formed by the chord of the airfoil and the direction of the relative wind or between the chord line and the flight path. The angle of attack changes during a flight as the pilot changes the direction of the aircraft and is related to the amount of lift being produced.

Angle of incidence. The acute angle formed between the chord line of an airfoil and the longitudinal axis of the aircraft on which it is mounted.

Anhedral. A downward slant from root to tip of an aircraft's wing or horizontal tail surface.

Annual inspection. A complete inspection of an aircraft and engine, required by the Code of Federal Regulations, to be accomplished every 12 calendar months on all certificated aircraft. Only an A&P technician holding an Inspection Authorization can conduct an annual inspection.

Anti-ice. Preventing the accumulation of ice on an aircraft structure via a system designed for that purpose.

Antiservo tab. An adjustable tab attached to the trailing edge of a stabilator that moves in the same direction as the primary control. It is used to make the stabilator less sensitive.

Approach lighting system (ALS). Provides lights that will penetrate the atmosphere far enough from touchdown to give directional, distance, and glidepath information for safe transition from instrument to visual flight.

Area chart. Part of the low-altitude en route chart series, this chart furnishes terminal data at a larger scale for congested areas.

Area forecast (FA). A report that gives a picture of clouds, general weather conditions, and visual meteorological conditions (VMC) expected over a large area encompassing several states.

Area navigation (RNAV). Allows a pilot to fly a selected course to a predetermined point without the need to overfly ground-based navigation facilities, by using waypoints.

Arm. See moment arm.

ARSR. See air route surveillance radar.

ARTCC. See air route traffic control center.

ASDE. See airport surface detection equipment.

ASOS. See Automated Surface Observing System.

Aspect ratio. Span of a wing divided by its average chord.

ASR. See airport surveillance radar.

Asymmetric thrust. Also known as P-factor. A tendency for an aircraft to yaw to the left due to the descending propeller blade on the right producing more thrust than the ascending blade on the left. This occurs when the aircraft's longitudinal axis is in a climbing attitude in relation to the relative wind. The P-factor would be to the right if the aircraft had a counterclockwise rotating propeller.

ATC. Air Traffic Control.

ATCRBS. See air traffic control radar beacon system.

ATIS. See automatic terminal information service.

Atmospheric propagation delay. A bending of the electromagnetic (EM) wave from the satellite that creates an error in the GPS system.

Attitude. A personal motivational predisposition to respond to persons, situations, or events in a given manner that can, nevertheless, be changed or modified through training as sort of a mental shortcut to decision-making.

Attitude and heading reference system (AHRS). A system composed of three-axis sensors that provide heading, attitude, and yaw information for aircraft. AHRS are designed to replace traditional mechanical gyroscopic flight instruments and provide superior reliability and accuracy.

Attitude director indicator (ADI). An aircraft attitude indicator that incorporates flight command bars to provide pitch and roll commands.

Attitude indicator. The foundation for all instrument flight, this instrument reflects the airplane's attitude in relation to the horizon.

Attitude instrument flying. Controlling the aircraft by reference to the instruments rather than by outside visual cues.

Attitude management. The ability to recognize hazardous attitudes in oneself and the willingness to modify them as necessary through the application of an appropriate antidote thought.

Autokinesis. Nighttime visual illusion that a stationary light is moving, which becomes apparent after several seconds of staring at the light.

Automated Surface Observing System (ASOS). Weather reporting system which provides surface observations every minute via digitized voice broadcasts and printed reports.

Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS). Automated weather reporting system consisting of various sensors, a processor, a computer-generated voice subsystem, and a transmitter to broadcast weather data.

Automatic dependent surveillance—broadcast (ADS-B). A function on an aircraft or vehicle that periodically broadcasts its state vector (i.e., horizontal and vertical position, horizontal and vertical velocity) and other information.

Automatic direction finder (ADF). Electronic navigation equipment that operates in the low- and medium-frequency bands. Used in conjunction with the ground-based nondirectional beacon (NDB), the instrument displays the number of degrees clockwise from the nose of the aircraft to the station being received.

Automatic terminal information service (ATIS). The continuous broadcast of recorded non-control information in selected terminal areas. Its purpose is to improve controller effectiveness and relieve frequency congestion by automating repetitive transmission of essential but routine information.

Autopilot. An automatic flight control system which keeps an aircraft in level flight or on a set course. Automatic pilots can be directed by the pilot, or they may be coupled to a radio navigation signal.

Aviation medical examiner (AME). A physician with training in aviation medicine designated by the Civil Aerospace Medical Institute (CAMI).

Aviation Routine Weather Report (METAR). Observation of current surface weather reported in a standard international format.

AWOS. See Automated Weather Observing System.

Axes of an aircraft. Three imaginary lines that pass through an aircraft's center of gravity. The axes can be considered as imaginary axes around which the aircraft rotates. The three axes pass through the center of gravity at 90° angles to each other. The axis from nose to tail is the longitudinal axis (pitch), the axis that passes from wingtip to wingtip is the lateral axis (roll), and the axis that passes vertically through the center of gravity is the vertical axis (yaw).

Axial flow compressor. A type of compressor used in a turbine engine in which the airflow through the compressor is essentially linear. An axial-flow compressor is made up of several stages of alternate rotors and stators. The compressor ratio is determined by the decrease in area of the succeeding stages.

Azimuth card. A card that may be set, gyroscopically controlled, or driven by a remote compass.

B

Back course (BC). The reciprocal of the localizer course for an ILS. When flying a back-course approach, an aircraft approaches the instrument runway from the end at which the localizer antennas are installed.

Balance tab. An auxiliary control mounted on a primary control surface, which automatically moves in the direction opposite the primary control to provide an aerodynamic assist in the movement of the control.

Baro-aiding. A method of augmenting the GPS integrity solution by using a nonsatellite input source. To ensure that baro-aiding is available, the current altimeter setting must be entered as described in the operating manual.

Barometric scale. A scale on the dial of an altimeter to which the pilot sets the barometric pressure level from which the altitude shown by the pointers is measured.

Basic empty weight (GAMA). Basic empty weight includes the standard empty weight plus optional and special equipment that has been installed.

BC. See back course.

Bernoulli's Principle. A principle that explains how the pressure of a moving fluid varies with its speed of motion. An increase in the speed of movement causes a decrease in the fluid's pressure.

Biplanes. Airplanes with two sets of wings.

Block altitude. A block of altitudes assigned by ATC to allow altitude deviations; for example, "Maintain block altitude 9 to 11 thousand."

Bypass ratio. The ratio of the mass airflow in pounds per second through the fan section of a turbofan engine to the mass airflow that passes through the gas generator portion of the engine.

C

Cabin altitude. Cabin pressure in terms of equivalent altitude above sea level.

Cage. The black markings on the ball instrument indicating its neutral position.

Calibrated. The instrument indication compared with a standard value to determine the accuracy of the instrument.

Calibrated orifice. A hole of specific diameter used to delay the pressure change in the case of a vertical speed indicator.

Calibrated airspeed. The speed at which the aircraft is moving through the air, found by correcting IAS for instrument and position errors.

Camber. The camber of an airfoil is the characteristic curve of its upper and lower surfaces. The upper camber is more pronounced, while the lower camber is comparatively flat. This causes the velocity of the airflow immediately above the wing to be much higher than that below the wing.

Canard. A horizontal surface mounted ahead of the main wing to provide longitudinal stability and control. It may be a fixed, movable, or variable geometry surface, with or without control surfaces.

Canard configuration. A configuration in which the span of the forward wings is substantially less than that of the main wing.

Cantilever. A wing designed to carry loads without external struts.

CAS. Calibrated airspeed.

CDI. Course deviation indicator.

Ceiling. The height above the earth's surface of the lowest layer of clouds, which is reported as broken or overcast, or the vertical visibility into an obscuration.

Center of gravity (CG). The point at which an airplane would balance if it were possible to suspend it at that point. It is the mass center of the airplane, or the theoretical point at which the entire weight of the airplane is assumed to be concentrated. It may be expressed in inches from the reference datum, or in percentage of mean aerodynamic chord (MAC). The location depends on the distribution of weight in the airplane.

Center of gravity limits. The specified forward and aft points within which the CG must be located during flight. These limits are indicated on pertinent airplane specifications.

Center of gravity range. The distance between the forward and aft CG limits indicated on pertinent airplane specifications.

Center of pressure. A point along the wing chord line where lift is considered to be concentrated. For this reason, the center of pressure is commonly referred to as the center of lift.

Centrifugal flow compressor. An impeller-shaped device that receives air at its center and slings the air outward at high velocity into a diffuser for increased pressure. Also referred to as a radial outflow compressor.

Centrifugal force. An outward force that opposes centripetal force, resulting from the effect of inertia during a turn.

Centripetal force. A center-seeking force directed inward toward the center of rotation created by the horizontal component of lift in turning flight.

CG. See center of gravity.

Changeover point (COP). A point along the route or airway segment between two adjacent navigation facilities or waypoints where changeover in navigation guidance should occur.

Chart Supplement U.S. (formerly Airport/Facility Directory). An FAA publication containing information on all airports, communications, and NAVAIDs.

Checklist. A tool that is used as a human factors aid in aviation safety. It is a systematic and sequential list of all operations that must be performed to properly accomplish a task.

Chord line. An imaginary straight line drawn through an airfoil from the leading edge to the trailing edge.

Circling approach. A maneuver initiated by the pilot to align the aircraft with a runway for landing when a straight-in landing from an instrument approach is not possible or is not desirable.

Class A airspace. Airspace from 18,000 feet MSL up to and including FL 600, including the airspace overlying the waters within 12 NM of the coast of the 48 contiguous states and Alaska; and designated international airspace beyond 12 NM of the coast of the 48 contiguous states and Alaska within areas of domestic radio navigational signal or ATC radar coverage, and within which domestic procedures are applied.

Class B airspace. Airspace from the surface to 10,000 feet MSL surrounding the nation's busiest airports in terms of IFR operations or passenger numbers. The configuration of each Class B airspace is individually tailored and consists of a surface area and two or more layers, and is designed to contain all published instrument procedures once an aircraft enters the airspace. For all aircraft, an ATC clearance is required to operate in the area, and aircraft so cleared receive separation services within the airspace.

Class C airspace. Airspace from the surface to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation (charted in MSL) surrounding those airports having an operational control tower, serviced by radar approach control, and having a certain number of IFR operations or passenger numbers. Although the configuration of each Class C airspace area is individually tailored, the airspace usually consists of a 5 NM radius core surface area that extends from the surface up to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation, and a 10 NM radius shelf area that extends from 1,200 feet to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation.

Class D airspace. Airspace from the surface to 2,500 feet above the airport elevation (charted in MSL) surrounding those airports that have an operational control tower. The configuration of each Class D airspace area is individually tailored, and when instrument procedures are published, the airspace is normally designed to contain the procedures.

Class E airspace. Airspace that is not Class A, Class B, Class C, or Class D, and is controlled airspace.

Class G airspace. Airspace that is uncontrolled, except when associated with a temporary control tower, and has not been designated as Class A, Class B, Class C, Class D, or Class E airspace.

Clean configuration. A configuration in which all flight control surfaces have been placed to create minimum drag. In most aircraft this means flaps and gear retracted.

Clearance. ATC permission for an aircraft to proceed under specified traffic conditions within controlled airspace, for the purpose of providing separation between known aircraft.

Clearance delivery. Control tower position responsible for transmitting departure clearances to IFR flights.

Clearance limit. The fix, point, or location to which an aircraft is cleared when issued an air traffic clearance.

Clearance on request. An IFR clearance not yet received after filing a flight plan.

Clearance void time. Used by ATC, the time at which the departure clearance is automatically canceled if takeoff has not been made. The pilot must obtain a new clearance or cancel the IFR flight plan if not off by the specified time.

Clear ice. Glossy, clear, or translucent ice formed by the relatively slow freezing of large, supercooled water droplets.

Coefficient of lift (C_L). The ratio between lift pressure and dynamic pressure.

Cold front. The boundary between two air masses where cold air is replacing warm air.

Compass course. A true course corrected for variation and deviation errors.

Compass locator. A low-power, low- or medium-frequency (L/MF) radio beacon installed at the site of the outer or middle marker of an ILS.

Compass rose. A small circle graduated in 360° increments, to show direction expressed in degrees.

Complex aircraft. An aircraft with retractable landing gear, flaps, and a controllable-pitch propeller.

Compressor pressure ratio. The ratio of compressor discharge pressure to compressor inlet pressure.

Compressor stall. In gas turbine engines, a condition in an axial-flow compressor in which one or more stages of rotor blades fail to pass air smoothly to the succeeding stages. A stall condition is caused by a pressure ratio that is incompatible with the engine rpm. Compressor stall will be indicated by a rise in exhaust temperature or rpm fluctuation, and if allowed to continue, may result in flameout and physical damage to the engine.

Computer navigation fix. A point used to define a navigation track for an airborne computer system such as GPS or FMS.

Concentric rings. Dashed-line circles depicted in the plan view of IAP charts, outside of the reference circle, that show en route and feeder facilities.

Condensation. A change of state of water from a gas (water vapor) to a liquid.

Condensation nuclei. Small particles of solid matter in the air on which water vapor condenses.

Cone of confusion. A cone-shaped volume of airspace directly above a VOR station where no signal is received, causing the CDI to fluctuate.

Configuration. This is a general term, which normally refers to the position of the landing gear and flaps.

Constant-speed propeller. A controllable-pitch propeller whose pitch is automatically varied in flight by a governor to maintain a constant rpm in spite of varying air loads.

Continuous flow oxygen system. System that supplies a constant supply of pure oxygen to a rebreather bag that dilutes the pure oxygen with exhaled gases and thus supplies a healthy mix of oxygen and ambient air to the mask. Primarily used in passenger cabins of commercial airliners.

Control and performance. A method of attitude instrument flying in which one instrument is used for making attitude changes, and the other instruments are used to monitor the progress of the change.

Control display unit. A display interfaced with the master computer, providing the pilot with a single control point for all navigations systems, thereby reducing the number of required flight deck panels.

Controllability. A measure of the response of an aircraft relative to the pilot's flight control inputs.

Controllable-pitch propeller (CPP). A type of propeller with blades that can be rotated around their long axis to change their pitch. If the pitch can be set to negative values, the reversible propeller can also create reverse thrust for braking or reversing without the need of changing the direction of shaft revolutions.

Controlled airspace. An airspace of defined dimensions within which ATC service is provided to IFR and VFR flights in accordance with the airspace classification. It includes Class A, Class B, Class C, Class D, and Class E airspace.

Control pressures. The amount of physical exertion on the control column necessary to achieve the desired attitude.

Convective weather. Unstable, rising air found in cumiliform clouds.

Convective SIGMET. Weather advisory concerning convective weather significant to the safety of all aircraft, including thunderstorms, hail, and tornadoes.

Conventional landing gear. Landing gear employing a third rear-mounted wheel. These airplanes are also sometimes referred to as tailwheel airplanes.

Coordinated flight. Flight with a minimum disturbance of the forces maintaining equilibrium, established via effective control use.

COP. See changeover point.

Coriolis illusion. The illusion of rotation or movement in an entirely different axis, caused by an abrupt head movement, while in a prolonged constant-rate turn that has ceased to stimulate the brain's motion sensing system.

Coupled ailerons and rudder. Rudder and ailerons are connected with interconnected springs in order to counteract adverse yaw. Can be overridden if it becomes necessary to slip the aircraft.

Course. The intended direction of flight in the horizontal plane measured in degrees from north.

Cowl flaps. Shutter-like devices arranged around certain air-cooled engine cowlings, which may be opened or closed to regulate the flow of air around the engine.

Crew resource management (CRM). The application of team management concepts in the flight deck environment. It was initially known as cockpit resource management, but as CRM programs evolved to include cabin crews, maintenance personnel, and others, the phrase "crew resource management" was adopted. This includes single pilots, as in most general aviation aircraft. Pilots of small aircraft, as well as crews of larger aircraft, must make effective use of all available resources; human resources, hardware, and information. A current definition includes all groups routinely working with the flight crew who are involved in decisions required to operate a flight safely. These groups include, but are not limited to pilots, dispatchers, cabin crewmembers, maintenance personnel, and air traffic controllers. CRM is one way of addressing the challenge of optimizing the human/machine interface and accompanying interpersonal activities.

Critical altitude. The maximum altitude under standard atmospheric conditions at which a turbocharged engine can produce its rated horsepower.

Critical angle of attack. The angle of attack at which a wing stalls regardless of airspeed, flight attitude, or weight.

Critical areas. Areas where disturbances to the ILS localizer and glideslope courses may occur when surface vehicles or aircraft operate near the localizer or glideslope antennas.

CRM. See crew resource management.

Cross-check. The first fundamental skill of instrument flight, also known as “scan,” the continuous and logical observation of instruments for attitude and performance information.

Cruise clearance. An ATC clearance issued to allow a pilot to conduct flight at any altitude from the minimum IFR altitude up to and including the altitude specified in the clearance. Also authorizes a pilot to proceed to and make an approach at the destination airport.

Current induction. An electrical current being induced into, or generated in, any conductor that is crossed by lines of flux from any magnet.

D

DA. See decision altitude.

Datum (Reference Datum). An imaginary vertical plane or line from which all measurements of arm are taken. The datum is established by the manufacturer. Once the datum has been selected, all moment arms and the location of CG range are measured from this point.

D.C. Direct current.

Dark adaptation. Physical and chemical adjustments of the eye that make vision possible in relative darkness.

Dead reckoning. Navigation of an airplane solely by means of computations based on airspeed, course, heading, wind direction and speed, groundspeed, and elapsed time.

Deceleration error. A magnetic compass error that occurs when the aircraft decelerates while flying on an easterly or westerly heading, causing the compass card to rotate toward South.

Decision altitude (DA). A specified altitude in the precision approach, charted in feet MSL, at which a missed approach must be initiated if the required visual reference to continue the approach has not been established.

Decision height (DH). A specified altitude in the precision approach, charted in height above threshold elevation, at which a decision must be made either to continue the approach or to execute a missed approach.

Deice. The act of removing ice accumulation from an aircraft structure.

Delta. A Greek letter expressed by the symbol Δ to indicate a change of values. As an example, Δ CG indicates a change (or movement) of the CG.

Density altitude. Pressure altitude corrected for nonstandard temperature. Density altitude is used in computing the performance of an aircraft and its engines.

Departure procedure (DP). Preplanned IFR ATC departure, published for pilot use, in textual and graphic format.

Deposition. The direct transformation of a gas to a solid state, in which the liquid state is bypassed. Some sources use sublimation to describe this process instead of deposition.

Detonation. The sudden release of heat energy from fuel in an aircraft engine caused by the fuel-air mixture reaching its critical pressure and temperature. Detonation occurs as a violent explosion rather than a smooth burning process.

Deviation. A magnetic compass error caused by local magnetic fields within the aircraft. Deviation error is different on each heading.

Dew. Moisture that has condensed from water vapor. Usually found on cooler objects near the ground, such as grass, as the near-surface layer of air cools faster than the layers of air above it.

Dewpoint. The temperature at which air reaches a state where it can hold no more water.

DGPS. Differential global positioning system.

DH. See decision height.

Differential ailerons. Control surface rigged such that the aileron moving up moves a greater distance than the aileron moving down. The up aileron produces extra parasite drag to compensate for the additional induced drag caused by the down aileron. This balancing of the drag forces helps minimize adverse yaw.

Differential Global Positioning System (DGPS). A system that improves the accuracy of Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) by measuring changes in variables to provide satellite positioning corrections.

Differential pressure. A difference between two pressures. The measurement of airspeed is an example of the use of differential pressure.

Dihedral. The positive acute angle between the lateral axis of an airplane and a line through the center of a wing or horizontal stabilizer. Dihedral contributes to the lateral stability of an airplane.

Diluter-demand oxygen system. An oxygen system that delivers oxygen mixed or diluted with air in order to maintain a constant oxygen partial pressure as the altitude changes.

Direct indication. The true and instantaneous reflection of aircraft pitch-and-bank attitude by the miniature aircraft, relative to the horizon bar of the attitude indicator.

Direct User Access Terminal System (DUATS). A system that provides current FAA weather and flight plan filing services to certified civil pilots, via personal computer, modem, or telephone access to the system. Pilots can request specific types of weather briefings and other pertinent data for planned flights.

Directional stability. Stability about the vertical axis of an aircraft, whereby an aircraft tends to return, on its own, to flight aligned with the relative wind when disturbed from that equilibrium state. The vertical tail is the primary contributor to directional stability, causing an airplane in flight to align with the relative wind.

Distance circle. See reference circle.

Distance measuring equipment (DME). A pulse-type electronic navigation system that shows the pilot, by an instrument-panel indication, the number of nautical miles between the aircraft and a ground station or waypoint.

DME. See distance measuring equipment.

DME arc. A flight track that is a constant distance from the station or waypoint.

DOD. Department of Defense.

Doghouse. A turn-and-slip indicator dial mark in the shape of a doghouse.

Domestic Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum (DRVSM). Additional flight levels between FL 290 and FL 410 to provide operational, traffic, and airspace efficiency.

Double gimbal. A type of mount used for the gyro in an attitude instrument. The axes of the two gimbals are at right angles to the spin axis of the gyro, allowing free motion in two planes around the gyro.

DP. See departure procedure.

Drag. The net aerodynamic force parallel to the relative wind, usually the sum of two components: induced drag and parasite drag.

Drag curve. The curve created when plotting induced drag and parasite drag.

Drift angle. Angle between heading and track.

DRVSM. See Domestic Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum.

DUATS. See direct user access terminal system.

Duplex. Transmitting on one frequency and receiving on a separate frequency.

Dutch roll. A combination of rolling and yawing oscillations that normally occurs when the dihedral effects of an aircraft are more powerful than the directional stability. Usually dynamically stable but objectionable in an airplane because of the oscillatory nature.

Dynamic hydroplaning. A condition that exists when landing on a surface with standing water deeper than the tread depth of the tires. When the brakes are applied, there is a possibility that the brake will lock up and the tire will ride on the surface of the water, much like a water ski. When the tires are hydroplaning, directional control and braking action are virtually impossible. An effective anti-skid system can minimize the effects of hydroplaning.

Dynamic stability. The property of an aircraft that causes it, when disturbed from straight-and-level flight, to develop forces or moments that restore the original condition of straight and level.

E

Eddy currents. Current induced in a metal cup or disc when it is crossed by lines of flux from a moving magnet.

Eddy current damping. The decreased amplitude of oscillations by the interaction of magnetic fields. In the case of a vertical card magnetic compass, flux from the oscillating permanent magnet produces eddy currents in a damping disk or cup. The magnetic flux produced by the eddy currents opposes the flux from the permanent magnet and decreases the oscillations.

EFC. See expect-further-clearance.

EFD. See electronic flight display.

EGT. See exhaust gas temperature.

Electronic flight display (EFD). For the purpose of standardization, any flight instrument display that uses LCD or other image-producing system (cathode ray tube (CRT), etc.)

Elevator. The horizontal, movable primary control surface in the tail section, or empennage, of an airplane. The elevator is hinged to the trailing edge of the fixed horizontal stabilizer.

Elevator illusion. The sensation of being in a climb or descent, caused by the kind of abrupt vertical accelerations that result from up- or downdrafts.

Emergency. A distress or urgent condition.

Empennage. The section of the airplane that consists of the vertical stabilizer, the horizontal stabilizer, and the associated control surfaces.

Emphasis error. The result of giving too much attention to a particular instrument during the cross-check, instead of relying on a combination of instruments necessary for attitude and performance information.

Empty-field myopia. Induced nearsightedness that is associated with flying at night, in instrument meteorological conditions and/or reduced visibility. With nothing to focus on, the eyes automatically focus on a point just slightly ahead of the airplane.

EM wave. Electromagnetic wave.

Encoding altimeter. A special type of pressure altimeter used to send a signal to the air traffic controller on the ground, showing the pressure altitude the aircraft is flying.

Engine pressure ratio (EPR). The ratio of turbine discharge pressure divided by compressor inlet pressure, which is used as an indication of the amount of thrust being developed by a turbine engine.

En route facilities ring. Depicted in the plan view of IAP charts, a circle which designates NAVAIDs, fixes, and intersections that are part of the en route low altitude airway structure.

En route high-altitude charts. Aeronautical charts for en route instrument navigation at or above 18,000 feet MSL.

En route low-altitude charts. Aeronautical charts for en route IFR navigation below 18,000 feet MSL.

EPR. See engine pressure ratio.

Equilibrium. A condition that exists within a body when the sum of the moments of all of the forces acting on the body is equal to zero. In aerodynamics, equilibrium is when all opposing forces acting on an aircraft are balanced (steady, unaccelerated flight conditions).

Equivalent airspeed. Airspeed equivalent to CAS in standard atmosphere at sea level. As the airspeed and pressure altitude increase, the CAS becomes higher than it should be, and a correction for compression must be subtracted from the CAS.

Evaporation. The transformation of a liquid to a gaseous state, such as the change of water to water vapor.

Exhaust gas temperature (EGT). The temperature of the exhaust gases as they leave the cylinders of a reciprocating engine or the turbine section of a turbine engine.

Expect-further-clearance (EFC). The time a pilot can expect to receive clearance beyond a clearance limit.

Explosive decompression. A change in cabin pressure faster than the lungs can decompress. Lung damage is possible.

F

FA. See area forecast.

FAA. Federal Aviation Administration.

FAF. See final approach fix.

False horizon. Inaccurate visual information for aligning the aircraft, caused by various natural and geometric formations that disorient the pilot from the actual horizon.

FDI. See flight director indicator.

Federal airways. Class E airspace areas that extend upward from 1,200 feet to, but not including, 18,000 feet MSL, unless otherwise specified.

Feeder facilities. Used by ATC to direct aircraft to intervening fixes between the en route structure and the initial approach fix.

Final approach. Part of an instrument approach procedure in which alignment and descent for landing are accomplished.

Final approach fix (FAF). The fix from which the IFR final approach to an airport is executed, and which identifies the beginning of the final approach segment. An FAF is designated on government charts by a Maltese cross symbol for nonprecision approaches, and a lightning bolt symbol for precision approaches.

Fixating. Staring at a single instrument, thereby interrupting the cross-check process.

Fixed-pitch propellers. Propellers with fixed blade angles. Fixed-pitch propellers are designed as climb propellers, cruise propellers, or standard propellers.

Fixed slot. A fixed, nozzle shaped opening near the leading edge of a wing that ducts air onto the top surface of the wing. Its purpose is to increase lift at higher angles of attack.

FL. See flight level.

Flameout. A condition in the operation of a gas turbine engine in which the fire in the engine goes out due to either too much or too little fuel sprayed into the combustors.

Flaps. Hinged portion of the trailing edge between the ailerons and fuselage. In some aircraft ailerons and flaps are interconnected to produce full-span “flaperons.” In either case, flaps change the lift and drag on the wing.

Floor load limit. The maximum weight the floor can sustain per square inch/foot as provided by the manufacturer.

Flight configurations. Adjusting the aircraft control surfaces (including flaps and landing gear) in a manner that will achieve a specified attitude.

Flight director indicator (FDI). One of the major components of a flight director system, it provides steering commands that the pilot (or the autopilot, if coupled) follows.

Flight level (FL). A measure of altitude (in hundreds of feet) used by aircraft flying above 18,000 feet with the altimeter set at 29.92 "Hg.

Flight management system (FMS). Provides pilot and crew with highly accurate and automatic long-range navigation capability, blending available inputs from long- and short-range sensors.

Flight path. The line, course, or track along which an aircraft is flying or is intended to be flown.

Flight patterns. Basic maneuvers, flown by reference to the instruments rather than outside visual cues, for the purpose of practicing basic attitude flying. The patterns simulate maneuvers encountered on instrument flights such as holding patterns, procedure turns, and approaches.

Flight strips. Paper strips containing instrument flight information, used by ATC when processing flight plans.

FMS. See flight management system.

FOD. See foreign object damage.

Fog. Cloud consisting of numerous minute water droplets and based at the surface; droplets are small enough to be suspended in the earth's atmosphere indefinitely. (Unlike drizzle, it does not fall to the surface. Fog differs from a cloud only in that a cloud is not based at the surface, and is distinguished from haze by its wetness and gray color.)

Force (F). The energy applied to an object that attempts to cause the object to change its direction, speed, or motion. In aerodynamics, it is expressed as F, T (thrust), L (lift), W (weight), or D (drag), usually in pounds.

Foreign object damage (FOD). Damage to a gas turbine engine caused by some object being sucked into the engine while it is running. Debris from runways or taxiways can cause foreign object damage during ground operations, and the ingestion of ice and birds can cause FOD in flight.

Form drag. The drag created because of the shape of a component or the aircraft.

Frise-type aileron. Aileron having the nose portion projecting ahead of the hinge line. When the trailing edge of the aileron moves up, the nose projects below the wing's lower surface and produces some parasite drag, decreasing the amount of adverse yaw.

Front. The boundary between two different air masses.

Frost. Ice crystal deposits formed by sublimation when temperature and dewpoint are below freezing.

Fuel load. The expendable part of the load of the airplane. It includes only usable fuel, not fuel required to fill the lines or that which remains trapped in the tank sumps.

Fundamental skills. Pilot skills of instrument cross-check, instrument interpretation, and aircraft control.

Fuselage. The section of the airplane that consists of the cabin and/or cockpit, containing seats for the occupants and the controls for the airplane.

G

GAMA. General Aviation Manufacturers Association.

Gimbal ring. A type of support that allows an object, such as a gyroscope, to remain in an upright condition when its base is tilted.

Glideslope (GS). Part of the ILS that projects a radio beam upward at an angle of approximately 3° from the approach end of an instrument runway. The glideslope provides vertical guidance to aircraft on the final approach course for the aircraft to follow when making an ILS approach along the localizer path.

Glideslope intercept altitude. The minimum altitude of an intermediate approach segment prescribed for a precision approach that ensures obstacle clearance.

Global landing system (GLS). An instrument approach with lateral and vertical guidance with integrity limits (similar to barometric vertical navigation (BARO VNAV)).

Global navigation satellite system (GNSS). Satellite navigation system that provides autonomous geospatial positioning with global coverage. It allows small electronic receivers to determine their location (longitude, latitude, and altitude) to within a few meters using time signals transmitted along a line of sight by radio from satellites.

Global positioning system (GPS). Navigation system that uses satellite rather than ground-based transmitters for location information.

GLS. See global landing system.

GNSS. See global navigation satellite system.

Goniometer. As used in radio frequency (RF) antenna systems, a direction-sensing device consisting of two fixed loops of wire oriented 90° from each other, which separately sense received signal strength and send those signals to two rotors (also oriented 90°) in the sealed direction-indicating instrument. The rotors are attached to the direction-indicating needle of the instrument and rotated by a small motor until minimum magnetic field is sensed near the rotors.

GPS. See global positioning system.

GPS Approach Overlay Program. An authorization for pilots to use GPS avionics under IFR for flying designated existing nonprecision instrument approach procedures, with the exception of LOC, LDA, and SDF procedures.

GPWS. See ground proximity warning system.

Graveyard spiral. The illusion of the cessation of a turn while still in a prolonged, coordinated, constant rate turn, which can lead a disoriented pilot to a loss of control of the aircraft.

Great circle route. The shortest distance across the surface of a sphere (the Earth) between two points on the surface.

Ground adjustable trim tab. Non-movable metal trim tab on a control surface. Bent in one direction or another while on the ground to apply trim forces to the control surface.

Ground effect. The condition of slightly increased air pressure below an airplane wing or helicopter rotor system that increases the amount of lift produced. It exists within approximately one wing span or one rotor diameter from the ground. It results from a reduction in upwash, downwash, and wingtip vortices, and provides a corresponding decrease in induced drag.

Ground proximity warning system (GPWS). A system designed to determine an aircraft's clearance above the Earth and provides limited predictability about aircraft position relative to rising terrain.

Groundspeed. Speed over the ground, either closing speed to the station or waypoint, or speed over the ground in whatever direction the aircraft is going at the moment, depending upon the navigation system used.

GS. See glideslope.

GWPS. See ground proximity warning system.

Gyroscopic precession. An inherent quality of rotating bodies, which causes an applied force to be manifested 90° in the direction of rotation from the point where the force is applied.

H

HAA. See height above airport.

HAL. See height above landing.

HAT. See height above touchdown elevation.

Hazardous attitudes. Five aeronautical decision-making attitudes that may contribute to poor pilot judgment: anti-authority, impulsivity, invulnerability, machismo, and resignation.

Hazardous Inflight Weather Advisory Service (HIWAS). An en route FSS service providing continuously updated automated of hazardous weather within 150 nautical miles of selected VORs, available only in the conterminous 48 states.

Head-up display (HUD). A special type of flight viewing screen that allows the pilot to watch the flight instruments and other data while looking through the windshield of the aircraft for other traffic, the approach lights, or the runway.

Heading. The direction in which the nose of the aircraft is pointing during flight.

Heading indicator. An instrument which senses airplane movement and displays heading based on a 360° azimuth, with the final zero omitted. The heading indicator, also called a directional gyro (DG), is fundamentally a mechanical instrument designed to facilitate the use of the magnetic compass. The heading indicator is not affected by the forces that make the magnetic compass difficult to interpret.

Headwork. Required to accomplish a conscious, rational thought process when making decisions. Good decision-making involves risk identification and assessment, information processing, and problem solving.

Height above airport (HAA). The height of the MDA above the published airport elevation.

Height above landing (HAL). The height above a designated helicopter landing area used for helicopter instrument approach procedures.

Height above touchdown elevation (HAT). The DA/DH or MDA above the highest runway elevation in the touchdown zone (first 3,000 feet of the runway).

HF. High frequency.

Hg. Abbreviation for mercury, from the Latin hydrargyrum.

High performance aircraft. An aircraft with an engine of more than 200 horsepower.

Histotoxic hypoxia. The inability of cells to effectively use oxygen. Plenty of oxygen is being transported to the cells that need it, but they are unable to use it.

HIWAS. See Hazardous Inflight Weather Advisory Service.

Holding. A predetermined maneuver that keeps aircraft within a specified airspace while awaiting further clearance from ATC.

Holding pattern. A racetrack pattern, involving two turns and two legs, used to keep an aircraft within a prescribed airspace with respect to a geographic fix. A standard pattern uses right turns; nonstandard patterns use left turns.

Homing. Flying the aircraft on any heading required to keep the needle pointing to the 0° relative bearing position.

Horizontal situation indicator (HSI). A flight navigation instrument that combines the heading indicator with a CDI, in order to provide the pilot with better situational awareness of location with respect to the courseline.

Horsepower. The term, originated by inventor James Watt, means the amount of work a horse could do in one second. One horsepower equals 550 foot-pounds per second, or 33,000 foot-pounds per minute.

Hot start. In gas turbine engines, a start which occurs with normal engine rotation, but exhaust temperature exceeds prescribed limits. This is usually caused by an excessively rich mixture in the combustor. The fuel to the engine must be terminated immediately to prevent engine damage.

HSI. See horizontal situation indicator.

HUD. See head-up display.

Human factors. A multidisciplinary field encompassing the behavioral and social sciences, engineering, and physiology, to consider the variables that influence individual and crew performance for the purpose of optimizing human performance and reducing errors.

Hung start. In gas turbine engines, a condition of normal light off but with rpm remaining at some low value rather than increasing to the normal idle rpm. This is often the result of insufficient power to the engine from the starter. In the event of a hung start, the engine should be shut down.

Hydroplaning. A condition that exists when landing on a surface with standing water deeper than the tread depth of the tires. When the brakes are applied, there is a possibility that the brake will lock up and the tire will ride on the surface of the water, much like a water ski. When the tires are hydroplaning, directional control and braking action are virtually impossible. An effective anti-skid system can minimize the effects of hydroplaning.

Hypemic hypoxia. A type of hypoxia that is a result of oxygen deficiency in the blood, rather than a lack of inhaled oxygen. It can be caused by a variety of factors. Hypemic means “not enough blood.”

Hyperventilation. Occurs when an individual is experiencing emotional stress, fright, or pain, and the breathing rate and depth increase, although the carbon dioxide level in the blood is already at a reduced level. The result is an excessive loss of carbon dioxide from the body, which can lead to unconsciousness due to the respiratory system’s overriding mechanism to regain control of breathing.

Hypoxia. A state of oxygen deficiency in the body sufficient to impair functions of the brain and other organs.

Hypoxic hypoxia. This type of hypoxia is a result of insufficient oxygen available to the lungs. A decrease of oxygen molecules at sufficient pressure can lead to hypoxic hypoxia.

I

IAF. See initial approach fix.

IAP. See instrument approach procedures.

IAS. See indicated airspeed.

ICAO. See International Civil Aviation Organization.

Ident. Air Traffic Control request for a pilot to push the button on the transponder to identify return on the controller’s scope.

IFR. See instrument flight rules.

ILS. See instrument landing system.

ILS categories. Categories of instrument approach procedures allowed at airports equipped with the following types of instrument landing systems:

ILS Category I: Provides for approach to a height above touchdown of not less than 200 feet, and with runway visual range of not less than 1,800 feet.

ILS Category II: Provides for approach to a height above touchdown of not less than 100 feet and with runway visual range of not less than 1,200 feet.

ILS Category IIIA: Provides for approach without a decision height minimum and with runway visual range of not less than 700 feet.

ILS Category IIIB: Provides for approach without a decision height minimum and with runway visual range of not less than 150 feet.

ILS Category IIIC: Provides for approach without a decision height minimum and without runway visual range minimum.

IMC. See instrument meteorological conditions.

Inclinometer. An instrument consisting of a curved glass tube, housing a glass ball, and damped with a fluid similar to kerosene. It may be used to indicate inclination, as a level, or, as used in the turn indicators, to show the relationship between gravity and centrifugal force in a turn.

Indicated airspeed (IAS). Shown on the dial of the instrument airspeed indicator on an aircraft. Indicated airspeed (IAS) is the airspeed indicator reading uncorrected for instrument, position, and other errors. Indicated airspeed means the speed of an aircraft as shown on its pitot static airspeed indicator calibrated to reflect standard atmosphere adiabatic compressible flow at sea level uncorrected for airspeed system errors. Calibrated airspeed (CAS) is IAS corrected for instrument errors, position error (due to incorrect pressure at the static port) and installation errors.

Indicated altitude. The altitude read directly from the altimeter (uncorrected) when it is set to the current altimeter setting.

Indirect indication. A reflection of aircraft pitch-and-bank attitude by instruments other than the attitude indicator.

Induced drag. Drag caused by the same factors that produce lift; its amount varies inversely with airspeed. As airspeed decreases, the angle of attack must increase, in turn increasing induced drag.

Induction icing. A type of ice in the induction system that reduces the amount of air available for combustion. The most commonly found induction icing is carburetor icing.

Inertial navigation system (INS). A computer-based navigation system that tracks the movement of an aircraft via signals produced by onboard accelerometers. The initial location of the aircraft is entered into the computer, and all subsequent movement of the aircraft is sensed and used to keep the position updated. An INS does not require any inputs from outside signals.

Initial approach fix (IAF). The fix depicted on IAP charts where the instrument approach procedure (IAP) begins unless otherwise authorized by ATC.

Inoperative components. Higher minimums are prescribed when the specified visual aids are not functioning; this information is listed in the Inoperative Components Table found in the United States Terminal Procedures Publications.

INS. See inertial navigation system.

Instantaneous vertical speed indicator (IVSI). Assists in interpretation by instantaneously indicating the rate of climb or descent at a given moment with little or no lag as displayed in a vertical speed indicator (VSI).

Instrument approach procedures (IAP). A series of predetermined maneuvers for the orderly transfer of an aircraft under IFR from the beginning of the initial approach to a landing or to a point from which a landing may be made visually.

Instrument flight rules (IFR). Rules and regulations established by the Federal Aviation Administration to govern flight under conditions in which flight by outside visual reference is not safe. IFR flight depends upon flying by reference to instruments in the flight deck, and navigation is accomplished by reference to electronic signals.

Instrument landing system (ILS). An electronic system that provides both horizontal and vertical guidance to a specific runway, used to execute a precision instrument approach procedure.

Instrument meteorological conditions (IMC). Meteorological conditions expressed in terms of visibility, distance from clouds, and ceiling less than the minimums specified for visual meteorological conditions, requiring operations to be conducted under IFR.

Instrument takeoff. Using the instruments rather than outside visual cues to maintain runway heading and execute a safe takeoff.

Intercooler. A device used to reduce the temperatures of the compressed air before it enters the fuel metering device. The resulting cooler air has a higher density, which permits the engine to be operated with a higher power setting.

Interference drag. Drag generated by the collision of airstreams creating eddy currents, turbulence, or restrictions to smooth flow.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). The United Nations agency for developing the principles and techniques of international air navigation, and fostering planning and development of international civil air transport.

International standard atmosphere (IAS). A model of standard variation of pressure and temperature.

Interpolation. The estimation of an intermediate value of a quantity that falls between marked values in a series. Example: In a measurement of length, with a rule that is marked in eighths of an inch, the value falls between 3/8 inch and 1/2 inch. The estimated (interpolated) value might then be said to be 7/16 inch.

Inversion. An increase in temperature with altitude.

Inversion illusion. The feeling that the aircraft is tumbling backwards, caused by an abrupt change from climb to straight-and-level flight while in situations lacking visual reference.

Inverter. A solid-state electronic device that converts D.C. into A.C. current of the proper voltage and frequency to operate A.C. gyro instruments.

Isobars. Lines which connect points of equal barometric pressure.

Isogonic lines. Lines drawn across aeronautical charts to connect points having the same magnetic variation.

IVSI. See instantaneous vertical speed indicator.

J

Jet route. A route designated to serve flight operations from 18,000 feet MSL up to and including FL 450.

Jet stream. A high-velocity narrow stream of winds, usually found near the upper limit of the troposphere, which flows generally from west to east.

Judgment. The mental process of recognizing and analyzing all pertinent information in a particular situation, a rational evaluation of alternative actions in response to it, and a timely decision on which action to take.

K

KIAS. Knots indicated airspeed.

Knot. The knot is a unit of speed equal to one nautical mile (1.852 km) per hour, approximately 1.151 mph.

Kollsman window. A barometric scale window of a sensitive altimeter used to adjust the altitude for the altimeter setting.

L

LAAS. See local area augmentation system.

Lag. The delay that occurs before an instrument needle attains a stable indication.

Land breeze. A coastal breeze flowing from land to sea caused by temperature differences when the sea surface is warmer than the adjacent land. The land breeze usually occurs at night and alternates with the sea breeze that blows in the opposite direction by day.

Land as soon as possible. Land without delay at the nearest suitable area, such as an open field, at which a safe approach and landing is assured.

Land as soon as practical. The landing site and duration of flight are at the discretion of the pilot. Extended flight beyond the nearest approved landing area is not recommended.

Land immediately. The urgency of the landing is paramount. The primary consideration is to ensure the survival of the occupants. Landing in trees, water, or other unsafe areas should be considered only as a last resort.

Lateral axis. An imaginary line passing through the center of gravity of an airplane and extending across the airplane from wingtip to wingtip.

Lateral stability (rolling). The stability about the longitudinal axis of an aircraft. Rolling stability or the ability of an airplane to return to level flight due to a disturbance that causes one of the wings to drop.

Latitude. Measurement north or south of the equator in degrees, minutes, and seconds. Lines of latitude are also referred to as parallels.

LDA. See localizer-type directional aid.

Lead radial. The radial at which the turn from the DME arc to the inbound course is started.

Leading edge. The part of an airfoil that meets the airflow first.

Leading edge devices. High lift devices which are found on the leading edge of the airfoil. The most common types are fixed slots, movable slats, and leading edge flaps.

Leading-edge flap. A portion of the leading edge of an airplane wing that folds downward to increase the camber, lift, and drag of the wing. The leading-edge flaps are extended for takeoffs and landings to increase the amount of aerodynamic lift that is produced at any given airspeed.

Leans, the. A physical sensation caused by an abrupt correction of a banked attitude entered too slowly to stimulate the motion sensing system in the inner ear. The abrupt correction can create the illusion of banking in the opposite direction.

Licensed empty weight. The empty weight that consists of the airframe, engine(s), unusable fuel, and undrainable oil plus standard and optional equipment as specified in the equipment list. Some manufacturers used this term prior to GAMA standardization.

Lift. A component of the total aerodynamic force on an airfoil and acts perpendicular to the relative wind.

Limit load factor. Amount of stress, or load factor, that an aircraft can withstand before structural damage or failure occurs.

Lines of flux. Invisible lines of magnetic force passing between the poles of a magnet.

L/MF. See low or medium frequency.

LMM. See locator middle marker.

Load factor. The ratio of a specified load to the total weight of the aircraft. The specified load is expressed in terms of any of the following: aerodynamic forces, inertial forces, or ground or water reactions.

Loadmeter. A type of ammeter installed between the generator output and the main bus in an aircraft electrical system.

LOC. See localizer.

Local area augmentation system (LAAS). A differential global positioning system (DGPS) that improves the accuracy of the system by determining position error from the GPS satellites, then transmitting the error, or corrective factors, to the airborne GPS receiver.

Localizer (LOC). The portion of an ILS that gives left/right guidance information down the centerline of the instrument runway for final approach.

Localizer-type directional aid (LDA). A NAVAID used for nonprecision instrument approaches with utility and accuracy comparable to a localizer but which is not a part of a complete ILS and is not aligned with the runway. Some LDAs are equipped with a glideslope.

Locator middle marker (LMM). Nondirectional radio beacon (NDB) compass locator, collocated with a middle marker (MM).

Locator outer marker (LOM). NDB compass locator, collocated with an outer marker (OM).

LOM. See locator outer marker.

Longitude. Measurement east or west of the Prime Meridian in degrees, minutes, and seconds. The Prime Meridian is 0° longitude and runs through Greenwich, England. Lines of longitude are also referred to as meridians.

Longitudinal axis. An imaginary line through an aircraft from nose to tail, passing through its center of gravity. The longitudinal axis is also called the roll axis of the aircraft. Movement of the ailerons rotates an airplane about its longitudinal axis.

Longitudinal stability (pitching). Stability about the lateral axis. A desirable characteristic of an airplane whereby it tends to return to its trimmed angle of attack after displacement.

Low or medium frequency. A frequency range between 190 and 535 kHz with the medium frequency above 300 kHz. Generally associated with nondirectional beacons transmitting a continuous carrier with either a 400 or 1,020 Hz modulation.

Lubber line. The reference line used in a magnetic compass or heading indicator.

M

MAA. See maximum authorized altitude.

MAC. See mean aerodynamic chord.

Mach number. The ratio of the true airspeed of the aircraft to the speed of sound in the same atmospheric conditions, named in honor of Ernst Mach, late 19th century physicist.

Mach meter. The instrument that displays the ratio of the speed of sound to the true airspeed an aircraft is flying.

Magnetic bearing (MB). The direction to or from a radio transmitting station measured relative to magnetic north.

Magnetic compass. A device for determining direction measured from magnetic north.

Magnetic dip. A vertical attraction between a compass needle and the magnetic poles. The closer the aircraft is to a pole, the more severe the effect.

Magnetic heading (MH). The direction an aircraft is pointed with respect to magnetic north.

Magneto. A self-contained, engine-driven unit that supplies electrical current to the spark plugs; completely independent of the airplane's electrical system. Normally there are two magnetos per engine.

Magnus effect. Lifting force produced when a rotating cylinder produces a pressure differential. This is the same effect that makes a baseball curve or a golf ball slice.

Mandatory altitude. An altitude depicted on an instrument approach chart with the altitude value both underscored and overscored. Aircraft are required to maintain altitude at the depicted value.

Mandatory block altitude. An altitude depicted on an instrument approach chart with two underscored and overscored altitude values between which aircraft are required to maintain altitude.

Maneuverability. Ability of an aircraft to change directions along a flight path and withstand the stresses imposed upon it.

Maneuvering speed (V_A). The design maneuvering speed. Operating at or below design maneuvering speed does not provide structural protection against multiple full control inputs in one axis or full control inputs in more than one axis at the same time.

Manifold absolute pressure. The absolute pressure of the fuel/air mixture within the intake manifold, usually indicated in inches of mercury.

MAP. See missed approach point.

Margin identification. The top and bottom areas on an instrument approach chart that depict information about the procedure, including airport location and procedure identification.

Marker beacon. A low-powered transmitter that directs its signal upward in a small, fan-shaped pattern. Used along the flight path when approaching an airport for landing, marker beacons indicate both aurally and visually when the aircraft is directly over the facility.

Mass. The amount of matter in a body.

Maximum altitude. An altitude depicted on an instrument approach chart with overscored altitude value at which or below aircraft are required to maintain altitude.

Maximum authorized altitude (MAA). A published altitude representing the maximum usable altitude or flight level for an airspace structure or route segment.

Maximum landing weight. The greatest weight that an airplane normally is allowed to have at landing.

Maximum ramp weight. The total weight of a loaded aircraft, including all fuel. It is greater than the takeoff weight due to the fuel that will be burned during the taxi and runup operations. Ramp weight may also be referred to as taxi weight.

Maximum takeoff weight. The maximum allowable weight for takeoff.

Maximum weight. The maximum authorized weight of the aircraft and all of its equipment as specified in the Type Certificate Data Sheets (TCDS) for the aircraft.

Maximum zero fuel weight (GAMA). The maximum weight, exclusive of usable fuel.

MB. See magnetic bearing.

MCA. See minimum crossing altitude.

MDA. See minimum descent altitude.

MEA. See minimum en route altitude.

Mean aerodynamic chord (MAC). The average distance from the leading edge to the trailing edge of the wing.

Mean sea level. The average height of the surface of the sea at a particular location for all stages of the tide over a 19-year period.

MEL. See minimum equipment list.

Meridians. Lines of longitude.

Mesosphere. A layer of the atmosphere directly above the stratosphere.

METAR. See Aviation Routine Weather Report.

MFD. See multi-function display.

MH. See magnetic heading.

MHz. Megahertz.

Microbursts. A strong downdraft which normally occurs over horizontal distances of 1 NM or less and vertical distances of less than 1,000 feet. In spite of its small horizontal scale, an intense microburst could induce windspeeds greater than 100 knots and downdrafts as strong as 6,000 feet per minute.

Microwave landing system (MLS). A precision instrument approach system operating in the microwave spectrum which normally consists of an azimuth station, elevation station, and precision distance measuring equipment.

Mileage breakdown. A fix indicating a course change that appears on the chart as an “x” at a break between two segments of a federal airway.

Military operations area (MOA). Airspace established for the purpose of separating certain military training activities from IFR traffic.

Military training route (MTR). Airspace of defined vertical and lateral dimensions established for the conduct of military training at airspeeds in excess of 250 knots indicated airspeed (KIAS).

Minimum altitude. An altitude depicted on an instrument approach chart with the altitude value underscored. Aircraft are required to maintain altitude at or above the depicted value.

Minimum crossing altitude (MCA). The lowest allowed altitude at certain fixes an aircraft must cross when proceeding in the direction of a higher minimum en route altitude (MEA).

Minimum descent altitude (MDA). The lowest altitude (in feet MSL) to which descent is authorized on final approach, or during circle-to-land maneuvering in execution of a nonprecision approach.

Minimum drag. The point on the total drag curve where the lift-to-drag ratio is the greatest. At this speed, total drag is minimized.

Minimum en route altitude (MEA). The lowest published altitude between radio fixes that ensures acceptable navigational signal coverage and meets obstacle clearance requirements between those fixes.

Minimum equipment list (MEL). A list developed for larger aircraft that outlines equipment that can be inoperative for various types of flight including IFR and icing conditions. This list is based on the master minimum equipment list (MMEL) developed by the FAA and must be approved by the FAA for use. It is specific to an individual aircraft make and model.

Minimum obstruction clearance altitude (MOCA). The lowest published altitude in effect between radio fixes on VOR airways, off-airway routes, or route segments, which meets obstacle clearance requirements for the entire route segment and which ensures acceptable navigational signal coverage only within 25 statute (22 nautical) miles of a VOR.

Minimum reception altitude (MRA). The lowest altitude at which an airway intersection can be determined.

Minimum safe altitude (MSA). The minimum altitude depicted on approach charts which provides at least 1,000 feet of obstacle clearance for emergency use within a specified distance from the listed navigation facility.

Minimum vectoring altitude (MVA). An IFR altitude lower than the minimum en route altitude (MEA) that provides terrain and obstacle clearance.

Minimums section. The area on an IAP chart that displays the lowest altitude and visibility requirements for the approach.

Missed approach. A maneuver conducted by a pilot when an instrument approach cannot be completed to a landing.

Missed approach point (MAP). A point prescribed in each instrument approach at which a missed approach procedure shall be executed if the required visual reference has not been established.

Mixed ice. A mixture of clear ice and rime ice.

MLS. See microwave landing system.

MM. Middle marker.

MOA. See military operations area.

MOCA. See minimum obstruction clearance altitude.

Mode C. Altitude reporting transponder mode.

Moment. The product of the weight of an item multiplied by its arm. Moments are expressed in pound-inches (lb-in). Total moment is the weight of the airplane multiplied by the distance between the datum and the CG.

Moment arm. The distance from a datum to the applied force.

Moment index (or index). A moment divided by a constant such as 100, 1,000, or 10,000. The purpose of using a moment index is to simplify weight and balance computations of airplanes where heavy items and long arms result in large, unmanageable numbers.

Monocoque. A shell-like fuselage design in which the stressed outer skin is used to support the majority of imposed stresses. Monocoque fuselage design may include bulkheads but not stringers.

Monoplanes. Airplanes with a single set of wings.

Movable slat. A movable auxiliary airfoil on the leading edge of a wing. It is closed in normal flight but extends at high angles of attack. This allows air to continue flowing over the top of the wing and delays airflow separation.

MRA. See minimum reception altitude.

MSA. See minimum safe altitude.

MSL. See mean sea level.

MTR. See military training route.

Multi-function display (MFD). Small screen (CRT or LCD) in an aircraft that can be used to display information to the pilot in numerous configurable ways. Often an MFD will be used in concert with a primary flight display.

MVA. See minimum vectoring altitude.

N

N₁. Rotational speed of the low pressure compressor in a turbine engine.

N₂. Rotational speed of the high pressure compressor in a turbine engine.

Nacelle. A streamlined enclosure on an aircraft in which an engine is mounted. On multiengine propeller-driven airplanes, the nacelle is normally mounted on the leading edge of the wing.

NACG. See National Aeronautical Charting Group.

NAS. See National Airspace System.

National Airspace System (NAS). The common network of United States airspace—air navigation facilities, equipment and services, airports or landing areas; aeronautical charts, information and services; rules, regulations and procedures, technical information; and manpower and material.

National Aeronautical Charting Group (NACG). A Federal agency operating under the FAA, responsible for publishing charts such as the terminal procedures and en route charts.

National Route Program (NRP). A set of rules and procedures designed to increase the flexibility of user flight planning within published guidelines.

National Security Area (NSA). Areas consisting of airspace of defined vertical and lateral dimensions established at locations where there is a requirement for increased security and safety of ground facilities. Pilots are requested to voluntarily avoid flying through the depicted NSA. When it is necessary to provide a greater level of security and safety, flight in NSAs may be temporarily prohibited. Regulatory prohibitions are disseminated via NOTAMs.

National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). A United States Government independent organization responsible for investigations of accidents involving aviation, highways, waterways, pipelines, and railroads in the United States. NTSB is charged by congress to investigate every civil aviation accident in the United States.

NAVAID. Navigational aid.

NAV/COM. Navigation and communication radio.

NDB. See nondirectional radio beacon.

Negative static stability. The initial tendency of an aircraft to continue away from the original state of equilibrium after being disturbed.

Neutral static stability. The initial tendency of an aircraft to remain in a new condition after its equilibrium has been disturbed.

NM. Nautical mile.

NOAA. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

No-gyro approach. A radar approach that may be used in case of a malfunctioning gyro-compass or directional gyro. Instead of providing the pilot with headings to be flown, the controller observes the radar track and issues control instructions “turn right/left” or “stop turn,” as appropriate.

Nondirectional radio beacon (NDB). A ground-based radio transmitter that transmits radio energy in all directions.

Nonprecision approach. A standard instrument approach procedure in which only horizontal guidance is provided.

No procedure turn (NoPT). Term used with the appropriate course and altitude to denote that the procedure turn is not required.

NoPT. See no procedure turn.

NOTAM. See Notice to Airmen.

Notice to Airmen (NOTAM). A notice filed with an aviation authority to alert aircraft pilots of any hazards en route or at a specific location. The authority in turn provides means of disseminating relevant NOTAMs to pilots.

NRP. See National Route Program.

NSA. See National Security Area.

NTSB. See National Transportation Safety Board.

NWS. National Weather Service.

O

Obstacle departure procedures (ODP). A preplanned instrument flight rule (IFR) departure procedure printed for pilot use in textual or graphic form to provide obstruction clearance via the least onerous route from the terminal area to the appropriate en route structure. ODPs are recommended for obstruction clearance and may be flown without ATC clearance unless an alternate departure procedure (SID or radar vector) has been specifically assigned by ATC.

Obstruction lights. Lights that can be found both on and off an airport to identify obstructions.

Occluded front. A frontal occlusion occurs when a fast-moving cold front catches up with a slow moving warm front. The difference in temperature within each frontal system is a major factor in determining whether a cold or warm front occlusion occurs.

ODP. See obstacle departure procedures.

OM. Outer marker.

Omission error. The failure to anticipate significant instrument indications following attitude changes; for example, concentrating on pitch control while forgetting about heading or roll information, resulting in erratic control of heading and bank.

Optical illusion. A misleading visual image. For the purpose of this handbook, the term refers to the brain's misinterpretation of features on the ground associated with landing, which causes a pilot to misread the spatial relationships between the aircraft and the runway.

Orientation. Awareness of the position of the aircraft and of oneself in relation to a specific reference point.

Otolith organ. An inner ear organ that detects linear acceleration and gravity orientation.

Outer marker. A marker beacon at or near the glideslope intercept altitude of an ILS approach. It is normally located four to seven miles from the runway threshold on the extended centerline of the runway.

Outside air temperature (OAT). The measured or indicated air temperature (IAT) corrected for compression and friction heating. Also referred to as true air temperature.

Overcontrolling. Using more movement in the control column than is necessary to achieve the desired pitch-and-bank condition.

Overboost. A condition in which a reciprocating engine has exceeded the maximum manifold pressure allowed by the manufacturer. Can cause damage to engine components.

Overpower. To use more power than required for the purpose of achieving a faster rate of airspeed change.

P

P-static. See precipitation static.

PAPI. See precision approach path indicator.

PAR. See precision approach radar.

Parallels. Lines of latitude.

Parasite drag. Drag caused by the friction of air moving over the aircraft structure; its amount varies directly with the airspeed.

Payload (GAMA). The weight of occupants, cargo, and baggage.

Personality. The embodiment of personal traits and characteristics of an individual that are set at a very early age and extremely resistant to change.

P-factor. A tendency for an aircraft to yaw to the left due to the descending propeller blade on the right producing more thrust than the ascending blade on the left. This occurs when the aircraft's longitudinal axis is in a climbing attitude in relation to the relative wind. The P-factor would be to the right if the aircraft had a counterclockwise rotating propeller.

PFD. See primary flight display.

Phugoid oscillations. Long-period oscillations of an aircraft around its lateral axis. It is a slow change in pitch accompanied by equally slow changes in airspeed. Angle of attack remains constant, and the pilot often corrects for phugoid oscillations without even being aware of them.

PIC. See pilot in command.

Pilotage. Navigation by visual reference to landmarks.

Pilot in command (PIC). The pilot responsible for the operation and safety of an aircraft.

Pilot report (PIREP). Report of meteorological phenomena encountered by aircraft.

Pilot's Operating Handbook/Airplane Flight Manual (POH/AFM). FAA-approved documents published by the airframe manufacturer that list the operating conditions for a particular model of aircraft.

PIREP. See pilot report.

Pitot pressure. Ram air pressure used to measure airspeed.

Pitot-static head. A combination pickup used to sample pitot pressure and static air pressure.

Plan view. The overhead view of an approach procedure on an instrument approach chart. The plan view depicts the routes that guide the pilot from the en route segments to the IAF.

Planform. The shape or form of a wing as viewed from above. It may be long and tapered, short and rectangular, or various other shapes.

Pneumatic. Operation by the use of compressed air.

POH/AFM. See Pilot's Operating Handbook/Airplane Flight Manual.

Point-in-space approach. A type of helicopter instrument approach procedure to a missed approach point more than 2,600 feet from an associated helicopter landing area.

Poor judgment chain. A series of mistakes that may lead to an accident or incident. Two basic principles generally associated with the creation of a poor judgment chain are: (1) one bad decision often leads to another; and (2) as a string of bad decisions grows, it reduces the number of subsequent alternatives for continued safe flight. ADM is intended to break the poor judgment chain before it can cause an accident or incident.

Position error. Error in the indication of the altimeter, ASI, and VSI caused by the air at the static system entrance not being absolutely still.

Position report. A report over a known location as transmitted by an aircraft to ATC.

Positive static stability. The initial tendency to return to a state of equilibrium when disturbed from that state.

Power. Implies work rate or units of work per unit of time, and as such, it is a function of the speed at which the force is developed. The term "power required" is generally associated with reciprocating engines.

Powerplant. A complete engine and propeller combination with accessories.

Precession. The characteristic of a gyroscope that causes an applied force to be felt, not at the point of application, but 90° from that point in the direction of rotation.

Precipitation. Any or all forms of water particles (rain, sleet, hail, or snow) that fall from the atmosphere and reach the surface.

Precipitation static (P-static). A form of radio interference caused by rain, snow, or dust particles hitting the antenna and inducing a small radio-frequency voltage into it.

Precision approach. A standard instrument approach procedure in which both vertical and horizontal guidance is provided.

Precision approach path indicator (PAPI). A system of lights similar to the VASI, but consisting of one row of lights in two- or four-light systems. A pilot on the correct glideslope will see two white lights and two red lights. See VASI.

Precision approach radar (PAR). A type of radar used at an airport to guide an aircraft through the final stages of landing, providing horizontal and vertical guidance. The radar operator directs the pilot to change heading or adjust the descent rate to keep the aircraft on a path that allows it to touch down at the correct spot on the runway.

Precision runway monitor (PRM). System allows simultaneous, independent instrument flight rules (IFR) approaches at airports with closely spaced parallel runways.

Preferred IFR routes. Routes established in the major terminal and en route environments to increase system efficiency and capacity. IFR clearances are issued based on these routes, listed in the Chart Supplement U.S. except when severe weather avoidance procedures or other factors dictate otherwise.

Preignition. Ignition occurring in the cylinder before the time of normal ignition. Preignition is often caused by a local hot spot in the combustion chamber igniting the fuel-air mixture.

Pressure altitude. Altitude above the standard 29.92 "Hg plane.

Pressure demand oxygen system. A demand oxygen system that supplies 100 percent oxygen at sufficient pressure above the altitude where normal breathing is adequate. Also referred to as a pressure breathing system.

Prevailing visibility. The greatest horizontal visibility equaled or exceeded throughout at least half the horizon circle (which is not necessarily continuous).

Preventive maintenance. Simple or minor preservative operations and the replacement of small standard parts not involving complex assembly operation as listed in 14 CFR part 43, appendix A. Certificated pilots may perform preventive maintenance on any aircraft that is owned or operated by them provided that the aircraft is not used in air carrier service.

Primary and supporting. A method of attitude instrument flying using the instrument that provides the most direct indication of attitude and performance.

Primary flight display (PFD). A display that provides increased situational awareness to the pilot by replacing the traditional six instruments used for instrument flight with an easy-to-scan display that provides the horizon, airspeed, altitude, vertical speed, trend, trim, and rate of turn among other key relevant indications.

PRM. See precision runway monitor.

Procedure turn. A maneuver prescribed when it is necessary to reverse direction to establish an aircraft on the intermediate approach segment or final approach course.

Profile view. Side view of an IAP chart illustrating the vertical approach path altitudes, headings, distances, and fixes.

Prohibited area. Designated airspace within which flight of aircraft is prohibited.

Propeller. A device for propelling an aircraft that, when rotated, produces by its action on the air, a thrust approximately perpendicular to its plane of rotation. It includes the control components normally supplied by its manufacturer.

Propeller/rotor modulation error. Certain propeller rpm settings or helicopter rotor speeds can cause the VOR course deviation indicator (CDI) to fluctuate as much as $\pm 6^\circ$. Slight changes to the rpm setting will normally smooth out this roughness.

R

Rabbit, the. High-intensity flasher system installed at many large airports. The flashers consist of a series of brilliant blue-white bursts of light flashing in sequence along the approach lights, giving the effect of a ball of light traveling toward the runway.

Radar. A system that uses electromagnetic waves to identify the range, altitude, direction, or speed of both moving and fixed objects such as aircraft, weather formations, and terrain. The term RADAR was coined in 1941 as an acronym for Radio Detection and Ranging. The term has since entered the English language as a standard word, radar, losing the capitalization in the process.

Radar approach. The controller provides vectors while monitoring the progress of the flight with radar, guiding the pilot through the descent to the airport/heliport or to a specific runway.

Radar services. Radar is a method whereby radio waves are transmitted into the air and are then received when they have been reflected by an object in the path of the beam. Range is determined by measuring the time it takes (at the speed of light) for the radio wave to go out to the object and then return to the receiving antenna. The direction of a detected object from a radar site is determined by the position of the rotating antenna when the reflected portion of the radio wave is received.

Radar summary chart. A weather product derived from the national radar network that graphically displays a summary of radar weather reports.

Radar weather report (SD). A report issued by radar stations at 35 minutes after the hour, and special reports as needed. Provides information on the type, intensity, and location of the echo tops of the precipitation.

Radials. The courses oriented from a station.

Radio or radar altimeter. An electronic altimeter that determines the height of an aircraft above the terrain by measuring the time needed for a pulse of radio-frequency energy to travel from the aircraft to the ground and return.

Radio frequency (RF). A term that refers to alternating current (AC) having characteristics such that, if the current is input to antenna, an electromagnetic (EM) field is generated suitable for wireless broadcasting and/or communications.

Radio magnetic indicator (RMI). An electronic navigation instrument that combines a magnetic compass with an ADF or VOR. The card of the RMI acts as a gyro-stabilized magnetic compass, and shows the magnetic heading the aircraft is flying.

Radiosonde. A weather instrument that observes and reports meteorological conditions from the upper atmosphere. This instrument is typically carried into the atmosphere by some form of weather balloon.

Radio wave. An electromagnetic (EM) wave with frequency characteristics useful for radio transmission.

RAIM. See receiver autonomous integrity monitoring.

RAM recovery. The increase in thrust as a result of ram air pressures and density on the front of the engine caused by air velocity.

Random RNAV routes. Direct routes, based on area navigation capability, between waypoints defined in terms of latitude/longitude coordinates, degree-distance fixes, or offsets from established routes/airways at a specified distance and direction.

Ranging signals. Transmitted from the GPS satellite, signals allowing the aircraft's receiver to determine range (distance) from each satellite.

Rapid decompression. The almost instantaneous loss of cabin pressure in aircraft with a pressurized cockpit or cabin.

RB. See relative bearing.

RBI. See relative bearing indicator.

RCO. See remote communications outlet.

Receiver autonomous integrity monitoring (RAIM). A system used to verify the usability of the received GPS signals and warns the pilot of any malfunction in the navigation system. This system is required for IFR-certified GPS units.

Recommended altitude. An altitude depicted on an instrument approach chart with the altitude value neither underscored nor overscored. The depicted value is an advisory value.

Receiver-transmitter (RT). A system that receives and transmits a signal and an indicator.

Reduced vertical separation minimum (RVSM). Reduces the vertical separation between flight levels (FL) 290 and 410 from 2,000 feet to 1,000 feet, and makes six additional FLs available for operation. Also see DRVSM.

Reference circle (also, distance circle). The circle depicted in the plan view of an IAP chart that typically has a 10 NM radius, within which chart the elements are drawn to scale.

Regions of command. The “regions of normal and reversed command” refers to the relationship between speed and the power required to maintain or change that speed in flight.

Region of reverse command. Flight regime in which flight at a higher airspeed requires a lower power setting and a lower airspeed requires a higher power setting in order to maintain altitude.

REIL. See runway end identifier lights.

Relative bearing (RB). The angular difference between the aircraft heading and the direction to the station, measured clockwise from the nose of the aircraft.

Relative bearing indicator (RBI). Also known as the fixed-card ADF, zero is always indicated at the top of the instrument and the needle indicates the relative bearing to the station.

Relative humidity. The ratio of the existing amount of water vapor in the air at a given temperature to the maximum amount that could exist at that temperature; usually expressed in percent.

Relative wind. Direction of the airflow produced by an object moving through the air. The relative wind for an airplane in flight flows in a direction parallel with and opposite to the direction of flight; therefore, the actual flight path of the airplane determines the direction of the relative wind.

Remote communications outlet (RCO). An unmanned communications facility that is remotely controlled by air traffic personnel.

Required navigation performance (RNP). A specified level of accuracy defined by a lateral area of confined airspace in which an RNP-certified aircraft operates.

Restricted area. Airspace designated under 14 CFR part 73 within which the flight of aircraft, while not wholly prohibited, is subject to restriction.

Reverse sensing. The VOR needle appearing to indicate the reverse of normal operation.

RF. Radio frequency.

Rhodopsin. The photosensitive pigments that initiate the visual response in the rods of the eye.

Rigging. The final adjustment and alignment of an aircraft and its flight control system that provides the proper aerodynamic characteristics.

Rigidity. The characteristic of a gyroscope that prevents its axis of rotation tilting as the Earth rotates.

Rigidity in space. The principle that a wheel with a heavily weighted rim spinning rapidly will remain in a fixed position in the plane in which it is spinning.

Rime ice. Rough, milky, opaque ice formed by the instantaneous freezing of small supercooled water droplets.

Risk. The future impact of a hazard that is not eliminated or controlled.

Risk elements. There are four fundamental risk elements in aviation: the pilot, the aircraft, the environment, and the type of operation that comprise any given aviation situation.

Risk management. The part of the decision-making process which relies on situational awareness, problem recognition, and good judgment to reduce risks associated with each flight.

RMI. See radio magnetic indicator.

RNAV. See area navigation.

RNP. See required navigation performance.

RT. See receiver-transmitter.

Rudder. The movable primary control surface mounted on the trailing edge of the vertical fin of an airplane. Movement of the rudder rotates the airplane about its vertical axis.

Ruddervator. A pair of control surfaces on the tail of an aircraft arranged in the form of a V. These surfaces, when moved together by the control wheel, serve as elevators, and when moved differentially by the rudder pedals, serve as a rudder.

Runway centerline lights. Runway lighting which consists of flush centerline lights spaced at 50-foot intervals beginning 75 feet from the landing threshold.

Runway edge lights. A component of the runway lighting system that is used to outline the edges of runways at night or during low visibility conditions. These lights are classified according to the intensity they are capable of producing.

Runway end identifier lights (REIL). A pair of synchronized flashing lights, located laterally on each side of the runway threshold, providing rapid and positive identification of the approach end of a runway.

Runway visibility value (RVV). The visibility determined for a particular runway by a transmissometer.

Runway visual range (RVR). The instrumentally derived horizontal distance a pilot should be able to see down the runway from the approach end, based on either the sighting of high-intensity runway lights, or the visual contrast of other objects.

RVR. See runway visual range.

RVV. See runway visibility value.

S

SA. See selective availability.

St. Elmo's Fire. A corona discharge which lights up the aircraft surface areas where maximum static discharge occurs.

Satellite ephemeris data. Data broadcast by the GPS satellite containing very accurate orbital data for that satellite, atmospheric propagation data, and satellite clock error data.

Sea breeze. A coastal breeze blowing from sea to land caused by the temperature difference when the land surface is warmer than the sea surface. The sea breeze usually occurs during the day and alternates with the land breeze that blows in the opposite direction at night.

Sea level engine. A reciprocating aircraft engine having a rated takeoff power that is producible only at sea level.

Scan. The first fundamental skill of instrument flight, also known as "cross-check;" the continuous and logical observation of instruments for attitude and performance information.

Sectional aeronautical charts. Designed for visual navigation of slow- or medium-speed aircraft. Topographic information on these charts features the portrayal of relief, and a judicious selection of visual check points for VFR flight. Aeronautical information includes visual and radio aids to navigation, airports, controlled airspace, restricted areas, obstructions and related data.

SDF. See simplified directional facility.

Selective availability (SA). A satellite technology permitting the Department of Defense (DOD) to create, in the interest of national security, a significant clock and ephemeris error in the satellites, resulting in a navigation error.

Semicircular canal. An inner ear organ that detects angular acceleration of the body.

Semimonocoque. A fuselage design that includes a substructure of bulkheads and/or formers, along with stringers, to support flight loads and stresses imposed on the fuselage.

Sensitive altimeter. A form of multipointer pneumatic altimeter with an adjustable barometric scale that allows the reference pressure to be set to any desired level.

Service ceiling. The maximum density altitude where the best rate-of-climb airspeed will produce a 100-feet-per-minute climb at maximum weight while in a clean configuration with maximum continuous power.

Servo. A motor or other form of actuator which receives a small signal from the control device and exerts a large force to accomplish the desired work.

Servo tab. An auxiliary control mounted on a primary control surface, which automatically moves in the direction opposite the primary control to provide an aerodynamic assist in the movement of the control.

SIDS. See standard instrument departure procedures.

SIGMET. The acronym for Significant Meteorological information. A weather advisory in abbreviated plain language concerning the occurrence or expected occurrence of potentially hazardous en route weather phenomena that may affect the safety of aircraft operations. SIGMET is warning information, hence it is of highest priority among other types of meteorological information provided to the aviation users.

Signal-to-noise ratio. An indication of signal strength received compared to background noise, which is a measure of the adequacy of the received signal.

Significant weather prognostic. Presents four panels showing forecast significant weather.

Simplex. Transmission and reception on the same frequency.

Simplified directional facility (SDF). A NAVAID used for nonprecision instrument approaches. The final approach course is similar to that of an ILS localizer; however, the SDF course may be offset from the runway, generally not more than 3°, and the course may be wider than the localizer, resulting in a lower degree of accuracy.

Single-pilot resource management (SRM). The ability for a pilot to manage all resources effectively to ensure the outcome of the flight is successful.

Situational awareness. Pilot knowledge of where the aircraft is in regard to location, air traffic control, weather, regulations, aircraft status, and other factors that may affect flight.

Skidding turn. An uncoordinated turn in which the rate of turn is too great for the angle of bank, pulling the aircraft to the outside of the turn.

Skills and procedures. The procedural, psychomotor, and perceptual skills used to control a specific aircraft or its systems. They are the airmanship abilities that are gained through conventional training, are perfected, and become almost automatic through experience.

Skin friction drag. Drag generated between air molecules and the solid surface of the aircraft.

Slant range. The horizontal distance from the aircraft antenna to the ground station, due to line-of-sight transmission of the DME signal.

Slaved compass. A system whereby the heading gyro is “slaved to,” or continuously corrected to bring its direction readings into agreement with a remotely located magnetic direction sensing device (usually a flux valve or flux gate compass).

Slipping turn. An uncoordinated turn in which the aircraft is banked too much for the rate of turn, so the horizontal lift component is greater than the centrifugal force, pulling the aircraft toward the inside of the turn.

Small airplane. An airplane of 12,500 pounds or less maximum certificated takeoff weight.

Somatogravic illusion. The misperception of being in a nose-up or nose-down attitude, caused by a rapid acceleration or deceleration while in flight situations that lack visual reference.

Spatial disorientation. The state of confusion due to misleading information being sent to the brain from various sensory organs, resulting in a lack of awareness of the aircraft position in relation to a specific reference point.

Special flight permit. A flight permit issued to an aircraft that does not meet airworthiness requirements but is capable of safe flight. A special flight permit can be issued to move an aircraft for the purposes of maintenance or repair, buyer delivery, manufacturer flight tests, evacuation from danger, or customer demonstration. Also referred to as a ferry permit.

Special use airspace. Airspace in which flight activities are subject to restrictions that can create limitations on the mixed use of airspace. Consists of prohibited, restricted, warning, military operations, and alert areas.

Special fuel consumption. The amount of fuel in pounds per hour consumed or required by an engine per brake horsepower or per pound of thrust.

Speed. The distance traveled in a given time.

Spin. An aggravated stall that results in an airplane descending in a helical, or corkscrew path.

Spiral instability. A condition that exists when the static directional stability of the airplane is very strong as compared to the effect of its dihedral in maintaining lateral equilibrium.

Spiraling slipstream. The slipstream of a propeller-driven airplane rotates around the airplane. This slipstream strikes the left side of the vertical fin, causing the aircraft to yaw slightly. Rudder offset is sometimes used by aircraft designers to counteract this tendency.

Spoilers. High-drag devices that can be raised into the air flowing over an airfoil, reducing lift and increasing drag. Spoilers are used for roll control on some aircraft. Deploying spoilers on both wings at the same time allows the aircraft to descend without gaining speed. Spoilers are also used to shorten the ground roll after landing.

SRM. See single-pilot resource management.

SSR. See secondary surveillance radar.

SSV. See standard service volume.

Stabilator. A single-piece horizontal tail surface on an airplane that pivots around a central hinge point. A stabilator serves the purposes of both the horizontal stabilizer and the elevators.

Stability. The inherent quality of an airplane to correct for conditions that may disturb its equilibrium, and to return or to continue on the original flight path. It is primarily an airplane design characteristic.

Stagnant hypoxia. A type of hypoxia that results when the oxygen-rich blood in the lungs is not moving to the tissues that need it.

Stall. A rapid decrease in lift caused by the separation of airflow from the wing's surface, brought on by exceeding the critical angle of attack. A stall can occur at any pitch attitude or airspeed.

Standard atmosphere. At sea level, the standard atmosphere consists of a barometric pressure of 29.92 inches of mercury ("Hg) or 1013.2 millibars, and a temperature of 15 °C (59 °F). Pressure and temperature normally decrease as altitude increases. The standard lapse rate in the lower atmosphere for each 1,000 feet of altitude is approximately 1 "Hg and 2 °C (3.5 °F). For example, the standard pressure and temperature at 3,000 feet mean sea level (MSL) are 26.92 "Hg (29.92 "Hg – 3 "Hg) and 9 °C (15 °C – 6 °C).

Standard empty weight (GAMA). This weight consists of the airframe, engines, and all items of operating equipment that have fixed locations and are permanently installed in the airplane including fixed ballast, hydraulic fluid, unusable fuel, and full engine oil.

Standard holding pattern. A holding pattern in which all turns are made to the right.

Standard instrument departure procedures (SIDS). Published procedures to expedite clearance delivery and to facilitate transition between takeoff and en route operations.

Standard rate turn. A turn in which an aircraft changes its direction at a rate of 3° per second (360° in 2 minutes) for low- or medium-speed aircraft. For high-speed aircraft, the standard rate turn is 1½° per second (360° in 4 minutes).

Standard service volume (SSV). Defines the limits of the volume of airspace which the VOR serves.

Standard terminal arrival route (STAR). A preplanned IFR ATC arrival procedure published for pilot use in graphic and/or textual form.

Standard weights. Weights established for numerous items involved in weight and balance computations. These weights should not be used if actual weights are available.

STAR. See standard terminal arrival route.

Static longitudinal stability. The aerodynamic pitching moments required to return the aircraft to the equilibrium angle of attack.

Static pressure. Pressure of air that is still or not moving, measured perpendicular to the surface of the aircraft.

Static stability. The initial tendency an aircraft displays when disturbed from a state of equilibrium.

Station. A location in the airplane that is identified by a number designating its distance in inches from the datum. The datum is, therefore, identified as station zero. An item located at station +50 would have an arm of 50 inches.

Stationary front. A front that is moving at a speed of less than 5 knots.

Steep turns. In instrument flight, any turn greater than standard rate; in visual flight, anything greater than a 45° bank.

Stepdown fix. The point after which additional descent is permitted within a segment of an IAP.

Strapdown system. An INS in which the accelerometers and gyros are permanently “strapped down” or aligned with the three axes of the aircraft.

Stratosphere. A layer of the atmosphere above the tropopause extending to a height of approximately 160,000 feet.

Stress. The body’s response to demands placed upon it.

Stress management. The personal analysis of the kinds of stress experienced while flying, the application of appropriate stress assessment tools, and other coping mechanisms.

Structural icing. The accumulation of ice on the exterior of the aircraft.

Sublimation. Process by which a solid is changed to a gas without going through the liquid state.

Suction relief valve. A relief valve in an instrument vacuum system required to maintain the correct low pressure inside the instrument case for the proper operation of the gyros.

Supercharger. An engine- or exhaust-driven air compressor used to provide additional pressure to the induction air so the engine can produce additional power.

Supercooled water droplets. Water droplets that have been cooled below the freezing point, but are still in a liquid state.

Surface analysis chart. A report that depicts an analysis of the current surface weather. Shows the areas of high and low pressure, fronts, temperatures, dewpoints, wind directions and speeds, local weather, and visual obstructions.

Synchro. A device used to transmit indications of angular movement or position from one location to another.

Synthetic vision. A realistic display depiction of the aircraft in relation to terrain and flight path.

T

TAA. See terminal arrival area.

TACAN. See tactical air navigation.

Tactical air navigation (TACAN). An electronic navigation system used by military aircraft, providing both distance and direction information.

Takeoff decision speed (V_1). Per 14 CFR section 23.51: “the calibrated airspeed on the ground at which, as a result of engine failure or other reasons, the pilot assumed to have made a decision to continue or discontinue the takeoff.”

Takeoff distance. The distance required to complete an all-engines operative takeoff to the 35-foot height. It must be at least 15 percent less than the distance required for a one-engine inoperative engine takeoff. This distance is not normally a limiting factor as it is usually less than the one-engine inoperative takeoff distance.

Takeoff safety speed (V_2). Per 14 CFR part 1: “A referenced airspeed obtained after lift-off at which the required one-engine-inoperative climb performance can be achieved.”

TAWS. See terrain awareness and warning system.

Taxiway lights. Omnidirectional lights that outline the edges of the taxiway and are blue in color.

Taxiway turnoff lights. Lights that are flush with the runway which emit a steady green color.

TCAS. See traffic alert collision avoidance system.

TCH. See threshold crossing height.

TDZE. See touchdown zone elevation.

TEC. See Tower En Route Control.

Technique. The manner in which procedures are executed.

Telephone information briefing service (TIBS). An FSS service providing continuously updated automated telephone recordings of area and/or route weather, airspace procedures, and special aviation-oriented announcements.

Temporary flight restriction (TFR). Restriction to flight imposed in order to:

1. Protect persons and property in the air or on the surface from an existing or imminent flight associated hazard;
2. Provide a safe environment for the operation of disaster relief aircraft;
3. Prevent an unsafe congestion of sightseeing aircraft above an incident;
4. Protect the President, Vice President, or other public figures; and,
5. Provide a safe environment for space agency operations.

Pilots are expected to check appropriate NOTAMs during flight planning when conducting flight in an area where a temporary flight restriction is in effect.

Tension. Maintaining an excessively strong grip on the control column, usually resulting in an overcontrolled situation.

Terminal aerodrome forecast (TAF). A report established for the 5 statute mile radius around an airport. Utilizes the same descriptors and abbreviations as the METAR report.

Terminal arrival area (TAA). A procedure to provide a new transition method for arriving aircraft equipped with FMS and/or GPS navigational equipment. The TAA contains a “T” structure that normally provides a NoPT for aircraft using the approach.

Terminal instrument approach procedure (TERP). Prescribes standardized methods for use in designing instrument flight procedures.

TERP. See terminal instrument approach procedure.

Terminal radar service areas (TRSA). Areas where participating pilots can receive additional radar services. The purpose of the service is to provide separation between all IFR operations and participating VFR aircraft.

Terrain awareness and warning system (TAWS). A timed-based system that provides information concerning potential hazards with fixed objects by using GPS positioning and a database of terrain and obstructions to provide true predictability of the upcoming terrain and obstacles.

TFR. See temporary flight restriction.

Thermosphere. The last layer of the atmosphere that begins above the mesosphere and gradually fades away into space.

Threshold crossing height (TCH). The theoretical height above the runway threshold at which the aircraft’s glideslope antenna would be if the aircraft maintained the trajectory established by the mean ILS glideslope or MLS glidepath.

Thrust. The force which imparts a change in the velocity of a mass. This force is measured in pounds but has no element of time or rate. The term “thrust required” is generally associated with jet engines. A forward force which propels the airplane through the air.

Thrust (aerodynamic force). The forward aerodynamic force produced by a propeller, fan, or turbojet engine as it forces a mass of air to the rear, behind the aircraft.

Thrust line. An imaginary line passing through the center of the propeller hub, perpendicular to the plane of the propeller rotation.

Time and speed table. A table depicted on an instrument approach procedure chart that identifies the distance from the FAF to the MAP, and provides the time required to transit that distance based on various groundspeeds.

Timed turn. A turn in which the clock and the turn coordinator are used to change heading a definite number of degrees in a given time.

TIS. See traffic information service.

Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR). Includes the federal aviation regulations governing the operation of aircraft, airways, and airmen.

Torque. (1) A resistance to turning or twisting. (2) Forces that produce a twisting or rotating motion. (3) In an airplane, the tendency of the aircraft to turn (roll) in the opposite direction of rotation of the engine and propeller. (4) In helicopters with a single, main rotor system, the tendency of the helicopter to turn in the opposite direction of the main rotor rotation.

Torquemeter. An instrument used with some of the larger reciprocating engines and turboprop or turboshaft engines to measure the reaction between the propeller reduction gears and the engine case.

Total drag. The sum of the parasite drag and induced drag.

Touchdown zone elevation (TDZE). The highest elevation in the first 3,000 feet of the landing surface, TDZE is indicated on the instrument approach procedure chart when straight-in landing minimums are authorized.

Touchdown zone lights. Two rows of transverse light bars disposed symmetrically about the runway centerline in the runway touchdown zone.

Tower En Route Control (TEC). The control of IFR en route traffic within delegated airspace between two or more adjacent approach control facilities, designed to expedite traffic and reduce control and pilot communication requirements.

TPP. See United States Terminal Procedures Publication.

Track. The actual path made over the ground in flight.

Tracking. Flying a heading that will maintain the desired track to or from the station regardless of crosswind conditions.

Traffic Alert Collision Avoidance System (TCAS). An airborne system developed by the FAA that operates independently from the ground-based Air Traffic Control system. Designed to increase flight deck awareness of proximate aircraft and to serve as a “last line of defense” for the prevention of midair collisions.

Traffic information service (TIS). A ground-based service providing information to the flight deck via data link using the S-mode transponder and altitude encoder to improve the safety and efficiency of “see and avoid” flight through an automatic display that informs the pilot of nearby traffic.

Trailing edge. The portion of the airfoil where the airflow over the upper surface rejoins the lower surface airflow.

Transcribed Weather Broadcast (TWEB). An FSS service, available in Alaska only, providing continuously updated automated broadcast of meteorological and aeronautical data over selected L/MF and VOR NAVAIDs.

Transponder. The airborne portion of the ATC radar beacon system.

Transponder code. One of 4,096 four-digit discrete codes ATC assigns to distinguish between aircraft.

Trend. Immediate indication of the direction of aircraft movement, as shown on instruments.

Tricycle gear. Landing gear employing a third wheel located on the nose of the aircraft.

Trim. To adjust the aerodynamic forces on the control surfaces so that the aircraft maintains the set attitude without any control input.

Trim tab. A small auxiliary hinged portion of a movable control surface that can be adjusted during flight to a position resulting in a balance of control forces.

Tropopause. The boundary layer between the troposphere and the stratosphere which acts as a lid to confine most of the water vapor, and the associated weather, to the troposphere.

Troposphere. The layer of the atmosphere extending from the surface to a height of 20,000 to 60,000 feet, depending on latitude.

True airspeed. Actual airspeed, determined by applying a correction for pressure altitude and temperature to the CAS.

True altitude. The vertical distance of the airplane above sea level—the actual altitude. It is often expressed as feet above mean sea level (MSL). Airport, terrain, and obstacle elevations on aeronautical charts are true altitudes.

Truss. A fuselage design made up of supporting structural members that resist deformation by applied loads. The truss-type fuselage is constructed of steel or aluminum tubing. Strength and rigidity is achieved by welding the tubing together into a series of triangular shapes, called trusses.

T-tail. An aircraft with the horizontal stabilizer mounted on the top of the vertical stabilizer, forming a T.

Turbine discharge pressure. The total pressure at the discharge of the low-pressure turbine in a dual-turbine axial-flow engine.

Turbine engine. An aircraft engine which consists of an air compressor, a combustion section, and a turbine. Thrust is produced by increasing the velocity of the air flowing through the engine.

Turbocharger. An air compressor driven by exhaust gases, which increases the pressure of the air going into the engine through the carburetor or fuel injection system.

Turbofan engine. A fanlike turbojet engine designed to create additional thrust by diverting a secondary airflow around the combustion chamber.

Turbojet engine. A turbine engine which produces its thrust entirely by accelerating the air through the engine.

Turboprop engine. A turbine engine which drives a propeller through a reduction gearing arrangement. Most of the energy in the exhaust gases is converted into torque, rather than using its acceleration to drive the aircraft.

Turboshaft engine. A gas turbine engine that delivers power through a shaft to operate something other than a propeller.

Turn-and-slip indicator. A flight instrument consisting of a rate gyro to indicate the rate of yaw and a curved glass inclinometer to indicate the relationship between gravity and centrifugal force. The turn-and-slip indicator indicates the relationship between angle of bank and rate of yaw. Also called a turn-and-bank indicator.

Turn coordinator. A rate gyro that senses both roll and yaw due to the gimbal being canted. Has largely replaced the turn-and-slip indicator in modern aircraft.

TWEB. See Transcribed Weather Broadcast.

U

UHF. See ultra-high frequency.

Ultra-high frequency (UHF). The range of electromagnetic frequencies between 300 MHz and 3,000 MHz.

Ultimate load factor. In stress analysis, the load that causes physical breakdown in an aircraft or aircraft component during a strength test, or the load that according to computations, should cause such a breakdown.

Uncaging. Unlocking the gimbals of a gyroscopic instrument, making it susceptible to damage by abrupt flight maneuvers or rough handling.

Uncontrolled airspace. Class G airspace that has not been designated as Class A, B, C, D, or E. It is airspace in which air traffic control has no authority or responsibility to control air traffic; however, pilots should remember there are VFR minimums which apply to this airspace.

Underpower. Using less power than required for the purpose of achieving a faster rate of airspeed change.

United States Terminal Procedures Publication (TPP). Booklets published in regional format by FAA Aeronautical Navigation Products (AeroNav Products) that include DPs, STARs, IAPs, and other information pertinent to IFR flight.

Unusual attitude. An unintentional, unanticipated, or extreme aircraft attitude.

Useful load. The weight of the pilot, copilot, passengers, baggage, usable fuel, and drainable oil. It is the basic empty weight subtracted from the maximum allowable gross weight. This term applies to general aviation aircraft only.

User-defined waypoints. Waypoint location and other data which may be input by the user, this is the only GPS database information that may be altered (edited) by the user.

V

V₁. See takeoff decision speed.

V₂. See takeoff safety speed.

V_A. See maneuvering speed.

Vapor lock. A problem that mostly affects gasoline-fuelled internal combustion engines. It occurs when the liquid fuel changes state from liquid to gas while still in the fuel delivery system. This disrupts the operation of the fuel pump, causing loss of feed pressure to the carburetor or fuel injection system, resulting in transient loss of power or complete stalling. Restarting the engine from this state may be difficult. The fuel can vaporize due to being heated by the engine, by the local climate or due to a lower boiling point at high altitude.

Variation. Compass error caused by the difference in the physical locations of the magnetic north pole and the geographic north pole.

VASI. See visual approach slope indicator.

VDP. See visual descent point.

Vector. A force vector is a graphic representation of a force and shows both the magnitude and direction of the force.

Vectoring. Navigational guidance by assigning headings.

VEF. Calibrated airspeed at which the critical engine of a multi-engine aircraft is assumed to fail.

Velocity. The speed or rate of movement in a certain direction.

Venturi tube. A specially shaped tube attached to the outside of an aircraft to produce suction to allow proper operation of gyro instruments.

Vertical axis. An imaginary line passing vertically through the center of gravity of an aircraft. The vertical axis is called the z-axis or the yaw axis.

Vertical card compass. A magnetic compass that consists of an azimuth on a vertical card, resembling a heading indicator with a fixed miniature airplane to accurately present the heading of the aircraft. The design uses eddy current damping to minimize lead and lag during turns.

Vertical speed indicator (VSI). A rate-of-pressure change instrument that gives an indication of any deviation from a constant pressure level.

Vertical stability. Stability about an aircraft's vertical axis. Also called yawing or directional stability.

Very-high frequency (VHF). A band of radio frequencies falling between 30 and 300 MHz.

Very-high frequency omnidirectional range (VOR). Electronic navigation equipment in which the flight deck instrument identifies the radial or line from the VOR station, measured in degrees clockwise from magnetic north, along which the aircraft is located.

Vestibule. The central cavity of the bony labyrinth of the ear, or the parts of the membranous labyrinth that it contains.

V_{FE}. The maximum speed with the flaps extended. The upper limit of the white arc.

VFR. See visual flight rules.

VFR on top. ATC authorization for an IFR aircraft to operate in VFR conditions at any appropriate VFR altitude.

VFR over the top. A VFR operation in which an aircraft operates in VFR conditions on top of an undercast.

VFR terminal area chart. At a scale of 1:250,000, a chart that depicts Class B airspace, which provides for the control or segregation of all the aircraft within the Class B airspace. The chart depicts topographic information and aeronautical information including visual and radio aids to navigation, airports, controlled airspace, restricted areas, obstructions, and related data.

V-G diagram. A chart that relates velocity to load factor. It is valid only for a specific weight, configuration and altitude and shows the maximum amount of positive or negative lift the airplane is capable of generating at a given speed. Also shows the safe load factor limits and the load factor that the aircraft can sustain at various speeds.

Victor airways. Airways based on a centerline that extends from one VOR or VORTAC navigation aid or intersection, to another navigation aid (or through several navigation aids or intersections); used to establish a known route for en route procedures between terminal areas.

Visual approach slope indicator (VASI). A visual aid of lights arranged to provide descent guidance information during the approach to the runway. A pilot on the correct glideslope will see red lights over white lights.

Visual descent point (VDP). A defined point on the final approach course of a nonprecision straight-in approach procedure from which normal descent from the MDA to the runway touchdown point may be commenced, provided the runway environment is clearly visible to the pilot.

Visual flight rules (VFR). Flight rules adopted by the FAA governing aircraft flight using visual references. VFR operations specify the amount of ceiling and the visibility the pilot must have in order to operate according to these rules. When the weather conditions are such that the pilot cannot operate according to VFR, he or she must use instrument flight rules (IFR).

Visual meteorological conditions (VMC). Meteorological conditions expressed in terms of visibility, distance from cloud, and ceiling meeting or exceeding the minimums specified for VFR.

V_{LE}. Landing gear extended speed. The maximum speed at which an airplane can be safely flown with the landing gear extended.

V_{LO}. Landing gear operating speed. The maximum speed for extending or retracting the landing gear if using an airplane equipped with retractable landing gear.

V_{MC}. Minimum control airspeed. This is the minimum flight speed at which a light, twin-engine airplane can be satisfactorily controlled when an engine suddenly becomes inoperative and the remaining engine is at takeoff power.

VMC. See visual meteorological conditions.

V_{NE}. The never-exceed speed. Operating above this speed is prohibited since it may result in damage or structural failure. The red line on the airspeed indicator.

V_{NO}. The maximum structural cruising speed. Do not exceed this speed except in smooth air. The upper limit of the green arc.

VOR. See very-high frequency omnidirectional range.

VORTAC. A facility consisting of two components, VOR and TACAN, which provides three individual services: VOR azimuth, TACAN azimuth, and TACAN distance (DME) at one site.

VOR test facility (VOT). A ground facility which emits a test signal to check VOR receiver accuracy. Some VOTs are available to the user while airborne, while others are limited to ground use only.

VOT. See VOR test facility.

VSI. See vertical speed indicator.

V_{SO}. The stalling speed or the minimum steady flight speed in the landing configuration. In small airplanes, this is the power-off stall speed at the maximum landing weight in the landing configuration (gear and flaps down). The lower limit of the white arc.

V_{S1}. The stalling speed or the minimum steady flight speed obtained in a specified configuration. For most airplanes, this is the power-off stall speed at the maximum takeoff weight in the clean configuration (gear up, if retractable, and flaps up). The lower limit of the green arc.

V-tail. A design which utilizes two slanted tail surfaces to perform the same functions as the surfaces of a conventional elevator and rudder configuration. The fixed surfaces act as both horizontal and vertical stabilizers.

V_X. Best angle-of-climb speed. The airspeed at which an airplane gains the greatest amount of altitude in a given distance. It is used during a short-field takeoff to clear an obstacle.

V_Y. Best rate-of-climb speed. This airspeed provides the most altitude gain in a given period of time.

V_{YSE}. Best rate-of-climb speed with one engine inoperative. This airspeed provides the most altitude gain in a given period of time in a light, twin-engine airplane following an engine failure.

W

WAAS. See wide area augmentation system.

Wake turbulence. Wingtip vortices that are created when an airplane generates lift. When an airplane generates lift, air spills over the wingtips from the high pressure areas below the wings to the low pressure areas above them. This flow causes rapidly rotating whirlpools of air called wingtip vortices or wake turbulence.

Warm front. The boundary area formed when a warm air mass contacts and flows over a colder air mass. Warm fronts cause low ceilings and rain.

Warning area. An area containing hazards to any aircraft not participating in the activities being conducted in the area. Warning areas may contain intensive military training, gunnery exercises, or special weapons testing.

WARP. See weather and radar processing.

Waste gate. A controllable valve in the tailpipe of an aircraft reciprocating engine equipped with a turbocharger. The valve is controlled to vary the amount of exhaust gases forced through the turbocharger turbine.

Waypoint. A designated geographical location used for route definition or progress-reporting purposes and is defined in terms of latitude/longitude coordinates.

WCA. See wind correction angle.

Weather and radar processor (WARP). A device that provides real-time, accurate, predictive, and strategic weather information presented in an integrated manner in the National Airspace System (NAS).

Weather depiction chart. Details surface conditions as derived from METAR and other surface observations.

Weight. The force exerted by an aircraft from the pull of gravity.

Wide area augmentation system (WAAS). A differential global positioning system (DGPS) that improves the accuracy of the system by determining position error from the GPS satellites, then transmitting the error, or corrective factors, to the airborne GPS receiver.

Wind correction angle (WCA). The angle between the desired track and the heading of the aircraft necessary to keep the aircraft tracking over the desired track.

Wind direction indicators. Indicators that include a wind sock, wind tee, or tetrahedron. Visual reference will determine wind direction and runway in use.

Wind shear. A sudden, drastic shift in windspeed, direction, or both that may occur in the horizontal or vertical plane.

Winds and temperature aloft forecast (FB). A twice daily forecast that provides wind and temperature forecasts for specific locations in the contiguous United States.

Wing area. The total surface of the wing (in square feet), which includes control surfaces and may include wing area covered by the fuselage (main body of the airplane), and engine nacelles.

Wings. Airfoils attached to each side of the fuselage and are the main lifting surfaces that support the airplane in flight.

Wing root. The wing root is the part of the wing on a fixed-wing aircraft that is closest to the fuselage. Wing roots usually bear the highest bending forces in flight and during landing, and they often have fairings to reduce interference drag between the wing and the fuselage. The opposite end of a wing from the wing root is the wing tip.

Wing span. The maximum distance from wingtip to wingtip.

Wingtip vortices. The rapidly rotating air that spills over an airplane's wings during flight. The intensity of the turbulence depends on the airplane's weight, speed, and configuration. Also referred to as wake turbulence. Vortices from heavy aircraft may be extremely hazardous to small aircraft.

Wing twist. A design feature incorporated into some wings to improve aileron control effectiveness at high angles of attack during an approach to a stall.

Work. A measurement of force used to produce movement.

World Aeronautical Charts (WAC). A standard series of aeronautical charts covering land areas of the world at a size and scale convenient for navigation (1:1,000,000) by moderate speed aircraft. Topographic information includes cities and towns, principal roads, railroads, distinctive landmarks, drainage, and relief. Aeronautical information includes visual and radio aids to navigation, airports, airways, restricted areas, obstructions and other pertinent data.

Z

Zone of confusion. Volume of space above the station where a lack of adequate navigation signal directly above the VOR station causes the needle to deviate.

Zulu time. A term used in aviation for coordinated universal time (UTC) which places the entire world on one time standard.

