Dekalb-Peachtree Airport (PDK)

PILOT INFORMATION

Updated: 01/24/2023

PDK Tower Administrative Office
Business Phone 678-495-5230
Open 08000L to 1600L – Monday through Friday

Federal Aviation Administration

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to supplement the From the Flight Deck Videos that are produced by the FAA Runway Safety Group. Here you will also find information provided by the local air traffic controllers at the airport where you intend to fly.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

The information in this facility supplement is subject to change. Not for navigation or legal* pre-flight action. Always refer to official pre-flight materials such as, but not limited to, NOTAMs, airport diagrams, VFR charts and airport construction notices for the latest airport-specific details.

General Links

Here are some links to current FAA information.

- **Aeronautical Information Services**
- **Airport Construction**
- **Airport Diagram**
- **Chart Supplement**
- **From the Flight Deck Videos**
- **Hot Spots**
- **NOTAMS**
- **VFR Charts**

Some Advisory Circulars for Reference

- AC 90-66B Non-Towered Airport Flight Operations (faa.gov) Subject: Non-Towered Airport Flight Operations – 2/25/19
- AC 91-73B (faa.gov) Subject: Parts 91 and 135 Single Pilot, Flight School Procedures During Taxi Operations – 7/30/12
- AC 91-92 (faa.gov) Subject: Pilot's Guide to a Preflight Briefing - 3/15/21
- AC 90-48 (faa.gov) Subject: Pilots' Role in Collision Avoidance – 10/20/22

PDK Specific Section

Dekalb-Peachtree Airport (PDK) is medium sized primarily general aviation airport located fifteen miles north, northeast of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. PDK hosts a high volume of corporate/general aviation jet traffic as well as pilot training operations for approximately ten flight schools based on the field. There is a robust helicopter community, providing tours of the city, daily traffic watch reports, and primary helicopter flight instruction. The diverse nature of pilot experience and aircraft performance make PDK a challenge for both controllers and pilots. This video shares runway configuration details and prepares pilots for hot spots and common issues at PDK.

1. From the Flight Deck (FTFD) Video Notes

- Runway configuration consists of two closely spaced parallel RWYs with staggered thresholds labeled RWYs 3-21 L and R.
- RWY 16-34 is an intersecting RWY that crosses both of the parallel RWYs.
- Services are primarily located on the west and north sides of the airport.
- TWY A is parallel to and runs the entire length of RWYs 3-21 L and R.
- TWYs B and D parallel RWY 16-34.
- It is possible to confuse a highway with the RWY 3-21 complex. At night, the lights on the highway are much brighter than the lights on the airport.
- Wrong surface landing potential exists when approaching PDK from the north or northeast and landing on RWY 21 L or R.
- RWY 21 R threshold is staggered by over 2000’ making it possible for pilots to fixate on the first runway that they see.
- TWY A has also been mistaken for RWY 21R.
- To enhance situational awareness for areas where RWY confusion may lead to a wrong surface event, the FAA has released an Arrival Alert Notice for PDK. An Arrival Alert Notice provides language with a graphic visually depicting the approach to an airport with a history of wrong surface alignment. This can be found in the Digital Chart Supplement under Airport Remarks which will then point you to the Special Notices Section.
- Aircraft approaching RWY 3L or 3R from either downwind or straight-in can expect traffic in the other pattern, because the thresholds are not staggered this means that aircraft on base leg may see traffic in front which may result in a TCAS alert.
- Since RWY 3R is the primary instrument RWY, aircraft conducting instrument approaches may see close-in traffic for RWY 3L which may also result in a TCAS alert.
- RWY centerlines are approximately 500’ apart making it important not to overshoot the turn to final.

- The PDK Airport Authority has worked for several years to mitigate surface issues and hot spots. RWY and TWY markings, signage and lighting have significantly reduced wrong surface issues, however, first-time/transient pilots should be aware of a few areas.
- At the approach end of RWY 21R and TWY G, pilots assigned to taxi to RWY 21R via TWY A have missed the hold short line and entered RWY 21R without a clearance.
- Aircraft leaving the run-up area at the juncture of TWY E and TWY A have also missed the hold short line on TWY G and entered RWY 21R.
- You need specific clearance to cross any RWY.
- Hot Spot 2 is simply a complex intersection of several taxiways bounded by two RWYs. Pay close attention to aircraft location/taxi route when operating in this area.
- Hot Spot 3 – Pilots expecting RWY 03R often fail to hold short at RWY 03L
- You need specific clearance to cross any RWY, active or not.

2. Airspace

The airspace at PDK is Class D with a 3500' MSL ceiling. It underlies Atlanta Class B airspace which begins at 7000' MSL directly over the PDK airport. (Refer to Sectional Chart)

Class D Airspace Requirements (CFR §91.129 and AIM 3-1-4; 3-2-5):

- Visibility — 3 statute miles
- Distance from Clouds — 500 feet below | 1,000 feet above | 2,000 feet horizontal
- Communications — Establish communications (controller response)
- Pilot — No special certification required
- Equipment — Two-way radio

Class B Airspace Requirements (CFR §91.131 and AIM 3-1-4; 3-2-3)

- Visibility — 3 statute miles
- Distance from Clouds — Clear of clouds
- Communications — Must obtain ATC clearance prior to entering/departing
- Pilot — Private Pilot Certificate (see AIM for alt requirements)
- Equipment — Two-way radio, operable transponder with automatic altitude reporting and ADS-B Out

3. Cautions

Hot Spots

HS 1 When side stepping from RWY 21L to RWY 21R pilots have mistakenly landed on TWY A.

HS 2 Southbound traffic on TWY B will miss the turn onto TWY A when assigned RWY 03L or RWY 03R.

HS 3 Pilots expecting RWY 03R often fail to hold at RWY 03L.

Departure

- ✓ Verify proper heading prior to starting takeoff roll on all intersection departures.

Landing

- ✓ Wrong Surface Landing risk exists due to closely spaced parallel RWYs with staggered thresholds.
- ✓ TWY A parallels RWY 03L-21R – Caution for wrong surface landing on TWY A
- ✓

Surface Risk – Movement Area

- ✓ Underlies ATL Class B Airspace
- ✓ The run-up pads for RWYs 3L and 21R are positioned across TWY A from the hold line at the approach end of each runway. Pilots in the run-up should remain on Ground Control frequency, report run-up complete and await instructions. **Proper read-back of all runway hold short instructions is critical and MANDATORY.
- ✓ Pilots exiting RWY 3R-21L must remain on Tower frequency until instructed to contact Ground. Pilots should expect to hold short of RWY 3L-21R with the Tower until told to cross. The runway hold short markings between the parallel runways are located deceptively far from the RWY 3R-21L runway edge stripe.

Additional Cautions

- ✓ If ever in doubt about your position or instructions, ask the TWR.
- ✓ Underlies ATL Class B Airspace

4. Communications

PDK Tower (TWR) operates from 0630L – 2300L Monday – Friday
0700L-2300L Saturday - Sunday

When TWR is closed:

- ✓ The airspace becomes Class **E**.
- ✓ Pilots should use standard uncontrolled airport procedures
- ✓ CTAF Frequency 120.9
- ✓ Getting Clearance – IFR Clearances and releases available from Atlanta TRACON on frequency 120.9
- ✓ Cancelling Flight Plan – Cancel IFR flight plans with Atlanta TRACON on 120.9 or with Flight Service on frequencies 122.2 or 122.6.
- ✓ Pilot operated runway and approach lighting (PCL) is available on frequency 120.0
- ✓ For traffic advisories contact Atlanta Approach Control on 126.97 and remain clear of the Atlanta Class Bravo airspace

- ✓ Unless otherwise noted, only Runway 3R/21L will remain lighted when tower closes
- ✓ Small GA aircraft should use caution for jet aircraft and report position on 120.9

5. From the PDK Control Tower

Local Information that your PDK TWR controllers want you to know.

Traffic Patterns

- ✓ Single engine small aircraft pattern altitude is 2000' MSL
- ✓ High performance turboprop and jet pattern altitude is 2500' MSL
- ✓ RWY 3R, RWY 21R are RIGHT TRAFFIC
- ✓ RWY 3L, RWY 21L are LEFT TRAFFIC
- ✓ Pattern aircraft must be aware that traffic operates 500' below and 500' above them and must maintain pattern altitude

Ground

- ✓ All ramps (including Taxi-lanes K and L) are non-movement areas and not controlled by ATC.
- ✓ Aircraft calling ground for taxi shall specify whether IFR or VFR departure
- ✓ When the tower is open, clearance delivery is only on Ground (121.6) or Clearance (125.2)
- ✓ FREQUECY IS SPECIFIED ON THE ATIS BROADCAST
- ✓ DO NOT CALL ON 120.9 FOR CLEARANCE WHEN TOWER IS OPEN
- ✓ Aircraft requesting VFR flight following should call ground with a VFR request and state your cardinal direction of flight (e.g. NW, SW, SE, N, etc.). Ground will issue taxi instructions and advise flight following will be available once airborne on 126.97 but only once tower switches you over.
- ✓ All VFR aircraft will request taxi from Ground with call-sign, type aircraft, parking location, the ATIS and cardinal VFR direction of flight

Take-off/Departure

- ✓ IFR aircraft expect an initial altitude of 3000' MSL, Tower will issue an initial departure heading once they receive your IFR release from the TRACON
- ✓ VFR traffic departing RWY 3L-21R must maintain runway track unless otherwise instructed by ATC and be vigilant for jet traffic departing the parallel runway
- ✓ VFR helicopters can expect to depart either the helipad (Charlie Pad) or depart directly from the ramp at the pilot's own risk. Tower may restrict helicopter departures to "at or below" 1500' MSL for traffic in the pattern.

Arrival/Landing

- ✓ VFR aircraft approaching from the east may be instructed to cross midfield at or above 2000' MSL or 2500' MSL to enter the downwind for RWY 3L-21R. This is to procedurally separate inbound aircraft from aircraft arriving and departing. The inbound aircraft crossing midfield must ensure they cross the runway complex at the midpoint from east to west.

- ✓ PDK has parallel runways that are 500 feet apart (Closely spaced parallels). Arriving aircraft must be aware of aircraft arriving to the parallel runway on a straight in or opposing base. Tower will continually issue traffic until the pilot calls the traffic in sight.

Special Traffic (Military/Commercial/Helicopter, etc.)

- ✓ VFR helicopters will be instructed by Approach Control to enter a boundary of the airport (East/West/North/South). After being switched to the tower, helicopters should advise the tower where they are parking and expect a clearance or landing advisory shortly after.
- ✓ Pilots should be aware of occasional military and civilian aircraft conducting overhead maneuvers at PDK. The overhead pattern is at 2500' MSL.
- ✓ There is a robust sightseeing, pilot training, news/traffic reporting, and MEDEVAC helicopter presence at PDK. Taxiing aircraft should use caution for rotor wash. Many helicopters departure directly from and land directly to the ramp areas.

Avoidance Areas

- ✓ When RWY 3R/L are in use VFR aircraft should avoid:
  - -The area between PDK355° and PDK035° radials between 4 and 6NM at 3000' MSL due to IFR jet departures on a Runway Heading or a 360° heading climbing to 3000' MSL.
  - -The area between 3 and 6 miles southeast of the airport at 3000' MSL for IFR arrival jet traffic
- ✓ When RWY 21L/R are in use VFR aircraft should avoid:
  - -The area 5NM northeast of PDK (PDK030° radial) between 2500' MSL and 3500' MSL because IFR aircraft on the ILS approach are descending from AABEE (PDK 030/12.3 DME) out of 3000' MSL, crossing CHAMB (PDK 030/6.2 DME) at 2900' MSL and continuing to descend to the runway
  - -The area 3 miles southeast of PDK between 2500' MSL and 3000' MSL for IFR eastbound jets departing RWY 21L with a 090° heading climbing to 3000' MSL
- ✓ VFR pilots should avoid "skirting the Delta". The high volume of VFR and IFR traffic in and out of PDK makes it imperative for aircraft on the edge of the Class D to monitor/ contact the Tower, especially between 2000' MSL and 3000' MSL.

6. Additional Information

- ✓ ILS Critical Areas – PDK has no protected ILS critical areas (they are all east of RWY 21L)
- ✓ The ILS hold bar on TWY A short or RWY 21L is meant to protect the Obstacle Clearance Surface when an arriving aircraft is within two miles of the runway. The weather requirements for this hold line is the same as for an ILS hold line (Ceiling

less than 800 feet and visibility less than 2 miles). Tower may instruct departing aircraft to pull up to the Runway Hold Short line if no aircraft are on final.

- ✓ Maintenance engine runs. The standard location for maintenance engine runs is in the run-up pad on Taxiway Juliet ("the Juliet run-up"). This area falls within the Precision Obstacle Free Zone (POFZ) and must be protected when the ceiling is less than 300 feet or the visibility is less than ¾ miles. Anytime an aircraft performs a run-up in the Juliet pad, the operator must ensure the aircraft fuselage is parallel to RWY 21L and the engines are facing north.
- ✓ RWY 21L has a 1000 foot displaced threshold.
- ✓ RWY 21L has a 500 foot paved overrun with 500 feet of the Engineered Material Arresting System (EMAS) beyond it

End of PDK Specific Section

General Information Section

1. Some Best Practices

Do:

- ✓ Refer to the airfield diagram and/or airport moving map while stopped and/or prior to taxiing.
- ✓ Keep your eyes outside to observe traffic, potential threats and airport signs and markings.
- ✓ Ask the controller to repeat instructions and clearances if you are not sure.
- ✓ Ask for progressive taxi instructions if you are unfamiliar or have lost situational awareness.
- ✓ Taxi your aircraft to the side of the run-up area to allow other aircraft to taxi around you if you are not ready for departure.
- ✓ Advise TWR on initial contact (ground or air) if you are a student pilot.
- ✓ Using runway and/or taxiway designators to describe your position, and turning on exterior lights will assist the controller in identifying you.
- ✓ Acknowledge all ATC instructions and read back all hold short restrictions with your call sign.
- ✓ Always make sure that your aircraft is completely behind all hold-short lines.
- ✓ Advise GND/TWR if you want an intersection departure and wait for TWR clearance to take off. There may be a delay due to wake turbulence or traffic.
- ✓ When using any RWY, verify mag heading and look for the white markings to avoid a wrong surface event.
- ✓ Consider backing up a visual approach with an underlying instrument (ILS/LOC/GPS) approach if time and workload allows.
- ✓ Remember that you must have a clearance to cross all RWYs, active and not active.
- ✓ Use caution when taxiing smaller aircraft/helicopters in the vicinity of larger aircraft/helicopters. Controllers may use the words rotor wash, jet blast, or prop wash when issuing cautionary advisories. A general rule of thumb is 100 feet behind a jet aircraft.
- ✓ Reference GPS User Waypoint, or if available, the assigned runway's instrument approach. If unsure that you are aligned for the assigned runway, announce going around and why.
- ✓ Verify proper heading prior to starting takeoff roll on all departures. Consider checking and calling out, Wet compass, runway heading, runway paint/signage for departure runway, and directional gyro shows runway heading.

Do Not:

- ✓ Do not taxi on your own without obtaining taxi instructions from ATC.
- ✓ Do not cross an active RWY without specific controller permission to cross that RWY.
- ✓ Do not use a RWY as a turn-off during landing unless cleared to do so by TWR.
- ✓ Do not wait until you are ready for departure to request an IFR clearance. Making your request to clearance delivery or ground control prior to taxiing will allow time for ATC coordination.
- ✓ Do not, on departure, leave TWR frequency while still in TWR airspace unless previously approved. (Note: frequency change outside of TWR airspace is at pilot's discretion.)

2. Lost Communications Tips (Additional information in the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM) Chapter 6 - Section 4)

- ✓ Squawk **Transponder Code 7600** if you experience loss of two-way radio capability.
- ✓ If you can hear other aircraft but nobody responds to your calls then you should check forproper

frequency selection, popped circuit breaker, radio panel setup, or an improperly hooked up intercom.

- ✓ Weak batteries in intercoms are often the cause of “radio failure”. Your emergency checklistmay come in handy for checking other areas specific to your aircraft.
- ✓ If you can’t hear anything on the receiver, check the volume control, squelch, intercom, circuit breaker, or a stuck mike.
- ✓ After you have determined the extent of the radio failure, you can determine how to communicate with the ATC.

3. Emergencies

- ✓ Each pilot in command who (though not deviating from a rule of this subpart) is given priority by ATC in an emergency and shall submit a detailed report of that emergency within 48 hours to the manager of that ATC facility, if requested by ATC. Ref: CFR §91.123 (d)
- ✓ It is extremely rare that a pilot is asked to justify declaring an emergency. In most cases,when a report is needed, it can usually be accomplished with a phone call.
- ✓ Additional information is also found in the AIM in Chapter 6 – Emergency Procedures

4. Special VFR (AIM 4-4-6)

- ✓ Special VFR is primarily intended to offer pilots a way to operate into, out of, and through tower controlled airspace when local weather restricts the visibility or ceiling tobelow VFR minimums.
- ✓ There are times, for instance, when visibility is below three miles due to ground fog or the ceiling is below 1000 feet AGL due to a cold front passage, it may be advantageousto use the Special VFR rules to be able to get to VFR conditions.
- ✓ There are rules and conditions that apply to Special VFR and the one that controllers deal with the most often is the requirement that the pilot must request the clearance. We cannot offer it, as we cannot determine your abilities as a pilot and have no wish totalk you into accepting a clearance that may be beyond your experience level.

The basic requirements for Special VFR are:

- ✈ The clearance must be requested by the pilot.
- ✈ If it is after sunset and before sunrise the pilot requesting the clearance must be IFR rated and the aircraft must be certified for IFR flight.
- ✈ A minimum of 1 mile visibility must exist as reported by the tower.

What you may do with a Special VFR clearance:

- ✈ You may depart for another destination
- ✈ You may transition
- ✈ You may enter and land
- ✈ You may do touch and go landings

End of General Section