

# Operational procedures

This section details operational procedures that **must be followed** in all aircraft operations. These procedures are extracts from the State Aircraft Unit Procedures (SAUP's) and the Pilot Reference Manual, which are approved for use by DEPI and the CFA.

## Flight following and flight notification procedures

Flight following is a mandatory Agency flight monitoring procedure whereby a nominated responsible person keeps track of the progress of an operational Agency flight through regular contact at pre-determined time intervals, and initiates search and rescue (SAR) if contacts are not made or if some doubt exists as to safety of the aircraft.

The procedures for Agency flight following and SAR initiation are contained in SAUP AM 1.04 and SAUP AM 1.07. More information is also contained in the Pilot Reference Manual

### Flight following procedures

Where flight following is required:

- The following information must be recorded pre-flight on the ASU Flight Following and Pax Manifest or Agency Incident Management Log and include:
  - date and ETD and ETA of flight;
  - all flight details including departure and landing locations;
  - manifest of all persons on board – including pilot;
  - flight following radio communications channel; and
  - name of nominated responsible person.
- The pilot or Agency person (as appropriate) conducting the operational flight must make contact with the pre-arranged nominated responsible person:
  - upon departure of the operational flight;
  - at least every 30 minutes during a flight; and
  - upon safe arrival at the destination.
- Contacts must include the present location, task and expected locations and tasks for next 30 minutes. Significant changes to anticipated tasks, locations and passengers must be communicated as they occur.
- All contacts (radio or otherwise) must be properly logged by the nominated responsible person.

- The nominated responsible person(s) must initiate action according to the SAR Initiation Procedures if the appropriate contacts are not made within the prescribed period or if an Emergency Call is made.
- If the aircraft is not able to contact the nominated responsible person at a required contact time, another station must be contacted and asked to pass information to the responsible person maintaining flight following.
- The nominated responsible person may transfer responsibility to a different person, by arrangement, provided the aircraft is notified and the transfer of responsibility is clear.

Where a SARtime is nominated with ASA, or where FullSAR is provided - submit details as required by ASA.

### **Requirement to record passenger names**

Irrespective of the category or type of flight, a record of the pilot and passengers carried must be available on the ground at all times the aircraft is in flight.

Ideally this should be in the form of a passenger manifest left with the person responsible for flight following and recorded on the ASU Flight Following and Pax Manifest or Agency Incident Management Log. Where an aircraft is frequently picking up or dropping off passengers (such as during helicopter fire command operations), details of passengers would have to be transmitted by radio to the nominated responsible person. Where no other option exists it would be acceptable to leave a manifest in an accessible location at the point of departure.

### **Requirement to maintain communications**

It is the responsibility of both the pilot and the officer initiating or dispatching the flight to ensure Flight following and communications procedures are complied with.

It must be carefully noted that some types of flight require maintenance of continuous communications with DEPI or CFA facilities irrespective of whether or not flight following is required for that particular flight. For example during the fire season all State Fleet aircraft are required to maintain continuous communications with the State Airdesk to facilitate rapid dispatch/re-deployment.

## SAR initiation procedures

If contact is...	Do...
<b>1. up to 10 minutes late for a scheduled call or arrival.</b>	<b>Attempt to contact aircraft:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• on agreed Agency channel;</li><li>• via on-ground personnel at last known location;</li><li>• on different Agency channels/radios;</li><li>• via other Agency offices, fire towers etc. to attempt contact;</li><li>• by asking other Agency aircraft in area.</li></ul> <p>Continue to attempt contact at regular intervals. It may also be useful to have ASA call the aircraft. This is normally arranged through the State Airdesk on 1300 13 4144 (24 hrs) or Trunk Radio 700.</p>
<b>2. 15 minutes late and no contact as per #1 above.</b>	<b>Establish whereabouts of Aircraft:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• contact departure point to determine if aircraft departed on time;</li><li>• contact destination to determine if in fact aircraft has arrived (somebody may have to drive out there to check);</li><li>• check with whoever is holding SARTIME (contact ASA through State Airdesk if ASA holds SARTIME), or whoever is conducting flight following, if appropriate;</li><li>• contact offices/towers/fire-line etc. on route;</li><li>• contact other aircraft in area – consider diverting aircraft (or vehicles) to look for signs of missing aircraft;</li><li>• contact other aerodromes/landing strips/fuel merchants etc. where aircraft may have landed;</li><li>• consider if aircraft may have diverted and forgotten or has been unable to notify you (perhaps diverted due to weather, maybe to a different incident etc.);</li><li>• notify State Airdesk – unless previously done and the Incident Controller.</li></ul>

<b>3. 20 minutes late and no contact as per #1 or 2 above.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate SAR Action</li> <li>• State Airdesk will contact Australian Search &amp; Rescue (AusSAR);</li> <li>• mobilise Agency resources that may be required (e.g. ensure they are briefed, properly prepared, have equipment, have appropriate communications);</li> <li>• if appropriate, alert or mobilise Ambulance/Police/SES or other resources that may be required;</li> <li>• establish Incident Management Team under AIIMS.</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency Call Response: MAYDAY and PAN call.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Incident Controller and State Airdesk</li> <li>• Ambulance / Fire / Police via 000</li> <li>• State Airdesk will notify Aus SAR.</li> </ul>
<b>State Airdesk</b>	<b>Ph. 1300 13 4144 (24 hrs) or Trunk 233 4001 700</b>
<b>AuSAR</b> Rescue Coordination Centre	Ph. 1800 815 257 <i>(only if unable to contact State Airdesk)</i>

## Aircheck

AIRCHECK is the performance monitoring program for State Fleet aircraft.

Each State Fleet aircraft is issued with a specific list of criteria, which must be checked by the authorised officer in charge of the flight or the authorised officer who authorises the Flight Operations Return. This person will vary according to the type of operation. The responsibility for completion of the AIRCHECK documents is that of the pilot.

The AIRCHECK system does not negate the DEPI's right to stand-down an aircraft for non-compliance with contract conditions.