

Student Study Notes – Canadian PPL

Aviation Ground School: Abbreviations & Acronyms

This version of my “Abbreviations & Acronyms” study notes is from January 1st, 2017. I’ll update this document any time I find the need to make any changes, and as I continue to progress through additional training.

I am sharing these study notes for anyone else who is taking their PPL in Canada. These aren’t intended as a replacement for proper training. I’m only sharing these notes as a supplement covering many of the key points that I decided that I really needed to memorize while going through my own PPL studies. The information in this specific set of notes comes from just two sources: the Aeronautical Information Manual, and the CFS.

Please note that while I have made every effort to ensure that all of the information in these notes is accurate, you should verify everything here against what you’ve learned in your own study programs. I (Jonathan Clark) shall not assume any liability for errors or omissions in these notes, and your official pilot training should always supersede any information presented herein. As the Canadian PPL curriculum is updated occasionally, I recommend that if you want to be 100% certain that everything in this set of study notes is correct, you should print a copy and ask your instructor to review these notes with you.

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Let’s Get Started – Ground School: Abbreviations & Acronyms

One of the more daunting challenges for student pilots is to start learning the exhaustive lists of abbreviations and acronyms that relate to both aviation and meteorology. In the modern digital age, technology means that restrictions on the length of communications are no longer a significant constraint. One might think that more written weather and meteorology reports, and other types of written documents, could revert to plain English rather than using so many shortened forms. However, until this happens, we need to memorize exhaustive lists of abbreviations and acronyms.

This set of study notes contains three separate study lists. The first is the list of general abbreviations and acronyms taken from the front of the Canada Flight Supplement (CFS). This is the easiest list to memorize, as most of the items are things that you’ll come across in a study of general aviation. I omitted some of the most basic commonsense abbreviations from this list, such as those for days of the week, months of the year, compass directions, and Canadian provinces.

The second list summarizes abbreviations and acronyms that can be used in Canadian NOTAMS. It is important to understand the meaning of these items for your flight exams. This list also comes from the front of the CFS. On a positive note, if you’re interpreting a NOTAM and you can’t remember what something means, you can just look it up in the CFS while you’re working on your pre-flight planning. Of course, knowing most of this information by memory is beneficial, because you don’t get a copy of the CFS during your flight exam.

The final list is a summary list of some of the most commonly used abbreviations and acronyms that you’ll find in aviation forecasts, and should be considered to be a bare minimum of the abbreviations that you must memorize relating to meteorology and weather forecasting. To be clear, there are MANY more abbreviations

and acronyms than the ones listed here. A full list can be found in the Manual of Word Abbreviations (MANAB), found on the Environment Canada website. However, that publication contains almost two hundred pages of abbreviations, which is beyond the scope of what can be presented here.

If an acronym or abbreviation was included in one of these lists, I usually omitted it from subsequent lists, in order to minimize repetition.

Let's start our review ...

General Aviation Abbreviations & Acronyms

AAE – above aerodrome elevation
AB INITIO – elementary
ABM – abeam
ACA – Arctic control area
ACN – aircraft classification number
A/D – aerodrome
ADCUS – advise customs
ADDN – addition, additional
ADF – automatic direction finding
ADS – automatic dependent surveillance
ADVS – advised, advise
ADVSY – advisory
AFB – air force base
A/G – air/ground
ALTN – alternate
AMSCR – aircraft movement surface condition report
AMU – air movements unit
AOE – airport of entry
APM – airport manager
APPR – approval, approve
APRT – airport
ARAF – air reserve air force
ARNG – arrangement, arrange
ARTCC – air route traffic control centre (US)
ASDE – airport surface detection equipment
ASPH – asphalt
ASR – airport surveillance radar
ASSN – association
ATB – airport terminal building
ATC – air traffic control
ATF – aerodrome traffic frequency
ATTN – attention
AU – approach Unicom
AUW – all up weight
AVN – aviation
BC – back course
BDRY – boundary
BIL – bilingual
BLKD – blocked
BM – back marker
BPOC – before proceeding on course

BRG – bearing
BTWN – between
CAE – control area extension
CAR(S) – Canadian Aviation Regulations publication
CARS – community aerodrome radio station
CCTV – closed circuit television
CCW – counter clockwise
CDA – Canadian domestic airspace
CDF – central de-icing facility
CDN – Canadian
CEIL – ceiling
CERT – certificate/certified
CF – Canadian forces
CFA – common frequency area
CFB – Canadian forces base
CFS – Canadian forces station
CH or CHAN – channel
CHG – charge
CIV – civilian
CK – checked, check
CLNC – clearance
CLSD – closed
CMNPS – Canadian minimum navigation performance specifications
COM/COMM – communication
COMSN – commission
CON – contract fuel
CONC – concrete
CONT – continuous
CONVL – conventional
CORP – corporation
CRS – course
CSN – Canadian switched network
CTN – caution
CTR – centre
CVFR – controlled VFR flight
CW – clockwise
CWO – contract weather observer
CZ – control zone
DEL – delivery
DEPT – department
DEP CON – departure control
DF – direction finding
DIA – diameter
DIREC – directional
DISPL – displaced
DND – department of national defense
DSN – defense switched network
DUAT – direct user access terminal
DUR – during, duration
DVFR – defense visual flight rules
DWAN – defense wide area network
EAT – expected approach time
EC – Environment Canada

EET – estimated elapsed time
EFC – expected further clearance time
EFF – effective
ELECT – electrical starting units
ELEV – elevation
ELT – emergency locator transmitter
ERS – emergency response services
ESA – emergency safe altitude
ETE – estimated time en route
EV – every
EXTV – extensive
FAA – federal aviation administration
FACF – final approach course fix
FATO – final approach and takeoff area
FBO – fixed base operator
FLD – field
FLIP – flight information publication
FLT PLN – flight plan
FM – frequency modulation
FOD – foreign object damage/debris
FR – from
FSII – fuel system icing inhibitor
G – grid
GAL – gallon
GCA – ground controlled approach
GCL – ground control intercept
GEN – general
GND – ground
GND CON – ground control
GOVT – government
GPI – ground point of interception
GR WT – gross weight
GS – glide slope
GTOW – gross takeoff weight
GV – grivation
H – hour
HAA – height above aerodrome
HDLG – handling
HAT – height above TDZE
HF – high frequency
HG – hanger
HG – inches of mercury
HI – high
HIAL – high intensity approach lighting
HIRL – high intensity runway lights
HLA – high level airspace
HOSP – hospital
HQ – headquarters
HR – high level air route
HWY – highway
IAIP – integrated aeronautical information package
ICAO – international civil aviation organization
ID – Idaho

IFF – identification friend or foe
IFSS – international flight service station
INBD – inbound
INC – incorporated
INF – inland navigational fix
INFO – information
INOP – inoperative
INS – inertial navigation system
INTSV – intensive
INTXN – intersection
IRU – inertial reference unit
ISA – international standard atmosphere
J – high level airway
JASU – jet aircraft starting unit
JB – jet barrier
JMC – joint meteorological centre
KHZ – kilohertz
KPH – kilometers per hour
KW – kilowatt
LAT – latitude
LCTD – located
LCZR – localizer
LF – low frequency
LOC – located/location
LONG – longitude
LVOP – low visibility operations plan
M – metres
M – magnetic
MAG VAR – magnetic variation
MANOT – missing aircraft notice
MB – millibar
MDT/HVY – moderate/heavy
ME – Maine
MEDEVAC – medical evacuation flight
MEHT – minimum eye height over threshold
MEM – memorial
METOC – meteorological and oceanographic
MFA – military flying area
MFAU – military flight advisory unit
MGR – manager
MHZ – megahertz
MI – Michigan
MIC – microphone
MISD – missed
MN – Minnesota
MNR – ministry of natural resources
MOA – military operations area
MTNS – mountains
MUNI – municipal/municipality
MVA – minimum vectoring altitude
N/A – not applicable
NATO – North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCA – northern control area

ND – North Dakota
NDA – northern domestic airspace
NGT – night
NO – number
NORDO – no radio
NT – Northwest Territories
NTAS – NORAD tactical avionics system
NTC – notice
NU – not usable
NU – Nunavut
NVG – night vision goggles
NWS – north warning system
OBD – outbound
OBSN(S) – observation(s)
OC – obstacle chart
OCC – obstacle clearance circle
OCL – obstacle clearance limit
OCSL – occasional
ODALS – omni-directional approach lighting system
OPRG – operating
O/S – out of service
O/T – other times
PAX – passenger
PCN – pavement classification number
PE – Prince Edward Island
PERM(S) – permission(s)
P-LINE(S) – power line(s)
PLR – pavement load rating (TC)
PMSV – pilot to metro service
POSN – position
PRO – procedure
PROH – prohibited
PSI – pounds per square inch
PSP – pierce steel planking
PT – point
PTN – pattern
PUB – public
PVT – private
RAAS – remote aerodrome advisory service
RAD – radial
RATCON – radar terminal control
RCMP – Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RCR – runway condition report
RCV – receive
RCVR – receiver
RESA – runway end safety area
REG – registered
REQ – request
RGT – right
RIL – runway identification lights
RLCD – relocated
RNG – range
RNPC – required navigation performance capability (airspace)

RON – remain overnight
RONLY – receiver only
RPT – report
RQRD – required
RR – retro reflective markers
RSC – runway surface condition
RSTD – restricted
RUF – rough
RVOP – reduced visibility operations plan
RVSM – reduced vertical separation minimum
SATCOM – satellite communications
SCA – southern control area
SCON – contract servicing
SDA – southern domestic airspace
SEAPL – seaplane
SEC – seconds of time
SELCAL – selective calling system
SFL – sequence flashing lights
SIF – selective identification feature
SIGMET – significant meteorological report
SIMUL – simultaneously
SM – statute miles
SOAP – spectrometric oil analysis program
SPECI – aerodrome special meteorological report
SQN – squadron
SSFO – simultaneous single frequency outlets
STAR – standard terminal arrival route
STD – standard
STN – station
STOR – storage
STU – student
SUM – summer
SUR – surround
SVCG – servicing
SWY – stopway
T – transmits only
T – True (after a bearing)
TA (3000) – transition altitude
TAS – true air speed
TC – Transport Canada
TCA – terminal control area
TCAS – traffic alert and collision avoidance system
TCU – terminal control unit
TDZE – touchdown zone elevation
TDZL – touchdown zone lighting
THLD – threshold
TNG – training
TRAN – transient
UHF – ultra high frequency
UNAVBL – unavailable
UNKN – unknown
UNLGTD – unlighted
UNLTD – unlimited

UNSKED – unscheduled
USA – United States of America
USAF – United States air force
USB – upper side band
USN – United States navy
UTC – coordinated universal time
VCS – vehicle control service
VGM – voice generator module
VGSI – visual glide slope indicator
VHF – very high frequency
VIC – vicinity
VNC – VFR navigation chart
VOLMET – meteorological information for aircraft in flight
VTPC – VFR terminal procedures chart
WA – Washington
WG – wing
WI – wind direction indicator
WIN – winter
WK(S) – week(s)
WKD – weekday
WKLY – weekly
WKNDS – weekends
WNG – warning
WP – way point
WT – weight
XMSN – transmission
YT – Yukon

Abbreviations & Acronyms Used in Canadian NOTAM's

ABN – aerodrome beacon
ABV – above
ACC – area control centre
ACFT – aircraft
ACT – active/activated/activity
AD – aerodrome
ADIZ – air defense identification zone
ADJ – adjacent
ADS-B – automatic dependent surveillance broadcast
ADZ – advise
AFT – after (time or place)
AGL – above ground level
AIC – aeronautical information circular
AIP – aeronautical information publication
ALS – approach lighting system
ALT – altitude
AMDT – AIP amendment
AP – airport
APAPI – abbreviated PAPI
APCH – approach
APN – apron
APRX – approximately

ARCAL – aircraft radio control of aerodrome lighting
ARFF – aircraft rescue and fire-fighting
ARR – arrive/arrival
ASDA – accelerate stop distance available
ASL – above sea level
ATC – air traffic control
ATFM – air traffic flow management
ATIS – automatic terminal information service
ATS – air traffic services
AUTH – authorized/authorization
AVASIS – abbreviated visual approach slope indicator system
AVBL – available/availability
AVGAS – aviation gasoline
AWOS – automatic weather observation system
AWY – airway
AZM – azimuth
BCN – beacon
BCST – broadcast
BFR – before
BLDG – building
BLW – below
BRKG – braking
C – centre
C – degrees Celsius
CAP – Canada Air Pilot publication
CAT – category
CFS – Canada Flight Supplement publication
CHEM – chemical
CL – centerline
CLR – clear, cleared to, clearance
CLRD – cleared runway
CLSD – close/closed/closing
COMSND – commissioned
COND – condition
CONST – construction/constructed
COOR – coordinate/coordination
COORD – coordinates
CPDLC – controller pilot data link communications
CRFI – Canadian runway friction index
CTA – control area
CTC – contact
CTL – control
CUST – customs
CWAS – Canada Water Aerodrome Supplement publication
CYA – class F advisory area
CYD – class F danger area
CYR – class F restricted area
DA – decision altitude
DAH – Designated Airspace Handbook publication
DECOMSND – decommissioned
DEG – degrees
DEP – depart/departure
DEST – destination

DH – decision height
DIST – distance
DLA – delay/delayed
DLY – daily
DME – distance measuring equipment
DOM – domestic
DP – dew point temperature
DPT – depth
DRCO – dialup remote communication outlet
DRG – during
DT – daylight savings time
DTHR – displaced runway threshold
EATPL – emergency air traffic priority list
EM – emission
EMERG – emergency
ENR – en route
EQPT – equipment
ESCAT – emergency security control of air traffic
ETA – estimated time of arrival
ETD – estimated time of departure
EXC – except
EXER – exercises/exercising/exercise
EXP – expect/expected/expecting
FAC – facilities
FAF – final approach fix
FATO – final approach and takeoff area
FAX – facsimile transmission
FCST – forecast
FIC – flight information centre
FIR – flight information region
FISE – flight information service enroute
FL – flight level
FLR – flares
FLT – flight
FLW – follows/following
FM – from
FMS – flight management system
FPM – feet per minute
FREQ – frequency
FSS – flight service station
FT – foot/feet
GLD – glider
GNSS – global navigation satellite system
GP – glide path
GPS – global positioning system
GRVL – gravel
H24 – continuous day/night service
HAPI – helicopter approach path indicator
HBN – hazard beacon
HDG – heading
HEL – helicopter
HELI – heliport
HGT – height or height above

HOL – holiday
HR – hours
HYDRO – water aerodrome
IAF – initial approach fix
ID – identify/identifier
IDENT – identification
IFR – instrument flight rules
ILS – instrument landing system
IMC – instrument meteorological conditions
INFO – information
INS – inch/inches
INSTR – instrument
INT – intersection
INTL – international
INTST – intensity
IR – ice on runway
KG – kilograms
KT – knots
L – left
LB – pounds
LDA – landing distance available
LDG – landing
LEN – length
LGT – lights/lighting
LGTD – lighted
LIH – light intensity high
LIL – light intensity low
LIM – light intensity medium
LNAV – lateral navigation
LOC – localizer
LP – localizer performance without vertical guidance
LPV – localizer performance with vertical guidance
LTD – limited
LVL – level
LWIS – limited weather information system
MAG – magnetic
MAINT – maintenance
MAX – maximum
MDA – minimum descent altitude
MEA – minimum enroute altitude
MET – meteorological/meteorology
METAR – aerodrome routine meteorological report
MF – medium frequency
MIL – military
MIN – minutes
MNPS – minimum navigation performance specifications
MOC – minimum obstacle clearance
MOCA – minimum obstacle clearance altitude
MSA – minimum sector altitude
MSG – message
MSL – mean sea level
MTCA – military terminal control area
NAT – north Atlantic

NAV – navigation
NAVAID – navigation aid
NDB – non directional radio beacon
NE – northeast
NGT – night
NM – nautical miles
NPA – non precision approach
OBS – observe/observed/observation
OBST – obstacle/obstruction
OCA – oceanic control area
OPN – open/opening/opened
OPR – operator/operate/operative/operating/operational
OPS – operations
O/R – on request
OTS – organized track system
PAL – peripheral station
PAPI – precision approach path indicator
PAR – precision approach radar
PCT – percent
PERM – permanent
PIREP – pilot weather report
PNR – prior notice required
PPR – prior permission required
PRKG – parking
PROC – procedure
PSR – primary surveillance radar
PUB – published/publications
PWR – power
QUAD – quadrant
R – right
RAC – règlement de l'aviation Canadian (CAR)
RAG – runway arresting gear
RAIM – receiver autonomous integrity monitoring
RCAP – restricted Canada air pilot
RCC – rescue coordination centre
RCL – runway centre line
RCLL – runway centre line lights
RCO – remote communications outlet
RDL – radial
RDO – radio
REC – receive/receiver
REDL – runway edge light(s)
REF – reference
RENL – runway end lights
RMK – remark
RNAV – area navigation
RNP – required navigation performance
RSC – runway surface condition
RSR – enroute surveillance radar
RTE – route
RTHL – runway threshold light(s)
RTZL – runway touchdown zone light(s)
RVR – runway visual range

RWY – runway
SAR – search and rescue
SDBY – standby
SFC – surface
SID – standard instrument departure
SKED – schedule/scheduled
SN – snow
SR – sunrise
SS – sunset
SSB – single sideband
SSR – secondary surveillance radar
STAR – standard instrument arrival
SVC – service, service message
SVCBL – serviceable
TACAN – ultra high frequency tactical air navigation aid
TAF – aerodrome terminal area forecast
TAR – terminal area surveillance radar
TCH – threshold crossing height
TDZ – touchdown zone
TEL – telephone
TEMPO – temporary/temporarily
TFC – traffic
THR – threshold
THRU – through
TIL – until
TKOF – takeoff
TLOF – touchdown and lift-off area
TML – terminal
TODA – takeoff distance available
TORA – takeoff run available
TRANS – transmits/transmitter
TWR – aerodrome control tower or aerodrome control
TWY – taxiway
UDF – ultra high frequency direction-finding station
UNICOM – private advisory station located at uncontrolled aerodrome
UNL – unlimited
UNREL – unreliable
U/S – unserviceable
VAGS – visual alignment guidance system
VAR – magnetic variation
VASIS – visual approach slope indicator system
VCY – vicinity
VDF – very high frequency direction finding station
VFR – visual flight rules
VIS – visibility
VMC – visual meteorological conditions
VNAV – vertical navigation
VNC – VFR navigation chart
VOR – VHF omnidirectional radio range
VORTAC – VOR and TACAN combination
VTA – VFR terminal chart area
WAAS – wide area augmentation system
WATER – water aerodrome

WDI – wind direction indicator
WEF – with effect from, effective from
WID – width/wide
WIP – work in progress
WX – weather
Z – zulu, coordinated universal time

Abbreviations & Acronyms Used in Aviation Forecasts

ABV – above
ACC - altocumulus castellanus
ACRS – across
ACSL – standing lenticular altocumulus
AFL – above freezing layer
AHD – ahead
ALG – along
APCH – approach
ASL – above sea level
BECMG – becoming
BGNG – beginning
BKN – broken
BL – blowing
BLO – below
BR – mist
BRF – brief
BRFLY – briefly
BRKS – breaks
BTN – between
CAT – clear air turbulence
CAVOK – ceiling and visibility OK
CB – cumulonimbus
CIG – ceiling
CLD – cloud
CLR – clear
CNTR – centre
CST – coast
CU – cumulus
DCRG – decreasing
DEG – degree
DNSLP – downslope
DP – deep
DPNG – deepening
DRFT – drifting
DURG – during
DVLPG – developing
DZ – drizzle
ELSW – elsewhere
EMBD – embedded
ENDG – ending
ERLY – easterly
EXC – except
FCST – forecast

FEW – few clouds
FG – fog
FM – from
FNT – front
FRQ – frequent
FT – foot
FU – smoke
FZ – freezing
FZLVL – freezing level
HGT – height
HI – high
HVY – heavy
ICG – icing
ICGIC – icing in cloud
ICGIP – icing in precipitation
INSTBY – instability
INTMT – intermittent
INTS – intense
INTSFY – intensify
ISOL – isolate
ISOLD – isolated
KT – knot
LCL – local
LFTG – lifting
LGT – light
LK – lake
LLJ – low level jet stream
LLWS – low level wind shear
LN – line
LO – low
LTL – little
LTNG – lightning
LVL - level
LWR - lower
LWRG – lowering
LYR – layer
MDT – moderate
MOVG – moving
MTS – mountains
MXD – mixed
NELY – northeasterly
NGT – night
NLY – northerly
NM – nautical mile
NMRS – numerous
NR – near
NRLY – nearly
NSW – no significant weather
NWLY – northwesterly
OBSC – obscure
OBSCD – obscured
OCNL – occasional
OCNLY – occasionally

OFSHR – offshore
ONSHR – onshore
OTLK – outlook
OTWZ – otherwise
OVC – overcast
OVR – over
PCPN – precipitation
PD – period
PL – ice pellets
PROB – probability
PROG - prognostic, prognosis
PRSTG – persisting
PTCHY – patchy
PTLY – partly
QS – quasi-stationary
RA – rain
RDG – ridge
REP – report
REPS – reports
RGN – region
RPDLY – rapidly
SCT – scattered
SELY – southeasterly
SEV – severe
SFC – surface
SH – shower
SHLW – shallow
SIGWX – significant weather
SKC - sky clear
SLY – southerly
SM – statute mile
SN – snow
SPECI – special meteorological report
SQ – squall
STG – strong
SVRL – several
SWLY – southwesterly
TCU – towering cumulus
TROF – trough
TROWAL – trough of warm air aloft
TRRN – terrain
TS – thunderstorm
TURB – turbulence
UPR – upper
UPSLP – upslope
UTC – coordinated universal time
VC – vicinity
VIS – visibility
VLY – valley
VRB – variable
VV – vertical visibility
WDLY – widely
WK – weak

WLY – westerly
WND – wind
WRM – warm
WS – wind shear
WV – wave
XTNSV – extensive
XTRM – extreme

Conclusion

The lists of abbreviations & acronyms for aviation are far more exhaustive than what I've listed here. In addition, you should be aware that certain words can have more than one acronym or abbreviation, depending on which source that you consult. It would also be wise to spend quite a bit of time studying the various resources that I've linked to on this page: <http://www.djbolivia.ca/aviation.html>

Thanks for reading, I hope this was helpful to pilots in training. If you find any errors in the above information, feel free to contact me at jonathan.scooter.clark@gmail.com

- Jonathan Clark