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.

To download PDF or audio MP3 versions of these notes, visit: http://djbolivia.ca/aviation.html

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
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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IFF</td>
<td>identification friend or foe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFSS</td>
<td>international flight service station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INBD</td>
<td>inbound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>incorporated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INF</td>
<td>inland navigational fix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFO</td>
<td>information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INOP</td>
<td>inoperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INS</td>
<td>inertial navigation system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTSV</td>
<td>intensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTXN</td>
<td>intersection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRU</td>
<td>inertial reference unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISA</td>
<td>international standard atmosphere</td>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>high level airway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JASU</td>
<td>jet aircraft starting unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JB</td>
<td>jet barrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JMC</td>
<td>joint meteorological centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KHZ</td>
<td>kilohertz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPH</td>
<td>kilometers per hour</td>
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<tr>
<td>KW</td>
<td>kilowatt</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAT</td>
<td>latitude</td>
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<tr>
<td>LCTD</td>
<td>located</td>
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<tr>
<td>LCZR</td>
<td>localizer</td>
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<tr>
<td>LF</td>
<td>low frequency</td>
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<tr>
<td>LOC</td>
<td>located/location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LONG</td>
<td>longitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVOP</td>
<td>low visibility operations plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>metres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>magnetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAG VAR</td>
<td>magnetic variation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANOT</td>
<td>missing aircraft notice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>millibar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDT/HVY</td>
<td>moderate/heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME</td>
<td>Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDEVAC</td>
<td>medical evacuation flight</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEHT</td>
<td>minimum eye height over threshold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEM</td>
<td>memorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METOC</td>
<td>meteorological and oceanographic</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFA</td>
<td>military flying area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MFAU</td>
<td>military flight advisory unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGR</td>
<td>manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MHZ</td>
<td>megahertz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>Michigan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIC</td>
<td>microphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISD</td>
<td>missed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MN</td>
<td>Minnesota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MNR</td>
<td>ministry of natural resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOA</td>
<td>military operations area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTNS</td>
<td>mountains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUNI</td>
<td>municipal/municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVA</td>
<td>minimum vectoring altitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCA</td>
<td>northern control area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ND – North Dakota  
NDA – northern domestic airspace  
NGT – night  
NO – number  
NORDO – no radio  
NT – Northwest Territories  
NTAS – NORAD tactical autovon 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
ONLY – receiver only
RPT – report
RQND – 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
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
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](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