Updated holding fuel advice for Australia

OPSGROUP Team
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AUSTRALIA

AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION SERVICE

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AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION CIRCULAR (AIC)

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HOLDING FUEL ADVICE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This AIC is to provide forward notification to pilots and aircraft operators of upcoming changes to AIP for holding fuel advice.

1.2 ATC may apply delaying action to an aircraft when the demand for an airport is more than the capacity, or due to other events such as weather.

1.3 Delaying action may require ATC to sequence arriving aircraft using one or more of the following methods:

a) Tactical speed control or vectoring,

b) Enroute holding procedures, or

c) Allocating a waypoint crossing time to the pilot.

1.4 AIP and ERSA refer to ATC holding fuel advisories and traffic holding delays. These advisories/ delays relate to estimates for airborne traffic holding caused by airport capacity constraints and are separate from ATFM measures and weather holding requirements.

1.5 In all cases, the responsibility for sufficient fuel carriage rests with the pilot or operator.

2. CHANGES TO HOLDING FUEL ADVISORIES

2.1 From 16 August 2018, changes will occur to the way ERSA and AIP holding information is described.

Australian traffic holding is a funny one; you can fly 16 hours directly from a place far far away, and then just before landing you get told to hold for 20 minutes – even though you have been in Australian airspace for sometimes 7 hours plus, they wait until the last few minutes to slow you down. ?

A recent AIP update and AIC Supp (H25/18) has updated the Airborne Holding Requirements for the four major Australian airports:

YBBN/Brisbane and **YMML/Melbourne** now are all in line with **YSSY/Sydney**

- **Daily, 2000Z-1300Z** (0600L-2300L) = **20 Minutes**

YPPH/Perth – **Monday to Friday ONLY**

- **0100Z-0500Z** (0900L-1300L) = **10 Minutes**
- **0500Z-0900Z** (1300L-1700L) = **5 Minutes**
- **0900Z-1300Z** (1700L-2100L) = **10 Minutes**

There has been a slight change in the AIP requirements also. Instead of publishing "holding fuel advisories" – it's now called **"airborne traffic delays"**. So they aren't really advising you on what fuel to carry anymore. In fact they go as far as saying that:

> "All traffic delay estimates are an indication only. Actual holding may differ from the estimate, and **operators should use their own judgement on fuel carriage decisions**. More detailed historical holding data is available from the NCC on request."

But… if you arrive at a destination without sufficient holding fuel for "actual traffic holding" then… "you will not be accorded a priority approach unless you declare an **"emergency"**.

So keep an eye on the NOTAMs for updated daily requirements. Even as recently as this week, 30 minutes holding was being required in **YSSY/Sydney** due to ATC shortages.

> **Insider tip:** If you see the winds in Sydney from the west gusting more than 25 knots, you will see a NOTAM for traffic holding that increases the 20 minutes to 50 minutes or more due to single runway ops. You can expect to see similar NOTAMs when any low visibility operation kicks in at the other airports.



A few other quick updates for operations around Australia that you might have missed.

- **YPPH/Perth** now has a Category III Instrument Landing System. Perth is a very isolated airport, especially for long-haul widebody operations, with the nearest diversion alternates being over 600-1000nm away.
- **YBBN/Brisbane**'s main runway, 01/19, will be changing designation to include a LEFT and RIGHT in early November in preparation for the certification of the parallel runway in 2020.

Have we missed anything? Then **let us know**!