

# CHOCK TALK

Newsletter of the Blue Sky Flying Club, est. 1957

## Night Flight (The Cliff Notes)

What is night? Stupid question, right? Not if you're the FAA. There are *three* different times to keep in mind. 1) Sunset to sunrise: Position lights must be on. 2) End of evening civil twilight to beginning of morning civil twilight: You can now log night time and your airplane must be night-equipped. 3) One hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise: You must be night current to carry passengers.

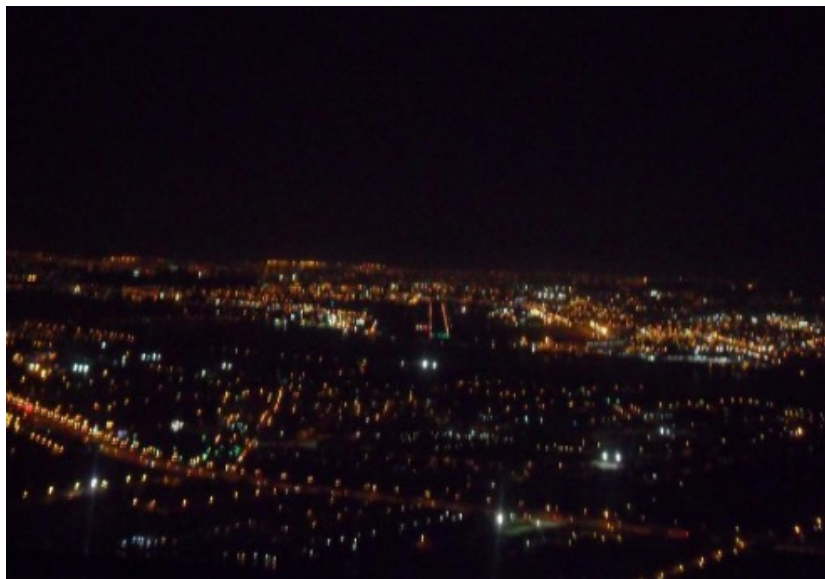
What is "night current"? It only applies to carrying passengers - not solo flight. In order to carry passengers you must have had three takeoffs and three landings [to a full stop] in the last 90 days.

What is "night equipped"? There's an easy acronym for this: **FLAPS**. **F**uses. (spare set... Circuit breakers? you're covered.) **L**anding light. (only if the flight is "for hire".) **A**nticollision Lights (red or white) **P**osition Lights. (must be ON). **S**ource of electricity (adequate for any installed equipment). A good headlamp with red lens and a good flashlight should be part of your kit bag.

Things to be aware of:  
"Black hole" effect: Where the runway is the only thing visible,

**Factoid:** In May, BasicMed will be two years old. There are currently over 45,000 pilots using it.

for example surrounded by unlit fields or adjacent to water. You feel like you're higher, so you can end up flying LOWER and could hit obstacles or touchdown short of the runway. Use PAPI or VASI if available. Check all pubs for obstacles. Use an instrument approach with vertical guidance if available.



High Flare There is a tendency to flare for landing a couple feet higher than where you should. This is because the mind sees the "runway surface" at the height of the runway lights, which are mounted on poles a couple feet higher than the ground.

VASI and PAPI are great and they have an effective range of up to 20 miles, **but** only provide safe obstacle clearance within 10 degrees of centerline and 4sm.

Other night landing illusions: Bright approach/runway lighting, high [lit] terrain near the airport, and wide runways can produce the illusion of being too low on final, resulting in a higher-than-normal [potentially unstable] approach. Visual



obstructions such as rain and haze can result in a lower-than-normal approach. *Remember:* Those little hairs on the back of your neck are there for a reason. If they're standing up..Go Around!

Info on Pilot Controlled Lighting (PCL) Chart supplement. PCL should stay on for 15 minutes after activated. [AIM]

FAA recommends avoiding bright lights for at least 30 minutes prior to night flight [AIM 8-1-6]. If you are about to encounter light from a flashlight or another aircraft, closing one eye will help preserve some degree of night vision

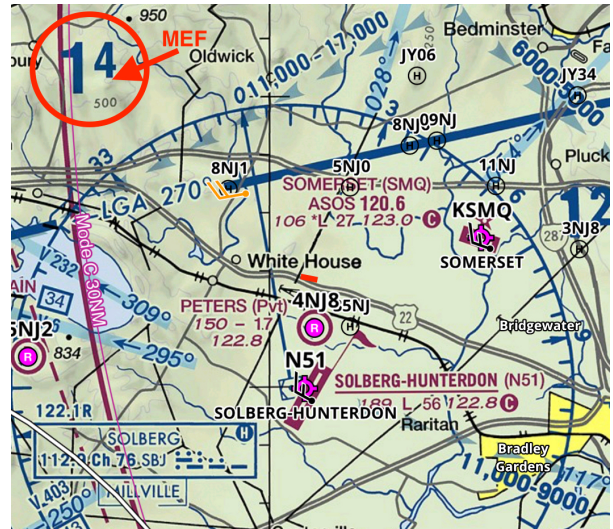
FAA recommends use of O2 above 5000' msl at night [AIM 8-1-6]

Lights: Runway lighting... after touchdown you see centerline lights change from white to red/white/red/white = 3000' remaining. Then you see solid red = last 1/3rd of runway remaining. Beacon: White/white/green = military. White/green = lighted land airport. Red/red/red = obstacle.

Sectional chart: MEF = Max Elevation Figure is adjusted upward between 100 and 300 feet and may provide as little as 101 feet of obstacle clearance! Know the terrain. OROCA = Off

Route Obstacle Clearance Altitude on an IFR chart provides 1000'/2000'[mountainous] clearance.

Some MOAs include training known as "lights out", where military aircraft conduct exercises with no exterior lighting. You are allowed to fly through an MOA. A wise pilot would be in touch with the controlling authority and ask about *any* activity.



Fuel Requirements. FAR 91.151 You need more fuel. You can't start your night VFR flight unless you have fuel to go to intended destination and then 45 minutes at normal cruising speed. [daytime is 30 minutes]. Those are *minimums*; a wise guy would carry more.

Weather A good weather briefing is...well...good! At night, it's particularly important to understand since we can't always see the clouds. Fly with your landing light ON and be prepared to execute a 360° (just kidding) -180° if needed.

Night VFR Some countries e.g. Canada prohibit night VFR. IFR proficiency is a big plus.

**Know Your History:** We currently own three planes. How many planes has the club owned during its 61 year history? What was the longest serving plane? What was the shortest? Why? (stay tuned for some interesting perspective in the next edition)



**Tom's Comm:** Calling approach control for the first time. Remember to be brief. First get ATC's attention:

Pilot: "Allentown Approach Skyhawk 642SP" (Do not say Cessna as there are Cessna jets)

ATC: "Skyhawk 642SP, Allentown, go ahead"

Pilot: (Use the "4 W's")

- 1. Who** you are calling "Allentown Approach";
- 2. Who** you are: "Skyhawk 642SP" (do not abbreviate until ATC does);
- 3. Where** you are [Distance from known waypoint, Direction, Altitude] "20 east at 3000 feet";



### Mark's Compliance

**Corner:** Did you know that BSAA has a relatively strict currency rule? Any member who has not acted as PIC in the category and class of a Club aircraft within the previous six months must obtain dual instruction before acting as PIC in that Club Aircraft. This is in addition to all other applicable FAA & Club proficiency/currency requirements.

Editor: Roger Harris

**4. What you want or your intentions:** "Request flight following to Reading." or "Request three practice approaches starting with the ILS 6, followed by the ILS 13; and the GPS 31. Information BRAVO".

ATC: "Skyhawk 2SP, Allentown, Squawk 1234, Altimeter 29.92";

Pilot: "Skyhawk 2SP Squawk 1234 and 29.92"

ATC: (when leaving Allentown Airspace) "Skyhawk 2SP, Allentown, contact Reading 125.15"

Pilot: "Contact Reading 125.15. 2SP"

Pilot: (switching to Reading frequency) "Reading Approach, Skyhawk 642SP, 3000. Information LIMA" (they are expecting you as a radar handoff has been made, but in the new airspace there could be a call sign similar to yours so you must use the full call sign with each controller change).

ATC: "2SP, Reading approach. Report airport in sight"

Pilot: "2SP Wilco" (means you heard what he said, and will comply with instructions to report the airport in sight)



### News you can use:

#### Cheap fuel

Central Jersey	\$4.30
Sky Manor	\$4.41
Solberg	\$4.79 (Must use the Phillips card)

#### Next Membership Meeting

April 1st, 7:30pm.

Safety Presentation: Paul D'Auria, **Autopilot Tips, Tricks and Traps**

#### Trouble logging in to BSAA website?

- Try the "Lost Your Password" link immediately under the login box.
- Don't forget to enter the "captcha" code: jtc.

*A pilot exercises his superior judgement so he does not have to exercise his superior skills*