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• www.anglais-pour-voler.com

Now on the **Appstore**, the collection of "In English, please" articles from June 2007 to July 2015, with audio recordings when available.

Numbers
Get better with them

Numbers are everywhere in air-ground communications. They figure (pun intended) in aircraft callsigns, altimeter settings, flight levels, altitudes, headings, airspeed, transponder codes, frequencies and weather-related data. There is hardly any message without them. Being able to understand and note down numbers easily, without having to ask ATC to repeat the message, makes for greater efficiency. It keeps the workload from building up unnecessarily, both in the cockpit and on the ground. Furthermore, It helps alleviate the strain on often congested radio frequencies.

The rules to transmit numbers are rather precise, and since doing so in English is a skill you are more likely to need across the Channel, here are some excerpts from CAP 413, the British equivalent of the SIA's "Procedures de radiotéléphonie". There is one basic rule: "all numbers shall be transmitted by pronouncing each digit separately"… and three exceptions.

The first of these concerns FL100, 200, 300 etc. which are expressed as "Flight Level (number) HUN DRED". The second one applies to "all numbers used in the transmission of altitude, height, cloud height, visibility and runway visual range information which contain whole hundreds and whole thousands". They "shall be transmitted by pronouncing each digit in the number of hundreds or thousands followed by the word HUNDRED or TOUSAND as appropriate". Sounds complicated? Well, let's say that "13000" is transmitted "One Three Thousand" and pronounced "Wun Tree Tousand". It should be noted that in radio communications, the "h" disappears from "thousand" and "three". The third exception deals with the transmission of radio frequencies. The same basic rule applies: "all six figures shall be used when identifying frequencies", with the decimal point indicated by the word decimal, but "when the final two digits of the frequency are both zero, only the first four digits need be given".

Listen to the recording on www.anglais-pour-voler.com and find the missing numbers in the transcription below. In some of these recordings, you'll hear "point" instead of "decimal". It's specific to the United States, according to the US AIP. You'll also hear numbers grouped by two, especially when a readback has been incorrect, in order to repeat the information in a different way.

ATIS

Belfast City information, acknowledge receipt of information C, time - - - -, runway In use - -, surface Wind - - - / - knots, varying between - - - and - - - degrees, visibility - - kilometer, few - - feet, scattered - - - - feet, broken - - feet, temperature - -, dew point - -, QNH - - - -

Frequencies

CTL Shamrock - - N contact approach - - - decimal -
CTL Airborne frequency - - - decimal - - -
CTL Contact ground - - - decimal -
CTL Freecall Rennes information - - - decimal - - -, bye bye
…
CTL Delta - - contact San Juan center - - - point - -
PIL Confirm - - - point - - Delta - -?
CTL Negative - - - point - -, - -
…
CTL Contact departure - - - point - -
PIL On a - - heading now and switching to - - - point -, Fedex - - - S
CTL That's - - - point - -, - -

Taxi, departure, arrival

PIL Shamrock - - M, established now ILS - -, - miles
CTL Shamrock - - M, the wind - - - at - knots, cleared for the approach, tower - - - -, bye
PIL Cleared for the approach, - -, Shamrock - - M, bye
…
CTL Ryanair - - ZF taxi P -, cross runway - - , P -, M -, B, hold short runway - -
CTL Vacate next left E -, continue onto H -, hold short runway - -
CTL Shamrock - - -, surface wind - - - degrees - - knots, runway - -, cleared (for) take-off
CTL G-GV the surface wind is - - - degrees - knots cleared for take-off - -

Altitude, squawks, speeds, headings

CTL Ryanair - - SN, turn left heading - - -
CTL Shamrock - - M, make the heading - - -, It's easier to count
PIL Affirm the squawk is - - - -
CTL Ryanair - - PA speed - - - knots when able
PIL Shamrock - - -, pass - -, Climbing - -
CTL Maintain - - -
CTL squawk - -
CTL GZD, you'll leave controlled airspace in - - - - -
CTL Not above - - - - feet, squawk - - - -, and the next frequency is going to be Dublin tower - - - -

Answers

ATIS: 0-6-1-1; 2-2; 2-0-0; 4; 1-6-0; 2-4-0; 1-5; 1 thousand; 1 thousand 4 hundred; 3 thousand; +9; +7; 1-0-2-7. Frequencies: 1-6; 1-2-1; 1 //1-2-0; 7-5-5 // 1-2-1; 8 //1-2-6; 9-5-0 // 4-85; 1-1-8; 1-5; 1-1-8; 4-5; 4-85; 1-1-8; 1-5; 18-15 //1-2-4; 1-5; 1-65; 1-2-4; 5; 9-2-3; 1-2-4; 1-5; 24-15. Taxi …: 6-0; 1-0; 7; 6-0; 1-3-0; 12; 1-1-8-6; 18-6; 6-0 // 5-6; 1; 3-4; 2; 2; 1-0 //3; 2; 3-4 // 7-9-8; 1-2-0; 1-3; 1-0 // 3-4-0; 5; 2-5. Altitude …: 2-6; 1-8-0 // 6-0; 2-5-0 // 3-7-0-7 // 3-8; 2-9-0 // 7-9-8; 1 thousand, 9 thousand // 1-7 thousand // 7 thousand // a mile and a half //1 thousand 7 hundred; 3-7-1-2; 1-1-8-6.

ERRATUM

Last month's text presenting the scavenger hunt contains an error: the answer is to be sent to d_defossez@orange.fr.

To make up for this mistake, the deadline has been extended to November 15th, and the number of winners to get a free download of either the "Angla pour voler" application (Appstore or Androïd market) or the "In English, please" application (Appstore only) has been increased to 15.