

How to look up and read NAV Canada NOTAMs



Version 1 January 2024

References:

- A. NAV Canada Collaborative Flight Planning Services (CFPS) – Weather and NOTAM <https://plan.navcanada.ca/wxrecall/>
- B. Canadian NOTAM Operating Procedures <https://www.navcanada.ca/en/aeronautical-information/operational-guides.aspx>

Purpose: to help Stetson members look up and read NAV Canada NOTAMs for the Stetson Field flying area.

Background: NOTAMs (historically Notice to Airmen, and now Notice to Air Missions or simply NOTAM) are published by NAV Canada to convey a multitude of temporary or short notice conditions affecting flight operations.

Most NOTAMs do not affect our operation, but some do, such as NOTAMs imposing temporary flight restrictions in our flying area. For example, state visits by the President of the USA usually result in a no-fly restriction over an area encompassing our field. From time to time, other situations could result in flight restrictions for security or safety reasons.

This is why RC pilots are required to check NOTAMs before each flying session.

NOTAMs can be checked quickly on the NAV Canada Collaborative Flight Planning Service (CFPS) website.

You can also continue to use RPAS Wilco. However, *if you use RPAS Wilco, you must still read and interpret the NOTAMs listed in the site survey document.* RPAS Wilco does not incorporate the effect of the NOTAMs in your site survey results. The convenient search and sort features of the CFPS will produce a shorter list than RPAS Wilco and make it faster and easier to look up and review NOTAMs, so read on!

The first part of this guide shows **how to look up NOTAMs** on the CFPS. The second part shows **how to read NOTAMs** and includes examples of the categories most likely to be relevant to us.

Part I: How to look up NOTAMs on the CFPS:

Step1: Go to <https://plan.navcanada.ca/wxrecall/>, and bookmark the page for future reference. The screen grab below shows a portion of the **NAV Canada CFPS Weather and NOTAM page**. The display is slightly different on a computer, tablet or phone but the app works equally well with any of those devices.

The screenshot shows the NAV Canada Collaborative Flight Planning Services (CFPS) interface. At the top left is the NAV CANADA logo and the text "Collaborative Flight Planning Services". To the right, there are two tabs: "Welcome" and "Weather an". Below this is a search box with the placeholder text "Enter Aerodrome, FIR, Navaid, etc.". Below the search box are two buttons: "Search" (with a question mark icon) and "Restore Defaults". Below the buttons are several checkboxes and dropdown menus: "Route Radius (NM)" (unchecked), a dropdown menu showing "10", "Show Duplicates" (unchecked), "SIGMET" (checked), "AIRMET" (checked), "NOTAM" (checked) with a dropdown menu showing "EN+FR", "METAR" (checked) with a dropdown menu showing "0H (Current Data Only)", "TAF" (checked), "PIREP" (checked), "Upper Wind" (checked) with a dropdown menu showing "Both", and "BC VFR Route Forecast" (unchecked).

Step 2a: Enter CPR2 in the box at the top. This is the location indicator for the Embrun aerodrome. Embrun is the closest aerodrome to our field and works best for this purpose.

Step 2b: Check the Route Radius box (important!). The CFPS has a convenient feature whereby you can select a route radius and it will display all (and only) NOTAMs that apply to that area. Despite its name, it works for an area around a single point as well as for a route. Our flying area is within 8 nautical miles (NM) of the Embrun aerodrome, so the default 10NM is adequate, or enter a radius of at least 8NM. However, **the Route Radius box must be checked** for this feature to work.

Step 2c: Uncheck all remaining boxes except NOTAM. You can also select the language of the NOTAMs (English and French, English only, or French only). The page should now look something like this:

NAV CANADA Collaborative Flight Planning Services

Welcome

CPR2 ✕

Enter Aerodrome, FIR, Navaid, etc.

Search ⓘ Restore Defaults

Route Radius (NM)

8

Show Duplicates

SIGMET

AIRMET

NOTAM EN+FR ▾

METAR 0H (Current Data Only) ▾

TAF

PIREP

Upper Wind Both ▾

BC VFR Route Forecast

Step 2d: You will find a 'Sort by' window on the right of the page on a computer or tablet, or by scrolling to the the bottom of the page on a phone, with the default being 'Sort by Type' as follows:

Sort By: Type ▾

Change it to 'Sort by Time', so that the latest NOTAM will be at the top when you do the search. This will help you go through them faster on subsequent visits.

Sort By: Time ▾

Step 2e: Click on the blue Search button. All the NOTAMs that cover our flying area will be displayed. On a computer or tablet, they will be on the right. On a phone you will find them by scrolling down the page.

Step 3: Review the NOTAMs: The next step is to look at the NOTAMs and see if any of them affect our operation. To facilitate this task, the next part of this guide describes how to read NOTAMs. It is not comprehensive but has enough details for our purposes.

Part II: How to read NOTAMs

(H4360/23 NOTAMN

A) CZUL B) 2312201537 C) 2412191600EST

E) TRIGGER NOTAM - AIP SUPPLEMENT 76/23 IN EFFECT - AUTOLAND PROCEDURES NOT RECOMMENDED IN RUNWAYS NOT COVERED BY ISED'S DESIGNATED 5G EXCLUSION AND PROTECTION ZONES

FR:

NOTAM DECLENCHEUR - SUPPLEMENT D'AIP 76/23 EN VIGUEUR - PROCEDURES D'ATERRISSAGE AUTOMATIQUE NON RECOMMANDEES SUR LES PISTES QUI NE FIGURENT PAS DANS UNE ZONE DESIGNEE D'EXCLUSION ET DE PROTECTION 5G DE L'ISDE

NOTAMs have the following fields:

Top line: NOTAM number, year and type. (*The types are NOTAMN for new information; NOTAMR for a NOTAM that replaces another; and NOTAMC for one that cancels a NOTAM*).

A) Contains the location indicator for an aerodrome, or of one or more Flight Information Region (FIRs). *We are located in the Montreal FIR, location indicator **CZUL**. Embrun aerodrome is **CPR2**, Ottawa International Airport is **CYOW**.*

B) Shows the time the NOTAM comes into effect. (**YYMMDDhhmm**). *Time is shown in Universal Time, Coordinated (UTC). Ottawa is 5 hours earlier than UTC when we are in standard time and 4 hours earlier than UTC during daylight saving time.*

C) Shows the time (UTC) the NOTAM ceases to be in effect. (*EST here means estimated*)

D) Schedule, where applicable (*if the event occurs at specific times (UTC) during the in-effect period*).

E) Contains the NOTAM text. Look for flight restrictions. (*Note: ACFT (aircraft) includes RC aircraft/RPAS*).

F) Where applicable, shows the lower altitude limit. (*SFC means surface*).

G) Where applicable, shows the upper altitude limit.

Example:

(H4360/23 NOTAMN
A) CZUL B) 2312201537 C) 2412191600EST
E) TRIGGER NOTAM - AIP SUPPLEMENT 76/23 IN EFFECT - AUTOLAND
PROCEDURES NOT RECOMMENDED IN RUNWAYS NOT COVERED BY ISED'S
DESIGNATED 5G EXCLUSION AND PROTECTION ZONES

FR:
NOTAM DECLENCHEUR - SUPPLEMENT D'AIP 76/23 EN VIGUEUR -
PROCEDURES D'ATTERRISSAGE AUTOMATIQUE NON RECOMMANDEES SUR LES
PISTES QUI NE FIGURENT PAS DANS UNE ZONE DESIGNEE D'EXCLUSION ET
DE PROTECTION 5G DE L'ISDE)

In the above example, the top line is the NOTAM number, year (2023) and type N (New info).

A) CZUL: The NOTAM applies to the Montreal FIR, the one we are in.

B) 2312201537: The NOTAM is effective from 20 December 2023, at 15:37 UTC or 10:37 am local time.

C) 2412191600EST: The NOTAM is effective until 19 December 2024, at 11:00 am local time, estimated.

E) (Details of the NOTAM): Clearly not applicable to our operation

D), F) and G): not applicable in this case.

Another example:

(V1442/23 NOTAMN
A) CZUL B) 2312061811 C) PERM
E) AMEND PUBLICATIONS: TOWER 451435N 0752729W (APRX 7NM WNW EMBRUN
AD (CPR2)). 318FT AGL 653FT AMSL. LGTD, PAINTED.

This NOTAM is about a 318-foot tower approximately 7 nautical miles (NM) from Embrun. We have not seen it, so it is probably not near our field. Indeed, it is west-north-west (WNW) of Embrun and we are north of Embrun. Looking up the coordinates on Google maps confirms that it is in Metcalfe, miles away from our field, so all is good. Note that coordinates in NOTAMs are in degrees, minutes, and seconds. Although the effectivity is permanent (PERM), this NOTAM will eventually be cancelled when the relevant publications are amended.

To review NOTAMs quickly, first look at field E), then move on to the next one. If a NOTAM looks like it might apply to our flying area, read all the parts, but otherwise, it doesn't matter. The list isn't very long, and if you sort by 'Time' as described in Part I, you will soon recognize the ones you have looked at already.

The NOTAMs to look for are the ones that affect the airspace. The following page lists some of the wording in field E) that should get your attention.

NOTAMs for Airspace Restrictions: Field E) wording to watch for

E) DAH IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS: *The designated Airspace Handbook (DAH) lists all the controlled airspace in Canada. We must stay out of controlled airspace, so any temporary change to the DAH in our area must be examined.*

The following example is the NOTAM that was issued for the visit of US President Biden in March 2023:

(H0697/23 NOTAMR H0693/23
A) CZUL B) 2303232130 C) 2303250200
E) DAH IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:
CYR546 CLASS F RESTRICTED AIRSPACE IS ESTABLISHED WITHIN THE AREA
BOUNDED BY 24NM RADIUS OF 451921N 754009W
(OTTAWA/MACDONALD-CARTIER INTL TML) EXCLUDING CYR 537 AND CYR545,
NO PERSON SHALL OPR AN ACFT (INCL ALL RPAS) WITHIN THE AREA
DESCRIBED, EXC POLICE, MIL, REGULARLY SKED COMMERCIAL PASSENGER
AND CARGO CARRIERS (CAR PART 704 AND 705) OR MEDEVAC FLT AUTH BY
ATC OR OTHER FLT AUTH BY RCMP SECURITY COORD 343-571-3804.

This one clearly applied to us (we are about 10.5 NM from Ottawa International Airport), and we had to close the field for the effective period of the NOTAM. We anticipate those NOTAMs because we learn of the upcoming visits through the media, so we can pick them up as soon as they are published. Note that the NOTAM was explicit about RPAS, but the term Aircraft (ACFT) includes RPAS.

E) PURSUANT TO CANADIAN AVIATION REGULATION (CAR) 601.18, BY MINISTERIAL ORDER, (DESCRIPTION OF AIRSPACE), IS RESTRICTED AS FLW: (DESCRIPTION OF RESTRICTION)

Airspace restrictions can be imposed by Ministerial Order. The above wording should cue us to look at the specifics of the flight restriction.

E) PURSUANT TO SECTION 5.1 OF THE AERONAUTICS ACT, ...

Airspace restrictions can be also imposed under Section 5.1 of the Aeronautics Act (restrictions necessary for aviation safety or security or the protection of the public)

This could be used to restrict flight over and around a nearby major emergency area.

This category can also be used for airshows. Our field is usually beyond the applicable radius of those NOTAMs for airshows in Ottawa and Gatineau, but the odd one could apply.

The above list is not comprehensive, but it shows the categories most likely to affect us.

Appendix D of *The Canadian NOTAM Operating Procedures* (Reference B) contains all the abbreviations used in NOTAMs.

To maximize the effectiveness of our communications within the club, if you see a NOTAM that affects or will affect our operation, please inform the Stetson Executive at contact@stetsonflyers.com, or call 613-518-4463.

Summary:

NOTAMs must be checked for temporary airspace restrictions before each flying session.

NOTAMs can be looked up quickly using the NAV Canada Collaborative Flight Planning Service (CFPS) – Weather and NOTAM website <https://plan.navcanada.ca/wxrecall/>.

NOTAMs can also be looked up in a site survey document generated by RPAS Wilco.

Part I of this guide describes how to search the CFPS – Weather and NOTAM website for NOTAMs applicable to the Stetson Field flying area.

Part II of this guide describes how to read NOTAMs, with emphasis on the categories dealing with temporary flight restrictions.

If you have any question on how to interpret a NOTAM, or about this guide, do not hesitate to ask at contact@stetsonflyers.com, or 613-518-4463.

Prepared by: Pierre Coulombe, President Stetson Flyers.