

5-4-23. Visual Approach

a. A visual approach is conducted on an IFR flight plan and authorizes a pilot to proceed visually and clear of clouds to the airport. The pilot must have either the airport or the preceding identified aircraft in sight. This approach must be authorized and controlled by the appropriate air traffic control facility. Reported weather at the airport must have a ceiling at or above 1,000 feet and visibility 3 miles or greater. ATC may authorize this type of approach when it will be operationally beneficial. Visual approaches are an IFR procedure conducted under IFR in visual meteorological conditions. Cloud clearance requirements of 14 CFR Section 91.155 are not applicable, unless required by operation specifications. When conducting visual approaches, pilots are encouraged to use other available navigational aids to assist in positive lateral and vertical alignment with the runway.

b. Operating to an Airport Without Weather Reporting Service. ATC will advise the pilot when weather is not available at the destination airport. ATC may initiate a visual approach provided there is a reasonable assurance that weather at the airport is a ceiling at or above 1,000 feet and visibility 3 miles or greater (e.g., area weather reports, PIREPs, etc.).

c. Operating to an Airport With an Operating Control Tower. Aircraft may be authorized to conduct a visual approach to one runway while other aircraft are conducting IFR or VFR approaches to another parallel, intersecting, or converging runway. ATC may authorize a visual approach after advising all aircraft involved that other aircraft are conducting operations to the other runway. This may be accomplished through use of the ATIS.

1. When operating to parallel runways separated by less than 2,500 feet, ATC will ensure approved separation is provided unless the succeeding aircraft reports sighting the preceding aircraft to the adjacent parallel and visual separation is applied.

2. When operating to parallel runways separated by at least 2,500 feet but less than 4,300 feet, ATC will ensure approved separation is provided until the aircraft are issued an approach clearance and one pilot has acknowledged receipt of a visual approach clearance, and the other pilot has acknowledged receipt of a visual or instrument approach clearance, and aircraft are established on a heading or established on a direct course to a fix or cleared on an RNAV/instrument approach procedure which will intercept the extended centerline of the runway at an angle not greater than 30 degrees.

3. When operating to parallel runways separated by 4,300 feet or more, ATC will ensure approved separation is provided until one of the aircraft has been issued and the pilot has acknowledged receipt of the visual approach clearance, and each aircraft is assigned a heading, or established on a direct course to a fix, or cleared on an RNAV/instrument approach procedure which will allow the aircraft to intercept the extended centerline of the runway at an angle not greater than 30 degrees.

NOTE-

The intent of the 30 degree intercept angle is to reduce the potential for overshoots of the final and to preclude side-by-side operations with one or both aircraft in a belly-up configuration during the turn-on.

d. Clearance for Visual Approach. At locations with an operating control tower, ATC will issue approach clearances that will include an assigned runway. At locations without an operating control tower or where a part-time tower is closed, ATC will issue a visual approach clearance to the airport only.

e. Separation Responsibilities. If the pilot has the airport in sight but cannot see the aircraft to be followed, ATC may clear the aircraft for a visual approach; however, ATC retains both separation and wake vortex separation responsibility. When visually following a preceding aircraft, acceptance of the visual approach clearance constitutes acceptance of pilot responsibility for maintaining a safe approach interval and adequate wake turbulence separation.

f. A visual approach is not an IAP and therefore has no missed approach segment. If a go-around is necessary for any reason, aircraft operating at controlled airports will be issued an appropriate clearance or instruction by the tower to enter the traffic pattern for landing or proceed as otherwise instructed. In either case, the pilot is responsible to maintain terrain and obstruction avoidance until reaching an ATC assigned altitude if issued, and