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# Emergency Approach

*Where you can go when all else fails, plus vectors below the MVA.*

In the article, "Verify The Forecast" (November 1996 *IFRR*), the CFII who couldn't break out in the glideslope-less Cessna 152 overlooked one important option: the military PAR [precision approach radar] approach. Nearly every naval air station (including NAS Atlanta, only 70 nm from Macon) still utilizes the PAR for its primary precision approach. With standard minimums of 100 feet and 1/4-mile visibility, and the only equipment necessary being an operable com radio, the PAR can be a useful tool in an emergency.

Chris and Amy Strand
Via Internet

Good point. The only problem is, faced with continuing budget cuts, the military has phased out many PAR facilities. It's also difficult to find PAR facilities, since they aren't listed in civil aviation publications. NOS dropped the PAR listing from en route charts in 1993. Jeppesen lists "GCA" on its en route charts at military fields that have either PAR and/or ASR available, but you can't determine from the listing whether PAR is available. Don't expect ATC to always know, either. We phoned Macon Approach Control and asked where the closest PAR facility was: the controller we talked to wasn't sure.

As a service to our readers and the result of tireless effort, Walt Echwald has compiled a list of military facilities where PAR approaches are available. See his article, "A Good Port In A Storm" on page 15 of this issue. Now, no *IFRR* reader should ever be high and dry in the event of such an emergency.—Ed.

### In ATC's hands

In the article, "When Can You Take a Shortcut?" (November 1996 *IFRR*), the letter from Mr. Robert Cicconi said, "I was under the impression as soon as ATC advises you're in radar contact, they assume responsibility for terrain clearance." Wally Roberts in his reply did not correct him.

When ATC says "radar contact" they're saying "I see you on my radar scope." You still have the responsibility for navigation and terrain/obstacle clearance. Only when they commence vectoring you do they assume responsibility for these tasks. I prefer to state that at that point they become shared responsibilities. You and ATC share them. NEVER as a pilot should you relinquish total control over these critical tasks. Happens that way far too often though, doesn't it?

Frequently this scenario will appear on departure. ATC can see you on their scope but must wait until you climb to the minimum vectoring altitude (MVA) before they can commence vectors.

James P. Scott, II
Wilmington, DE

Roberts responds: Mr. Scott gets a different meaning from Mr. Cicconi's letter than I did. Let me quote the salient context of Mr. Cicconi's letter: "I was under the impression as soon as ATC advises you're in radar contact, they assume responsibility for terrain clearance and can give you a vector/shortcut."

In the context of Mr. Cicconi's entire sentence, I concluded that he associated both "radar contact" and "can give you a vector/shortcut" with the threshold events that trigger joint pilot/controller responsibility for terrain clearance during departure radar vectors.

Mr. Scott is correct, of course, that the utterance by the controller of just "radar contact" means little. But, "radar contact" and "can (then) give you a vector…" is quite a different matter than just "radar contact." I concluded from Mr. Cicconi's letter that he has been told both "radar contact" followed immediately by a vector off the SID.

Further, ATC can indeed vector below the MVA for departing aircraft and aircraft missing the approach. The reference for this is the ATC Handbook

*(continued on page 14)*

## Emergency. . .

*(continued from page 2)*

(FAA Order 7110.65) Section 5-6-3, "Vectors Below Minimum Altitude" which states:

"Except in en route automated environments in areas where more than 3 miles separation minima is required, you may vector a departing IFR aircraft, or one executing a missed approach, within 40 miles of the antenna and before it reaches the minimum altitude for IFR operations if separation from prominent obstructions shown on the radar scope is applied in accordance with…"

This was also discussed in my article, "Vectors Below the Hilltops" (November 1995 *IFRR*). I'd like to conclude by repeating a footnote in my article, "Authority and Command" (October 1996 *IFRR*):

"In the U.S., ATC assumes responsibility for issuing off-route altitudes that assure safe terrain clearance, anytime ***ATC initiates*** an off-route clearance. U.S. ATC also assumes responsibility for terrain clearance during radar vectors, except where the aircraft is climbing below the minimum vectoring altitude. In the rest of the world, ATC does not reliably assume responsibility for off-route terrain clearance, even where initiated by ATC. Some countries do not assume responsibility for terrain clearance even during radar vectors. Even U.S. ATC is not infallible so the off-route/radar vector terrain clearance responsibilities are, in fact, shared between the pilot and controller."

### A boo-boo?

In "IFR Quiz" (November *IFRR*), it appears you made a boo-boo in question 1. The JST R-074 to Kewer, which for some reason appears only on the NOS chart and not on the Jepp, is not a transition but only an identifier.

Gerard L. Field
Annapolis, MD

If you look carefully, you'll note the JST R-074 is a transition route from Hudon to Kewer (254° inbound). NOS shows the R-074 from JST going through Kewer to Hudon. Jepp depicts it slightly different, showing "JST 074°" with the frequency and Morse Code northeast of Kewer.—Ed.