



Safety net – Standard Instrument Arrivals (STARs)

Deviation from Standard Instrument Arrivals (STARs) either vertically or laterally can affect the safety and efficiency of a flight. This Safety Net explains the relationship between STARs, Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs) and common areas of confusion.

Standard Instrument Arrivals (STARs) and Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs) enable the safe and efficient processing of instrument flight rules (IFR) aircraft to and from airports.

STARs are designed to fulfill noise abatement requirements, airspace segregation, maximum traffic handling capacity and to reduce pilot/controller workload and air/ground communications. They also provide assured tracking and stabilised approaches by allowing controllers and crews to base aircraft separation and profile on published tracks.

Some common areas of confusion and concern relating to stars include:

- aircraft not meeting the altitude requirements published on STARs
- aircraft not following the tracking requirements published on the STAR
- aircraft deviating from their STAR track after they have been cleared for a visual approach.

Why are altitude requirements important on a STAR?

Not meeting the altitude requirements specified on the STAR can impact:

- your approach
- approaches by other aircraft
- aircraft departures
- separation with other aircraft.

Recommended practice when flying a STAR or SID.

If you have any concerns about your ability to meet altitude or speed requirements when flying a STAR or SID, advise air traffic control (ATC) immediately. Remember, you still need ATC approval to operate outside of your issued clearance.

Does a clearance for visual approach cancel my STAR tracking?

No. If ATC want you to deviate from the tracking published on the STAR they will say "CANCEL STAR, (instructions e.g.: track direct LEFT BASE RUNWAY 14), CLEARED VISUAL APPROACH."

If you do not receive the "CANCEL STAR" instruction you must continue to track in accordance with the STAR tracking.

Tracking requirements

Tracking requirements for a visual approach include the following:

- a. a pilot in command must maintain track/heading on the route progressively authorised by ATC until:
 - by day within 5NM of the aerodrome
 - by night
 - for an IFR flight, within the prescribed circling area
 - for a VFR flight, within 3NM of the aerodrome
 - the aerodrome is in sight.

b. from this position the circuit must be joined as directed by ATC for an approach to the nominated runway.

The phrase 'as directed by ATC' means the tracking requirements as explained on the STAR must still be followed.

More information

More pilot safety information is available on the Airservices website at bit.ly/pilotsafety.



If you have any feedback or questions about this publication please email, safetypromotions@airservicesaustralia.com.