BVA's Logan Informer

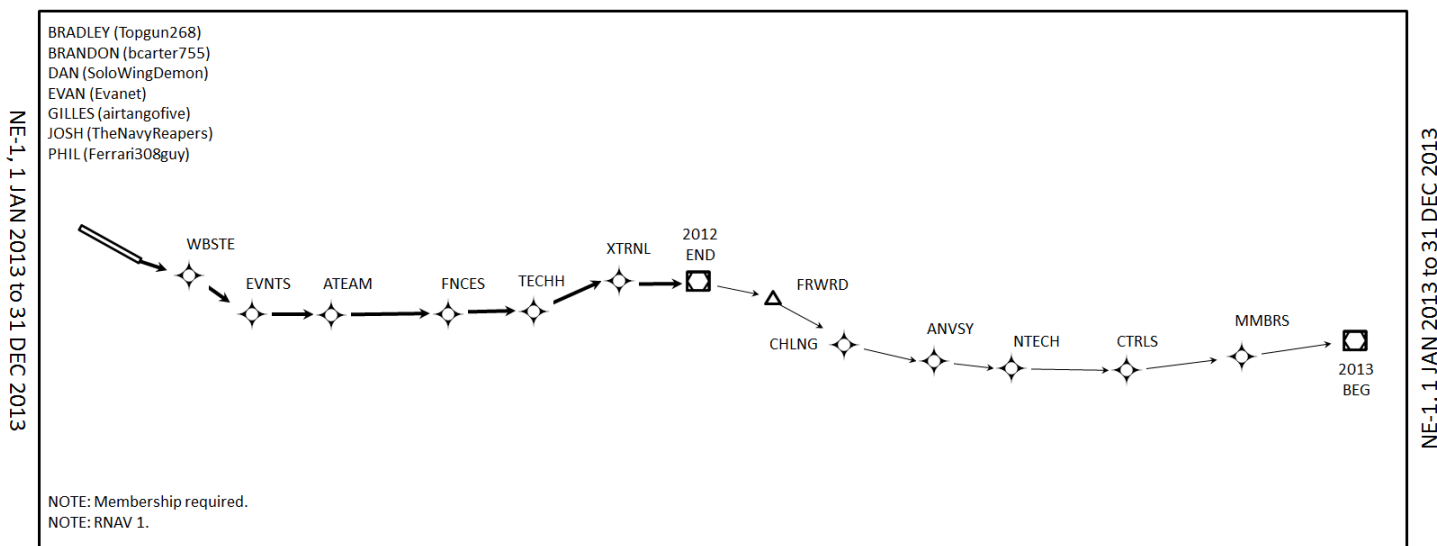## Boston Virtual ATC: The 2013 Transition

CNGES1.2012   11022
CHANGES ONE DEPARTURE (RNAV)   5L-58 (BVA)

BOSTON VIRTUAL ATC (BVA)
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

NE-1, 1 JAN 2013 to 31 DEC 2013

BRADLEY (Topgun268)
BRANDON (bcarter755)
DAN (SoloWingDemon)
EVAN (Evanet)
GILLES (airtangofive)
JOSH (TheNavyReapers)
PHIL (Ferrari308guy)

WBSTE   EVNTS   ATEAM   FNCES   TECHH   XTRNL   2012 END   FRWRD   CHLNG   ANVSY   NTECH   CTRLS   MMBRS   2013 BEG

NOTE: Membership required.
NOTE: RNAV 1.

NE-1, 1 JAN 2013 to 31 DEC 2013

Evan ('evanet')
BVA Administration Team

It's been a year of transition. In BVA's sixth year, technical support for FSX was formally terminated by Microsoft, Flight came and went, and GameSpy-powered multiplayer became a thing of the past. Sometimes change is good—nobody else will have to put up with the constant connection problems of GameSpy, or the sessions full of kids flying fighter jets anymore. But with change comes new challenges and opportunities that we need to face together.

Since our founding in 2006, BVA has grown through transition and change to provide the most complete offering available in the online ATC world. Today, BVA has the most competent, professional, and realistic pilots and controllers anyone can find online. We have the perfect balance of long-haul flyers and small GA puddlejumpers. We have technology, scenery design, and a website that makes other communities jealous. And we have some fantastic partnerships with other FSX organizations.

All of that came together on December 8 when we staffed up five airports with fifteen controllers for four hours. Our KBOS, KEWR, KISP, KJFK, and KLGA Celebrating 6 Years event was probably the busiest in FSX multiplayer history. We had 90 members in the server and while our server limit is actually set over 100, many members reported they were unable to make a connection to the server. At the peak, we had 60 pilots zipping between the preferred airports.

And while the event was an overall success, it has also provided an excellent metaphor for the current state of affairs within the community. BVA as a community is constantly pushing the limits of what FSX can do. Our controllers are exceptional in small groups but still need practice working together as a team when traffic gets to overwhelming levels—and generally we need more of them. And so while the event was generally a positive experience, there remains room for improvement. We've had six good but not yet great birthday events. As we search for the perfect anniversary event, so too do we search for excellence in our community in 2013.

In this year's wrap-up article from your Administrative Team, we'll start by talking about our numerous accomplishments in 2012 and what BVA is to us today. Then, we'll move on to how the best can continue to get better in 2013. It's a long one—there's just too much to talk about to make it any shorter. So set up a long haul flight into ZBW and journey with us through BVA's 2012.

A New Website
The biggest change this year was the launch of our new website on Sunday, July 29. In addition to improved reliability and a much better and more visually-appealing layout, we introduced pages of new content, especially the Pilot References hub. Under Pilot References, pilots can find information about airline codes, equipment suffixes, proper flight planning, and an in-depth tutorial on radio communications in one place. The Pilot Timetable, Orientation, ATC Exam Center and Optional and Required Downloads pages are also new additions this year.

Regional Circuit

Rc

Tuesday, January 8
(8-11pm ET)

KBOS (Boston) &
KBTV (Burlington)

Our controllers fully staff two airports and provide complete ATC coverage for flights between the two; pilots are encouraged to file preferred routes and can expect multiple handoffs and busy frequencies throughout the event

Pack the Pattern

Pp

Sunday, January 13
(8-10pm ET)

KFJT (Grand Junction)

Pilots are encouraged to fly into the event or fly IFR or VFR circuits of a busy Class Bravo airport, with full ATC coverage for the entire evening (including Clearance, Ground, multiple Tower and Approach controllers, and maybe even a Center!)

Challenge

Ch

Wednesday, January 2
(8-11pm ET)

Bad Weather RC
(KIND & KORD)

BVA's Challenge event will test your piloting skills in the realistic atmosphere of BVA. This event is about exercising your multi-tasking ability in challenging and unfamiliar situations—something pilots have to do all the time.

Domestic Journey

Dj

Tuesday, January 24
(8-11pm ET)

KDEN (Denver) &
KSLC (Salt Lake City)

The Domestic Journey provides BVA pilots with the opportunity to enjoy medium-haul flights across North America with air traffic control coverage from gate-to-gate.

Fly-In

Fi

Thursday, February 3
(3-6pm ET)

North Carolina
(KAVL, KHKY, and KTYS)

Tower (Local) Controllers will feature several small airports designed for General Aviation aircraft. Fly IFR or VFR within controlled airspace; general aviation aircraft (anything from a Cessna to a LearJet) are preferred.

Getaway

Ga

January 11-27

Aspen
(KASE, KCOS, KDEN)

BVA's Getaway Event takes pilots and controllers for a change of scenery, and features various airports across North America. Join BVA as we 'Getaway' to explore new airports and destinations

Season's Greetings from **Boston Virtual ATC**

Best of all, the website was designed in accordance with member feedback, and members provided their input throughout the design process with multiple beta testing progress.

Incredible Events

This year, we launched the extremely successful and wildly popular Challenge series of events, designed to test BVA's pilots and controllers on extreme but realistic situations and improve their abilities to work together. The Bad Weather Regional Circuit on June 13 was the first of several unique events which featured Alaska (VFR), La Guardia (Expressway Visual Approach), and Washington (SFRA and Special Use Airspace).

We also launched a free SMS (text message) event reminder service in 2012 and posted more of our events on Facebook and other social media sites.

United Regional pilots, finally wrapping up a busy Christmas Lift 2012 schedule, were busy in NorCal too, flying a Project 30 (30 arrivals in 30 minutes at KSFO). BVA's training airline will be doing its traditional Denver Migration on Friday, January 11 to help us kick off the Aspen Getaway. And Cape Air Virtual has been holding Lobster Run events, swamping ZBW and local Approach controllers every other Sunday.

We held five Getaways in 2012, to Colorado, California (one week in each of SoCal and NorCal), Alaska, Florida, and the Pacific Northwest.

And we held true to our tradition of 60 Hours of ATC, holding Cleared for the Cause from May 4-6, 2012, where ZBW was continuously staffed for members to enjoy ATC for more than 60 straight hours. During that time, 122 pilots filed 546 flight plans in mostly instrument conditions, and generated $2,088 for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Boston Virtual ATC.

By the way, we'll feature almost all of our regular events in the first month of 2013, the highlight of which will be our Aspen Getaway from January 11-27!

BVA's Administrative Team

2012 was the first full year for BVA's Administrative Team. Affectionately known as the A-Team, BVA's administrators are: Brad, Brandon, Dan, Evan, Gilles, Josh, and Phil; the A-Team works together to bring you—for free—the events, services, and environment you enjoy so much. In 2012, the A-Team approved 671 new members (out of 834 applications), bringing BVA's total membership to just under 3,400.

Finances

We have always had a commitment to transparency and responsibility in the administration of our finances. As you can see from our 2012 budget, our financial situation is good but could be better.

Recently, we took advantage of an excellent deal at our server ISP and have pre-paid the most expensive bill for 2013. As a result, we won't need to run a fundraising campaign now. However, these pre-payments left us with only $100 in our account which means that we would be unable to pay any unexpected expenses. The holidays are an expensive time of year so before you look at your credit card bill, consider making a donation to BVA so that we can continue providing you with the services you enjoy.

Continuously Improving Technology

FlightDesk remains one of our top development priorities. In 2012, we released FlightDesk 1.2 which introduced a better performing and more stable product. The most visible features are the public chatroom and as well as a revamped map and a better user interface.

Our vision for bigger and better sessions keeps expanding but since Microsoft has cancelled FSX development we will need to look internally to match our servers with the demands of our growing community. This means that a large chunk of our attention in 2013 and 2014 will be devoted to perfect FSX's infrastructure. We will be tackling FSX's unique difficulties like a pilot manages a crosswind on a final approach through rain and fog. It's a constant series of adjustments to perfect the quality of the sessions while preserving simplicity of use and compatibility with our members' growing fleet of aircraft. The challenges ahead are formidable but so is our determination to overcome them.

From the VC to External View

With everything going on inside BVA, it's easy to forget that we're part of a global community of multiplayer users. There's been a lot going on to affect that global community, including the release of Microsoft Flight on February 29. It didn't last long (Microsoft axed the Flight development team in July).

And of course, we all know that GameSpy-powered multiplayer functionality is now a thing of the past after Microsoft decided to stop supporting FSX.

Looking Back on 2012

That's where we are. There's a lot going on inside the community and externally—so where does that leave us? In last year's article we listed six goals (improve the new member process, launch the PRP/Virtual FBO, launch a new website, improve our year-end anniversary event, feature overnight ATC, and continue holding bad weather events) and we're happy to say that we've accomplished all of them.

We made the new member process easier on the new website, incorporating a new entrance exam and orientation page which has improved the quality of the applications received (we've accepted 80% of new members this year as compared to below 70% last year).

...Continued from Page 3

We formally launched the Virtual FBO and Pilot Ratings Program (PRP). To date, 113 pilots have participated in the PRP, 602 ratings have been passed, and 11 of our members have completed all of the ratings flights to earn top honors.

And we launched our new website, ran a bigger and better anniversary event (though there's still work to do on this one), and kept our overnight ATC and bad weather events coming.

Moving Forward to 2013

A few weeks ago at the beginning of our Celebrating 6 Years event, I spoke for a few minutes about what Boston Virtual ATC is to me today, and what I think it's going to be in the future. Those who were actually listening through my monotone heard me say "Every One Counts". That tagline has two components.

First, every experience our members have should be the best it can possibly be. If members aren't satisfied, we as an A-Team want to know, and we want to make it right. We believe we need to do more to try to make sure satisfaction with the community remains high, and that we keep getting the positive feedback we are today (since April 24, 2011, the average rating from 115 Controller Feedback Form submissions is 4.4/5; in a survey of members, 69% were extremely satisfied and 26% were very satisfied with BVA).

Secondly, every pilot and controller counts. The professionalism, abilities, and realism of our pilots and controllers make up what BVA is today. We believe we can continue to improve our pilots and controllers and thus improve the overall experience members have with BVA.

Every One Counts is more important than ever because as of the beginning of December, BVA can no longer rely on the GameSpy lobby as a source of new members. We need to make sure that every existing member and every new member are having the best possible experiences with BVA. The best thing that our members can do in this new world is to fly and control as much as possible. Making sure that BVA's session is consistently the busiest will help us expand the number of controllers we have, extend our ATC offering to pilots in terms of airports and airspaces we control, and continue to grow and expand as we have been doing for the past six years.

This year, BVA's A-Team will be working to:
1. Bring you more Challenge events, especially those which help us learn new aviation skills or practice under-used ATC techniques
2. Design and execute our best anniversary celebration ever
3. Create new, improved technologies and add-ons for FSX
4. Increase the number of active controllers, and the amount of airspace that can be covered
5. Bring inactive and new members into the community and keep them here

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Denver International Airport - KDEN
Airport Information:
Elevation: 5431 ft / 1655 m
Class: Bravo
Runways:
7 / 25: 12000 ft / 3658 m
8 / 26: 12000 ft / 3658 m
16R / 34L: 16000 ft / 4877 m
16L / 34R: 12000 ft / 3658 m
17R / 35L: 12000 ft / 3658 m
17L / 35R: 12000 ft / 3658 m
Frequencies:
Ground: 121.85
Tower: 124.30
Approach / Departure: 119.30
Preferred Routes:
To KASE: ROCKI8 DBL
To KCOS: LUFSE V389 ADANE BRK

Aspen-Pitkin County Airport / Sardy Field - KASE
Airport Information:
Elevation: 7820 ft / 2384 m
Class: Delta
Runways:
15 / 33: 7006 ft / 2135 m
Frequencies:
Ground: 121.90
Tower: 118.85
Approach / Departure: 123.80
Preferred Routes:
To KDEN: ASPE4 DBL POWDR8
To KDEN: ASPE4 DBL JNETT CREDE1 / TELLR1 (RNAV)
To KCOS: ASPE4 DBL V108 BRK

City of Colorado Springs Municipal Airport - KCOS
Airport Information:
Elevation: 6187 ft / 1885 m
Class: Charlie
Runways:
13 / 31: 8269 ft / 2520 m
17R / 35L: 11022 ft / 3360 m
17L / 35R: 13501 ft / 4115 m
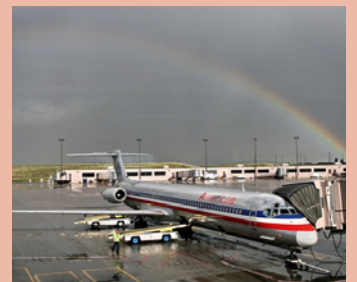Frequencies:
Ground: 121.70
Tower: 133.15
Approach / Departure: 118.50
Preferred Routes:
To KDEN: COS3 FQF
To KDEN: COS3 ELLZA MASHD TRAIN (RNAV)
To KASE: COS3 BRK V108 DBL

DOWNLOAD ASPEN GETAWAY PREFERRED ROUTES

...Continued from Page 4

And at this time next year, as we did this year, we'll see how we've done and decide where we go from there.

The difference a year makes is incredible. In 2009, we released FlightDesk, launched Cape Air Virtual, and surpassed 2,000 members. In 2010, we got United Regional and the ATC Timetable. In 2011, we officially minted the A-Team, launched our social media presence, and created Live ATIS. And this year, we surpassed 3,000 members and...well, you've been reading about the rest.

Members, websites, and programs have changed but one thing that has always been consistent about BVA is the spirit of community, inclusiveness, and togetherness that we have always

had. No BVA member is ever afraid to help. There are a lot of things that have changed about this community in the past 6 years but I'm confident that our community spirit will never be one of them.

From all of us at BVA's A-Team, thank you for your support, dedication, and membership in 2012, and Happy New Year!

Bradley Dill   *BVA*   *Billy*

Brandon Carter

Dan A. Parnel   *Philly Cayli*   *E. Ratto*

Screenshot of the Month

Max ('ameri767300')
Screenshot of the Month Coordinator

Congratulations to **Ryan ('Flyin_[2YAN')** for winning BVA's December Screenshot of the Month contest! Displayed below, his shot is a beautiful Frontier Airlines A319 on its

decent into the Denver International Airport (KDEN). Click HERE to see the competition finalists and voting results.

If you missed this month's competition and are interested in submitting a screenshot next month, stay tuned to BVA's forums for the January Screenshot Contest announcement.

Crisis & Opportunity: BVA After GameSpy

Evan ('evanet')
BVA Administration Team

In February, 2012, Microsoft released Flight, a free, mission-based, single player shell of what Flight Simulator 11 might have been. At the time, BVA predicted that Flight was in no way an upgrade of Flight Simulator and that it was not a viable platform for supporting our community. In that same March, 2012 Informer article, we also said that we have learned over the past six years to work with the multiplayer environment of FSX and are proud to be a founding part of that environment.

But 2012 was a busy year for Microsoft. Less than five months later, Microsoft ceased development for Flight. And in early December, GameSpy-powered multiplayer for FSX was terminated after Microsoft "opted to drop support of the title". Users who try to access GameSpy today are unable to sign in or create accounts. The communal lobby for FSX multiplayer users has disappeared forever.

In response to the shuttering of GameSpy, BVA launched FSX Beyond GameSpy to help direct users of GameSpy to information about the multiplayer options that remain available. Many of the most popular communities, including BVA, are profiled on the site. GameSpy was inaccessible on December 6; FSX Beyond GameSpy

was launched the next day, thanks to an incredible team effort from a number of committed BVA members and your A-Team. We also asked for the community's support and got it in a big way: your help promoting the site has led to over 4,000 unique visitors learning more about FSX multiplayer.

Today, Boston Virtual ATC's website traffic is slightly higher than before GameSpy's shut down, and our new member count has remained steady at about two per day. We stand ready to accept those who were displaced by GameSpy and have been adding controllers to our roster who have joined us from hosting their own GameSpy sessions. For the past month, it's been business as usual, with our members bypassing GameSpy to connect directly.

And while new members have been finding BVA through FSX Beyond GameSpy, we still need to find new ways of marketing BVA to the FSX and aviation communities. As we move into 2013, the A-Team will be working on those new marketing initiatives, sharing them with you, and asking for your help to accomplish them. For now, the best thing we can all do is fly and control, keeping our server busy and active for as much of the day as possible to help attract those who view our website to submit an application. And, of course, to stay tuned to the Logan Informer and your inbox for more information on how BVA moves forward now that GameSpy is a thing of the past.

Controller of the Month

Dan ('SoloWingDemon')
BVA Administration Team

As we begin the new year, the ATC Instructors and I have been pouring over our candidates for Controller of the Month. Doing so, we found ourselves thinking back on this past year and the challenges we have faced, met, and conquered as a result of the dedication of our members, and particularly from our controllers. This made it difficult for us to pick a single recipient for this month's recognition.

As a result, for December, we recognize all of our dedicated controllers who spend hours reading SOPs, practicing their craft, and training with our Mentors and Instructors.

Our new 2012 event, Challenge, presented the controller group with situations that paralleled those faced by pilots during each event. The purpose of Challenge has always been to push all participants—pilots and controllers—to new levels of mastery. The other Instructors and I have been impressed with the level of controlling proficiency we saw in all of our Challenge events. I personally have enjoyed watching our control staff grow under the guise of these events and how they have shaped even further the knowledgeable, professional, and confident group of controllers BVA sports at the end of 2012. In addition to the Challenge events, the ATC group has continued to be an integral cog in the machines that are United Regional and Cape Air Virtual.

Perhaps the most fantastic showing of controller ability came during this year's birthday celebration in November. BVA broke records then as it continues to break records now, and has proven not only to ourselves, but to the larger FSX community, that we are ready and able to provide the best virtual ATC available anywhere.

At some point in between all these events, the studying, and the community, I found a number of controllers who took the time to sit down with me and share their views and experiences at BVA. Each one I found positive in some way, whether it was an anecdote about an interesting night on frequency, or an honest willingness to help a fellow BVA pilot improve in ways unattainable over the frequency. I have had a front row seat to a community with such passion and energy for flight and flight simulation. Each night here for me is like watching a dream come true. Each controller on the team has helped to make the ATC program better, every night.

The entire controller team is worthy of this recognition, and I am honored to have the privilege of leading a team as great as ours.
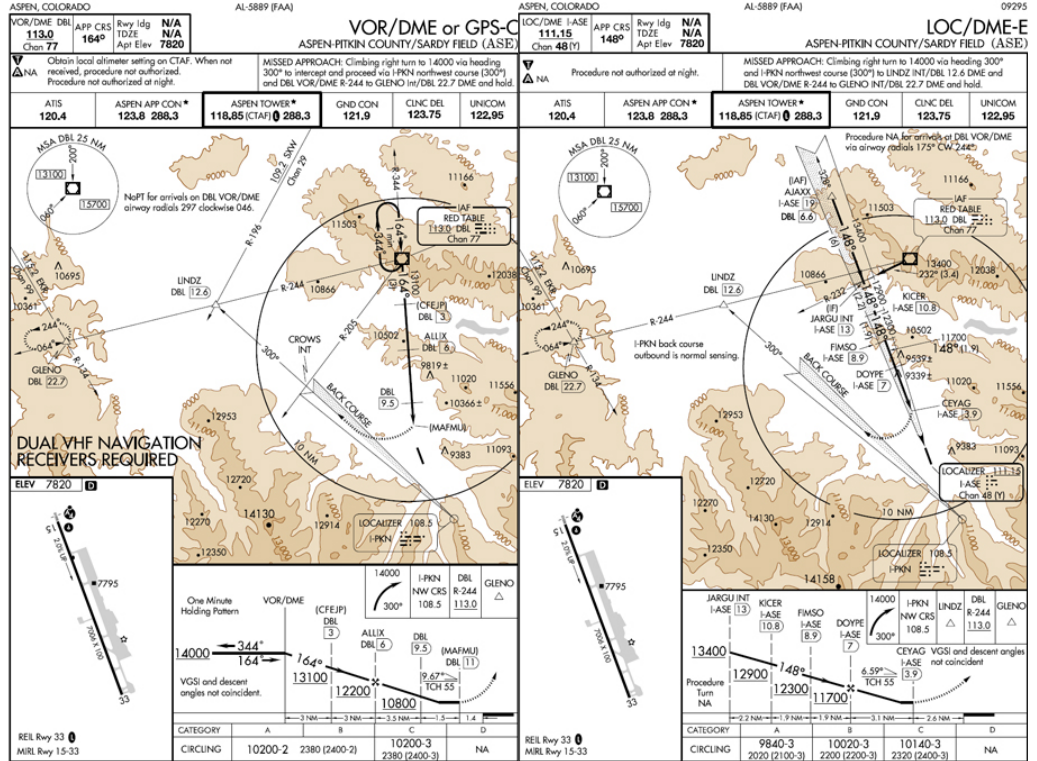
I am looking forward to what 2013 will bring, and ask that each of us continues to dedicate our best to BVA as we move forward into the future. On behalf of the ATC Instructors, I wish you and yours the best this holiday season, a happy New Year, and a full radar scope.

There are three approaches available at Sardy Field (KASE), but only the LOC/DME-E and VOR/DME or GPS-C approaches are shown to the right. Notice how both of these approahces only lead to Runway 15—that's because it's the only runway that aircraft are permitted to land on. The other end of the runway (33) is used for departures only. Both the Localizer and VOR approaches are referred to as 'circling' approaches because both of the descent paths are too steep to be associated with a particular runway. Thus, in a landing clearance, you might hear something like "N107KR, Runway 15, Wind 150 at 9, Make Straight In, Cleared to Land". You might also hear an instruction like "Make Right Upwind" or "fly overhead the field, make right downwind to Runway 15". In either case, even though you flew an instrument approach, because the VOR and LOC approaches aren't necessarily 'attached' to a specific runway, you would effectively enter a right traffic pattern as you overfly the runway and land after flying the right-hand traffic pattern (see the diagram below).

Note as well that the Red Table (DBL) VOR on both charts can be the start of the approach; if you've filed "DBL" in your flight plan, be prepared to hear an approach clearance that sounds like this: "N233DL cross Red Table at or above 13000', cleared Localizer-DME Echo Approach, circle to land Runway 15". If you are cleared for this type of full approach (either for the localizer or VOR approach), **it is your responsibility to follow the chart and align yourself with the final approach course after crossing the Red Table VOR at the prescribed altitude. Also keep in mind that you could be vectored onto the final approach course (just like any other approach).**

If you're confused about 'circling approaches', don't worry. The easiest thing to do is "make straight in"—after you follow the localizer or VOR final approach course in and pick up the field, you can just land the plane normally (and if you miss, there are defined go-around and missed approach procedures). Feel free to continue to discuss this more—post on the forums, ask questions in the session, and we'll help ensure approaches into Aspen are a lot less confusing (if not any easier to actually fly). This is without question one of the most difficult airports to fly into in the world.

There is some very challenging terrain to watch out for, so listening closely to ATC instructions and coming prepared with the necessary charts (charts are available from websites like www.airnav.com and www.myairplane.com) will be instrumental in landing your aircraft successfully—even if it takes a couple of attempts. In the event of a "Go Around" or "Missed Approach", be ready to make a quick right turn to the northwest; otherwise someone will be scraping your airplane off the side of a mountain.

Because the entire approach to Aspen is done above 10,000 feet, speed will be very important—listening closely to controllers' instructions and watching the airspeed carefully between the mountains will be instrumental in completely successful approaches.

Contacting Departure

When making initial contact with a departure controller after takeoff, there are a few things to say and do to help ensure clear, efficient communication. The first step to a smooth departure handoff actually begins when you are still on the ground! During your clearance, the delivery controller will tell you the departure frequency to expect. Be sure to write this frequency down, as the tower controller will not necessarily give it to you after takeoff when he tells you to "Contact departure". You don't want to end up in a situation where you need to ask the tower controller to repeat the departure frequency and then scramble to set your radio accordingly—all while you are trying to fly the airplane through a critical phase of flight. When the clearance delivery controller tells you the departure frequency, write it down and set it into one of your aircraft radio's standby frequencies so that it is there for you when you need it.

Once you are in the air and are ready to make initial contact with the departure controller, follow the 3 steps below to ensure that your handoff goes as smoothly as possible:

1. Listen before you transmit. If you hear someone else talking, then keying your microphone will be futile; you will probably just jam other receivers, causing others to repeat messages. After changing frequencies, pause, listen, and make sure the frequency is clear before you key your microphone.

2. Think before you transmit. Know what you want to say.

3. Make your initial contact to departure with the following information:
   - Name of the facility being called
   - Your full aircraft identification as filed in the flight plan
   - Your current altitude. This piece of information is extremely important, as the departure controller needs to verify your altitude in order to ensure that your transponder is operating properly. If you do not check in with your altitude, the departure controller will need to ask you for it, resulting in an excess transmission.

For example:

1. "Boston Departure, American Two, one thousand five hundred, climbing five thousand."

Note that when checking in with a new controller, extraneous phrases such as "with you" are discouraged.

Cape Air Virtual >>
Pilot of the Month

Each month, Cape Air Virtual recognizes the pilot who has the most hours for the airline. For December, that pilot is Bill ('braines1'), who has flown a total of 50.6 hours. Congratulations Bill!