AIRMET

An AIRMET is issued to provide pilots with plain language warnings of certain meteorological phenomena, in the layer below FL185, that have not been included in the current Area Forecast.

They are issued for the following phenomena:

• Thunderstorms, isolated and occasional
• Moderate icing, except when associated with convective cloud
• Moderate turbulence, except when it is a normal seasonal feature¹
• Extensive areas² of visibility of less than 8 kilometers
• Extensive areas² of cloud of BKN or more extent with base within 1500 feet of ground level³
• Winds of 40 knots or more within 2000 feet of ground level³

NOTES

¹ A ‘normal seasonal feature’ is one which occurs on at least fifty per cent of days during the season or one which characteristically occurs with low-level winds of a certain direction during the season concerned.

² An ‘extensive area’ is one equivalent to an area with a radius in excess of one hundred miles, or a smaller area critically located such that low cloud cover would severely restrict aircraft movements along high density routes or through mountain passes.

³ ‘Within 1500 (or 2000) feet of ground level’ means within 1500 (or 2000) feet of the level of the highest terrain excluding isolated peaks.

Pilots who encounter any of these phenomena which have not been notified by an Area Forecast or AIRMET should report the details by a SHORT AIREP.

An AIRMET will be issued as a Hazard Alert by Air Traffic Services to aircraft operating in areas likely to be affected by the AIRMET information.

AIRMET Format

Identifier is AIRMET

Issue time is the time the message was issued by the forecaster. It is given in universal coordinated time (UTC) in the format DDHHMM, e.g. 300559 (0559 on the 30th UTC).

Area number gives the Area Forecast number to which the advice relates.

Validity period extends from the expected time of occurrence of the phenomenon until the expected time of cessation, or to the end of the validity of the amended Area Forecast to be issued after the AIRMET, whichever occurs first. It is given in UTC in the format DDHHMM/DDHHMM, e.g. 300600/301000 (from 0600 until 1000 on the 30th UTC).
**Meteorological Information** includes:

- type of significant phenomenon
- type of information – observed or forecast
- time of observation or forecast time of commencement
- location – geographical and/or vertical extent
- expected movement
- expected development
- indication that the Area Forecast will be amended

Geographical locations may be given using location abbreviations on Airservices Australia’s *Planning Chart Australia* (PCA).

**Area Forecast Numbers**

AIRMET Example

AIRMET 300559 AREA 20 VALID 300600/301000 ISOLATED THUNDERSTORMS OBSERVED AT 0550 BETWEEN DOORA AND YSCO MOV W. INTSF. AMEND AREA FORECAST FOLLOWS

**Decode:** AIRMET issued at 0559 on the 30th UTC, and valid from 0600 until 1000, for isolated thunderstorms observed in Area 20 between Doora and Scone, and expected to move to the west and intensify.