

Uncontrolled airfield

Upon obtaining your student rating, you will advance to **Aerodrome Flight Information Service (AFIS) training** and eventually qualify to provide AFIS within your assigned **virtual Area Control Center (vACC)**. This manual serves as a reference throughout your training and operational duties.

While this guide remains general, specific procedures may vary between **Flight Information Regions (FIRs)** and should be adapted accordingly.

Role of the AFIS Officer

Unlike air traffic controllers, **AFIS officers do not issue instructions or clearances** to aircraft. Instead, they provide **traffic information** and operational details to assist pilots in **maintaining situational awareness**.

One key phrase, "**Runway occupied**," alerts ground traffic to remain clear of the runway until informed that it is available. Similarly, airborne aircraft notified of an **occupied runway** must ensure they do not interfere with another aircraft operating under a "**No reported traffic runway XX**" advisory. Pilots are responsible for maintaining **separation from active approach, departure, and missed approach paths**.

Objectives of This Guide

This guide outlines the responsibilities of an **AFIS officer**, including:

- **Providing accurate traffic information** to pilots.
- **Relaying IFR clearances** received from ATC units.
- **Understanding AFIS limitations** regarding clearances and instructions.
- **Ensuring effective AFIS service delivery** while operating within established regulatory boundaries.

Uncontrolled Airfields

An **uncontrolled airfield** is an aerodrome without **Air Traffic Control (ATC)**, where flight operations are managed through **AFIS or pilot self-announcements**.

Surrounding Airspace

Uncontrolled airfields are usually located in **Class G airspace**, where **both IFR and VFR flights** operate. If IFR procedures exist, a **Radio Mandatory Zone (RMZ)** is established around the aerodrome.

Within an **RMZ**:

- Pilots must adhere to **Class G airspace visibility and cloud clearance minima**.
- Continuous **radio monitoring and transmissions** on the RMZ frequency are required.
- The designated **aerodrome frequency** is used for all communications.

Where IFR traffic is present, **Class E airspace may extend down to 1,000 ft AGL**.

Uncontrolled airfields **without IFR procedures** generally follow a naming convention that combines the **nearest town name with "Radio"** (e.g., Bouarfa *Radio*). Exceptions are listed in **VFR charts and the Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP)**.

Aerodrome Layout and Traffic Patterns

Larger uncontrolled aerodromes resemble controlled airfields and typically feature:

- **Runways** (paved or grass).
- **Taxiways** connecting runways to aprons.
- **Designated parking areas** for aircraft.

Grass airstrips **may lack taxiways**, requiring pilots to specify **which side of the runway** they will use for taxiing.

Traffic Circuit Operations

The **traffic circuit** helps maintain orderly arrivals and departures. It follows a **rectangular flight pattern** at **1,000 ft AGL**, unless otherwise published.

A **standard circuit** consists of **left-hand turns**, although variations exist due to **noise abatement, terrain, or operational requirements**. These deviations are detailed in **VFR Approach Charts (VACs)**.

If no official circuit is published, pilots establish their own routing based on **safety considerations, minimum altitudes, and noise abatement procedures**.

Traffic Circuit Phases

English	French
Departure	Départ
Crosswind	Vent traversier
Downwind	Vent arrière
Base	Vent de base
Final	Finale

Runway Selection & Meteorological Conditions

Similar to controlled aerodromes, the **active runway** is chosen based on:

- **Wind direction and speed.**
- **Local regulations and procedures.**

The active runway is a **guideline** for pilots, who may select an alternative for operational or safety reasons. Most uncontrolled airfields **lack certified barometric pressure (QNH) equipment**. In such cases, pilots set **QNH manually** using the **aerodrome elevation (MSL)**.

Limitations of AFIS Authority

A **core principle of AFIS** is that **clearances and instructions are not issued** to aircraft. However, in some cases, **ground movement control** (e.g., taxiing and parking) may be delegated to AFIS officers by the aerodrome operator.

Communications Procedures

Initial Contact & Establishing Communication

VFR aircraft **arriving at or departing** an uncontrolled aerodrome must initiate radio contact on the AFIS frequency.

“ **Pilot:** Bouarfa Radio, CN-AKM.
AFIS: CN-AKM, Bouarfa Radio.

Once contact is established, the pilot states their **intentions**.

Arriving Traffic

After the initial call, an inbound aircraft transmits the following details:

- **Call sign**
- **Aircraft type**
- **Current position (distance and altitude)**
- **Intentions (e.g., landing, touch-and-go, etc.)**

In addition, pilots may also report:

- **Departure aerodrome**
- **Persons on board**

Pilot: *CN-AKM, C172, VFR from Oujda 8 miles north of field, 2,200 feet, for landing.*

AFIS: *CN-AKM, runway 27, glider activity south of the field.*

Pilots should continue **self-announcing their positions** during circuit operations. Callsigns may be abbreviated **only if first done by the ground station**.

Departing Traffic

Departing pilots must request **taxi instructions (if required)** and receive traffic information.

“ **Pilot:** *CN-AKM, C172, VFR to Nador, apron, request taxi information.*

AFIS: *CN-AKM, runway 27.*

If ground movement control is provided by the aerodrome operator, AFIS officers may issue taxi instructions.

“ **AFIS:** *CN-AKM, runway 27 via eastern grass area / taxiway S.*

Before takeoff, **wind conditions** are typically provided.

“ **AFIS:** *Wind 240 degrees, 9 knots.*

Traffic Awareness & Special Operations

Traffic Information

Since AFIS does not include radar services, **traffic information is provided based on visual observations and pilot reports**.

“ **Pilot:** *CN-AKM, holding point runway 27, ready for departure.*

AFIS: *CN-AKM, traffic information, Cessna 172 departing runway 27.*

Pilot: *CN-AKM, traffic in sight, lining up runway 27.*

Night VFR (NVFR) & Special Procedures

Night VFR (NVFR) requires:

- **A filed flight plan (if leaving the aerodrome vicinity).**
- **Use of "VFR Night" in all radio calls.**
- **Verification that the aerodrome is NVFR-approved.**

“ **Pilot:** *CN-AKM, C172, VFR Night to Melilla, at the apron, request taxi information.*

AFIS: *CN-AKM, runway 27.*

If transitioning into **Class E airspace**, the pilot must contact **ATC for further clearance**.

Emergency Procedures

Emergencies at uncontrolled aerodromes are managed similarly to controlled airports:

- **The aerodrome is closed to all traffic.**
- **Pilots are informed of the emergency.**
- **Once resolved, normal operations resume.**

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