



FAQs

SARTIMEs

What is a SARTIME?

SARTIME is an abbreviation for 'time search action required'. A SARTIME is the time nominated by a pilot for the initiation of Search and Rescue (SAR) action. SAR action will commence at this time, so it is important that the SARTIME nominated allows enough time for landing and return to your flight ops.

What is a flight note?

A flight note is 'details of the route and timing of a proposed flight provided by the pilot in command of an aircraft, other than notification submitted to Airservices Australia, and which is required to be left with a person who could be expected to notify appropriate authorities in the event that the flight becomes overdue'.

What is a SARTIME flight notification?

A SARTIME flight notification can be lodged through the National Aeronautical Information Processing System (NAIPS) and requires only basic flight information and a SARTIME to be entered. This notification may only be used for operations wholly outside controlled airspace (OCTA).

What is an ICAO flight notification?

Pilots of Visual Flight Rules (VFR) flights intending to operate in controlled airspace (except for VFR flights in Class E airspace) must submit flight details to ATS.

An ICAO Flight Notification can be lodged through the NAIPS Internet Service, where you have the option to nominate a SARTIME on the ICAO Flight Notification. However, a responsible person can hold watch as an alternative to nominating a SARTIME.

Who can hold your SARTIME?

Any person deemed to be a responsible person can hold watch on your safe arrival. This could be a friend, relative, your flying school or company.

The person you nominate may need to provide emergency services with accurate information about you and your flight, so ensure they have:

- a description of the aircraft you are flying
- the details of your flight, including the route
- your contact details
- Australia's search and rescue authority contact details – Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) 1800 815 257.

Airservices maintains a centralised SARTIME database known as CENSAR.

Pilots operating VFR flights in Australian airspace may nominate a SARTIME for Airservices to manage. The SARTIME service is currently accessed free of charge by pilots (including military pilots) across Australia.

As an alternative to a SARTIME, it is good practice to use an ICAO Flight Notification whenever possible and ensure a responsible person nominated by you holds watch on your safe arrival.

Can I lodge more than one SARTIME at a time?

No. Only one SARTIME per flight notification may be entered. If more than one SARTIME is required, then 'TBA' should be entered for the remaining legs. These TBA's can be changed to the desired SARTIME before the start of the flight. Only cancel your SARTIME once. If you cancel it on the phone there is no need to cancel it again online (AIP EN ROUTE 1.10 - 5 2.13).

Am I required to lodge a SARTIME, flight note or flight plan (FPL)?

Flight rules	Airspace class	Type of operation	Flight notification options
IFR	All	All	Submit a flight plan
VFR	C, D	All	Submit a flight plan
VFR	Any	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air transport • over water • in designated remote areas • at night proceeding beyond 120nm from the aerodrome departure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a flight plan; or • nominate a SARTIME; or • leave a flight note
VFR	Any	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSF (Community Service Flight) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a flight plan; or • nominate a SARTIME
VFR	E, G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any other operations not listed above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a flight plan; or • nominate a SARTIME; or • leave a flight note; or • no notification

For search and rescue purposes, it is highly recommended that at the very minimum you lodge a flight note, even if you are not required to (ENR 1.10 -7 2.21 and ENR 1.10-8 2.22).

As an alternative to a SARTIME, it is good practice to use an ICAO Flight Notification whenever possible and ensure a responsible person nominated by you e.g., friend, relative, flying school or company, can hold watch on your safe arrival.

How to nominate, amend and cancel a SARTIME with Airservices?

Online

The best way to nominate, amend and cancel your SARTIME is online. For example, you may nominate a SARTIME using an ICAO Flight Notification. The NAIPS Internet Service provides automatic confirmation of successful flight notification.

Phone

You can lodge, amend and cancel your SARTIME by phoning Airservices on 1800 814 931.

Radio

If you do not have online access or access to a phone, you can lodge, amend and cancel your SARTIME by radio (HF or VHF). Remember that there may be some delays due to operator workload or HF interference.

SARTIME phraseology for radio.

When nominating or amending a SARTIME by radio, include in your initial transmission the phrase 'SARTIME details'. Then wait for the operator to respond before nominating your new or amended SARTIME.

When cancelling a SARTIME by radio, end your transmission with 'cancel SARTIME'. Then wait for the operator to respond with the phrase 'SARTIME cancelled' for confirmation they have received your transmission.

I have nominated a SARTIME for the first leg of my flight. Why should I insert 'TBA' for subsequent flight legs if I intend to nominate a SARTIME for it later?

If you enter 'TBA' into the DTG field, the process for nominating a SARTIME later is streamlined for the SARTIME operator because CENSAR will be holding all the details of your flight. Blank DTG fields are not sent to CENSAR. When you have completed each leg and wish to nominate a SARTIME for the next leg (through NIS or by calling 1800 814 931), the SARTIME operator simply changes 'TBA' to the DTG nominated.

Who should I call if I forget to cancel my SARTIME?

You should call the SARTIME team on 1800 814 931.

When I call 1800 814 931, why should I keep my call short?

Keeping the call short will ensure the most efficient service can be provided. An example of a typical call is 'ABC cancel SARTIME 0700 for arrival at Archerfield'.

What happens if I forget to cancel my SARTIME?

Managing your SARTIME and cancelling it at the end of your flight is a critical responsibility for any pilot in command. It ensures that Airservices and the emergency response authorities know that you have arrived safely. It prevents unnecessary search and rescue operations—a highly resource intensive, and at times, costly process:

- Any SARTIME not cancelled is immediately subject to communications checks.
- Communications checks consist of:
 1. a phone call to the pilot's nominated contact number or numbers
 2. radio calls broadcast on HF and VHF
 3. checks with towered aerodromes to establish if the aircraft has arrived safely.
- The process of conducting communications checks results in an increased workload for:
 1. the SARTIME operator
 2. HF operators
 3. air traffic and tower controllers.
- If contact with the pilot is not made within 30 minutes, the flight details will be subject to escalation to the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC), or military SAR authority—Headquarters Joint Operations Command (HJOC).

There will not be any phone reception at my destination. What should I do?

If there is no phone reception at your destination, you may cancel your SARTIME on HF on arrival. If your aircraft is not equipped with HF you may contact the sector and request them to cancel your SARTIME. You may need to do this in the air as VHF coverage may be limited on the ground.

I have already cancelled my SARTIME on 1800 814 931, should I also send an arrival/cancellation message through NIS?

No. There is no need to confirm your verbal instruction by sending a cancellation or arrival report on NIS.

I saw my friend land safely, why can't I cancel their SARTIME?

Due to safety standards, SARTIME operators may only cancel a SARTIME if in contact with the pilot who nominated the SARTIME or at the direction of JRCC.

Why can't I nominate a SARTIME for next week?

You can nominate a SARTIME up to 5 days in advance; this limitation is required to conform to other flight planning requirements.

Why is it required that I put my phone number in the orgn/field of my flight plan?

This allows the SARTIME operator to recall your phone number, even if you have cancelled your flight plan in NIS.

I called 1800 814 931 and was on hold for a long time. Why?

The SARTIME specialist on duty normally answers calls quickly. However, if the specialist is trying to contact pilots who have failed to cancel their SARTIMEs or other calls on the network, the workload involved can result in delays. If all pilots cancelled their SARTIME prior to expiry, the waiting time would be reduced for all.

I called 1800 814 931 and cancelled my SARTIME - so why is it still in my NIS (NAIPS Internet) flight plan?

NIS (NAIPS Internet Service) talks to CENSAR, but CENSAR does not talk to NIS. So, if a change to a SARTIME is made in NAIPS, the change will take effect in the CENSAR database. However, if a change is made to your SARTIME in the CENSAR database by the SARTIMEs operator, no change will be seen in NIS.

I have a question about my flight plan, or need to make an amendment to my flight plan, other than a SARTIME question, can the SARTIME operator help?

All flight planning questions and amendments should be directed to the briefing office (BOF) on 1800 805 150.

More information

More information on SARTIME is available on the Airservices website at

airservicesaustralia.com/industry-info/pilot-tools/sartime

or by email at

sartime@airservicesaustralia.com.

