



# Safety net – the view from the Gold Coast Tower

**As Gold Coast airspace becomes increasingly active and complex, the controllers at the Gold Coast Tower are seeing a growing number of safety concerns, particularly operational deviations, runway incursions and failure to action ATC instruction correctly.**

Gold Coast aerodrome has an unusual mix of traffic, from initial pilot training, sightseeing, parachute jumping operations and high-end RPT.

The growing number of RPT jet operations make the unsafe operations from low-time or private pilots an increased safety risk. The following are the main types of unsafe operations controllers are currently seeing from the Gold Coast Tower and some tips to avoid making them.

Remember, ATC is there to help. They would much rather you ask for assistance than continue and increase the risk to yourself and other airspace users.

## On the ground

**Observed behaviour:** **taxing, crossing runways and holding points, or commencing take-off without clearance.**

These actions can potentially cause a loss of separation with other recreational or heavy commercial activities, resulting in a conflict with another aircraft. Increased workload for ATC can also result, causing subsequent delays for other airspace users.

Taxi clearance is required prior to taxiing anywhere on the manoeuvring area, e.g. upon vacating the runway after landing.

Include your position on the aerodrome to assist ATC and other pilots or airside drivers to identify you and guard against the probability of the instruction being directed at the wrong aircraft.

You must have a specific clearance from ATC to enter, cross, taxi along, line up on, backtrack on or take-off from any runway (even if that runway is not the runway in use).

After landing, remain on tower frequency until clear of all runways, then contact Gold Coast Ground for taxi clearance.

For more information about operating safely at an aerodrome, visit

**[airservicesaustralia.com/industry-info/pilot-tools/pilot-and-airside-safety/runway-safety](https://airservicesaustralia.com/industry-info/pilot-tools/pilot-and-airside-safety/runway-safety).**

## In the air

### Observed behaviour: commencing turns or climbing or descending contrary to instructions.

These actions can result in potential loss of separation, including with fast-moving RPT and high-capacity heavy jet aircraft. They also cause increased workload for ATC resulting in subsequent delays of air traffic coordination and activity.

Always maintain a listening watch on the radio by ensuring:

- you are on the correct frequency
- your radio is working and turned up
- you use the information gained from listening to build your situation awareness and to assist you to see- and-avoid other aircraft.

Use standard phraseology in radio calls to ensure ATC understand your intentions and confirm that you have understood your clearance.

Familiarise yourself with standard readback requirements at [AIP GEN 3.4 - 12](#).

For more information about communicating with ATC, visit

[airservicesaustralia.com/industry-info/pilot-tools/pilot-and-airside-safety/working-with-atc](https://airservicesaustralia.com/industry-info/pilot-tools/pilot-and-airside-safety/working-with-atc).

## Case study

ATC cleared a GA solo flight at A005. On departure from RWY 14, the aircraft (Aircraft A) was instructed to maintain runway heading and climb to A010 due to parachuting to the east.

After departure, the aircraft was instructed to make a left turn to intercept the coast south of CIS. The pilot read back the instructions correctly, so the controller determined that their instructions were correctly understood. Another aircraft (Aircraft B), a commercial passenger flight, was issued a departure instruction of heading 140 from RWY 14 once Aircraft A had cleared runway centreline.

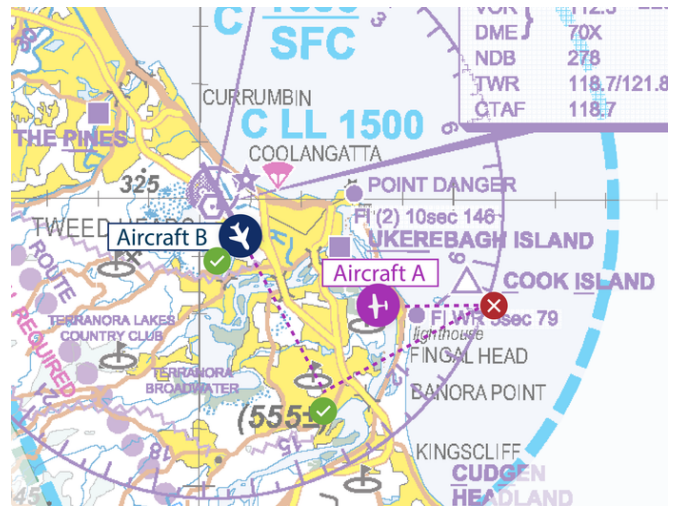
Soon after Aircraft B was airborne, Aircraft A was observed to have turned back to the west towards the runway centreline. ATC instructed Aircraft A to make an immediate left turn back towards the coastline, which they did. ATC advised Aircraft B of the traffic and instructed them to expedite the climb through 2000 ft.

This case presented risk both to Aircraft A's pilot, as well as those on board Aircraft B's flight. However, visual separation was maintained at all times due to the decisive actions of the Controller, as well as Aircraft B's attention and adherence to ATC instruction.

Whilst it is essential to maintain a listening watch and comply with ATC instruction, it is important not to rely solely on them to remain vigilant to identify your or other pilots' mistakes.

Maintain situation awareness at all times and speak up if you:

- do not understand an instruction
- are unsure if an instruction is directed at you or not
- think that a transmission has been addressed to, or answered by, the wrong station.



## More information

For more specific operational information about flying around the Gold Coast, please access CASA's **Stay OnTrack - Flying the Gold Coast Region**.

If you have any questions, or would like to provide us some feedback on this material, please email us at [safetypromotions@airservicesaustralia.com](mailto:safetypromotions@airservicesaustralia.com).

*Maps included in this document are extracts from the relevant VTC at the time of publication and not intended for navigation purposes. To access the full, most up-to-date version of the map, as well as other documents within the Aeronautical Information Package (AIP), visit [airservicesaustralia.com/aip](https://airservicesaustralia.com/aip).*