Flying the Islands of The Bahamas is truly simple, well with the capabilities of the lightest single engine aircraft. On leaving the Florida east coast first landfalls occur at Freeport (60 NM) or Bimini (50 NM). Overlapping VOR/DME of NDB signals provide course guidance from the U.S. coast and throughout the most frequently traveled routes in The Bahamas.

The information provided in this publication is for VFR planning and enroute reference only. The planning chart section shows dash lines between flight destinations to indicate suggested VFR routing, using VOR radials. Solid lines indicate NDB course lines or the necessity for dead reckoning procedures. All depicted course lines are magnetic (true course, adjusted for local magnetic variation). Distance between points is shown in nautical miles.

All locations shown with dashed course lines have ground transportation and hotel accommodations available. The absence of a course line indicates that a depicted airstrip is very remote, the runway condition is unmonitored, food and lodgings may be unavailable or the airstrip may be privately owned and barricaded in the owner’s absence.

Pilots are encouraged to examine the planning chart course lines to determine where ports of entry, maintenance, fuel and lodgings are available. The interior of this publication is called the island profile section and its purpose is to supply specific airport information and to portray the actual shape and configuration of each of our most frequently traveled islands. Pilots will find it most helpful to match up the view from the cockpit to the exact depiction of island shoreline, location of towns and settlements and their relationship to airports and runway headings.

Isogonic lines and other operational information changes with time. Please refer to current BAHAMAS AREA WAC or IFR charts, published by US/NOAA and Jeppesen Sanderson, for critical flight information. AOPA can provide members with an excellent Bahamas pilot kit, for this purpose. Carefully note any change of information (magnetic variation, frequency changes, and etc.). Any of the larger Florida Gateway FBO operators, especially at International Airports, will be able to provide current charts, rental flotation gear, Bahamas customs documents and a proper pilot briefing on international procedures.

Nassau and Freeport are major population centers. Nassau is our seat of government, the hub of commerce and airline traffic. Flight operations are conducted within the equivalent of a U.S. TCA. Freeport, on Grand Bahama Island, tower operation Control Zone. Nassau and Freeport are both busy airports with FSS facilities located in their main terminal buildings. All other airports in The Bahamas are uncontrolled.

Standard uncontrolled airport procedures are in effect; all pilots monitor blind transmission of position advisory and intentions on 122.8, left turns, pattern altitudes 1000 AGL. ATA operations require inbound traffic to come in low, with stated intentions and pattern position reports. Outbound traffic announces before occupying runway and departs straight out or with left turns, climbing immediately above pattern altitude. Runway operation must be “into the wind.”

VFR night flying is prohibited in The Bahamas, during official sunset to sunrise. IFR is easily accomplished. Controlled airspace at Nassau and Freeport requires VFR minimums of 1500, 3 miles clear of clouds. Uncontrolled airspace at VFR minimums differ from U.S. requirements; 1000’, one mile, clear of clouds and sight of land or water.

MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

You must file an e-APIS manifest and U.S. International Flight Plan before departing the U.S. and your first point of arrival must be at a Port of Entry in The Bahamas. Each person aboard the aircraft must have a passport. Drivers license or voter registration cards are not sufficient. Return to the U.S. requires an International Flight Plan filed to the most convenient U.S. Airport of Entry and advising Customs of arrival ETA by including the word “ADCUS” in the remarks section. U.S. Customs requires one hour notice of arrival. Accomplish this by following the procedure outlined in the Flight Plan Procedure section of this publication. All planes must have transponder, survival gear and 12” numbers.
All that is required for an aircraft to enter The Bahamas is an-APIS manifest and International Flight Plan, filed to any Bahamas airport of entry. Flight plans are mandatory for all operations at Nassau and Freeport, because of the density of traffic and the presence of FSS facilities at both locations. Operations between uncontrolled airports elsewhere in The Bahamas do not require a flight plan, however this protection is highly recommended when flying any appreciable distance over open water.

Freeport FSS traffic uses Freeport Radio 122.3. Operations within 5ONM radius of Nassau use Nassau Radio 128.0. All other areas of The Bahamas are served by remoted transceivers of Nassau Radio 124.2. Remote sites are located at South Bimini; Marsh Harbour, Treasure Cay; Governors Harbour, Eleuthera; Georgetown, Exuma and Great Inagua. Nassau Radio is listening to six remote receivers simultaneously. Be patient, even though your receiver is silent. Always identify your location so that they know which remote is active. A good rule of thumb is to use 1000 MSL as a base communication altitude and add 80 feet to that base for each NM distant from the nearest remote site of 124.2.

It is the pilot’s responsibility to cancel a flight plan, once initiated. If communication is lost, listen for another pilot using the frequency and ask for a relay. If all efforts fail, climb to the highest altitude possible and try again. Reserve course until communication is restored or land at a point where phone, ship to shore or HAM radio facilities are available. Failure to close a flight plan is a serious matter and will result in an extensive effort to locate the aircraft or prompt an air/sea rescue mission. Leaving The Bahamas requires an e-APIS manifest and International Flight Plan and a departure from a Port Of Entry to comply with Customs departure procedures. U.S. Customs/Immigration requires filing to a U.S. Port of Entry and notification of arrival, at least one hour in advance. Include in the remarks section of the flight plan word “ADCUS” as soon as possible, during flight, contact U.S. FSS and give them your time of activation with Bahamian FSS, the number of passengers aboard, their country of nationality and your proposed ETA at U.S. Customs. FSS will assign you a VFR Customs “SQUAWK” code. Make note of this code since ATC may assign you another for flight operations. U.S. FSS is remoted on 118.4. at Nassau, 126.9 East of Freeport and 126.7 at Bimini.

The General Aviation Community is reminded that the U.S. Customs Private Flyer’s Guide states “it is the ultimate responsibility of the pilot to ensure that Customs is properly notified of intended arrival”, one hour before departure.

### FLIGHT PLAN PROCEDURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAD FORM 63A1</th>
<th>DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION FLIGHT PLAN FORM</th>
<th>FILING TIME</th>
<th>SPECIALIST</th>
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<th>INITIALS</th>
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1. **TYPE OF FLIGHT** | **RULES** | 2. **ACFT. IDENT** | 3. **ACFT. TYPE/ EQUIPMENT** | 4. **TAS** | 5. **PT. OF DEP.** | 6. **DEP. TIME (UTC)** | **ETD** | **ATD** |
| INTR. | INTR. | HR | VFR | | | | |
| INTER-ISLAND | INTER-ISLAND | VFR | DVFR | | | | |

7. **RTE OF FLIGHT**

| | | | | |

12. **FOB.** | 13. **ALTERNATE** | 14. **PILOTS FULL ADDRESS OR ACFT HOME BASE** | 15. **SOB** |
| **HOURS** | **MINUTES** | | |

16. **COLOUR OF ACFT** | 17. **PILOTS SIGNATURE/DESTINATION CONTACT** |
| | |

18. **CLOSURE** | 19. **NOTE** | **IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AIR NAVIGATION (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) REGULATIONS 1961. PARAGRAPH 5 SUB-SECTION 2, ALL AIRCRAFT DEPARTING NASSAU INT’L MUST FILE FLIGHT PLANS IN PERSON WITH AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES.** |
| | | |

*Note: Always identify your location so that they know which remote is active. A good rule of thumb is to use 1000 MSL as a base communication altitude and add 80 feet to that base for each NM distant from the nearest remote site of 124.2.*
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