



Our Wings Carry Your Dreams

Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC)

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Introduction

When you are flying VFR (see associated mini brief), as you will be for your initial RPL and PPL flying, you must maintain visual meteorological conditions (VMC), in order to be able to see and avoid other traffic.

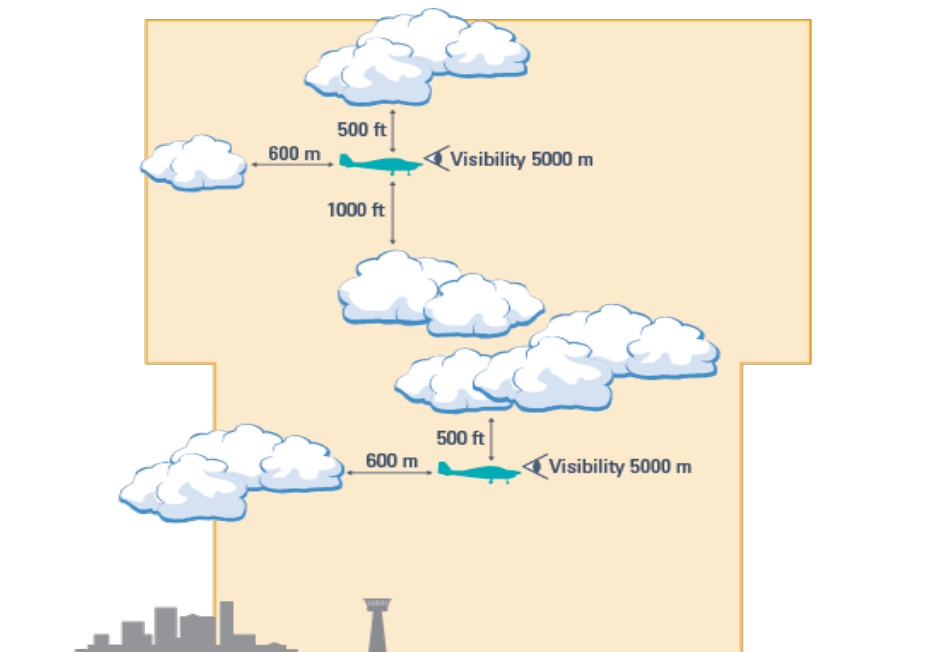
For day VFR operations, VMC is also necessary to be able to maintain terrain clearance, and to set your attitude with reference to the horizon.



VMC has two related elements – clearance from cloud and visibility. Even where you are clear of cloud, visibility may be reduced due to rain, fog, etc. Under *CAR 174* you, as the pilot in command, are responsible for determining if the visibility meets the minimum requirements for VFR operations.

VMC Requirements in Class D Airspace

In a Class D control zone, such as Bankstown, you must maintain 5,000 metres visibility, 500 feet below cloud, and 1,000 feet above cloud, and 600 metres horizontally from any cloud.

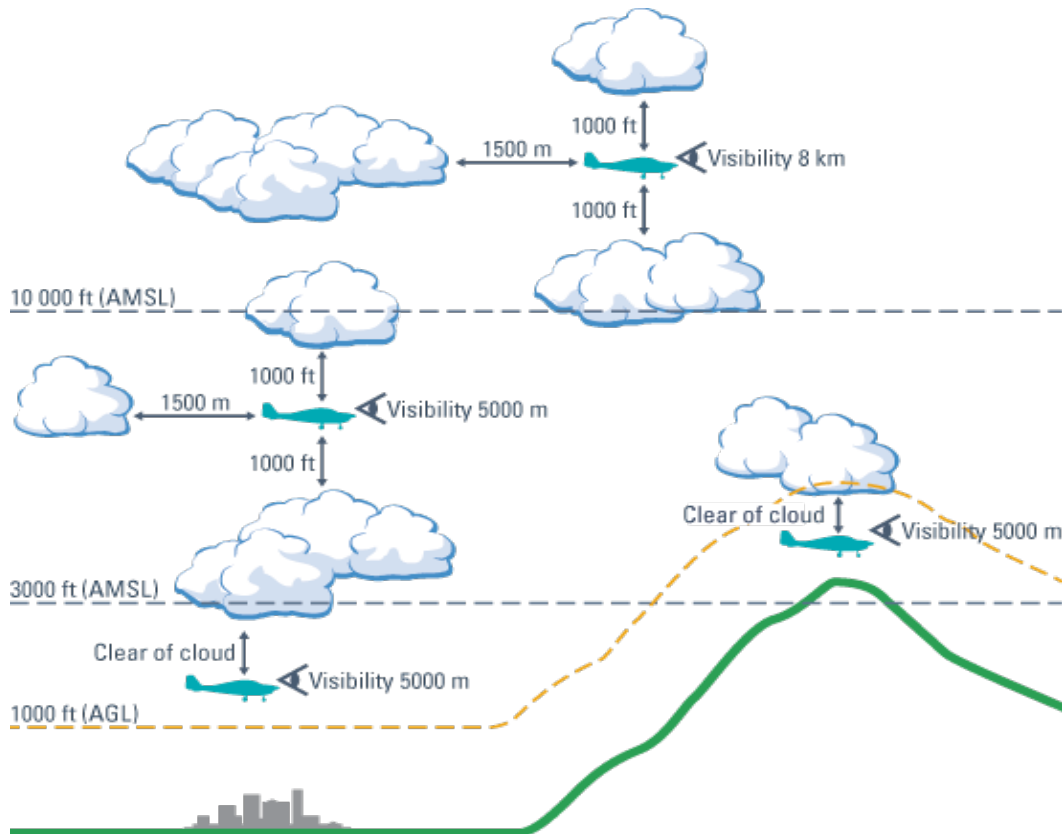


Although you are responsible for determining the visibility and distance from cloud for VMC, the Tower may advise you that the zone is “non-VMC”, in which case Special VFR is required. Because of the additional separation requirements for Special VFR, this may prevent you from departing or conducting circuits.

VMC Requirements in Class G Airspace

In Class G uncontrolled airspace, such as the Training Area, you must maintain 5,000 metres visibility below 10,000 feet (or 8,000 metres above 10,000 feet, but this generally will not apply in a Cherokee!), 1,000 feet above or below cloud, and 1,500 metres horizontally from cloud.

Although there is no Special VFR in Class G airspace, there is an additional clause. If you are either below 3,000 feet AMSL or below 1,000 feet AGL, whichever is higher, you only need 5,000 metres visibility and to be clear of cloud.



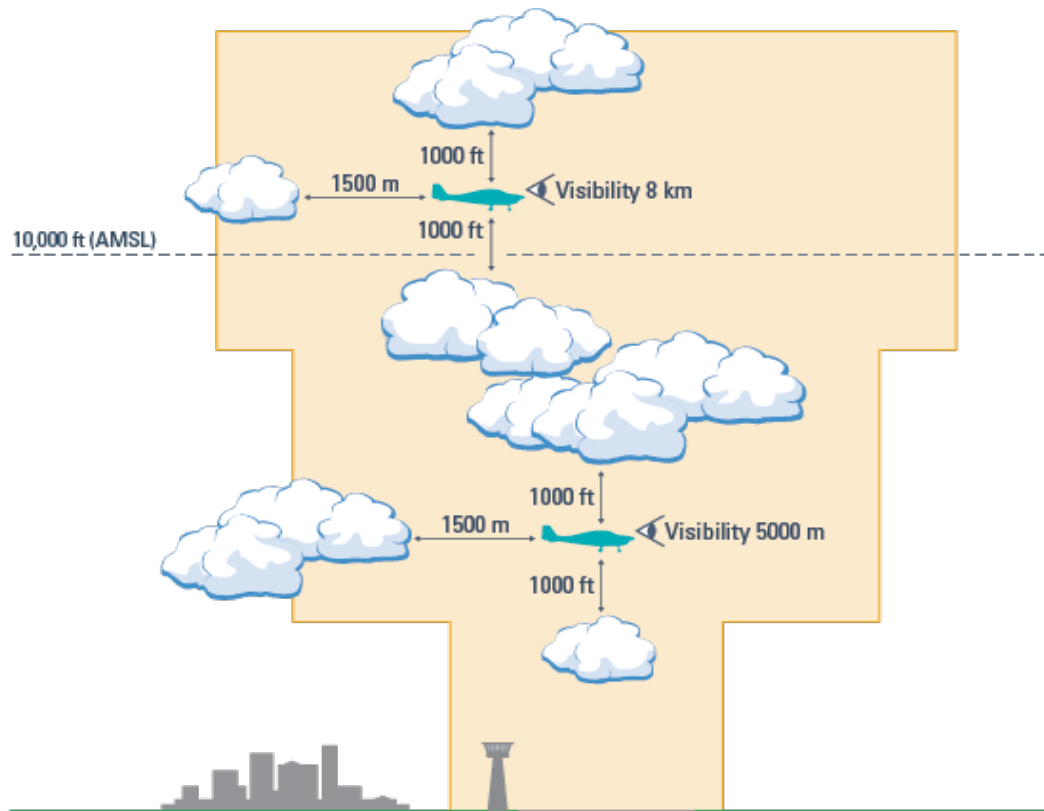
Special VFR Requirements

If you are not able to meet the VMC requirements, you may still be able to fly VFR in a control zone, or in the associated control area steps to and from the control zone, by requesting a Special VFR clearance.

To operate Special VFR, you must maintain 1,600 metres visibility in a fixed wing aircraft, and clear of cloud.

VMC Requirements in Other Airspace

In Class C controlled airspace below 10,000 feet, and in Class E airspace below 10,000 feet, similar requirements apply to Class G airspace. You must maintain 5,000 metres visibility below 10,000 feet, 1,000 feet above or below cloud, and 1,500 metres horizontally from cloud.



Reference Material

Part 91 (General Operating and Flight Rules) Manual of Standards 2020

AIP Reference:

AIP ENR 1.2.2 – Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC) – Take-Off, Landing, Enroute

AIP ENR 1.2.1.2 – Special VFR

Trivia

Researchers at the University of Illinois conducted testing of 20 non-instrument rated pilots in cloud and found that all lost control within 20 to 480 seconds, with an average time of 178 seconds between entering cloud and losing control.