AIR NAVIGATION TERMS

Graticule. A three-dimensional geometrical pattern of intersecting circles. Envision the black lines on a basketball, or a globe with only the black lines.

Latitude. Parallels of latitude are imaginary circles on the earth's surface, which lie parallel to the equator. Latitude measures 90 degrees north and 90 degrees south of the equator. Parallels of latitude make up half of the earth's graticule. Latitude is measured in degrees (°), minutes ('), and seconds (").

Longitude. Meridians of longitude are imaginary circles on the earth's surface, which intersect at the true or geographic poles, and join the poles of the earth together. Longitude measures 180 degrees west and 180 degrees east of the prime meridian (0 degrees), which passes through Greenwich, England. Meridians of longitude make up the other half of the earth's graticule. Longitude is measured in degrees (°), minutes ('), and seconds (").

Nautical Miles. A nautical mile (nm) is 6 080 feet and is the average length of one minute of latitude.

Statute Miles. A statute mile is 5 280 feet.

Scale. Scale on a map is the relationship between a unit of distance on the chart to the distance on the earth that the unit represents. For example, a scale of 1 : 250 means that one inch on the map is equal to 250 inches on the ground.

VNC. A visual flight rules (VFR) navigation chart (VNC) is a chart used primarily for visual navigation, at low altitudes (below 18 000 feet) and slower speeds (less than 300 knots). A VNC has a scale of 1 : 500 000, or one inch to eight miles.

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