AIRSPACE CLASSIFICATIONS

CDA is divided into seven classes, each identified by a single letter: A, B, C, D, E, F, or G. Flight within each class is governed by specific rules applicable to that class.

CLASS A

Class A airspace is designated where an operational need exists to exclude VFR aircraft. All operations must be conducted under IFR and are subject to Air Traffic Control (ATC) clearances and instructions. An ATC clearance gives authorization to proceed within controlled airspace and an ATC instruction is a directive issued by an ATC unit for air traffic control purposes.

All high level controlled airspace is designated as Class A.

CLASS B

Class B airspace is designated where an operational need exists to provide air traffic control service to IFR and to control VFR aircraft.

All low level controlled airspace above 12 500 feet ASL or at and above the minimum en route altitude (MEA), whichever is higher, up to but not including 18 000 feet ASL will be Class B airspace. Control zones and associated terminal control areas may also be classified as Class B airspace.

CLASS C

Class C airspace is controlled airspace in which both IFR and VFR flights are permitted.

Airspace classified as Class C becomes Class E airspace when the appropriate ATC unit is not in operation. Terminal control areas and associated control zones may be classified as Class C airspace.

CLASS D

Class D airspace is controlled airspace in which both IFR and VFR flights are permitted, but VFR flights must establish two-way communication with the appropriate ATC agency prior to entering the airspace.

Airspace classified as Class D becomes Class E airspace when the appropriate ATC unit is not in operation. A terminal control area and associated control zone could be classified as Class D airspace.

CLASS E

Class E airspace is designated where an operational need exists for controlled airspace but does not meet the requirements for Class A, B, C, or D.

Low level airways, control area extensions, transition areas, or control zones established without an operating control tower may be classified as Class E airspace.

CLASS F

Class F airspace is an area in which activities must be restricted, or limitations imposed upon aircraft operations that are not a part of those activities. Typical uses for Class F airspace include:

- military practice areas,
- fire-bombing,
- parachute jumping,
- flight training,
- soaring,
- hang gliders, and

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- air shows.

Class F airspace is sometimes known as special use airspace. It may be classified as Class F advisory, or as Class F restricted, and can be controlled airspace, uncontrolled airspace, or a combination of both.

CLASS G

Class G airspace is airspace that has not been designated Class A, B, C, D, E or F and in which ATC has neither the authority or responsibility for exercising control over air traffic.

To help remember:

- Classes A to E are controlled airspace,
- Class F may be controlled or uncontrolled, and
- Class G airspace is uncontrolled.

The difference between Class C and Class D is that an ATC clearance is needed to enter Class C, but two-way communication is all you need to enter Class D.

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