

# IFR Radio Communications Guideline

## Common Frequencies

Kona ATIS 127.4

Kona Tower 120.3

HCF 126.0

## ***On the Ramp***

Before any IFR flight we start by getting the ATIS and then requesting a clearance. In a real IFR scenario ATC would have our IFR flight plan and give a clearance based on the information we filed. In training we will normally simulate this portion of the radio calls with the instructor playing the role of ATC.

**Helicopter:** “Kona Clearance, helicopter 405CM on the South Ramp with information Whiskey ready to copy clearance.”

**Instructor:** “Helicopter 405CM you are cleared to 10 DME on the 230 radial of the Kona VOR, climb maintain 2,000’, departure frequency 126.0, squawk 1200.”

**H:** “405CM cleared to 10 DME on the 230 radial of Kona VOR, climb maintain 2,000’, departure 126.0, squawk 1200.”

**I:** “405CM read back correct, contact tower on 120.3 when ready for takeoff.”

**H:** “Tower 120.3 when ready, 405CM.”

Make the normal VFR radio calls when ready for takeoff at Kilo. Pay special attention to the CRAFT clearance because that tells us what type of departure to request. In the example above we would ask for a southwest departure.

When asking for a departure that crosses the runway (northwest or southwest) the tower may not approve it if there is traffic using the runway.

**Tower:** “Helicopter 405CM, unable southwest departure at this time, proceed southbound and remain east of the runway centerline.”

There will be some variation to the exact instructions but the idea is to remain clear of the runway until the controller approves us for our requested departure. This normally takes no more than 5 to 10 minutes.

## ***Approaches on the Active Runway***

When making practice IFR approaches on the active runway we must coordinate our request through HCF. Read AIM 4-3-21 for a full description of what it means to make a practice instrument approach.

**Helicopter:** “HCF helicopter 405CM with request.”

**HCF:** “405CM go ahead with request.”

**H:** “405CM 15 miles northeast of Kona VOR requesting a **practice approach** on ILS 17 and a southeast departure, we have Tango.”

- We always give our position, say practice approach with the name of the approach, what we intend to do after the approach, and give the current ATIS information.

**HCF:** “Helicopter 405CM squawk 2364.”

- HCF gives a squawk code so that they can identify us on radar and start to work out sequencing.

**H:** “Squawk 2364, helicopter 405CM.”

**HCF:** “Helicopter 405CM radar contact 15 miles northeast of Kona VOR, say altitude.”

- HCF requests that we read our altitude to verify what they see on radar from our transponder.

**H:** “Two thousand, helicopter 405CM.”

What happens next depends on the amount of traffic in the area. HCF will always give priority to jet aircraft and because we are slow it is not always easy to sequence us in for an approach. There may be no wait, or it may be necessary to wait for 10 minutes or more. Exactly what HCF tells us varies depending on the traffic and the controller. Here are some possibilities:

**HCF:** “Helicopter 405CM remain east of the approach course and expect 10 minute delay...”

- They will often include a description of the traffic that we are waiting for.

**HCF:** “Helicopter 405CM proceed westbound and intercept the approach course...”

- In this scenario the instructor will continue to play the role of HCF and give vectors to intercept the approach course.
- HCF may ask for us to report when established on the approach course.

HCF: “Helicopter 405CM fly heading 240.”

- Here HCF is providing vectors to the approach course.

Whatever the case may be we will read back and comply with instructions from HCF.

The next step is receiving the clearance to fly the practice approach.

HCF: “Helicopter 405CM cleared for practice approach on ILS 17, remaining VFR, contact Kona tower on 120.3”

H: “Cleared ILS 17, remain VFR, contact tower 120.3, helicopter 405CM.”

When instructed to switch frequencies we should always make it a priority to make contact on the new frequency as soon as possible.

Helicopter: “Kona tower helicopter 405CM on ILS 17.”

Tower: “Helicopter 405CM report 5 mile final for 17.”

- The tower may clear us all the way in.
- Sometimes the tower may tell us to “continue” which simply means they will contact us again shortly.

If we have not stated our intentions, which are what we want to do after the approach, the tower will ask us what they are.

Tower: “Helicopter 405CM say intentions.”

Helicopter: “Southeast departure, 405CM.

- It is possible to depart in other directions as well, or to request a full stop.
- The instructor will let you know what to request.

The tower will then give instructions how to proceed.

### ***Approaches on the Inactive Runway***

We also make approaches to the inactive side of the runway. This could mean that 17 is active but we want to practice approaches to runway 35. The main difference is that HCF cannot clear us for an approach to the inactive side so we must coordinate our request with the tower.

We start by contacting tower, stating our position, and then requesting a low approach along with our intentions after the approach.

**Helicopter:** “Kona tower, helicopter 405CM 10 miles south requesting low approach for 35, departure to the northeast.”

Notice that when we make an approach to the inactive side of the runway and coordinate with tower we do not have to give the name of the approach we will be following.

**Tower:** “Helicopter 405CM report 5 miles out for 35.”

It is possible that the tower will respond with “unable” but don’t worry, your instructor will take care of this!

Similar to our approaches on the active side of the runway if we do not state our intentions the tower will request that we “Say intentions” at some point along the approach.

With an approach to the inactive side of the runway we never know how far along the approach we will be able to proceed. Departing aircraft will always be given priority, but often the tower will let us get quite close. They may request that we make several position reports along the way and it is critical that we make these on time.

The tower will usually give us instructions that match with our departure or full stop request. Exactly what we hear from tower will depend on traffic, but here are some possibilities:

**Tower:** “Helicopter 405CM left turn out before the numbers, southwest departure approved.”

**Tower:** “Helicopter 405CM break off the approach before the shoreline, join left traffic for full stop on South Alpha.”