

“Stand By”

In the Southern California area we have seen an increased use of the word "STAND BY" by controllers of various facilities.

There seems to be a universal lack of knowledge of the meaning of the term "STAND BY" by pilots, as I continually hear them answering the controller, instead of remaining silent, and answering the controller with all kinds of various answers - some really humorous. So, to refresh the memories of those who haven't had an opportunity to read the AIM for a while:

The definition of STAND BY follows below, a direct extract from the AIM PILOT/CONTROLLER Glossary:

“Means the controller or the pilot must pause for a few seconds, usually to attend to other duties of a higher priority. Also means to wait as in "stand by for clearance." The caller should reestablish contact if a delay is lengthy. "Stand by" is not an approval or denial.”

So, when a controller says "1MM Stand By" - no response should be made by the pilot of 1MM. By saying, "Stand by" they told the pilot to cease talking and to wait a few seconds while they tend to something (maybe a 1MM something). Recently, during a very busy time at the airport where I am based, I heard a pilot respond after being told to "Stand by" by saying something to the effect "N12345 is standing by in the runup area." After a few seconds the controller that told him to STAND BY came back on the freq, obviously distracted again, with something to the effect of "N12345 I told you STAND BY, I am busy trying to get your clearance." I don't believe, from the look on the pilot's face in the aircraft next to me that he had a clue why he just got chewed out.

The word works for pilots too. If we are busy in the cockpit, and a controller is overwhelming us, all we have to do is say, "Stand by," and when we are ready to talk to him/her, then we call them and let them know we now have time to converse with them.

Fly Safely,

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