

**AERONAUTICAL
INFORMATION
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ESSENDON AERODROME (YMEN) VISUAL IDENTIFICATION HAZARD

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A review of recent safety occurrences by Airservices Australia has identified a trend of pilots experiencing difficulty in visually acquiring or correctly identifying Essendon Aerodrome (YMEN), particularly during night operations.
- 1.2 This has led to instances where aircraft manoeuvre unexpectedly while in close proximity to Melbourne Aerodrome (YMML) and its associated traffic, posing a potential safety risk.
- 1.3 Most occurrences have involved itinerant operators, although not exclusively.

2. VISUAL ACQUISITION HAZARDS

- 2.1 The YMEN Aerodrome Beacon (ABN), which normally aids visual identification, is currently unserviceable.
- 2.2 Light pollution in the surrounding area - such as freeway lighting – further complicates visual acquisition.
- 2.3 The proximity of YMML has in some instances resulted in pilots misidentifying YMML for YMEN, particularly RWY 26/RWY 27 and, to a lesser extent, RWY 34/RWY 35.
- 2.4 These factors contribute to an elevated risk of continued misidentification.

3. ADVICE TO AIRCREW

- 3.1 Pilots operating into YMEN, particularly at night and for those unfamiliar with the area, are encouraged to:
- Request an instrument approach or specific length final for a visual approach (e.g. 5NM FINAL). Air Traffic Control (ATC) will endeavour to accommodate preferred tracking, subject to traffic and workload.
 - Report UNFAMILIAR on first contact with ATC (Melbourne Approach/Departures).
 - Notify ATC of any loss of visual reference to YMEN as soon as practicable.
- 3.2 YMML RWY 34 can be distinguished by the use of Runway Touchdown Zone Identification Lights (synchronised white flashing lights).
- 3.3 ATC may instruct aircraft to report YMEN in sight.

4. CANCELLATION

- 4.1 This AIC is expected to be cancelled in six months time.

5. DISTRIBUTION

- 5.1 Airservices Australia website only.