

**AERONAUTICAL
INFORMATION
CIRCULAR (AIC)****H15/26****Effective: 202604070430 UTC**

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ESSENDON AERODROME (YMEN) VISUAL IDENTIFICATION HAZARD

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This AIP AIC cancels and replaces AIC H42/25, with a change to the cancellation date.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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 will be cancelled when the visual identification hazard has been resolved.

5. DISTRIBUTION

5.1 Airservices Australia website only.