

MERSAR 2016 - 16-T-4810
SAFETY BEFORE ALL ELSE
Air Operations Procedures and Protocols
READ BEFORE ANY FLIGHT

These instructions are designed to help make air operations at MERSAR more safe, effective, and efficient. We will be running air operations on a very precise schedule, so it's incumbent upon you to be familiar with air ops procedures so that you may proceed in an expedient manner without taking shortcuts and compromising your safety. These instructions are intended as a supplement to the Operations Plan for MERSAR.

SAFETY

There is nothing that we are doing at this training event that's worth risking your life, others' lives, or property. If at any point you see something going on that you feel is unsafe, you should call a safety time out and stop the activity. There will never be any repercussions for doing this, no matter what your rank or position in CAP. This goes for cadets as well. Use your common sense.

Be aware of the following:

- 1) **Numerous aircraft operating.** There will be quite a lot of aircraft operating within a 30 mile radius of Blackstone at any given time. The sorties have been planned in such a way as to provide separation in at least two of three ways: time, vertical separation, and horizontal separation. It is imperative that you understand and follow the instructions given by your briefer and that you are familiar with your sortie assignment as written in the briefing packet. Do not be afraid to ask questions. Keep your strobe lights, pulse lights (if equipped) or landing/taxi lights on at all times for safety. **The pilot should have eyes outside of the aircraft searching for traffic. When en route, all aircrew should be searching for other traffic.**
- 2) **Flight line safety.** As with any area in which there are turning propellers, the flight line can be a dangerous place. Both when taxiing and walking to and from aircraft, you need to be cautious of propellers – both those that are turning and those that are not. A stopped propeller doesn't mean it won't start up when you're not looking. Follow the instructions of the flight line marshallsers. In the event you do not understand their instructions, or believe you are being given unsafe instructions, stop your aircraft and your engine if necessary.
- 3) **Communications.** It's imperative that you understand your responsibilities to communicate both on FAA frequencies and to Blackstone Base on your CAP FM radio. Due to the operations tempo in particular, your failure to do so could cause significant safety issues. A complete communications briefing is included here and some augmentation is available for each sortie in the briefing packet.
- 4) **Take care of your aircraft.** Arrive at Blackstone with your aircraft in completely airworthy condition, and take care of the ones you're flying during the event. You'll be flying low and slow, and you need to make sure you're using carb heat as necessary (on planes where that applies) and make sure that you lean the mixture properly, even at these lower altitudes. **Bring your tie-down kits – we can't use your aircraft without tie-downs.**

- 5) **Airspace, airports and restricted areas.** There is a restricted area (R6602) southeast of Runway 4/22 at Blackstone. Here's a simple rule: stay out of it. There's live firing in that zone, and there is never any need for you to enter it. Additionally, there are two MOAs so there may be military traffic in the area. There are a LOT of airports inside our operating areas, so you need to be sure you're watching out for traffic not related to MERSAR. If you're flying close to or over another airport at low altitude, the mission pilot should be announcing your intentions on the CTAF frequency for that airport. As always, it's the pilot and aircrew's responsibility to maintain situational awareness and follow all FAA regulations and directives.
- 6) **Obstructions.** Flying low and slow also means you need to be familiar with and watch for uncharted obstructions. *The maps in your briefing packet are not current and are not to be used for navigation. They are there to graphically depict your sortie assignment.*
- 7) **Runways and taxiways.** We will be using 4-22 which requires back-taxiing. In the event the tower is closed (unlikely during our stay), monitor and use the CTAF/UNICOM frequency of 126.2 and be very aware of what is going on around you. *Don't be part of a runway incursion.*
- 8) **Fuel.** You may well be flying an aircraft with which you are unfamiliar. Make sure you know your endurance and the weight of the fuel on board. Don't make assumptions in this area – find out for sure what you have on board. We plan to fuel all 182 aircraft to 50 gallons and all 172 aircraft to 40 gallons. Please do the best you can to arrive with that amount of fuel or less in your aircraft.

COMMUNICATIONS

The table below shows the communications channels and resources that will be used at MERSAR. On the left side are the FAA frequencies that will be used by the pilot. On the right side are the CAP channels that will be used by the observer or co-pilot.

<p>Blackstone Ramp: 122.9 The flight line supervisor will monitor this frequency if you have questions or concerns taxiing in the non-movement area.</p>	<p>CAP R67: Air to Blackstone Base. Use this channel to stay in contact with Blackstone Base as briefed (Analog mode). <i>Used when Airborne Repeaters are in operation.</i></p>
<p>Blackstone Tower/Unicom: 126.2 We anticipate that Blackstone Tower will be operational during most or all of our operations. When the tower is closed, CTAF is also on this frequency.</p>	<p>TAC 1: Air to ground teams. If your assignment has you coordinating with a ground team, then you will contact them on TAC 1 (Analog mode).</p>
<p>AWOS-3: 119.225 On-field weather station.</p>	<p>AIR 1: Used as a backup to the CAP R67 repeater or when the airborne repeater is not operational, mainly during inbound and outbound sorties. (Analog mode).</p>
<p>Washington Center: 118.75 Used as usual. IFR arrivals and departures are now possible through Washington Center / Blackstone Tower.</p>	<p>AIR 2: This may be used on the field as the command and safety net (P25 digital mode).</p>

Telephone Numbers:

- Air Unit Lead Col Jay Lindler (803) 518-5340
- Air Unit C&C Maj Dennis Bissell (336) 202-4549
- Air Unit Dispatch Maj Don Ells (410) 562-3664
- Air Ops Branch Director Col Francis Smith (803) 261-4981

Communications Procedures

Before taxi communications check. All flights departing BKT must perform a communications check with Blackstone Base on R67 or Air 1 prior to taxi (as briefed). Failure to establish two-way communication prior to taxi may result in your being recalled and grounded for the duration of the event.

Communications on the Ground. Talk to the flight line supervisor as “Blackstone Ramp” on 122.9 while on the ramp if needed for safety or clarity. Before entering any controlled area on the ground, contact Blackstone Tower on 126.2 or advise on the CTAF 126.2 if the tower is closed.

In-Flight Communications. Call Blackstone Base procedurally when you depart, enter an operations area, leave an operations area, return to base, and arrive. Also if you need to deviate for any reason, inform Blackstone Base. Monitor R67 or Air 1 as assigned, as Blackstone Base will call you for operational checks as needed.

Lost Communications. Should you be unable to reach Blackstone Base on R67, try your backup frequency of Air 1. Use the Ft Pickett Repeater (R12) next. If all else fails, return to base, avoiding all other operational areas. If you are more than 15 minutes late on a check-in, the air unit will initiate search operations for you. Should you need to land at an airport other than BKT, be sure you contact the Air Unit Leader or Air Operations Branch Director by telephone.

INBOUND SORTIES

IFR APPROACHES INTO BLACKSTONE ARE NOW AUTHORIZED. Washington Center and Blackstone Tower can now accommodate IFR approaches and departures.

Releases

Delaware and Maryland wings contact Maj Don Ells at (410) 562-3664 for your release.

Virginia and South Carolina wings contact Col Jay Lindler at (803) 518-5340 for your release.

North Carolina, National Capital, and West Virginia wings contact Maj Dennis Bissell at (336) 202-4549 for your release.

Enter your own inbound sorties into WMIRS. Please call for your release as soon as possible, but not more than 24 hours prior to your proposed departure time. Be aware that we may be traveling when you call, so please leave a specific message so that we can return your call and do the release on time. Make sure that your sortie is completely entered in WMIRS prior to your call.

Arrival

Please contact Blackstone Base on Air 1 about 20 minutes out to inform us of your imminent arrival and then again when on the ground. Blackstone Tower will likely be active beyond normal operating hours on 126.2. If not, use the CTAF on the same frequency. Once you are on the ramp, Blackstone Ramp 122.9 will help direct you to fueling and then to parking. Blackstone Ramp and the flight line personnel will help you get your plane in place and secured. **BRING YOUR TIE-DOWN KITS AND ANCHORS – we absolutely have to have these for parking.**

Fueling

Someone at the fueling point will ask for your MERSAR 2016 Air Tasking Card (or will provide you one if you are inbound) and will record gallons and cost of fueling your aircraft on that sheet. Stay with your plane while it is being fueled. **All 172 aircraft will be fueled to 40 gallons, all 182 aircraft to 50 gallons. If at all possible, please land at BKT with that amount or less.** This should provide more than a 1 hour reserve for even the longest sorties and will allow for more flexibility when assigning aircrews. If you have a fuel gauge (dipstick type) please bring it. We intend to measure the fuel in this manner so that we know how much is in each plane. We'll have people to help you fuel, but please make sure you stay with the plane until you are specifically relieved.

If you are bringing a non-participant aircraft, you will be responsible for your own fueling and costs.

Parking

When your fueling is complete, you will be directed to taxi to parking. Contact Blackstone Ramp on 122.9 for parking instructions and follow the marshalls. Flight line personnel will help you get your plane in place and secured. **BRING YOUR TIE-DOWN KITS AND ANCHORS** as we may need to secure these aircraft in grassy areas. If you are a non-participant aircraft, please inform Blackstone Ramp so we can park you in the appropriate areas.

Secure your aircraft, and bring your keys and completed MERSAR 2016 Air Tasking Card (with time and fueling blanks totally completed) to the Air Ops building. We will handle closing out your flight for you in WMIRS. You'll then be provided with transportation to registration.

MISSION SORTIES

You should receive your air taskings for the weekend prior to your arrival. While we hope to stick to that plan as closely as possible, we anticipate changes and adjustments to get everyone the maximum training possible.

You will have a specific time to report to the staging area at the flight line. You and your crew will be directed to a briefer in one of the briefing areas. Together, you will brief the sortie, ask and answer questions, and complete the sortie and 104 information in WMIRS. You will have available a spreadsheet that will help you do weight and balance, and you will complete the Air Tasking Card. When the briefing is complete, the briefer and mission pilot will sign off on the sortie on the card, and the mission pilot will report to air ops for a release and the keys to the aircraft. You may then preflight and depart per your sortie instructions, always keeping in mind that you need to stay within the schedule proscribed or you won't be allowed to depart. Remember to communicate per the communications brief and your sortie brief.

Upon return, you will be directed to fueling. You will have personnel to ASSIST you in the fueling process. Please remember to fuel only to 40 gallons for 172s and 50 for 182s. The fueling team will record the gallons and cost of fuel on your card, and then you will be directed to parking. Return to your briefer for close-out of the sortie and 104 data.

OUTBOUND SORTIES

Sorties for returning home are frequently difficult in that everyone's ready to depart. We will set up multiple stations and tell you the person you should see for your outbound release in order to facilitate this, but please do not harass the air ops staff. We'll get everyone home as fast and as safely as possible (not in that order.)

Your air ops rep will work with you to get your ORM done along with your weight and balance and WMIRS entry. Once all that is complete, you'll be given the keys and released to go home.

Again, be safe and watch for aircraft back-taxiing on Runway 4/22. Use 122.9 for Blackstone Ramp and 126.2 for Blackstone Tower or CTAF for safety advisories. The tower will be in operation during most of our activities. Contact Blackstone Base on Air 1 at engine start, and on departure.

Upon arrival at your home base, you will need to refuel your plane to its original fuel state (whatever it had in it when you first left for MERSAR). Call your FRO with your gallons and fuel cost, as well as your time home. You will need to see to it that your fuel receipt is uploaded to WMIRS per your normal wing procedure. The individual wings will submit for reimbursement.

