

## **Glossary of Terms Used In Airport Master Planning**

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PREPARED FOR

### **CHARLES M. SCHULZ-SONOMA COUNTY AIRPORT MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

PREPARED BY

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#### **PREFACE**

Many technical terms and expressions are used in airport master planning and noise management programs. This glossary has been prepared for the members of the Charles M. Schulz-Sonoma County Airport Master Plan Update Community Advisory Committee and interested members of the public. The definitions in this glossary were compiled from various sources including government publications such as Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Advisory Circulars, FAA Orders, the Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs) and professional literature.

**ABOVE GROUND LEVEL (AGL):** An elevation datum given in feet above ground level.

**AIR CARRIER:** A person who undertakes directly by lease, or other arrangement, to engage in air transportation. (Federal Aviation Regulations Part 1 [FAR 1]) (Also see Certificated Air Carrier)

**AIR CARRIERS:** The commercial system of air transportation, consisting of the certificated air carriers, air taxis (including commuters), supplemental air carriers, commercial operators of large aircraft, and air travel clubs. (Federal Aviation Administration [FAA Census])

**AIR ROUTE TRAFFIC CONTROL CENTER (ARTCC):** A facility established to provide air traffic control service to aircraft operating on IFR flight plans within controlled airspace, principally during the en route phase of flight. When equipment capabilities and controller workload permit, certain advisory/assistance services may be provided to VFR aircraft. (Aeronautical Information Manual [AIM])

**AIR TAXI:** A classification of air carriers which directly engage in the air transportation of persons, property, mail, or in any combination of such transportation and which do not directly or indirectly utilize large aircraft (over 30 seats or a maximum payload capacity of more than 7,500 pounds) and do not hold a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity or economic authority issued by the Department of Transportation. (Also see commuter air carrier and demand air taxi.) (FAA Census)

**AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL (ATC):** A service operated by appropriate authority to promote the safe, orderly, and expeditious flow of air traffic. (FAR 1)

**AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT:** An occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft which takes place between the time any person boards the aircraft with the intention of flight and all such persons have disembarked, and in which any person suffers death or serious injury, or in which the aircraft receives substantial damage. (National Transportation Safety Board [NTSB])

**AIRCRAFT APPROACH CATEGORY:** A grouping of aircraft (Categories A–E) based on 1.3 times their stall speed in their landing configuration at their maximum certificated landing weight. (Airport Design)

**AIRCRAFT OPERATION:** The airborne movement of aircraft in controlled or non-controlled airport terminal areas and about given en route fixes or at other points where counts can be made. There are two types of operations — local and itinerant. (FAA Stats)

**AIRCRAFT PARKING LINE LIMIT (APL):** A line established by the airport authorities beyond which no part of a parked aircraft should protrude. (Airport Design)

**AIR/FIRE ATTACK BASE:** An established on-airport base of operations for the purposes of aerial suppression of large-scale fires by specially-modified aircraft. Typically, such aircraft are operated by the California Department of Forestry and/or the U.S. Forest Service.

**AIRPLANE DESIGN GROUP:** A grouping of airplanes (Groups I–V) based on wingspan. (Airport Design)

**AIRPORT:** An area of land or water that is used or intended to be used for the landing and takeoff of aircraft, and includes its buildings and facilities, if any. (FAR 1)

**AIRPORT ELEVATION:** The highest point of an airport's usable runways, measured in feet above mean sea level (MSL). (AIM)

**AIRPORT HAZARD:** Any structure or natural object located on or in the vicinity of a public airport, or any use of land near such airport, that obstructs the airspace required for the flight of aircraft in landing or taking off at the airport or is otherwise hazardous to aircraft landing, taking off, or taxiing at the airport. (Airport Design)

**AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION (ALUC):** A commission established in accordance with the California State Aeronautics Act in each county having an airport operated for the benefit of the general public. The purpose of each ALUC is “to assist local agencies in ensuring compatible land uses in the vicinity of all new airports and in the vicinity of existing airports to the extent that the land in the vicinity of those airports is not already devoted to incompatible uses.” An ALUC need not be created if an alternative process, as specified by the statutes, is established to accomplish the same purpose. (California Public Utilities Code, Section 21670 et seq.)

**AIRPORT LAYOUT PLAN (ALP):** A scale drawing of existing and proposed airport facilities, their location on the airport, and the pertinent clearance and dimensional information required to demonstrate conformance with applicable standards.

**AIRPORT REFERENCE CODE (ARC):** A coding system used to relate airport design criteria to the operational and physical characteristics of the airplanes intended to operate at the airport. (Airport Design)

**AIRPORT REFERENCE POINT (ARP):** A point established on an airport, having equal relationship to all existing and proposed landing and takeoff areas, and used to geographically locate the airport and for other planning purposes. (Airport Design)

**AIRPORT TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER (ATCT):** A terminal facility that uses air/ground communications, visual signaling, and other devices to provide ATC services to aircraft operating in the vicinity of an airport or on the movement area. (AIM)

**AIRWAY/FEDERAL AIRWAY:** A Class E airspace area established in the form of a corridor, the centerline of which is defined by radio navigational aids. (AIM)

**ALERT AREA:** A special use airspace which may contain a high volume of pilot training activities or an unusual type of aerial activity, neither of which is hazardous to aircraft. (AIM)

**APPROACH LIGHT SYSTEM (ALS):** An airport lighting system which provides visual guidance to landing aircraft by radiating light beams in a directional pattern by which the pilot aligns the aircraft with the extended runway centerline during a final approach to landing. Among the specific types of systems are:

- **LDIN**—Lead-in Light System.
- **MALSR**—Medium-intensity Approach Light System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights.
- **ODALS**—Omnidirectional Approach Light System, a combination of LDIN and Runway End Identifier Lights (REILS).
- **SSALR**—Simplified Short Approach Light System with Runway Alignment Indicator Lights. (AIM)

**APPROACH SPEED:** The recommended speed contained in aircraft manuals used by pilots when making an approach to landing. This speed will vary for different segments of an approach as well as for aircraft weight and configuration. (AIM)

**AUTOMATED SURFACE OBSERVING SYSTEM (ASOS):** Airport electronic equipment which automatically measures meteorological parameters, reduces and analyzes the data via computer, and broadcasts weather information which can be received on aircraft radios in some applications, via telephone.

**AUTOMATIC DIRECTION FINDER (ADF):** An aircraft radio navigation system which senses and indicates the direction to a low/medium frequency (L/MF) nondirectional radio beacon (NDB) ground transmitter. (AIM)

**AUTOMATIC TERMINAL INFORMATION SERVICE (ATIS):** The continuous broadcast of recorded non-control information in selected terminal areas. (AIM)

**BACK COURSE APPROACH:** A non-precision instrument approach utilizing the rearward projection of the Instrument Landing System (ILS) localizer beam.

**BALANCED FIELD LENGTH:** The runway length at which the distance required for a given aircraft to abort a takeoff and stop on the runway (accelerate-stop distance) equals the distance required to continue the takeoff and reach a height of 35 feet above the runway end (accelerate-go distance).

**BASED AIRCRAFT:** Aircraft stationed at an airport on a long-term basis.

**BUILDING RESTRICTION LINE (BRL):** A line which identifies suitable building area locations on airports.

**CEILING:** Height above the earth's surface to the lowest layer of clouds or obscuring phenomena that is reported as "broken", "overcast", or "obscuration" and is not classified as "thin" or "partial". (AIM)

**CERTIFICATED ROUTE AIR CARRIER:** An air carrier holding a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity issued by the Department of Transportation authorizing the performance of scheduled service over specified routes, and a limited amount of nonscheduled service. (FAA Census)

**CIRCLING APPROACH/CIRCLE-TO-LAND MANEUVER:** A maneuver initiated by the pilot to align the aircraft with a runway for landing when a straight-in landing from an instrument approach is not possible or is not desirable. (AIM)

**COMMERCIAL OPERATOR:** A person who, for compensation or hire, engages in the carriage by aircraft in air commerce of persons or property, other than as an air carrier. (FAR 1)

**COMPASS LOCATOR:** A low power, low or medium frequency (L/MF) radio beacon installed at the site of the outer or middle marker of an ILS. (AIM)

**COMPASS ROSE:** A circle, graduated in degrees, printed on some charts or marked on the ground at an airport. It is used as a reference to either true or magnetic direction. (AIM)

**COMMUNITY NOISE EQUIVALENT LEVEL (CNEL):** The noise rating adopted by the State of California for measurement of airport noise. It represents the average daytime noise level during a 24-hour day, measured in decibels and adjusted to an equivalent level to account for the lower tolerance of people to noise during evening and nighttime periods.

**COMMUTER AIR CARRIER:** An air taxi operator which performs at least five round trips per week between two or more points and publishes flight schedules which specify the times, days of the week and places between which such flights are performed. (FAA Census)

**CONTROLLED AIRSPACE:** A generic term that covers the different classifications of airspace (Class A, Class B, Class C, Class D and Class E airspace) and defines dimensions within which air traffic control service is provided to Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) flights and to Visual Flight Rules (VFR) flights in accordance with the airspace classification. Controlled airspace in the United States is designated as follows:

- **Class A**—Generally, that airspace from 18,000 feet MSL up to and including 60,000 feet MSL (Flight Level 600), including the airspace overlying the waters within 12 nautical miles of the coast of the 48 contiguous states and Alaska. Unless otherwise authorized, all persons must operate their aircraft under IFR.
- **Class B**—Generally, that airspace from the surface to 10,000 feet MSL surrounding the nation's busiest airports in terms of airport operations or passenger enplanements. The configuration of each Class B airspace area is individually tailored and consists of a surface area and two or more layers (some Class B airspaces areas resemble upside-down wedding cakes), and is designed to contain all published instrument

procedures once an aircraft enters the airspace. An ATC clearance is required for all aircraft to operate in the area, and all aircraft that are so cleared receive separation services within the airspace. The cloud clearance requirement for VFR operations is "clear of clouds".

- **Class C**—Generally, that airspace from the surface to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation (charted in MSL) surrounding those airports that have an operational control tower, are serviced by radar approach control, and that have a certain number of IFR operations or passenger enplanements. Although the configuration of each Class C airspace area is individually tailored, the airspace usually consists of a surface area with a 5 nm radius, and an outer area with a 10 nm radius that extends from 1,200 feet to 4,000 feet above the airport elevation. Each person must establish two-way radio communications with the ATC facility providing air traffic services prior to entering the airspace and thereafter maintain those communications while within the airspace. VFR aircraft are only separated from IFR aircraft within the airspace.
- **Class D**—Generally, that airspace from the surface to 2,500 feet above the airport elevation (charted in MSL) surrounding those airports that have an operational control tower. The configuration of each Class D airspace area is individually tailored and when instrument procedures are published, the airspace will normally be designed to contain the procedures. Arrival extensions for instrument approach procedures may be Class D or Class E airspace. Unless otherwise authorized, each person must establish two-way radio communications with the ATC facility providing air traffic services prior to entering the airspace and thereafter maintain those communications while in the airspace. No separation services are provided to VFR aircraft.
- **Class E**—Generally, if the airspace is not Class A, Class B, Class C, or Class D, and it is controlled airspace, it is Class E airspace. Class E airspace extends upward from either the surface or a designated altitude to the overlying or adjacent controlled airspace. When designated as a surface area, the airspace will be configured to contain all instrument procedures. Also in this class are Federal airways, airspace beginning at either 700 or 1,200 feet AGL used to transition to/from the terminal or en route environment, en route domestic, and offshore airspace areas designated below 18,000 feet MSL. Unless designated at a lower altitude, Class E airspace begins at 14,500 MSL over the United States, including that airspace overlying the waters within 12 nautical miles of the coast of the 48 contiguous States and Alaska. Class E airspace does not include the airspace 18,000 feet MSL or above.

**DEMAND AIR TAXI:** Use of an aircraft operating under Federal Aviation Regulations, Part 135, passenger and cargo operations, including charter and excluding commuter air carrier. (FAA Census)

**DISPLACED THRESHOLD:** A threshold that is located at a point on the runway other than the designated beginning of the runway. (AIM)

**DISTANCE MEASURING EQUIPMENT (DME):** Equipment (airborne and ground) used to measure, in nautical miles, the slant range distance of an aircraft from the DME navigational aid. (AIM)

**FEDERAL AVIATION REGULATIONS (FAR) PART 77:** The part of the FAR that deals with objects affecting navigable airspace.

**FAR PART 77 SURFACES:** Imaginary surfaces established with relation to each runway of an airport. There are five types of surfaces: (1) primary; (2) approach; (3) transitional; (4) horizontal; and (5) conical.

**FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION (FAA):** The United States government agency that is responsible for insuring the safe and efficient use of the nation's airspace.

**FIXED BASE OPERATOR (FBO):** A business operating at an airport that provides aircraft services to the general public, including but not limited to sale of fuel and oil; aircraft sales, rental, maintenance, and repair; parking and tiedown or storage of aircraft; flight training; air taxi/charter operations; and specialty services, such as instrument and avionics maintenance, painting, overhaul, aerial application, aerial photography, aerial hoists, or pipeline patrol.

**FLIGHT SERVICE STATION (FSS):** FAA facilities which provide pilot briefings on weather, airports, altitudes, routes, and other flight planning information.

**FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP:** A company or individual buys, or leases, a fractional interest in one aircraft just as they might acquire a partial interest in one condo unit. They can use their own aircraft or another similar or identical aircraft a certain number of hours or days per year. The economics of each situation differs depending on the number of people who will use the aircraft, the value of their time to the company, and the dollars saved in airline tickets, hotels, etc.

**GENERAL AVIATION:** That portion of civil aviation which encompasses all facets of aviation except air carriers. (FAA Stats)

**GENERIC VISUAL GLIDE SLOPE INDICATOR (GVGI):** A generic term for the group of airport visual landing aids which includes Visual Approach Slope Indicators (VASI), Precision Approach Path Indicators (PAPI), and Pulsed Light Approach Slope Indicators (PLASI). When FAA funding pays for this equipment, whichever type receives the lowest bid price will be installed unless the airport owner wishes to pay the difference for a more expensive unit.

**GLIDE SLOPE:** An electronic signal radiated by a component of an ILS to provide descent path guidance to approaching aircraft.

**GLOBAL POSITIONING SYSTEM (GPS):** A relatively new navigational system which utilizes a network of satellites to determine a positional fix almost anywhere on or above the earth. Developed and operated by the U.S. Department of Defense, GPS has been made available to the civilian sector for surface, marine, and aerial navigational use. For aviation purposes, the current form of GPS guidance provides en route aerial navigation and selected types of nonprecision instrument approaches. Eventual application of GPS as the principal system of navigational guidance throughout the world is anticipated.

**HELIPAD:** A small, designated area, usually with a prepared surface, on a heliport, airport, landing/takeoff area, apron/ramp, or movement area used for takeoff, landing, or parking of helicopters. (AIM)

**INSTRUMENT APPROACH PROCEDURE:** A series of predetermined maneuvers for the orderly transfer of an aircraft under instrument flight conditions from the beginning of the initial approach to a landing or to a point from which a landing may be made visually. It is prescribed and approved for a specific airport by competent authority. (AIM)

**INSTRUMENT FLIGHT RULES (IFR):** Rules governing the procedures for conducting instrument flight. Also term used by pilots and controllers to indicate a type of flight plan. (AIM)

**INSTRUMENT LANDING SYSTEM (ILS):** A precision instrument approach system which normally consists of the following electronic components and visual aids: (1) Localizer; (2) Glide Slope; (3) Outer Marker; (4) Middle Marker; (5) Approach Lights. (AIM)

**INSTRUMENT OPERATION:** An aircraft operation in accordance with an IFR flight plan or an operation where IFR separation between aircraft is provided by a terminal control facility. (FAA ATA)

**INSTRUMENT RUNWAY:** A runway equipped with electronic and visual navigation aids for which a precision or non-precision approach procedure having straight-in landing minimums has been approved. (AIM)

**ITINERANT OPERATION:** An arrival or departure performed by an aircraft from or to a point beyond the local airport area.

**LARGE AIRCRAFT:** An aircraft of more than 12,500 pounds maximum certificated takeoff weight. (FAR 1)

**LIMITED REMOTE COMMUNICATIONS OUTLET (LRCO):** An unmanned, remote air/ground communications facility which may be associated with a VOR. It is capable only of receiving communications and relies on a VOR or a remote transmitter for full capability.

**LOCALIZER (LOC):** The component of an ILS which provides course guidance to the runway. (AIM)

**LOCAL OPERATION:** An arrival or departure performed by an aircraft: (1) operating in the traffic pattern, (2) known to be departing or arriving from flight in local practice areas, or (3) executing practice instrument approaches at the airport. (FAA ATA)

**LORAN:** An electronic ground-based navigational system established primarily for marine use but used extensively for VFR and limited IFR air navigation.

**MARKER BEACON (MB):** The component of an ILS which informs pilots, both aurally and visually, that they are at a significant point on the approach course.

**MEAN SEA LEVEL (MSL):** An elevation datum given in feet from mean sea level.

**MEDIUM-INTENSITY APPROACH LIGHTING SYSTEM (MALS):** The MALS is a configuration of steady-burning lights arranged symmetrically about and along the extended runway centerline. MALS may also be installed with sequenced flashers; in this case, the system is referred to as MALSF.

**MILITARY OPERATIONS AREA (MOA):** A type of special use airspace of defined vertical and lateral dimensions established outside of Class A airspace to separate/segregate certain military activities from IFR traffic and to identify for VFR traffic where these activities are conducted. (AIM)

**MINIMUM DESCENT ALTITUDE (MDA):** The lowest altitude, expressed in feet above mean sea level, to which descent is authorized on final approach or during circle-to-land maneuvering in execution of a standard instrument approach procedure where no electronic glide slope is provided. (FAR 1)

**MISSED APPROACH:** A maneuver conducted by a pilot when an instrument approach cannot be completed to a landing. (AIM)

**NAVIGATIONAL AID/NAVAID:** Any visual or electronic device airborne or on the surface which provides point-to-point guidance information or position data to aircraft in flight. (AIM)

**NONDIRECTIONAL BEACON (NDB):** A Medium Frequency (MF) or Ultra High Frequency (UHF) radio beacon transmitting nondirectional signals whereby the pilot of an aircraft equipped with direction finding equipment can determine his bearing to or from the radio beacon and "home" on or track to or from the station. (AIM)

**NONPRECISION APPROACH PROCEDURE:** A standard instrument approach procedure in which no electronic glide slope is provided. (FAR 1)

**NONPRECISION INSTRUMENT RUNWAY:** A runway with an instrument approach procedure utilizing air navigation facilities, with only horizontal guidance, or area-type navigation equipment for which a straight-in nonprecision instrument approach procedure has been approved or planned, and no precision approach facility or procedure is planned. (Airport Design)

**OBJECT FREE AREA (OFA):** A surface surrounding runways, taxiways, and taxilanes which should be clear of parked airplanes and objects except for objects that need to be located in the OFA for air navigation or aircraft ground maneuvering purposes. (Airport Design)

**OBSTACLE:** An existing object, object of natural growth, or terrain at a fixed geographical location, or which may be expected at a fixed location within a prescribed area, with reference to which vertical clearance is or must be provided during flight operation. (AIM)

**OBSTACLE FREE ZONE (OFZ):** A defined volume of airspace above and adjacent to a runway and its approach lighting system if one exists, free of all fixed objects except FAA-approved frangible aeronautical equipment and clear of vehicles and aircraft in the proximity of an airplane conducting an approach, missed approach, landing, takeoff, or departure.

**OBSTRUCTION:** An object/obstacle, including a mobile object, exceeding the obstruction standards specified in FAR Part 77, Subpart C. (AIM)

**OUTER MARKER:** A marker beacon at or near the glide slope intercept position of an ILS approach. (AIM)

**PRECISION APPROACH PATH INDICATOR (PAPI):** An airport visual landing aid similar to a VASI, but which has light units installed in a single row rather than two rows.

**PRECISION APPROACH PROCEDURE:** A standard instrument approach procedure in which an electronic glide slope is provided, such as an ILS or precision approach radar (PAR). (FAR 1)

**PRECISION INSTRUMENT RUNWAY:** A runway with an instrument approach procedure utilizing an ILS, microwave landing system (MLS), or PAR. (Airport Design)

**PULSED LIGHT APPROACH SLOPE INDICATORS (PLASI).** PLASI systems are a visual approach aid for use in visual flight conditions. The system provides the pilot with a stabilized approach by means of a single light source from a position adjacent to the intended touchdown point of a runway or helipad.

**RELOCATED THRESHOLD:** The portion of pavement behind a relocated threshold that is not available for takeoff and landing. It may be available for taxiing and aircraft. (Airport Design)

**REMOTE COMMUNICATIONS AIR/GROUND FACILITY (RCAG):** An unmanned VHF/UHF transmitter/receiver facility which is used to expand Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) air/ground communications coverage and to facilitate direct contact between pilots and controllers. (AIM)

**REMOTE COMMUNICATIONS OUTLET (RCO) AND REMOTE TRANSMITTER/ RECEIVER (RTR):** An unmanned communications facility remotely controlled by air traffic personnel. RCO's serve FSS's. Remote Transmitter Receivers serve terminal ATC facilities. (AIM)

**RESTRICTED AREA:** Designated airspace within which the flight of aircraft, while not wholly prohibited, is subject to restriction. (FAR 1)

**RUNWAY CLEAR ZONE:** A term previously used to describe the runway protection zone.

**RUNWAY EDGE LIGHTS:** Lights used to define the lateral limits of a runway. Specific types include:

- **HIRL**—High-Intensity Runway Lights.
- **MIRL**—Medium-Intensity Runway Lights.

**RUNWAY END IDENTIFIER LIGHTS (REIL):** Two synchronized flashing lights, one on each side of the runway threshold, which provide a pilot with a rapid and positive visual identification of the approach end of a particular runway. (AIM)

**RUNWAY PROTECTION ZONE (RPZ):** A trapezoidal shaped area at the end of a runway, the function of which is to enhance the protection of people and property on the ground through airport owner control of the land. The RPZ usually begins at the end of each primary surface and is centered upon the extended runway centerline. (Airport Design)

**RUNWAY SAFETY AREA (RSA):** A defined surface surrounding the runway prepared or suitable for reducing the risk of damage to airplanes in the even of an undershoot, overshoot, or excursion from the runway. (Airport Design)

**SMALL AIRCRAFT:** An aircraft of 12,500 pounds or less maximum certificated takeoff weight. (FAR 1)

**SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE:** Airspace of defined horizontal and vertical dimensions identified by an area on the surface of the earth wherein activities must be confined because of their nature and/or wherein limitations may be imposed upon aircraft operations that are not a part of those activities. (AIM)

**STANDARD INSTRUMENT DEPARTURE (SID):** A preplanned IFR air traffic control departure procedure printed for pilot use in graphic and/or textual form. SID's provide transition from the terminal to the appropriate en route structure. (AIM)

**STANDARD TERMINAL ARRIVAL ROUTE (STAR):** A preplanned IFR air traffic control arrival route published for pilot use in graphic and/or textual form. STARS provide transition from the en route structure to an outer fix or an instrument approach fix/arrival waypoint in the terminal area. (AIM)

**STOPWAY:** An area beyond the takeoff runway, no less wide than the runway and centered upon the extended centerline of the runway, able to support the airplane during an aborted takeoff, without causing structural damage to the airplane, and designated by the airport authorities for use in decelerating the airplane during an aborted takeoff. (FAR 1)

**STRAIGHT-IN INSTRUMENT APPROACH — IFR:** An instrument approach wherein final approach is begun without first having executed a procedure turn; it is not necessarily completed with a straight-in landing or made to straight-in landing weather minimums. (AIM)

**TAXILANE:** The portion of the aircraft parking area used for access between taxiways, aircraft parking positions, hangars, storage facilities, etc. (Airport Design)

**TAXIWAY:** A defined path, from one part of an airport to another, selected or prepared for the taxiing of aircraft. (Airport Design)

**TERMINAL INSTRUMENT PROCEDURES (TERPS):** Procedures for instrument approach and departure of aircraft to and from civil and military airports. There are four types of terminal instrument procedures: precision approach, nonprecision approach, circling, and departure.

**TERMINAL RADAR SERVICE AREA (TRSA):** Airspace surrounding designated airports wherein ATC provides radar vectoring, sequencing, and separation on a full-time basis for all IFR and participating VFR aircraft. (AIM)

**THRESHOLD:** The beginning of that portion of the runway usable for landing. (AIM)

**TOUCH-AND-GO:** An operation by an aircraft that lands and departs on a runway without stopping or exiting the runway. A touch-and-go is defined as two operations. (AIM)

**TRAFFIC PATTERN:** The traffic flow that is prescribed for aircraft landing at, taxiing on, or taking off from an airport. The components of a typical traffic pattern are upwind leg, crosswind leg, downwind leg, base leg, and final approach. (AIM)

**TRANSIENT AIRCRAFT:** Aircraft not based at the airport.

**TRANSMISSOMETER:** An apparatus used to determine visibility by measuring the transmission of light through the atmosphere. (AIM)

**UNCONTROLLED AIRSPACE:** Now known as Class G airspace. Class G airspace is that portion of the airspace that has not been designated as Class A, Class B, Class C, Class D, and Class E airspace.

**UNICOM (Aeronautical Advisory Station):** A nongovernment air/ground radio communication facility which may provide airport information at certain airports. (AIM)

**VERY-HIGH-FREQUENCY OMNIDIRECTIONAL RANGE (VOR):** The standard navigational aid used throughout the airway system to provide bearing information to aircraft. When combined with Distance Measuring Equipment (DME) or Tactical Air Navigation (TACAN) the facility, called VOR-DME or VORTAC, provides distance as well as bearing information.

**VISUAL APPROACH SLOPE INDICATOR (VASI):** An airport landing aid which provides a pilot with visual descent (approach slope) guidance while on approach to landing. Also see PAPI.

**VISUAL FLIGHT RULES (VFR):** Rules that govern the procedures for conducting flight under visual conditions. The term "VFR" is also used by pilots and controllers to indicate type of flight plan. (AIM)

**VISUAL GLIDE SLOPE INDICATOR (VGSI):** A generic term for the group of airport visual landing aids which includes VASI, PAPI, and Pulsed Light Approach Slope Indicators (PLASI). When FAA funding pays for this equipment, whichever type receives the lowest bid price will be installed unless the airport owner wishes to pay the difference for a more expensive unit.

**VISUAL RUNWAY:** A runway intended solely for the operation of aircraft using visual approach procedures, with no straight-in instrument approach procedure and no instrument designation indicated on an FAA-approved airport layout plan. (Airport Design)

**WARNING AREA:** A type of special use airspace which may contain hazards to nonparticipating aircraft in international airspace. (AIM)

## SOURCES

**FAR 1:** Federal Aviation Regulations Part 1, Definitions and Abbreviations. (1993)

**AIM:** Aeronautical Information Manual, Pilot/Controller Glossary. (1993)

**Airport Design:** Federal Aviation Administration. *Airport Design*. Advisory Circular 150/5300-13, Change 10. (2006)

**FAA ATA:** Federal Aviation Administration. *Air Traffic Activity*. (1986)

**FAA Census:** Federal Aviation Administration. *Census of U.S. Civil Aircraft*. (1986)

**FAA Stats:** Federal Aviation Administration. *Statistical Handbook of Aviation*. (1984)

**NTSB:** National Transportation Safety Board. *U.S. NTSB 830-3*. (1989)