

SESSION 31: ATC CLEARANCES — EN ROUTE AMENDMENTS AND ALTITUDE ASSIGNMENTS

1. An en route clearance amendment is issued when ATC needs to:
 - A. Cancel the IFR flight plan
 - B. Change the route, altitude, or other element of the existing clearance
 - C. Assign the destination airport
 - D. Issue the initial departure clearance

2. When ATC issues a reroute amendment, the pilot must:
 - A. Continue the original route until reaching the destination
 - B. Disregard it if the original route is shorter
 - C. Depart from the route only after landing
 - D. Read back the amended route, confirm, and comply

3. "Climb and maintain 9,000" issued en route is an amendment that:
 - A. Authorizes the pilot to descend at discretion
 - B. Requires the pilot to remain at the current altitude
 - C. Replaces the previous altitude assignment with a new one to climb to and hold
 - D. Is only a suggestion the pilot may decline

4. "Descend at pilot's discretion, maintain 6,000" allows the pilot to:

- A. Descend immediately at maximum rate only
- B. Remain at the current altitude indefinitely with no obligation to descend
- C. Level off below 6,000 if desired
- D. Begin the descent whenever ready and level off as needed, ultimately maintaining 6,000

5. "Cross WILMS at or above 8,000" is a crossing restriction that requires the aircraft to:

- A. Cross WILMS at exactly 8,000
- B. Cross WILMS below 8,000
- C. Begin descent only after WILMS
- D. Be at or above 8,000 when crossing WILMS

6. "Cross DENZO at and maintain 5,000" requires the aircraft to:

- A. Cross DENZO at exactly 5,000 and hold that altitude
- B. Cross DENZO at or above 5,000
- C. Cross DENZO at or below 5,000
- D. Descend to 5,000 only after DENZO

7. A "descend via" STAR clearance authorizes the pilot to:

- A. Comply with all published altitude (and speed) restrictions on the STAR
- B. Ignore the published restrictions and descend at will
- C. Maintain the last assigned altitude regardless of the STAR
- D. Climb to the STAR's highest altitude

8. Without a "descend via" or specific altitude amendment, a pilot on a STAR must:

- A. Descend to meet all published crossing restrictions
- B. Begin descent at pilot's discretion
- C. Maintain the last assigned altitude until ATC amends it
- D. Descend to the lowest published altitude

9. A clearance amendment that says "amend altitude, maintain 11,000" supersedes:

- A. Only the route portion of the clearance
- B. The transponder code
- C. The previous altitude assignment
- D. The destination

10. When ATC issues "proceed direct to BAILY, rest of route unchanged," the pilot:

- A. Disregards the rest of the filed route
- B. Navigates direct to BAILY, then resumes the previously cleared route
- C. Holds at BAILY
- D. Lands at BAILY

11. A pilot who receives an en route amendment they cannot comply with should:

- A. Comply partially and continue
- B. Read it back as issued and attempt it
- C. Squawk 7600
- D. Advise ATC "unable" and state the limitation

12. "Climb via SID" differs from a plain altitude amendment in that it:

- A. Authorizes compliance with all published SID altitude (and speed) restrictions
- B. Cancels the SID routing
- C. Requires an immediate climb to the top altitude ignoring restrictions
- D. Applies only to the descent phase

13. A pilot cleared "maintain 7,000" who is later issued "climb and maintain 13,000" should:

- A. Climb only halfway and report
- B. Maintain 7,000 until reaching the next fix
- C. Begin the climb to 13,000 and read back the new altitude
- D. Request the previous altitude back

14. A reroute amendment that takes the aircraft off its filed route requires the pilot to:

- A. Continue on the filed route until the destination
- B. Reprogram navigation as needed and verify the new routing against the clearance
- C. Ignore the change if GPS-equipped
- D. Land and re-file

15. "Cross FENNS at or below FL230" is a restriction meaning the aircraft must:

- A. Cross FENNS at exactly FL230
- B. Cross FENNS above FL230
- C. Be at or below FL230 when crossing FENNS
- D. Climb to FL230 after FENNS

16. The most critical elements to read back in an en route amendment are:

- A. The destination only
- B. The departure frequency only
- C. The new altitude, route, and any heading or crossing restriction
- D. The transponder code only

17. "Descend and maintain 8,000" (without "pilot's discretion") requires the pilot to:

- A. Begin the descent promptly and maintain 8,000
- B. Descend only when ready
- C. Level off above 8,000 first
- D. Remain at the current altitude

18. A pilot on a "descend via" STAR who is then told "descend now, maintain 10,000" should understand that:

- A. The STAR is cancelled entirely
- B. All speed restrictions are also cancelled
- C. The lateral routing is no longer required
- D. The hard altitude assignment of 10,000 now applies, while the lateral routing continues

19. When an amendment changes only the altitude, the route portion of the clearance:

- A. Is also cancelled
- B. Remains as previously cleared unless ATC states otherwise
- C. Reverts to the filed route automatically
- D. Must be re-requested by the pilot

20. A clearance "after WICKR, cleared direct destination" means the pilot:

- A. Proceeds via the cleared route to WICKR, then direct to the destination
- B. Goes direct to the destination immediately
- C. Holds at WICKR
- D. Lands at WICKR

21. "Maintain at or above 7,000 until established on the airway, then climb and maintain 11,000" is an amendment that:

- A. Permits descent below 7,000 immediately
- B. Requires reaching 11,000 before the airway
- C. Sets a conditional altitude sequence the pilot must follow precisely
- D. Cancels the airway routing

22. A pilot who accepts an amended clearance is then obligated to:

- A. Fly the original clearance instead
- B. Comply with the amended clearance as the new authorization
- C. Confirm it only with Flight Service
- D. Request a return to the original clearance

23. If a pilot does not understand an amended clearance, the correct action is to:

- A. Comply with their best interpretation
- B. Request clarification or "say again" from ATC before complying
- C. Continue on the previous clearance silently
- D. Squawk 7700

24. "Climb and maintain FL200, expedite through 14,000" means the pilot should:

- A. Climb at normal rate to 14,000 then level off
- B. Maintain the current altitude through 14,000
- C. Descend through 14,000 quickly
- D. Climb to FL200, increasing the climb rate while passing through 14,000

25. The fundamental principle governing en route clearance amendments is that:

- A. The pilot may choose which amendments to accept
- B. Amendments apply only above FL180
- C. The most recent accepted clearance supersedes prior instructions, and the pilot must read back and comply
- D. Amendments are advisory and need not be followed

ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS – SESSION 31

1. B. Change an element — An en route amendment changes the route, altitude, or other element of the existing clearance.
2. D. Read back/comply — A reroute amendment must be read back, confirmed, and complied with.
3. C. New altitude to hold — "Climb and maintain 9,000" replaces the previous altitude with a new one to climb to and hold.
4. D. Begin when ready, maintain 6,000 — "Descend at pilot's discretion, maintain 6,000" lets the pilot begin the descent when ready and level off as needed, ultimately maintaining 6,000.
5. D. At or above 8,000 — "Cross WILMS at or above 8,000" requires being at or above 8,000 when crossing WILMS.

6. A. Exactly 5,000, hold — "Cross DENZO at and maintain 5,000" requires crossing at exactly 5,000 and holding that altitude.
7. A. Comply with restrictions — "Descend via" authorizes compliance with all published altitude (and speed) restrictions on the STAR.
8. C. Maintain last assigned — Without "descend via" or a specific amendment, the pilot maintains the last assigned altitude until ATC amends it.
9. C. Previous altitude — "Amend altitude, maintain 11,000" supersedes the previous altitude assignment.
10. B. Direct then resume — "Proceed direct to BAILY, rest of route unchanged" means navigate direct to BAILY, then resume the previously cleared route.
11. D. Advise "unable" — An amendment the pilot cannot comply with prompts advising ATC "unable" and stating the limitation.
12. A. Comply with SID restrictions — "Climb via SID" authorizes compliance with all published SID altitude (and speed) restrictions.
13. C. Climb/read back — "Climb and maintain 13,000" requires beginning the climb to 13,000 and reading back the new altitude.
14. B. Reprogram/verify — A reroute requires reprogramming navigation and verifying the new routing against the clearance.
15. C. At or below FL230 — "Cross FENNS at or below FL230" requires being at or below FL230 when crossing FENNS.
16. C. Altitude/route/restriction — The critical readback elements of an amendment are the new altitude, route, and any heading or crossing restriction.

17. A. Descend promptly — "Descend and maintain 8,000" (without PD) requires beginning the descent promptly and maintaining 8,000.

18. D. Hard altitude, lateral continues — "Descend now, maintain 10,000" applies the hard altitude assignment while the STAR lateral routing continues.

19. B. Route unchanged — When only the altitude changes, the route remains as previously cleared unless ATC states otherwise.

20. A. Via route then direct — "After WICKR, cleared direct destination" means proceed via the cleared route to WICKR, then direct to the destination.

21. C. Conditional sequence — The conditional altitude amendment sets a sequence the pilot must follow precisely (at or above 7,000 until established, then climb to 11,000).

22. B. Comply with amended — Accepting an amended clearance obligates the pilot to comply with it as the new authorization.

23. B. Request clarification — If an amendment isn't understood, the pilot requests clarification or "say again" before complying.

24. D. Climb, expedite through 14,000 — "Climb and maintain FL200, expedite through 14,000" means climb to FL200, increasing the climb rate through 14,000.

25. C. Latest supersedes — The most recent accepted clearance supersedes prior instructions, and the pilot must read back and comply.