Understanding ATIS

The first time you contact an airport you need to announce that you have the current weather or ATIS. ATIS (automatic terminal information service) is a recorded broadcast of the current conditions at that specific airport. Typically a new ATIS is recorded every hour unless conditions change dramatically enough to issue an intermediate observation.

Airport Name
β Brackett, El Monte, etc.

Information
β Each new report gets a new identifier in the phonetic alphabet
β Alpha, Bravo, Charlie etc.

Time
β Time of recording using the 24 hour clock in zulu time.
β Zulu time is -8 during PST and -7 during PDT. (Ex. 1547Z is 07:47AM PST)

Wind
β Surface wind at the airport based on magnetic heading
β 180 at 09 means wind is coming from a heading of 180° or South at 9 knots velocity

Visibility
β The reported visibility as seen by the controllers in statute miles
β Haze can also be reported with visibility

Sky Condition or Clouds
β Will include cloud coverage and altitudes of layers if applicable
β Can be reported as clear clouds, few clouds, scattered clouds, broken clouds, or overcast clouds
β Broken and overcast are considered ceilings

Temperature & Dewpoint
β Reported in Celsius
β Not included at all airports
β A close temperature/dewpoint spread means fog could easily form soon

Altimeter Setting
β Current barometric pressure at the airport
β Should set altimeter to setting to have correct attitudes

Approach & Runway in Use
β Announces which instrument approach and runways to expect
β Runway alignment should match wind direction
β If runways 19 and 1 are available, wind is 180, runway should be 19

NOTAM’s
β Notices to Airmen
β Reminds pilots of restrictions, inoperative equipment, or to caution for birds

Please check ATIS early and often to become familiar with the language. If weather is ever questionable you can call ATIS on your telephone using the following numbers:

KPOC (909) 596-1523    KEMT (626) 444-1107