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FltPlan.com's New Pre-Departure Clearance System Working Smoothly Despite Earlier Concerns

SOUTHBURY, CT September 23, 2013 -- General aviation pilots using FltPlan.com's new Pre-Departure Clearance (PDC) delivery system are successfully navigating the nuances of PDCs despite early concerns they would have difficulty figuring things out.

"After four months of operation our pilots have been interpreting PDCs correctly and the program has gone quite smoothly," Ken Wilson, president of FltPlan.com, the free online flight planning and flight plan filing service that supports more than 130,000 pilots.

"The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) feedback is also very positive. There haven't been any instances of pilot deviations based on general aviation pilots using our system. Unlike the airlines which have been plagued by pilot deviations because of pilot lack of understanding of PDCs, FltPlan.com is requiring pilots to take a PDC quiz before using the delivery system."

FltPlan.com started the PDC delivery system in May for jet and turbo props not equipped with datalink on board the aircraft. Since then, more than 200 aircraft that didn't have the PDC capability are now receiving PDCs through FltPlan.com's system. PDCs, text clearances issued for an Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) flight plan, are now available at 70 airports throughout the United States. The pilot's PDC, secured through FltPlan.com, is his Air Traffic Control (ATC) clearance.

ATC generates the PDC approximately 25 to 30 minutes prior to the filed departure time. It is then forwarded to FltPlan.com. Once received, a PDC available message is automatically displayed on a pilot's Active Flight Plan List. The PDC can be distributed to the pilot or co-pilot via email addresses or text messages and through FltPlan.com's mobile Apps.

The benefits of PDC are that it lessens controller and pilot workload, reduces delays in pilots receiving their clearances, reduces radio congestion on clearance delivery frequencies, and avoids potential verbal instruction errors.

"While PDCs have been around for more than 20 years, people receiving a PDC without datalink is something new," Wilson said.

"Through FltPlan.com a growing number of pilots now don't have to wait while some other aircraft is struggling to read back a full route clearance. Pilots can go right to ground control and bypass clearance delivery. Better yet, now they won't be struggling to read back the full route clearance. Using the system also helps reduce frequency congestion at a busy period, saving pilots and air traffic controllers valuable time."

FltPlan.com supports pilots with services ranging from flight plan filing, FBO/airport information, flight tracking, certified eAPIS submissions, SMS (IS-BAO and ACSF), runway analysis, weight and balance, eLogbook program, Mexican/Caribbean/Central America handling, Mexican and Cuban overflight services, pre-departure clearances, FAA-approved certified weather, and participation in the FAA's CDM program.

For additional information about FltPlan.com's Pre-Departure Clearance (PDC) delivery system contact Tina Gillis at tina@fltplan.com.