

# **MAREP REPORT**

## **Utilizing Aviation Weather Reports**

**04 03 16**

We know that the best place to obtain weather forecasts and reports is on Environment Canada's web site ([www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca](http://www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca)). The "Text Forecasts" will give you the marine forecast, and "Marine Weather" will give you current hour reports for all the Strait of Georgia buoys & lightstations. However, you need not stop there! Right below "Marine Weather" on the Menu is "Aviation Weather" which you can select, then select "METAR/TAF" on the aviation page, and then select the airports which lie virtually at sea level on your route.

One of the problems of the Marine forecast is that if you are going to Desolation Sound for example, your level of detail is restricted to "northern Strait of Georgia". We all know that local conditions can be quite different from the general forecast. However, you can obtain detailed 24 hour forecasts and hourly reports for Comox and for Campbell River Airports which are very specific. Although Powell River Airport does not have a forecast, it does report hourly weather in more detail than does the Powell River marine station. Also, the aviation hourly sequence includes the hourly reports for the last three hours – so you can observe trends for wind direction and speed, temperature, dew point, visibility, sea level pressure, precipitation, and cloud cover. These are all very useful when you are expecting (or worse – not expecting) changes.

For trips to the Gulf Islands, try the information for the Nanaimo and Victoria Airports. For the upcoming cruise south of the border, look up Bellingham and Whidby Island Airports. The USA material is further down the aviation page, where you select "American Data (ADDS)" (Aviation Digital Data Service).

You do not need to know the specific airport identifier – the system will coach you and supply this as long as you know the name of the place. Be sure that you select the "plain language" option, or you will get the cryptic aviation symbol shorthand report which will not be of much use – unless you are also an aviator.

The Aviation Page also references the latest (last six hours) weather map, graphic forecast maps for the next 12 hours, and (through ADDS) forecast maps for the next 24, 36 and 48 hours. All of these are very useful for you to consider in conjunction with the usual Marine material.

Keep the fog below eye level!

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