

*Below is the text from an email received 6/1/21 from the South Carolina FSDO. While it refers to Skydiving Operations at DCM, Aerowood instructors, students, and renters should follow these procedures at any airport with skydiving activity [Aerowood comments are in bracketed italics]:*

Thank you for reaching out to me. Per our conversation, I'm passing along the information available regarding Chester-Catawba Regional Airport (KDCM) and some of its general aviation activities and how we can all make the airspace safer operating near this busy, uncontrolled airport. Please feel free to share any and all attachments/info at your next instructor safety meeting.

First we'll cover the regulatory aspect – **§91.103 Preflight Action** – “Each pilot in command shall, before beginning a flight, become familiar with all available information concerning that flight. This information must include – (a) For a flight under IFR or a flight not in the vicinity of an airport, weather reports and forecasts, fuel requirements, alternatives available if the planned flight cannot be completed, and any known traffic delays of which the pilot in command has been advised by ATC;”

See PDF attachment “Skydiving and Parachute Operations”. This document, P-8740-57 [*document is below*], and other great safety publications can be found here: <https://www.faasafety.gov/gslac/alc/>

This publication advises that pilots should check NOTAMs, the A/FD, and sectional charts for awareness. It also states, “Unless you are flying into, or out of, an airport where skydiving is taking place, **it is best to avoid overflying such an airport by at least 2 miles**. [*Aerowood recommends avoiding the overflight by at least 3 miles*] Maintain a listening watch on UNICOM.” Keep in mind, it is not required for all skydiving activity to have NOTAMs issued. In our particular case, NOTAMs are not issued at KDCM because this is an ongoing jump activity/permanent jump site that operates in controlled airspace. Instead, it is charted on the sectional and in the AFD found in the Chart Supplement. See PDF attachment “PJA excerpt from SE chart sup” [*document is below*]. Additionally, the skydiving operator has a Letter of Agreement (LOA) on file defining the responsibilities and procedures for the operator and the controllers.

Advisory Circular 90-48D Pilots' Role in Collision Avoidance – references the AIM, Chapter 4, sections 1-4, and chapter 5, sections 2-4, containing additional info on services available to pilots, including information on VFR advisory services, etc. **VFR flight following to an airport such as KDCM would alert the pilot that parachute activity is underway.** Even if it isn't feasible to utilize flight following because of training that is underway, monitoring CLT App/Dep could be a good alternative for CFI situational awareness.

For flights to or near KDCM, I would recommend all pilots and flight instructors monitor CTAF and begin announcing intentions 10 miles out (AC 90-66B para 10.1 Recommended Traffic Advisory Practices). Section 12.5 of this AC also discusses Parachute Operations *[Excerpt below]*. Jump Pilots not only have to talk to ATC for Class Bravo and jump authorization, but they also make jump announcements on approach and on CTAF. Monitoring the CTAF frequency for a long time period will allow pilots to recognize the activity and remain clear. I would also potentially recommend NOT doing a midfield crossover at a busy known Drop Zone. If you are inbound to an airport such as DCM, I would recommend circling the airport at a distance of at least 1-2 miles *[Aerowood recommends circling at a distance of at least 3 miles]* while looking for jump plane activity and open parachute canopies.

## ***Skydiving and Parachute Operations - P-8740-57***

### ***Introduction***

These days, the sky has become a very busy place, and pilots are not the only ones who use it. Skydiving is growing in popularity at a remarkable pace. Safety and awareness of skydiving operations is necessary since all users of the National Airspace System have the responsibility to know and understand each other's operation.

To assist in this improved understanding, the FAA and the US Parachute Association have collaborated to create this pamphlet and a video entitled *Skydiving and Parachute Operations*. Pilots are encouraged to review the information in both the pamphlet and the video.

This pamphlet describes:

- Skydiving origins and growth
- Skydiving procedures
- Pilot safety concerns
- Pilot and skydiver responsibilities
- Key references

### ***Skydiving Origins and Growth***

Present day skydiving began with the life-saving necessity known as parachuting. From the late 1940s to the 1960s, a few hundred adventuresome souls acquired WWII military surplus parachuting equipment. Once airborne, the goal was to get out of the airplane and make it to the ground in one piece. The idea quickly caught on, and clubs began forming at airports around the country.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, parachutists began to use larger aircraft and jump from higher altitudes. It wasn't long before parachutists were arranging themselves in a multitude of aerial formations with remarkable ease and dexterity. Soon, these energetic men and women were being called Skydivers engaged in Sport Parachuting -- or, as it is currently known -- Skydiving.

The sport of skydiving spread worldwide. American skydivers alone make nearly 3,000,000 jumps per year either on or next to over 300 general aviation airports. With this growth, you can begin to see the need for education and communication.

### ***Skydiving Procedures***

There are certain regulations and related information regarding skydiving and aircraft operations that need to be adhered to. The purpose of this is to ensure that operations are performed at the optimum safety level.

#### **Regulations and Related Information**

These regulations and related information can be found in the following documents:

- 14 CFR Part 105 - Parachute Jumping

- [Advisory Circular 105-2C - Sport Parachute Jumping](http://www.airweb.faa.gov/Regulatory_and...5870370C862569DE005BD7AA?OpenDocument) ([http://www.airweb.faa.gov/Regulatory\\_and...5870370C862569DE005BD7AA?OpenDocument](http://www.airweb.faa.gov/Regulatory_and...5870370C862569DE005BD7AA?OpenDocument))
- [Advisory Circular 90-66B - Recommended Standard Traffic Patterns and Practices for Aeronautical Operations at Airports without Operating Control Towers](#)
- Skydiver's Information Manual (published by the US Parachute Association)
- [Aeronautical Information Manual](http://www.faa.gov/ATpubs/AIM/index.htm) (<http://www.faa.gov/ATpubs/AIM/index.htm>)

### **Skydiver Qualifications**

Skydivers become qualified to jump after graduating from an extensive course of instruction developed by the US Parachute Association. Throughout the course, they are under direct instructor supervision. Instruction covers many aspects, including indoctrination on how aircraft use airports. Skydivers gain a healthy respect for aircraft and pilots.

### **Drop Zone**

A *drop zone* is a designated landing area clear of obstacles, and is usually marked with a brightly colored wind sock. Drop zone operators, jump pilots, airport management, and aviation officials meet and agree upon key safety concerns and practical issues of sharing airports and the surrounding airspace. Some drop zones located beneath complex airspace have a letter of agreement with the appropriate FAA air traffic control facility to address site-specific issues and concerns.

Each day before the jumping begins, the drop zone operator contacts the Flight Service Station for the latest weather forecast and winds aloft forecast. The jump pilot files a notification with Air Traffic Control at least one hour prior to the first drop. Skydiving operations with continuous activity may file a permanent notification. These areas are often, but not always, depicted on aeronautical charts with a parachute symbol and are listed in the Airport/Facility Directory. The actual location of parachute symbols on the chart does not represent the precise location of drop zones. The symbol on the chart may be in the only free spot that is clear of other markings. Another reason to make sure you look for these symbols is because the FSS will not normally identify these permanent notifications during a preflight briefing, unless specifically requested to do so.

### **Takeoff and Climb**

During jump operations, the jump pilot follows procedures covered by the general operating and flight rules of Part 91 of 14 CFR. The jump pilot is also required to follow 14 CFR Part 105, which includes special provisions unique to parachute operations.

Prior to takeoff, the skydivers load up and secure themselves with seat belts. The pilot assures that the aircraft's weight and balance parameters are not exceeded.

A typical climb pattern has the jump aircraft quickly leaving the airport traffic pattern and climbing to the jump altitude, which generally ranges from 10,000 AGL to 15,000 AGL. The location of the aircraft climb and descent areas is determined by several factors, including:

- Winds aloft

- Proximity to airways
- Population density
- Air traffic control

Specific procedures may vary by airport.

#### **Jump Run**

The jump run typically takes place over the designated landing area and usually into the wind. A few minutes prior to the drop, the jump pilot contacts ATC, advising of jump altitude and exit time. ATC then advises of any aircraft or unsafe conditions in the area. Before the drop, the jump pilot may make a blind call on UNICOM as an additional alert to aircraft in the vicinity of the drop zone.

#### **Exit**

From typical jump altitudes of 10,000 AGL to 15,000 AGL, it takes just over one minute to freefall to parachute opening altitudes of 4,000 AGL to 2,000 AGL. The jump pilot ensures that all jumpers have exited, and then advises ATC that jumpers are away.

#### **Descent**

Even with a minimum parachute opening altitude of 2,000 AGL, skydivers are well above the normal aircraft traffic pattern altitude. Under a parachute, the rate of descent slows to about 1,000 feet per minute. Skydiver landing patterns at airports are generally contained well within aircraft traffic patterns. Except in rare cases, skydivers open their parachutes upwind of the intended landing area, and then land into the wind to minimize speed and to maximize flare.

Skydiving ends when the jump pilot verifies that all skydivers are down, and advises ATC that all have landed. The jump pilot then makes a quick descent to the airport - continually scanning for other air traffic. Specific procedures vary by airport.

### ***Pilot Safety Concerns and Responsibilities***

To learn more about parachuting procedures, pilots can turn to the documents listed in a previous chapter. Additionally, pilots should check:

- NOTAMs
- Airport/Facility Directory
- Sectional Charts

Pilots and skydivers need to be alert and follow the rules. It is the responsibility of everyone to watch for, and avoid, each other. Because skydivers freefall at a speed of 120 mph or more, they are extremely difficult to spot from other aircraft. Unless you are flying into, or out of, and airport where skydiving is taking place, it is best to avoid overflying such an airport by at least 2 miles. Maintain a listening watch on UNICOM.

As pilots, we can appreciate the energy and dedication that has taken skydiving from a survival skill to a world class sport. As interest and participation in skydiving continues to grow, so does our individual responsibility to follow procedures and do everything possible to maintain our mutual safety.

## ***About This Series***

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The purpose of this series of Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Aviation Safety Program publications is to provide the aviation community with safety information that is informative, handy, and easy to review. Many of the publications in this series summarize material published in various FAA advisory circulars, handbooks, other publications, and various audiovisual products developed by the FAA and used in its Aviation Safety Program.

Some of the ideas and materials in this series were developed by the aviation industry. The FAA acknowledges the support of the aviation industry and its various trade and membership groups in the production of this series.

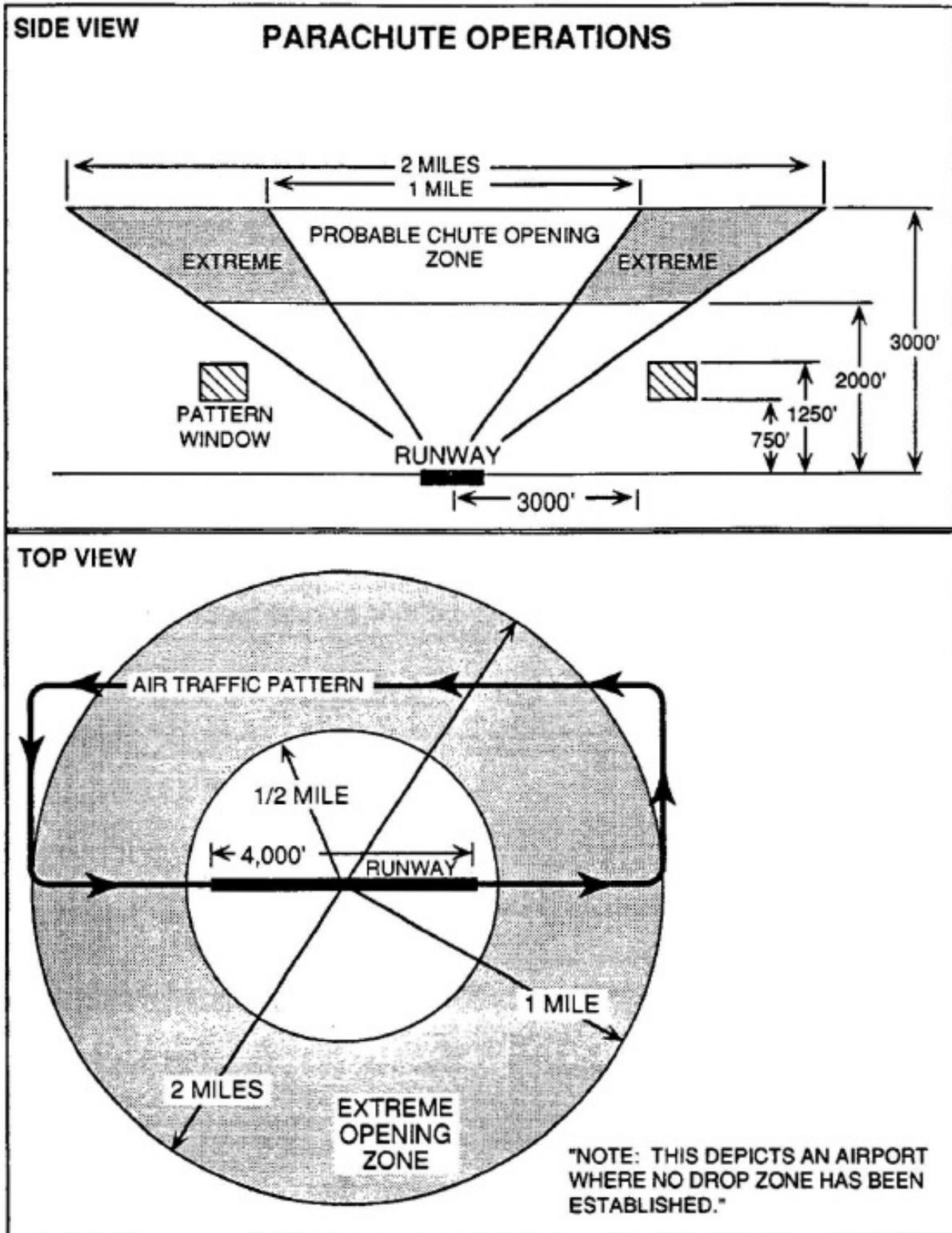
Comments regarding these publications should be directed to the National Aviation Safety Program Manager, Federal Aviation Administration, Flight Standards Service.

For more information on skydiving and parachute operations or details on the US Parachute Association, please call 1-800-371-USPA or visit online at <http://www.uspa.org>.

**12.5 Parachute Operations.**

- 12.5.1** All activities are normally conducted under a NOTAM noting the location, altitudes, and time or duration of jump operations. The Chart Supplement lists airports where permanent Drop Zones (DZ) are located.
- 12.5.2** Jumpers normally exit the aircraft either above, or well upwind of, the airport and at altitudes well above traffic pattern altitude. Parachutes are normally deployed between 2,000 feet and 5,000 feet AGL and can be expected to be below 3,000 feet AGL within 2 miles of the airport.
- 12.5.3** Pilots of jump aircraft are required by part 105 to establish two-way radio communications with the air traffic control (ATC) facility or FSS that has jurisdiction over the affected airspace prior to jump operations for the purpose of receiving information in the aircraft about known air traffic in the vicinity. In addition, when jump aircraft are operating at or in the vicinity of an airport, pilots are also encouraged to provide advisory information on the CTAF. For example, “Chambersburg traffic, jumpers away over Chambersburg.”
- 12.5.4** When a DZ has been established at an airport, parachutists are expected to land within the DZ. At airports that have not established DZs, parachutists should avoid landing on runways, taxiways, aprons, and their associated safety areas. Pilots and parachutists should both be aware of the limited flight performance of parachutes and take steps to avoid any potential conflicts between aircraft and parachute operations.
- 12.5.5** Appendix [C](#) depicts operations conducted by parachutists.

APPENDIX C. PARACHUTE OPERATIONS



**CHESTER CATAWBA RGNL** (DCM)(KDCM) 5 N UTC-5(-4DT) N34°47.36' W81°11.75'

657 B NOTAM FILE AND

RWY 17-35: H5000X100 (ASPH) S-30, D-44 MIRL 0.4% up N

RWY 17: PAPI(P2L)—GA 3.0° TCH 26'. Tree. Rgt tfc.

RWY 35: PAPI(P2L)—GA 3.0° TCH 32'. Tree.

RWY 05-23: H4998X100 (ASPH) S-4, D-12 0.4% up SW

RWY 05: Tree. Rgt tfc.

RWY 23: Tree.

SERVICE: FUEL 100LL, JET A LGT ACTIVATE MIRL Rwy 17-35 and

PAPI Rwy 17 and Rwy 35—CTAF.

AIRPORT REMARKS: Attended Mon-Sat 1400-2300Z†, Sun 1800-2300Z†.

For fuel or any svc aft hrs call 803-385-6664. Parachute Jumping.

Rwy 05-23 PCI rating 40, very poor.

AIRPORT MANAGER: 803-385-6664

WEATHER DATA SOURCES: AWOS-3 120.975 (803) 385-2011.

COMMUNICATIONS: CTAF/UNICOM 122.7

② CHARLOTTE APP/DEP CON 120.05

CLEARANCE DELIVERY PHONE: For CD ctc Charlotte Apch at 704-359-0241.

RADIO AIDS TO NAVIGATION: NOTAM FILE CLT.

CHARLOTTE (L) VOR/DME 115.0 CLT Chan 97 N35°11.42'

W80°57.11' 212° 26.9 NM to fld. 732/5W.

DME portion unusable:

015°-050° byd 25 NM blo 3,000'

050°-100° byd 25 NM blo 2,500'

203°-220°

270°-350° byd 20 NM blo 5,000'

VORDME controlled by charlotte ATCT

VOR unusable:

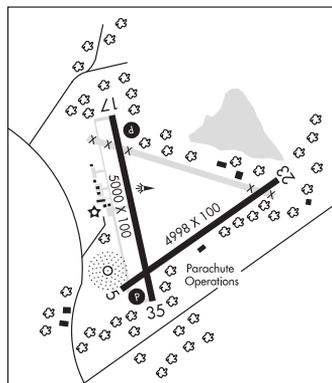
203°-220°

NDB (MHW) 220 DCM N34°47.15' W81°12.05' at fld. 657/6W. NOTAM FILE AND.

CHARLOTTE

H-9B, 12G, L-24I, 25D, 36E

IAP

**CHESTERFIELD** N34°39.03' W80°16.49' NOTAM FILE AND.

(L) VOR/DME 108.2 CTF Chan 19 080° 16.2 NM to Cheraw Muni/Lynch Bellinger Fld. 598/3W.

RCO 122.05R 108.2T (ANDERSON RADIO)

CHARLOTTE

L-24I, 25E, 36E

**CLEMSON****OCONEE CO RGNL** (CEU)(KCEU) 3 W UTC-5(-4DT) N34°40.33' W82°53.15'

891 B NOTAM FILE CEU

RWY 07-25: H5000X100 (ASPH) S-28.5, D-44 PCN 10 F/C/Y/T

MIRL 0.3% up W

RWY 07: REIL. PAPI(P2L)—GA 3.0° TCH 39'. Tree. Rgt tfc.

RWY 25: REIL. PAPI(P2L)—GA 3.0° TCH 33'. Tree.

SERVICE: S4 FUEL 100LL, JET A LGT ACTVT REIL Rwy 07 and 25;

PAPI Rwy 07 and 25; MIRL Rwy 07-25—CTAF.

AIRPORT REMARKS: Attended Mon-Sat 1300-2300Z†, Sun 1400-2200Z†.

Rwy 07-25 PAEW adjacent 1700-0200Z†. Parachute Jumping. No

line of sight between rwy ends. Acft may be opr from pvt arpt 1 NM

WNW of arpt.

AIRPORT MANAGER: 864-882-2959

WEATHER DATA SOURCES: ASOS 119.275 (864) 653-8855.

COMMUNICATIONS: CTAF/UNICOM 122.7

② GREER APP/DEP CON 118.8 (1100-0445Z†)

ATLANTA CENTER APP/DEP CON 134.8 (0445-1100Z†)

CLEARANCE DELIVERY PHONE: For CD ctc Greer Apch at 864-877-8275. when

Greer Apch clsd, for CD ctc Atlanta ARTCC at 770-210-7692.

RADIO AIDS TO NAVIGATION: NOTAM FILE AND.

FOOTHILLS (H) VOR/DME 113.4 ODF Chan 81 N34°41.75'

W83°17.86' 094° 20.4 NM to fld. 1700/OE.

VOR unusable:

075°-085° byd 28 NM blo 5,300'

199°-213° byd 15 NM blo 7,800'

280°-295° byd 25 NM blo 11,000'

301°-311° byd 20 NM blo 11,000'

DME unusable:

324°-344° blo 9,000'

ATLANTA

H-9B, L-25C

IAP

