



VFR Into IMC: What ATC Will Do

One reason we might be reluctant to climb, communicate and confess is we don't know what to expect from ATC. But that's not a good reason to be droning around in the weeds. In fact, the FAA has specified the controller's role in Order JO 7110-65T, *Air Traffic Control*:

If VFR aircraft requests assistance when it encounters or is about to encounter IFR weather conditions, determine the facility best able to provide service. If a frequency change is necessary, advise the pilot of the reason for the change, and request the aircraft contact the appropriate control facility. Inform that facility of the situation. If the aircraft is unable to communicate with the control facility, relay information and clearances. —ATC, para. 10-2-7

Use the following techniques to the extent possible when you provide radar assistance to a pilot not qualified to operate in IFR conditions:

- a. Avoid radio frequency changes except when necessary to provide a clear communications channel.
- b. Make turns while the aircraft is in VFR conditions so it will be in a position to fly a straight course while in IFR conditions.
- c. Have pilot lower gear and slow aircraft to approach speed while in VFR conditions.
- d. Avoid requiring a climb or descent while in a turn if in IFR conditions.
- e. Avoid abrupt maneuvers.
- f. Vector aircraft to VFR conditions. —ATC, para. 10-2-8