

Approach Light Secrets

Jeff Van West's article on approach lighting in December, 2012, was terrific. I'm doing an IPC with a student tonight and that information is going to help a lot.

Alex Brancati
New York

"Approach Light Secrets" was thought provoking and prompted me to dive into the AIM and the A/FD. Many of us are using AeroNav charts via various electronic offerings, and the smaller airport diagrams on the approach chart must rely on codes, A and A1 thru A5, instead of Jeppesen's depiction of the actual lighting system.

While your article contained a great explanation of the various systems, the missing link is the decoder ring for the AeroNav codes. Not to worry, your informative article spurred me to create my own decoder ring by copying the diagrams from the AIM and the legend from the A/FD onto front and back of a single sheet of paper.

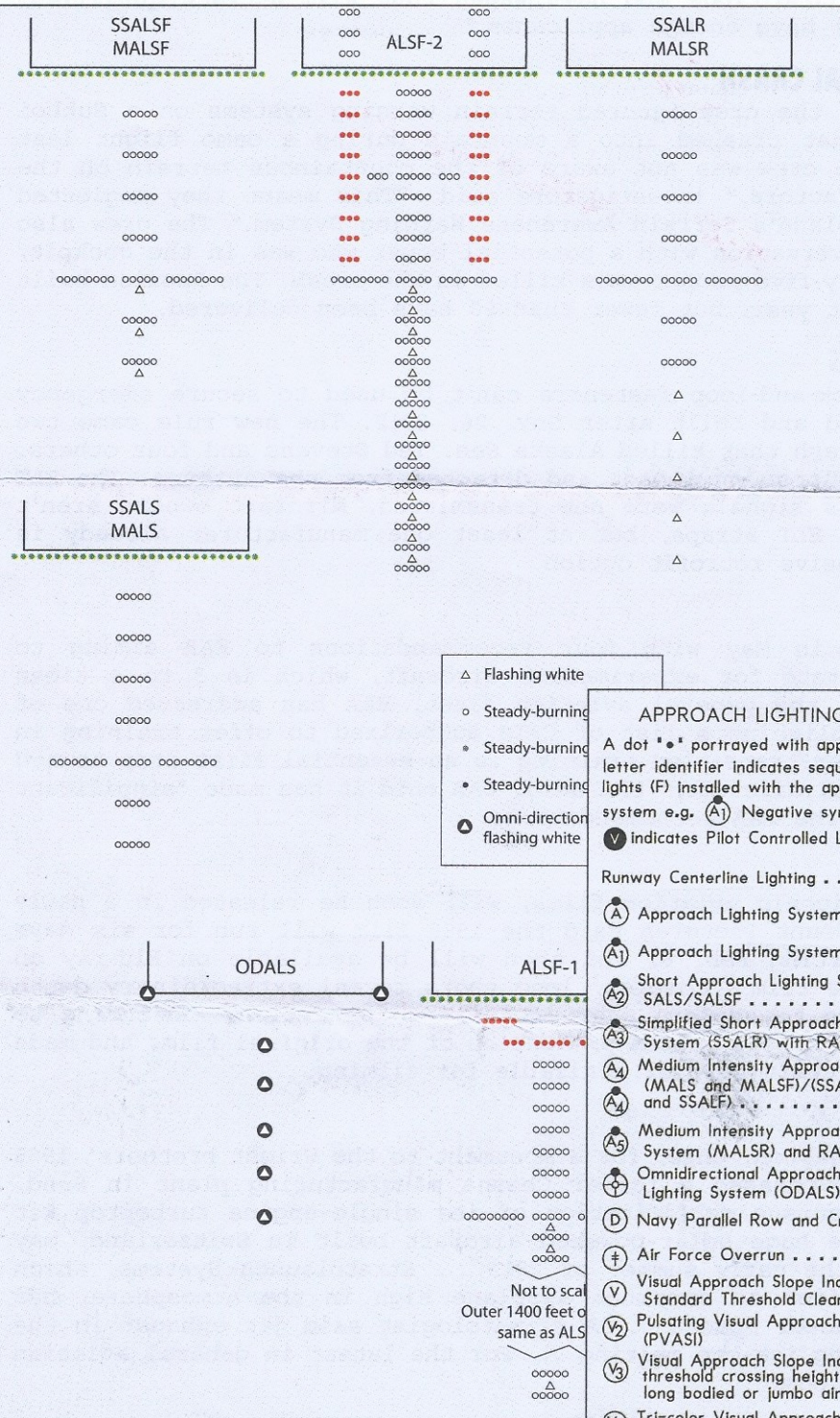
Keep up the good work.

Bill Castlen
Dothan, Alabama

Great idea, Bill. Thanks for the tip.

Your sidebar on cutoff angles in "Approach Light Secrets" illustrates a principle that is critical in search and rescue.

In 1957, I was searching for an overdue boat off Galveston, Texas. I just happened to look down



APPROACH LIGHTING SYSTEMS

A dot "•" portrayed with approach lighting letter identifier indicates sequenced flashing lights (F) installed with the approach lighting system e.g., (A1) Negative symbology, e.g., (A1) (V) indicates Pilot Controlled Lighting (PCL).

- Runway Centerline Lighting
- (A) Approach Lighting System ALSF-2
- (A1) Approach Lighting System ALSF-1
- (A2) Short Approach Lighting System SALS/SALSf
- (A3) Simplified Short Approach Lighting System (SSALR) with RAIL
- (A4) Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System (MALS and MALSf)/(SSALS and SSALF)
- (A5) Medium Intensity Approach Lighting System (MALSr) and RAIL
- (Y) Omnidirectional Approach Lighting System (ODALS)
- (D) Navy Parallel Row and Cross Bar
- (F) Air Force Overrun
- (V) Visual Approach Slope Indicator with Standard Threshold Clearance provided
- (V2) Pulsating Visual Approach Slope Indicator (PVASI)
- (V3) Visual Approach Slope Indicator with a threshold crossing height to accommodate long bodied or jumbo aircraft
- (V4) Tri-color Visual Approach Slope Indicator (TRCV)
- (V5) Approach Path Alignment Panel (APAP)
- (P) Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI)