



SUNNY COAST  
FREE FLYERS

# VHF RADIO CALLS

A refresher for PG and HG and PPG pilots

By Greg Lane ARN 405346 and Kent Gosden.

Some pilots have told us they find making VHF radio calls confronting, and need a boost of confidence and a memory refresh. We had a chat with two experienced Sunny Coast Free Flyers committee members Greg Lane and Kent Gosden. Here's the result

## Greg and Kent emphasised:

There are two things to remember about radio calls. Firstly, the primary purpose of using a radio is to **create situational awareness that helps keep aircraft apart**. Secondly, almost **any radio call is better than no radio call**.

## Greg:

"When I started flying back in 2000 and my instructor told me what to say for my first radio call, I remember thinking 'I'll never remember that.' Looking back, the calls became easier, and by the time I moved my aircraft to Archerfield, which has a control tower, calls had become second nature.

What I didn't know when I started flying was that there are only a limited number of phrases and a general order in which they are said. Knowing that, it's actually easy to make up calls that follow that pattern.

My first radio call ever was "**Redcliffe traffic, Whiskey Lima Yankee, a Cessna 172, taxiing for runway 07 for a local flight, Redcliffe traffic.**" That was a lot to remember that first time, but breaking it down makes it easier.

Think of it like this:

**Who are you talking to?** - Redcliffe traffic

**What are you?** - VH-WLY Cessna 172 - (Note for a hang glider or paraglider your callsign is the word "Paraglider" followed by the last four digits of your SAFA number)

**What are you doing now?** (Taxiing for runway 07)

**What are you doing next?** (A local flight)

## Who are you talking to? (Redcliffe traffic)

### Kent:

Yes, the vast majority of radio calls follow that basic pattern. Here's three relevant examples

1. For a paraglider pilot at Kings Beach you might say **"Caloundra traffic, Paragliders operating coastal at Kings Beach, not above 500', Caloundra traffic."**
2. For a paraglider flying south-west from Maleny area, the call might be **"Maleny traffic, Paraglider 3456 in company with two other paragliders, currently 1 nautical mile east of Maleny township, 2500' varying, tracking south-west, Maleny traffic."**
3. For a paramotor coming into the Teewah Airfield, the call might be **"Teewah and Noosa traffic, Paramotor 9876 currently overhead Noosa River bar, 500', tracking north coastal, inbound for a full stop Teewah Runway 32, Teewah and Noosa traffic."**

Any pilot hearing that will understand what you've said and will be on the lookout for you.

- Remember - always say who you are talking to at the beginning and end of a message.
- Generally speaking, the 'who you are talking to' is an area.
- Pick an airfield, town, or landmark to refer to your location that is ideally within about 30nm of your current location.
- If you are inbound to land at a location, then you would generally use that location. So, you might say "Caboolture Traffic," or "Kilcoy traffic" or "Glass House Mountains traffic," for example.

In summary, just follow the pattern and say **Who** at the beginning and end of a broadcast and then just **What, Now** and **Next** in the middle. Everyone else will understand you and other pilots will be aware of where you are.

**Safe and happy flying, Free Flyers**