

## Transcript for Audio Lesson #9: With You on the Aircraft Radio

16 June 2011

Hey there! I'm Jeff Kanarish, back with you after a nice vacation. That is to say, I'm here. This is me, talking to you. I'm not anywhere else. I'm with you.

No, I haven't lost my mind, but thank you for asking.

There is a point to that ridiculous opening. It was inspired by a question from one of our subscribers to the Insider area\* of this website, Ron. [Hey Ron!]

Ron wrote an email to me and asked:

I have read/been told that ATC does not like pilots saying "123 Alpha Bravo with you"... yet I hear professional pilot(s) use that phrase all the time after switching frequencies.

I put his question to my controller friend, who said, “Whenever you as a pilot operate your aircraft outside the manufactures parameters it introduces an extra risk to yourself and those on the plane. It's the same in communication. If you say something outside standard phraseology, you introduce an unintended risk. It might be the simplest of things that get misinterpreted so you're just better off by doing what the book says. The world of aviation is very cruel to those that do not pay attention to details.”

We looked in the books—the Aeronautical Information Manual and the Air Traffic Controller Manual. Guess what? “With you,” ain't in there.

Here's why it's not in there: What does “With you” mean? What does it add to the conversation? To answer, let's put it into context.

“Fort Worth Center, Skylane 755 Golf Delta, with you at eight thousand.”

Hmm. If Skylane 755 Golf Delta is reporting to me at eight thousand, obviously he's with me. Where else would he be? On another frequency but sending a message to me by mental telepathy? Of course he's with me, so why say it?

Because it sounds cool. “Professional” pilots say it, and they know everything. Let's imitate the pros and be cool like the pros.

Give me second to stop gagging. Okay. Better. The truth is, many pros have a lot of bad habits. These bad habits are passed from one generation of pilots to another, and no one ever questions why they persist. I wrote a bit about this in an article called “Your Radio Calls Suck,” and I put a link to that article in the show notes for this broadcast.

Piloting, by its nature is a collection of habits. That's how we produce consistent and safe results flight after flight. Habits are so important to safe flight that we have checklists that require us to run through a series of habits during each stage of flight.

You know what else is part of piloting? Self-evaluation. We pilots have to consistently ask ourselves, is what I'm doing right now in the interest of safety. Furthermore, is what I'm doing right now make sense for this flight?

Saying “With you,” on the radio does not make sense. It is simply a bad habit. It's a space filler, a time waster. It's talking to hear yourself talk. It definitely isn't cool. It's also a reminder that the pros don't always get it right.

We've spent a lot of time on this example of a bad radio call for a reason. In my last article, I said it's a good idea to listen to the radios and try to learn from other pilots. Sometimes you'll hear someone who knows exactly what to say and when to say it. Sometimes you'll hear someone who doesn't have a clue. And sometimes you'll hear some who thinks they have the program wired, when they actually don't have a clue. The trick is to know the difference, and that's why I'm hear. To help you sort it out.

Speaking of sorting it out. You can sort it all out at our Insider's area of this website by signing up for access. Join the crowd and ask questions, tell stories, work together to get better on the aircraft radios.

If you are aren't already an Insider like my friend Ron, just use the pop-up form at the bottom of the website to sign up, or click the link in the right margin to go to the page that talks about the aircraft radio simulator. You'll find a sign up form there too. Signing up gets you instant free access to test versions of the Aircraft Radio simulator, plus a free subscription to our newsletter Radar Contact, plus free downloads of materials to make your flying life easier—like tailored checklists, worksheets for your flying kneeboard or lap desk, and other instructional materials.

Thanks for listening, I'm Jeff Kanarish, saying I'll be with you, that is to say, speaking to you, which means you and me, talking on the same frequency, with each other, right here, with you, ahh, that's enough. Be well and fly safe.