

IN ENGLISH, PLEASE

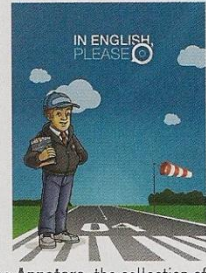


L'anglais pour voler
disponible sur



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Preflight preparation AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION AND WEATHER FORECAST



Now on the **Appstore**, the collection of "In English, please" articles from June 2007 to July 2015, with audio recordings when available. The "In English, please" app has been upgraded for iOS 10 and the articles from August 2015 all the way through December 2016 have been added, bringing the total to over 110 articles. Don't forget to visit the App Store for a free update.

The main purpose of the GetMet booklet, published on a regular basis by the UK Met Office and available online at: www.metoffice.gov.uk (type GetMet 2015 in the **search box**), is to help pilots find and use weather information necessary to prepare a flight. Incidentally it's in the same booklet, page 32, that a list of the main UK airports ATIS phone numbers can be found, which, coupled with a Skype connection, is a great tool for listening to ATIS recordings and practice jotting down the different elements. Also in this booklet, page 10/11, is a "pilot's pre-flight check". It details the different actions a pilot should take prior to a flight, giving references of the appropriate maps, texts, manuals or **leaflets** if they exist. Let's put aside the items of this list **pertaining to** the pilot or the aircraft to focus on the information that should be reviewed while preparing a flight, and more specifically on aeronautical information and weather information.

Aeronautical information

The aeronautical information is divided in two categories: permanent and temporary. **The former** is collected by each state in its Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP), which contains, as stipulated in ICAO annex 15 "aeronautical information of a lasting character essential to air navigation". It is where you find data on aerodromes, airspace, navigation aids, as well as elements of regulations and procedures **in effect** in the country where it has been published. AIPs can be updated every 28 days, in accordance

Vocabulary

TO ADDRESS A PROBLEM	s'occuper d'un problème
TO DECIPHER	déchiffrer, décoder
TO DISSEMINATE	faire circuler
THE FORMER ... THE LATTER	la première ... la seconde
IN EFFECT	en vigueur
A LEAFLET	une notice
MOUNTAIN WAVES	ondes orographiques
NAMELY	à savoir
TO BE PRONE TO	avoir tendance à
PERTAINING TO	relatif à
A SEARCH BOX	un champ de recherche

with the international AIRAC cycle.

The latter can be found in:

- supplements of the AIP (SUP AIP) which are published whenever temporary changes to the AIP, either of long duration or containing comprehensive text and/or graphics, cannot be notified by NOTAM.
- Aeronautical Information Circulars (AIC) which are also issued when the information to be **disseminated** does not qualify for a SUP AIP or a NOTAM publication. They contain information relating to safety and navigation, and also technical, administrative or legal matters.
- last, but not least, in Notices to Airmen or NOTAMs.

NOTAMs

They cover short-duration modifications or short-notice permanent changes to aeronautical information notified within the AIP. They give operationally significant information on aeronautical facilities, procedures, services and hazards. These include closed runways or taxiways, unserviceable equipment, airspace restrictions of short duration, and temporary obstacles raised in the vicinity of an aerodrome. SNOWTAMs, ASHTAMs or BIRDTAMs provide information on snow, volcanic ash or intense bird activity respectively.

NOTAMs in effect at an airport, or along a route, can be retrieved prior to a flight from a database on AIS websites and presented in the form of Pre-flight Information Bulletins, or PIBs.

As reported in a 2013 ICAO document entitled "NOTAM proliferation analysis", the number of NOTAM issued by the French NOTAM Office increased by 10% per year between 2004 (16 000) and 2011 (30 000). The study was based on French data, but the trend can be seen worldwide. This information overload, resulting in PIBs of 10 to 50 pages for an internal European flight, is a safety issue: some important messages can be lost in a sea - or should we say a sky? - of irrelevant ones. **To address this problem** Eurocontrol, in cooperation with the US FAA, is working on the digital NOTAM project, to improve the

quality of the information provided to NOTAM users. Whereas the current NOTAM is "a notice distributed by means of telecommunication", the Digital aeronautical information update, or digital NOTAM, will be "a dataset made available through digital services"⁽¹⁾.

For each state, the AIP, SUP AIP, AICs and NOTAMs are available online as Integrated IAP. IATPs from European countries can be found on the Eurocontrol site at: <https://www.eurocontrol.int/articles/ais-online>

Weather information

The British are said **to be prone** to talking a lot about the weather, but so are pilots (can you imagine what British pilots talk about?), and for good reasons: meteorological conditions are a major concern in aviation. These conditions have a decisive influence on aircraft performance and flying safety and pilots should be generous with the time they spend reading through the relevant documentation.

To prepare for a flight in the UK, the previously mentioned Met Office site offers free online meteorological information to registered users. There you can find briefing charts for surface pressure, significant weather, wind and temperature, and a guide to help you read them. Forecast and observation messages, **namely** TAFs, METARs, SIGMETs and AIRMETs are also available. TAFs and METARs concern aerodromes. The first one gives a forecast, the second one an observation. They are written in coded language and require some practice to **decipher**.

AIRMETs are messages issued for a region. They describe, in abbreviated plain language, en-route weather phenomena (strong winds, reduced visibility, thunderstorms, icing, ...), observed or forecast, that may affect the safety of flights below FL100.

A SIGMET is an AIRMET's big brother. It is issued when thunderstorms, cyclones, turbulence, icing, **mountain waves**, dust storms, sand storms, volcanic ash clouds, or radioactive clouds are observed or forecast in a specific Flight Information Region. ●