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Newsletter - August 12th, 2009

FltPlan.com Gets a Makeover

FltPlan.com has a new look. Our designer, Carole, and our programmer, Keith, have worked hard to give us a fresh look and easier to read graphics. Further improvements on the site are planned for the weeks ahead. All of our features have remained the same, and no functionality has been changed. [Login to FltPlan.com](#) and check it out.

Recycling Flight Plans: Just don't do it!

While recycling might be good for the environment, recycling your flight plans from the Active Flight Plan List is definitely not a good thing for the flying environment.

What is recycling a flight plan?

Recycling is when:

- a.) You take an old flight plan, and reuse it for a future flight.
- b.) You have a flight plan from Airport AAA to Airport BBB, and then modify it for a flight plan from Airport AAA to Airport CCC.

Why do pilots recycle?

- a.) The perception is that they will not need to enter as much data for the flight plan if they use one that has already been completed.
- b.) They don't want to re-enter the route again (see below for STORED ROUTES).
- c.) They do not realize that they can delete old flight plans (by using the DELETE FLT PLAN button on the left side of the Main Menu Page).

Why it's a bad idea to recycle flight plans.

- a.) Many pilots do not update data correctly when recycling.

This includes:

- 1.) Time of departure.
- 2.) Fuel on Board.
- 3.) Passengers.

- b.) Recycling an old flight and then changing either the departure airport or arrival airport has additional potential to cause even bigger problems.

- 1.) Forgetting to change the route and not noticing that your route of flight is now 1200nm for a 600nm trip.
- 2.) Forgetting to change the alternate. (We saw one where the alternate listed was 900nm away.)
- 3.) Forgetting to change the cruise altitude. (One Lear pilot filed a flight plan from TEB to Palm Beach, FL at 16,000 feet using a recycled flight plan.)

Just about everyday we see someone recycling a flight plan and having bad data. The items mentioned above are just the beginning of problems which could occur.

Recycling can also cause problems with your Passenger Briefing, FBO Fax Briefing, and eAPIS Manifests. The reason for this is that we save data from a flight plan after a new Briefing or Manifest is created. This way, you can modify the briefing or manifest (for the same flight) without retyping it all in again. When you use a new Flight Plan, the info defaults with fresh data, and does not use data already entered from a previous flight plan.

So why do so many pilots still recycle?

We're not sure, but they shouldn't.

Solutions

We know you're not always going to want to re-enter the route, but that doesn't mean you have to recycle the flight plan. Here are some solutions:

- 1.) Recent routes used by FltPlan.com users (most likely yours also) are displayed on the Flight Plan entry page.
- 2.) Recent ATC Routes are also displayed on the Flight Plan entry page.
- 3.) If item 1 & 2 do not suit your needs, we have STORED ROUTES (left side of the Main Menu page).

What is "Stored Routes":

Stored Routes is your own special section (that only you can view), where you can store up to 500 of your personal flight plan routes.

In this section you can also include notes on the flight, such as fuel burn, altitude assignment, or information on the route. These routes and notes are then automatically displayed the next time you create a flight plan between the same airport pair. The route can then be easily selected when creating a new flight plan. It doesn't get any easier than that.

Keeping Your Account Active

FltPlan.com deletes unused accounts every 120 days. Don't let yours be one of them.

In order to maintain a current and accurate database, FltPlan.com purges inactive accounts every 120 days. Accounts that have not been logged into in the last 120 days are deleted from our system. We won't delete your account without telling you. Before removing your information, we do send two notifications to the e-mail address in your account. Make sure to keep the email addresses in your account up-to-date, so you'll receive our notifications. To keep your account active, just be sure to log-in to FltPlan.com at least once every 90 days.

ICAO Equipment Suffixes:

"Where did my /Q go? It's showing /M!"

FltPlan.com is still receiving a lot of questions about ICAO equipment suffixes and wake turbulence categories. In ICAO format flight plans, the wake turbulence category appears directly after the aircraft type. Wake turbulence categories are as follows:

- "H" for Heavy - Greater than 300,000 lbs. maximum certificated take-off weight
 - "M" for Medium - Between 15,000 and 300,000 lbs. maximum certificated take-off weight
 - "L" for Light - Less than 15,000 lbs. maximum certificated take-off weight
- The confusion here is that in Domestic format the equipment suffix appears in this position. When filing ICAO format, the equipment is entered in item 10 (versus right after the aircraft type) and appears as a string of letters in the item 10 equipment box. So a Challenger 601 with standard equipment (which is VHF, ADF, VOR, ILS) and DME, HF Radio, RVSM, and RNP certification, and Mode S transponder would look like this: CL60/M - SDHRWZ/S (Fig. 1). If you're flying a Piper Saratoga with standard equipment (VHF, ADF, VOR, ILS) and DME, GPS, point-to-point RNAV capability, and a Mode C transponder it would look like this: PA32/L - SDGZ/C. (Fig. 2)

Navigation Log		FltPlan.com	
N1234A	IFR	GenAv	CL60/M Equip: SDHRWZ/P
Dep: KMMU	1300Z	455kts	FL360 Filed Route (see below)
Dest: KPDK	ETE: 1:47		Altn: KRYY
item 18: NAV/RNVD1A1E2 RNP4			
item 19: FOB: 0415 SOB: 4 PIC:BOB ALLEN			
LANNA J48 ODF.AWSONI			
Fig.1 - ICAO NavLog for a Challenger.			
Navigation Log		FltPlan.com	
N3456C	IFR	GenAv	PA32/L Equip: SDGZ/C
Dep: KFPR	1900Z	143kts	7,000 Filed Route (see below)
Dest: MYNN	ETE: 1:46		Altn:
item 18: NAV/RNVE99 RMK/PTP			
item 19: FOB: 0300 SOB: 3 PIC:BOB ALLEN			
BERTH BR62V ZFP BR65V ZQA			
Fig.2 - ICAO NavLog for a Piper Saratoga.			

When talking to ATC about aircraft equipment it's necessary to specify whether you're referring to ICAO or Domestic formatting. Here's why: Government computers are currently translating ICAO format flight plans back into Domestic format to send to Air Traffic Controllers. The change to ICAO formatting is part of a huge transition from the current system to the new ERAM (En Route Automation Modernization) system. Because of the many computer networks involved in ATC, the complete changeover to the use of ICAO data will be quite some time in the works. If you're capable of PDCs (pre-departure clearance), you'll also notice that your filed ICAO equipment information has been translated back into the Domestic format.

[Click here](#) for a full article on ICAO format flight plans, which appeared in FltBrief June 2009 Vol.1.

Upload FltPlan.com Route Data to Your Garmin System

(Garmin 1000 and Garmin 430W/530W system)

You can now upload FltPlan.com flight plan data to your Garmin 1000 system or Garmin 430W/530W system (min sw ver 3.20).

By selecting the **Garmin** checkbox on the **Change or Add Aircraft** Page (left side of Main Menu Page), you will get a link on the bottom of the NavLog that you can use to export your flight plan from FltPlan.com in a format which can be uploaded to your Garmin system. See your unit's manual or upgrade documentation for how to perform flight plan uploads or contact Garmin or your Avionics Dealer directly for more information.

FltPlan.com is also a Satcom Direct datalink provider for uploading flight plans. Satcom Direct interfaces with Honeywell AFIS, Rockwell Collins RIU-4000, Teledyne Controls Telelink, and Universal Avionics Unilink.

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