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## Newsletter - June 9th, 2010

### Demystify ICAO Format Flight Plans

On June 29, 2008 the FAA started requiring ICAO Format flight plans on all flights filing RNAV departures/arrivals, "Q" Routes, or "T" Routes. The 2nd anniversary of this requirement is this month, yet here at FltPlan.com we still see many questions about equipment suffixes and wake turbulence categories.

#### Here's what you need to know

- a.) An ICAO Format flight plan has nothing to do with flying an international flight. You can (and should) use an ICAO Format flight plan even when flying from KLUK (Cincinnati OH) to KMEM (Memphis TN).
- b.) An ICAO Format flight plan is only a different format (versus using a Domestic Format flight plan). The ICAO Format is just a different form for entering flight data being supplied to the FAA when filing a flight plan.
- c.) The letter after your aircraft type on an ICAO Format flight plan is your Wake Turbulence Category.

#### Why did the FAA switch to ICAO Format for RNAV flights?

The ICAO Format allows a greater amount of data to be entered into a submitted flight plan, so your aircraft and its capabilities can be properly entered into the ATC system for routing purposes.

#### Why does the FAA need info on my aircraft that wasn't available on the Domestic Format?

With the Domestic Format, the flight plan is limited to 26 letters for showing equipment capabilities (i.e. /A, /L, /Q, etc.). On the Domestic Format flight plan, the equipment capabilities are added to the end of your aircraft type, and it looked like **H25B/Q** or **C172/A**. The problem with the Domestic Format was that, with all the combinations of equipment (RNP, RNAV, GPS, FMS, RVSM, LORAN, DME, TACAN), plus transponder (Mode C, S etc), the FAA quickly ran out of letters.

For practical considerations, the FAA decided to use the already established and tested ICAO Format (which in the past was primarily used for international flight plans, thus the ICAO name), instead of creating a whole new format for pilots to submit their expanded equipment information.

With the ICAO format, each type of equipment gets its own letter (for example, **D**=DME, **G**= GPS, **W**=RVSM). You put these letters together (**DGHLORVWXYZ**) in the Equipment section (Item 10) of your ICAO Format flight plan, and the FAA computers can easily decipher what equipment and capabilities you have from the submitted flight plan. At the end of the equipment list, on the ICAO format, you have a / (slash) and a letter. This is your transponder information. The transponder info gets added to the above letters and you end up with **DGHLORVWXYZ/S**. Additional Navigational (**NAV**) capabilities are listed in ITEM 18 (e.g. **NAV/RNVD1A1E2 RNP4**) for RNAV (**RNV**) Departures (**D1**) and RNAV Arrivals (**A1**), and Enroute "Q" and "T" Routes (**E2**), and RNP certification level (**RNP4**). The numbers in **D1**, **A1**, **E2** and **RNP4** all represent RNAV accuracy in nautical

miles (i.e. 1 = 1nm, 4 = 4 nm).

**Now that you know why, how do you make it all work for you using FltPlan.com?**

Enter the data.

FltPlan.com provides a simple-to-use screen for entering your data suitable to an ICAO Format flight plan. (This is accessed from the **A/C ICAO Data** section on the left side of the Main Menu page.)

Select ICAO Format when creating a flight plans.

Actually, when creating a new flight plan, we default your flight plan to ICAO Format.

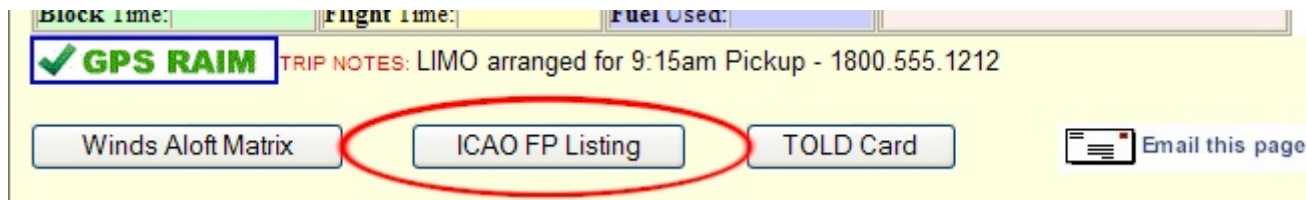
If you are flying a Jet or Turboprop aircraft and you choose Domestic format, we'll give you a friendly reminder to use ICAO Format.

Know what all the letters mean.

On the top of the NavLog, we will give you the equipment letters being sent to the FAA in your flight plan.

Navigation Log		FltPlan.com			Navigation Log		FltPlan.com		
N1234A	IFR	GenAv	CL60/M	Equip: SDHRWZ/P	N3456C	IFR	GenAv	PA32/L	Equip: SDGZ/C
Dep: KMMU	1300Z	455kts	FL360	Filed Route (see below)	Dep: KFPR	1900Z	143kts	7,000	Filed Route (see below)
Dest: KPDK	ETE: 1:47		Altn: KRYY		Dest: MYNN	ETE: 1:46		Altn:	
item 18: NAV/RNVD1A1E2 RNP4					item 18: NAV/RNVE99 RMK/PTP				
item 19: FOB: 0415 SOB: 4 PIC:BOB ALLEN					item 19: FOB: 0300 SOB: 3 PIC:BOB ALLEN				
LANNA J48 ODF.AWSON1					BERTH BR62V ZFP BR65V ZQA				
Fig.1 - ICAO NavLog for a Challenger.					Fig.2 - ICAO NavLog for a Piper Saratoga.				

If you don't know what all the letters mean, on the bottom of the NavLog is a button label **ICAO FP Listing**.



If you click on this button, you will get a copy of the ICAO Format flight plan, and we will also give you what each letter means.

9 NUMBER	TYPE OF AIRCRAFT	WAKE TURBULENCE CAT.	10 EQUIPMENT
- 1 (aircraft)	C650	/ M (Medium)	DGHLORVWXYZ/P

D=DME G=GPS H=HF L=ILS O=VOR R=RNP V=VHF W=RVSM X=MNPS Y=CMNPS Z=RNAV info in item 18 /P=Xpdr - Alt. / No ID

18 OTHER Information
- NAV/RNVD1A1E2 RNP4

**Just to make it interesting (some may say confusing).**

On the Domestic Format flight plan, (as noted earlier), the equipment suffix was added to the end of your aircraft type: **C650/L** (aka a Citation 650 with GPS and RVSM capable) or **PA44/A** (aka a Piper Seminole with DME and Mode C Transponder).

On an ICAO Format Flight plan, these same aircraft would be **C650/M** (a Citation 650 that has a Medium Wake Turbulence Category) and **PA44/L** (a Piper Seminole with a Light Wake Turbulence Category).

The reason is that in an ICAO format flight plan, the wake turbulence category appears directly after the aircraft type (and not the equipment 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

Remember, for ICAO Format, equipment gets its own section (**DGHLORVWXYZ/S**).

**And to make it really interesting (some might say mind-boggling).**

While the pilots are dealing with the ICAO Format for filing flight plans, believe it or not, the Controllers are still using the Domestic Format when looking at your flight plan strip.

How can this be, you ask?

After your flight plan's RNAV and equipment information is read for RNAV routing assignment, the FAA computers are translating ICAO Format flight plans back into Domestic Format for the Air Traffic Controllers. No, this is not because the FAA likes controllers better than pilots; it's because the software changes necessary in the ATC's antiquated computer systems were determined not to be practical at this time, with the new ERAM computer system coming soon. (For PDC users, please note that your PDC is also translated back into Domestic Format.)

What language are you talking?

When interfacing with a controller on your equipment type (i.e. the controller asks "what type equipment are you?"), please remember he's talking Domestic Format, and you'll be talking ICAO Format.

Your options:

- a.) From a practical basis, your best response (if you know) is to just say "in Domestic Format, I'm a /Q",
- b.) If you don't know/forgot your Domestic Format letter, just say "I'm RNAV 1 capable and RVSM certified; do you need any other information."
- c.) Or you could be a show off (read: how to torque-off a controller), and say "in ICAO Format, I'm a **DGHLORVWXYZ/S** with **RNAV** capabilities of **D1A1E2** and an **RNP** of **4**".

In Summary.

ICAO Format is here for flying in the U.S.(and has been for 2 years). There is no going back.

Once you are familiar with the ICAO Format, you'll probably still like the Domestic Format better. But this is progress.

**Other reading:** [FltBrief June 2009 Vol.1.](http://flttrack.fltplan.com/flightbrief/june2009/icaoarticle.htm)

<http://flttrack.fltplan.com/flightbrief/june2009/icaoarticle.htm>

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## That Pesky eAPIS Warning on your Active Flight Plan List

If you've used FltPlan.com to create a flight plan to or from a foreign destination in the last year, you may have noticed the following note in your Active Flight Plan list.

Thu. 6/10	KSDL	MMAA	0900	1400	3:00	N1234A	Dave	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-	
↓	↓	↓	notes	→ No record of Customs/DHS eAPIS Manifest being submitted.											
Fri. 6/11	MMAA	KTUS	0900	0945	2:45	N1234A	Dave	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-	
↓	↓	↓	notes	→ No record of Customs/DHS eAPIS Manifest being submitted.											

The reason for this message is that no CBP eAPIS manifest was sent **from your FltPlan.com account** for this flight. This is intended to serve as a reminder to our eAPIS subscribers that they need to submit their passenger manifest. If a manifest is submitted from an account that uses our CBP certified eAPIS system, then our system matches up the flight plan with the eAPIS manifest and provides a confirmation number.

Thu. 6/10	KSDL	MMAA	0900	1400	3:00	N1234A	Dave	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-	
↓	↓	↓	notes → CBP Manifest submitted on 06/08 Confirmation# 1742033.												
Fri. 6/11	MMAA	KTUS	0900	0945	2:45	N1234A	Dave	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	-	
↓	↓	↓	notes → CBP Manifest submitted on 06/08 Confirmation# 1742045.												

We have no knowledge of whether a pilot has submitted a CBP eAPIS manifest by other means. If you have submitted an eAPIS manifest by other means, then you can use the message as a reminder or just ignore it.

We feel that, given the \$5,000 fine for failing to submit an eAPIS manifest, the warning is valuable to our users, whether they use our eAPIS system or the government site. You can also use the **Trip Notes** (left side of Active Flight Plan List), to put a notation in that a CBP Manifest has been submitted for this flight.

On a related note, FltPlan.com's CBP certified eAPIS system allows you to submit unlimited manifests for one low yearly fee. For more information, call our eAPIS experts at 731-855-8000.

## Entering an NDB in your Route

Many times we get an email at [Support@FltPlan.com](mailto:Support@FltPlan.com) saying that we don't have an NDB in the database. Actually NDBs *can* be used in the routing of a flight plan, but you must use the correct format.

The only difference for entering an NDB (versus a VOR) is that you must put "-NDB" after the fix identifier. The correct format is XXX-NDB, where XXX is the NDB fix identifier. Example: **DIW-NDB** or **CLB-NDB**

You can find more information on planning your route by clicking the Help link on your Flight Plan Entry page or by clicking the following link:  
<http://www.fltplan.com/HelpRouting.htm#ROUTING>

## Visit FltPlan.com at Upcoming Trade Shows

FltPlan.com is hitting the road and demonstrating our site at some upcoming trade shows. You can visit our booth at the following dates and locations:

### June 10th: NBAA Regional Forum, Teterboro, NJ (KTEB).

Please stop by to see FltPlan.com located at Booth 25 to learn more about Flight Tracking, eAPIS & our newest enhancement Runway Analysis.

### June 11th & 12th: Parade of Planes, Lawrenceville, GA (KLZU).

FltPlan.com will be hosting a booth at the Parade of Planes June 11th & 12th between 10:00am and 5:00pm.

If you're in the Teterboro or Atlanta area, be sure and stop by.

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## FltPlan.com Now Includes Most Mexican Airways

We at FltPlan.com are continuing to expand our coverage in Mexico. FltPlan.com's database now includes most VORs, NDBs, Intersections and airways in Mexico. Check out the map below:



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Lead Editor: Claire Warner - [Claire@FltPlan.com](mailto:Claire@FltPlan.com)

Contributing Editor: David Wilson

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Advertising Contact: Lisa Kessler

[Lisa@FltPlan.com](mailto:Lisa@FltPlan.com)

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