

New Datalink Mandate in France

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Effective July 13, if you're flying in **France above FL195 and you have ATN CPDLC - you must use it!**

Following the recommendation of the Eurocontrol Operational Focus Group (OFG), France is the first European country to **mandate CPDLC logon** in their airspace after Karlsruhe UAC (EDUU), Maastricht UAC (EDYY), and Cyprus (LCCC). The OFG recommendation is the result of the review of several incidents by ATCOs from 22 ANSPs.

What do you mean by "France"?

Anywhere in the LFFF, LFEE, LFMM, LFBB, or LFRR FIRs.



Where have they announced this?

In AIC 10/23.

Subject : En-Route DATA LINK services

1. CONTEXT AND PURPOSE:

The purpose of this AIC is to present the provision of data link services in French metropolitan airspace.

These provisions will be incorporated into the AIP.

2. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The CPDLC application provides an alternative to radiotelephony communications (voice) means of communication between the controller and pilot using data link for air traffic control (ATC) communication. The CPDLC application includes a set of clearance / information / request message elements that correspond to the phraseology used in radiotelephony.

Pilots shall make initial contact with each ATC Unit by voice, irrespectively of having logged on or not.

The use of CPDLC is expected and preferred when operations allow its use. CPDLC may only be used for non-time-critical requests, i.e. requests that do not require the immediate reaction of the pilot. Nevertheless, as in radiotelephony, CPDLC messages shall be answered with the least possible delay. If the downlink request is cut off because the time limit was exceeded, the pilot should also repeat the request via radiotelephony. In case of uncertainty regarding an operational situation with open CPDLC dialogue, voice communications should be used to clarify the situation.

If the controller or the pilot is of the opinion that CPDLC should no longer be used in the given circumstances, CPDLC shall be terminated and the other party shall be informed about this by voice communication.

Urgent tactical ATC clearances will continue to be issued via radiotelephony communications.

3. DESCRIPTION AND AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES

In metropolitan France, provision of CPDLC services is based on the requirements of the Commission regulation (EC) n° 29/2009, revised by regulation (EC) n°2015/310 lying down requirements for CPDLC services provision.

Hence, CPDLC is provided only to ATN Protected Mode (PM) CPDLC equipped aircraft using VDL mode 2 sub-network. Log-on from FANS1/A or non-PM CPDLC capable aircraft are not accepted.

Aeronautical VHF Data Link uses the 117.975–137 MHz band which is assigned by the International Telecommunication Union to Aeronautical mobile (route) services. VDL Mode 2 has been operationally implemented to support Controller Pilot Data Link Communications (CPDLC).

The frequency 136.975 MHz is reserved on a worldwide basis to provide a common signaling channel (CSC) to the VDL Mode 2.

Additional frequencies have been allocated:

- 136.775 MHz and 136.875 MHz only used by SITA
- 136.725 MHz and 136.825 MHz only used by ARINC

The following CPDLC services are provided for eligible aircraft in the entire French metropolitan airspace above FL195:

- DLIC (datalink initiation capability)
- ACL (ATC clearances and instructions, pilot requests)
- ACM (ATC communications management)
- AMC (ATC microphone check)

ATS services are provided in French metropolitan airspace by five ATS Units : LFBB, LFEE, LFFF, LFMM, LFRR

Provided CPDLC services are:

- LFEE, LFMM, LFBB: all services
- LFFF, LFRR: pilot requests will be rejected

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The AIC says the mandate only applies if you're "capable and eligible". What does that mean?

You're capable and eligible if **all** of the following three things apply:

- You have ATN CPDLC
- Your equipment is not broken
- The crew is trained on how to use datalink

If you don't tick all three boxes, you can still fly above FL195 in France – **they won't restrict you**. They're just saying that **you must logon if you can**.

What if I only have FANS datalink?

This new rule in France only applies to aircraft with ATN CPDLC – those with FANS 1/A (or with no datalink at all) will **continue to supported by conventional VHF**. Dual-stack aircraft should be reconfigured to logon via ATN

Do I have to register my aircraft on the Logon List?

No. You don't have to sign up to the Logon List to use CPDLC in France. France doesn't use the Logon List yet. The only places where you need to be on this list is for flights in **Switzerland, Germany, and Maastricht-UAC controlled airspace** (i.e. the upper airspace above FL245 over Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg). **France plans to join from 2026.**

Is this new rule in France the same thing as the European Datalink Mandate?

No. The European Datalink mandate is for CPDLC **equipage** for flights **above FL285** throughout Europe. This new French mandate applies not on the carriage but on the **logon** for **flights above FL195**.

Another important distinction - **none of the European Datalink exemptions apply** for aircraft which are equipped with CPDLC, as this new French rule has nothing to do with the Datalink mandate! (i.e. the exemptions we detail here do not apply, such as aircraft with 19 seats or less and a MTOW less than 100,000 lbs).

Where else in Europe do I have to logon to CPDLC?

Provided you've got ATN CPDLC, here are the places in Europe where **logon is mandatory**:

- **Maastricht UAC** (EDYY) and **Karlsruhe UAC** (EDUU) above FL285 (source: Eurocontrol)
- **Cyprus** (LCCC FIR) above FL285 (source: AIP GEN 3.4.5)
- **France** (LFFF, LFEE, LFMM, LFBB, LFRR FIRs) above FL195 (source: AIC 10/23)

Know of anywhere else that should be in this list? Let us know.

And for everything you need to know about the **European Datalink Mandate** and how it affects your flight, check our article.