

DELTA FLY!

MARCH 2007 EDITION

DELTA VIRTUAL AIRLINES MAGAZINE

60 years



Online Etiquette ●
Concorde Overview ●
Using FS Flight Planner ●

March 2007

Issue #8

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On the Cover:



DC-6 and Boeing 767-300ER over Georgia – Charly Diaz Azcue

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From the President's Desk



Terry Eshenour - President, Senior Captain 777

Fellow Pilots,

Six years of advancing flight simming is indeed a major accomplishment particularly for an all-volunteer organization. In a moment I will come back to the "volunteer" aspect of our organization. I would first like to recognize our accomplishments.

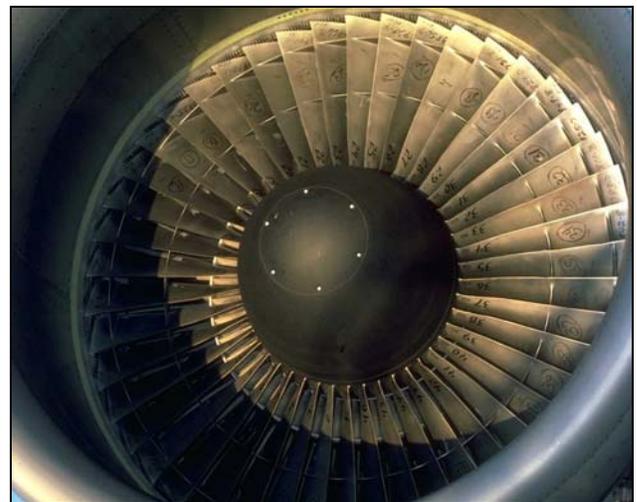
During the past year there were several major notable developments.

- The number of active pilots exceeded 2,000, making us the world's largest single Virtual Airline.
- Roger Pilgrim the leading pilot flew his 1,800 flight leg.
- The Flight Academy opened its doors to train our pilots with the PPL course. Its staff grew from 1 to 5.
- ACARS has proven its worth in serving online and offline flight tracking, management and in-flight information services.
- Our commercial server has functioned without downtime or a reboot for 481 days.
- Our staff expanded to meet growing demands with the addition of assistants, HR, Activities, B737, B757 and B767.
- Organized group flights expanded from 1 event per week to 2 – 3.
- Help Desk with FAQ was inaugurated with 200+ requests.
- Global Virtual Airlines Group successfully "sold" shares to fund DVA and AFVA for the forthcoming year.

Now, let's hear a big round of applause for the staff members who work tirelessly to bring services to our pilots. Another round to our pilots who participated in supporting the organization by filing flight reports, flying group flights, posting in the Water Cooler and supporting one another.

Well, this all begs the question of what next for Delta Virtual Airlines. Looking forward is an important function of management.

- In year 7 we will focus on continued serving with excellence.
- We may need to add more assistants to support in a timely manner our pilots and to not wear out those who devote 100 of hours a month to DVA.
- Exam questions and aircraft operating manuals will be revised to assure accuracy and eliminate vague questions.
- The Commercial Course will be inaugurated in the Flight Academy.
- The fleet will be upgraded to be FSX compatible.



Now back to our staff that are all volunteers and receive no remuneration. DVA is fortunate to have an abundance of individuals who want to contribute to this hobby by giving of their time and knowledge. Without this wonderful resource, this organization would not be as great as it is nor would function at the high level that it does. We have individuals that wake up in the morning around 0300 and 0430 to grade check rides and approve flight reports. Others devote their evenings 5 days a week to work with students in the Flight Academy. Our staff is not looking for a pat on the back. They get their rewards by seeing their fellow pilots advance in their abilities to pilot aircraft or achieve the next Stage level. As the recipient of the services, I ask that you treat them with respect and not take them for granted. Be patient if their response is not instantaneous. Staff has real world obligations and commitments. Be polite and inform staff if you cannot make an appointment. Our business is about enjoyment. All should have fun. Make it a chore and staff will become discouraged, cranky and may just leave.

Wishing you all a safe and enjoyable 7th year with Delta Virtual Airlines.

Thank you for flying Delta Virtual Airlines,



From Delta FLY!'s Editor



George Lewis - Vice President (Training)

I would like to thank all of those who helped make this 6th Anniversary edition of the Delta FLY possible:

- Andrew Vane, whom without his help this issue would never have materialized.
- Larry Foltran, for his wonderful job laying out the look and feel of the Delta FLY – without Larry's work none of this would be possible.
- Charly Azcue, who is a very talented and giving individual who never ceases to amaze me at the work he is capable of producing – his cover art is some of the best I have ever seen!

The edition features a reprint from the Computer Pilot magazine featuring Delta Virtual Airlines. It has been reprinted with permission from the author and Computer Pilot magazine. We thank them both.

Franz Emerson, Chief Pilot of the Concorde for our sister airline, Aviation Français Virtuel, has contributed a nice article on the Concorde.

Larry Foltran has contributed an article featuring flight planning using the Flight Sim flight planner.

Rob Morgan has written an article talking about online etiquette.

We are looking for someone to take over the reins as the Delta FLY Editor. If you think you have what it takes to put together the FLY on a regular basis and would be interested in this position, please send an e-mail to Human Resources at hr@deltava.org

If you are interested in seeing certain topics covered in this newsletter, or would be interested in submitting an article to the FLY, please send me an email at editor@deltava.org



From the Flight Academy



Scott Clarke - Director of the Flight Academy

The academy would like to welcome two new personnel to our growing group of flight instructors.

Robert Tally (DVA3799) Robert is an instructor in the Flight Academy and was a Marine Corps fighter intercept ATC (F-4 & A-4). He started flight simming on a Timex Sinclair PC and has been involved ever since. Robert is an avid hunter, outdoorsman and resides in Pendleton, Oregon where he is a university IT manager.

Sid Dudley (DVA 3710) As an instructor in the Flight Academy, he shares his real world aviation experiences with his students. Sid has real world PPL training and was a dispatcher for Comair Aviation Academy (now the real world Delta Flight Academy at KSFB). He was also a helicopter mechanic and crewmember while serving in the U.S. Army. He is planning to enroll in helicopter flight school soon. Sid and his family live in Lakeland, FL where he occasionally plays golf when not flying or teaching.

Started in March of 2006, the Delta Flight Academy has grown from a one-person operation teaching the basics of flying-Pitch-Power-Trim, into a "Flight Academy" currently with 57+ students and six flight instructors bringing "real world" experience into the virtual training cockpit.

Based at Orlando International Airport (KMCO), the academy flies the EMB 120 twin-engine turboprop airplane, as its primary training aircraft. Each student is assigned an instructor and connected to a multiplayer session that allows the student and instructor to fly in the same cockpit with Team Speak providing intercom communications between the two pilots during the lessons.

Using FAA course curriculum and guidelines and a 120-page manual, the stage one course is the Private Pilot program (PPL). It teaches basic flying skills such as pitch, power, trim,

turns, altitude and heading holds, VFR NDB and VOR cross country flying. Many of the students can complete this course in two to three weeks.

The soon to be released (March 12th) Commercial course is stage two for the student pilot. This course will expose the student to the specific requirements of commercial flight standards and will require the student to learn and execute more precise aircraft control and aeronautical knowledge than in the PPL course. Using a 155-page manual, it teaches airspace regulations, navigation, weather, single engine procedures, ATC communications and many other topics of interest to the commercial pilot.

The IFR course will be stage three at the academy. The student will be taught the skills and knowledge to fly IFR in the VATSIM airspace using real world IFR rated pilots, FAA training courses and procedures. The course will cover precision and non-precision approaches, SID's and STAR's, IFR cross country flying and ATC communications on VATSIM.

Sign up for the Flight Academy and begin your journey in the virtual world of flying.

Scott Clarke
DVA 2370
Senior Captain, B767
DVA Director of the Flight Academy



Online Etiquette

Rob Morgan, DVA2784

Captain 727 / DVA Flight Academy CFI

The world of online flying can be both exciting and challenging all at the same time. But every pilot must remember that they are not the only ones flying in the virtual world. Because of this, every pilot needs to be a good neighbor and practice a little bit of 'on-line etiquette'. This starts at log in and continues all the way through to log off.



After getting set up and ready to go, you are ready to connect to the network of your choice, be it VATSIM, IVAO or other virtual network. Keep in mind when connecting that there may already be an aircraft sitting where you are in FS, especially if there is a scheduled airline event or the air traffic facilities are running a high ops tempo event such as Friday Night Ops. If there is another aircraft in your spot, you have three options, 1) you can immediately log off and relocate (slew) to another spot, 2) Stay logged on and slew to another spot or 3) stay where you are and sit on the other aircraft. Of the three, the worst thing to do is simply sit on the other aircraft. Use the first-come-first-serve concept – if someone is already there...move. Logging off and moving is the best practice here. It only takes a minute or two and it is the least disruptive to your fellow pilots.

Effective use of the radio is another area of concern. Being effective on the radio takes practice and the air traffic controllers we deal with are usually very sympathetic towards inexperienced pilots. Here are some guidelines

to remember. First, listen before you key the mic. Make sure any ongoing communication is complete. Do not jump into the middle of a conversation. If Center just issued an instruction, wait for the acknowledgment from the other pilot. Unless it is an emergency, it is extremely rude to jump in like that. Second, think before you talk. Know what you want to say and how you are going to say it. A transmission full of pauses, "um" and "uh" is disruptive especially when it is busy. Third, brevity is best. Keep your transmission short and sweet. Use common terminology and realize that ATC knows a lot about you from your flight plan...you did file a flight plan right? If you have been handed off, check in with your call sign and altitude only. They already know where you are and where you are going and what you are flying. Lastly, remember to read back all clearances but keep it short. For example:

Center: "DAL2784, Descend at pilots discretion to cross TIROE at and maintain one two thousand"

DAL2784: Pilots discretion to cross TIROE at 12,000, DAL2784

Uncontrolled operations are the next area to be addressed. When ATC is not present be it in the air or on the ground it is up to us as pilots to create our own spacing and not run each other over. How do you do this? In a word...UNICOM. UNICOM is a common advisory frequency that all pilots should be tuned to when not under direct air traffic control. To use UNICOM, set your radio to 122.8. This is text only.

When in the air, send text announcements at key points along the way such as when you start your descent to land, entering the terminal environment, turning final, exiting the runway, etc. If everyone does this, you can get the "big picture" and make adjustments to prevent you and another pilot getting to the same point in space and time.

Ground operations are also important. Announce your intentions. Include who you are, what you are and what you intend to do. And for goodness sake, be looking out the window. If another aircraft is on the taxiway you are about to turn onto, give way to them. If an aircraft is stopped on the ramp DO NOT run them over. A good rule of thumb is if you would not do it in real life, don't do it online.



A word about crash detection – turn it off. If you are flying online, it is highly recommended you turn this off in the Flight Simulator settings menu. There are many scenarios where FS might detect a crash condition such as another aircraft logging on top of you, another aircraft taxiing into you and in the air. There are some out there who take pleasure in screaming around the sky in fighters trying to run intercepts on innocent pilots. Any one of these events will ruin you day.

Flying online is what makes our hobby what it is. Where else can you take to the skies in an airplane worth millions, hauling hundreds of passengers to exotic destinations...virtually of course? Showing some consideration to our fellow pilots and the controllers who support us so well will only make the experience better.

FLY!

Concorde

Franz Emerson, AFV056
Chief Pilot, Concorde

There are very few commercial passenger aircraft that have captured the awe and imagination of aviation enthusiasts as Concorde has. While still operating, it was always a treat to catch a glimpse of one whether on the ground or in the air. Concorde personifies elegance and sophistication with every sweeping curve. This month, we are fortunate to feature an article by Virtual Air France Concorde Chief Pilot, Franz Emerson

Larry Foltran - Chief Pilot MD88

"Men of vision designed this wonderful machine, men of passion built her, and, I hope that it will be said, men of skill and daring flew her".

Capt. Adrian Thompson, Concorde Pilot
Last Heathrow – New York Flight

A Brief Moment in Time:

- ✦ November 1956, Britain and France begin research on a Supersonic Transport Aircraft.
- ✦ November 1962, British and French Governments agree to develop and manufacture a supersonic airliner.
- ✦ June 1963, the first sales contracts are signed by Pan American, BOAC and Air France.
- ✦ April 1966, Final assembly of prototype 001.
- ✦ May 1967, Total contracts for Concorde reach 74 from 16 different airlines.
- ✦ March 02 1969, First flight of the French assembled Concorde 001...

The Aircraft

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Operating Weight Empty: | 173,500 lbs |
| Max Take Off Weight: | 408,000 lbs |
| Max Fuel Weight: | 26,400 gal. in 13 fuel tanks. |
| Max Operating Speed: | Mach 2.04 or 1 mile every 2.7 seconds |
| Max Permissible Range: | 3900 nm |
| Avg. Take Off Speed: | 250 mph |
| Avg. Landing Speed: | 185 mph. |
| Max Operating Altitude: | 60,000 feet |
| Max Total Temperature (TMO): | 127°C (Nose Temp) |
| Engine Model: | 4X Olympus 593 Mrk610 Turbojets. |
| Engine Manufacture: | Roll-Royce / SNECMA |

Takeoff Thrust: 38,050 lbs per engine with Reheat in use.

Fuel Consumption /Full Power w/ Reheats: 49,500 lbs/hr or 6181 Gallons/hr.

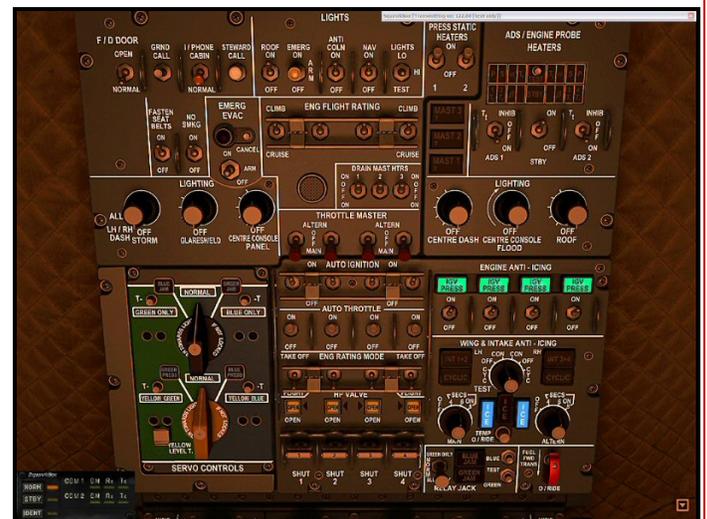
The Preflight

Pre-Flight in the Concorde usually starts 1.5 to 2.0 hours prior to takeoff. This allows for the crew to brief such things as navigation, communications, and all possible divers along Concorde's route. The flight plan is studied carefully and the fuel requirements worked out. Thus the (CG) or Center of Gravity is calculated. This is extremely important to allow for room in the trim tanks to transfer fuel forward and aft prior to takeoff during the cruise to altitude.

Once the Pre-Flight is completed, the crew heads out to the aircraft. The Flight Engineer begins his external checks and also monitors the fueling of the aircraft which is usually completed just prior to takeoff.

The Pilot and Co-Pilot are now on the Flight Deck starting their checks and preparing the aircraft for departure. The Load Sheet arrives and is gone over carefully. With this information the crew can calculate the aircraft's take off speeds and final calculations for the CG.

The Flight Crew now makes their final preparations for getting underway...



Going Virtual

We now leave the real world of the Concorde and enter the Virtual world. Everything from this point forward will be in reference to using the Phoenix Simulations (PSS) Concorde model. Delta Virtual has a fine Concorde model in the Fleet Library, however I have chosen to reference the PSS Model. There are some differences between these two models, but the principle of flight remains the same.

Because the complete checklist for Concorde takes approximately 1 hour to complete, I will begin just prior to engine start.

✦ **Engine Start up Procedure #3 and #2**

- ✓ Engine number three is started and monitored.
- ✓ Engine number two is now started and monitored.

✦ **Pushback**

- ✓ With both Engines running call for Clearance.
- ✓ Release the Parking Brake by pressing "." (period key).
- ✓ With Clearance, begin the pushback by pressing shift + P.
- ✓ Monitor the pushback, usually from "Spot" view. Remember that the Concorde will have a different turning radius than typical airliners due to the nose wheel placement.
- ✓ Press shift + P again to discontinue the Pushback and set the Parking Brake.
- ✓ Engine Number 4 is started and monitored.
- ✓ Engine Number 3 is started and monitored.

✦ **Taxi**

- ✓ The aircraft's nose is lowered to 5 degrees.
- ✓ Call for taxi.
- ✓ Taxi clearance received, release the parking brake and slowly bring up the power to start the aircraft rolling. Once the aircraft begins to roll reduce the throttles to idle. The Concorde will taxi with just idle power and will have to be

braked from time to time to prevent it from gaining speed.

- ✓ A point to remember about taxiing the Concorde. The pilot is located 38 feet in front of the nose gear and 97 feet in front of the main gear. Not allowing for this will cause new pilots to cut the corners too soon during taxi. I usually do not start my turns until the beginning of the wing, when viewed from "Spot View", is at the point I want to begin my turn.
- ✓ Taxi to the active runway as normal and call for clearance upon arrival.
- ✓ Once I have Clearance I taxi out onto the runway and go back to cockpit view. One last check of the instruments and off we go.



✦ **Takeoff**

- ✓ For this flight V_1 will be 162 kts, V_r will be 192 kts, and V_2 will be 221 Kts. In the real world of the Concorde noise restriction procedures are strictly adhered to. So in the Virtual World we shall adhere to these rules as well.
- ✓ Pressing shift + F4 activates the Reheats and then pressing F4 bring the throttle up to maximum. Brake release and the takeoff roll begins.
- ✓ Concorde will begin to build speed quickly and a feather touch on the rudder will keep her on centerline.
- ✓ At V_r slowly pull back on the rams horn (yoke) and rotate to a 13.5 degree pitch angle. Hold the pitch until reaching V_2 ,

221 kts. Concorde can now safely fly away even if we lose an engine.

- ✓ Gear up.
- ✓ Speed will now quickly overtake the 250 kt restriction, so monitor it closely. Bringing the pitch angle up to 18 degrees will help keep it under control.
- ✓ The throttles are now brought back to obey the noise restrictions and the pitch angle is brought back down to 12 degrees.
- ✓ Reheats are now selected "Off".
- ✓ The nose is raised and the Visor is brought up.
- ✓ Elapsed time from brake release to Reheats off will be approximately 90 seconds. There is a lot to do in these 90 seconds, so be prepared or you will find yourself at 300 kts and climbing through 5000 feet before you know it. Don't worry though; a calm controller will usually remind you...

✦ **Subsonic Cruise**

- ✓ Continue the climb until leveling off FL 280 / 290. Speed should be allowed to build until reaching Mach 0.95. Mach HOLD and Alt HOLD should be engaged as well as Auto Pilot and FD. Using the PSS Concorde allows for the use of a "Virtual Flight Engineer" who will have been monitoring and transferring fuel accordingly to maintaining the proper CG. You can however do both the job of the Pilot and Flight Engineer if you choose. I however stay busy enough with just the Piloting duties.
- ✓ Closely monitor your position in reference to where you are over land. Once you have cleared landfall by 10 miles begin your acceleration to Mach 2.00 and FL 590 / 600.
- ✓ I will now switch the MAX CLIMB to "On" and select Alt Acquisition for FL 590.
- ✓ Select shift + F4 to engage the Reheats and select F4 to bring the throttles to Max Power. The aircraft will begin a

slow climb, depending on the aircraft's current weight, to altitude.

- ✓ Upon reaching Mach 1.00 the Altimeter and the Vertical Speed Indicator will fluctuate wildly and then settle back down. This is due to the pressure going through Mach 1.00.
- ✓ Now the Concorde comes into its own. The climb to altitude will begin to slow. The intakes will begin to close to slow down the air entering the intakes and the aircraft's skin temperature will begin to climb.



✦ **The Cruise**

- ✓ Concorde will now begin to climb to altitude. Upon reaching Mach 1.70, the reheats are deselected. Concorde's engines are so efficient at altitude that they are no longer needed. The aircraft will now continue to climb to its final altitude. This may take quite a while. Remember that Concorde will not reach its final altitude of FL 590 / 600 until nearly the end of its cruise. This is because fuel is needed to be burned off to gain altitude.
- ✓ Upon reaching approximately FL 500 MAX CRUISE will engage and Concorde will climb and descend as necessary to maintain maximum speed and control the skin temperature.
- ✓ One thing to also remember is the flight path and waypoints. Concorde is traveling at such extreme speeds that any turns greater than 10 degrees are

difficult for the INS to keep up with and will need to be started sooner than with usual aircraft traveling at Mach 0.84. I usually begin my turn at 7 to 10 miles from my next waypoint. This gives the aircraft time to complete the turn in time to make the waypoint.



✦ The Descent

- ✓ Depending on the winds, I will usually begin my descent approximately 160 to 180 nm out from my destination. This however is just a rough guide and the destination airport's STAR will dictate any adjustments, so this is just a rough explanation of the procedure.
- ✓ Once receiving Clearance to descend the throttles are brought back. I will maintain altitude while allowing the aircraft to slow to Mach 1.50. Upon reaching Mach 1.50 I will continue to allow the aircraft to slow and then push the nose over and begin my descent to FL 350. I will continue to slow to 350 kts and then maintain that airspeed until reaching FL 350.
- ✓ Upon reaching FL 350 I will again request to descend to approximately 14,000 feet and begin to slow the aircraft to meet the 250 kts restriction at 10,000 feet.
- ✓ Upon reaching 10,000 feet the speed has been reduced to 240 kts and the Visor and the Nose are lowered.

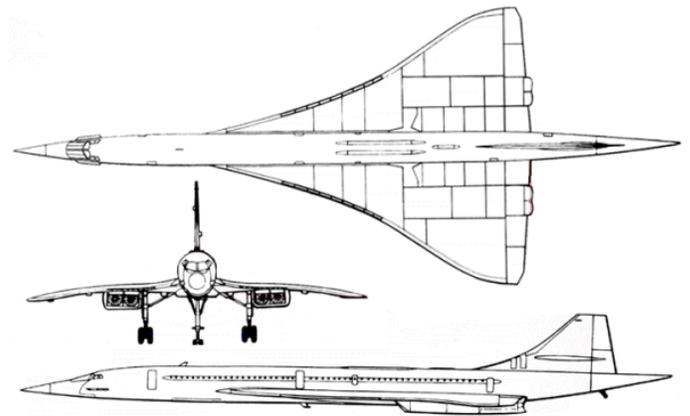
✦ Final Approach

- ✓ Continuing my descent per the STAR and the controller's instructions will bring me to the ILS intercept point. I usually will disengage the Auto Pilot upon capturing the Glide Slope. At this point the Auto Throttles will remain engaged and the nose lowered again to 12.5 degrees.
- ✓ I will now slow to 210 kts as I continue on final and the gear brought down.
- ✓ Concorde is now on ILS approach and assumed the 3 degree glide slope. AOA (Angle of Attack) will be at 13 degrees. This approach angle, approximately 10 degrees above the horizon compared to the usual 2 to 3 degrees on normal airliners, along with the unusual view will be very disorienting the first few times you try it. Just remember to trust the instruments and you will do fine. The last thing you want to do on final is to disregard the instruments and make a play for the deck at the last minute thinking you are too high on short final. If you do this and lower the nose in close, it will cause you to gain airspeed quickly and then you will wind up floating down the runway and having to go around. Worse is getting slow and nose down in close and then trying to flare at touchdown. What will happen now is the aircraft will squat on you as you raise the nose and you'll have a hard landing... at best.

- ✓ I will now slow to 170 kts until approximately 1000 feet.
- ✓ Continuing on down to decision height, which I set at 200 feet, you should have slowed to 155 to 165 kts depending on aircraft weight and winds.
- ✓ At approximately 400 feet, I will disengage the Auto Throttles and hand fly it on in the rest of the way.
- ✓ At approximately 20 feet, the throttles are brought to idle and I pull the nose up to capture a 10 to 12 degree pitch angle. I now allow the aircraft to settle on down to main gear touch down and remembering to keep the nose on the end of the runway. As I hear the mains arrive, I slowly ease back on the yoke to keep the nose off the deck as long as possible. This aerodynamic braking will greatly reduce the stopping distance of the Concorde. Reversers are also engaged at this time until the aircraft slows to 70 kts. With continued braking the nose gear will usually touch down at approximately 90 kts.
- ✓ At approximately 50 kts, the throttles are brought back to idle and I will now monitor ground speed until slowing to approximately 25 kts, at which time I will turn off the Active runway.

engines and complete the shut down checklist.

- ✓ That's all there is to it!



✚ Taxi to the Gates

- ✓ Once clear of the Active I will now raise the nose to 5 degrees and secure Engines 2 and 3. At this reduced weight Concorde can easily taxi using just two engines.
- ✓ Once on the stand, I will set the parking brake and secure the two remaining

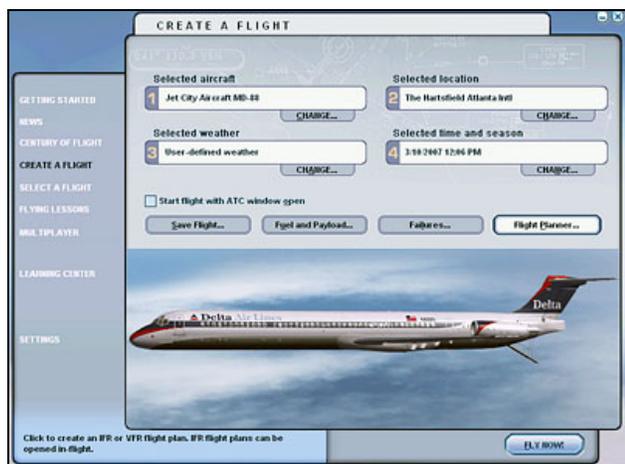
Using the FS Flight Planner

Larry Foltran, DVA1679
Chief Pilot, MD88/90

I often receive emails from DVA pilots asking about using the default Flight Simulator Flight Planner (FSFP). Although it can be a little more cumbersome to use than the payware versions that are available, the primary purpose of setting up a flight plan can still be achieved with this tool.

The majority of the time, I am asked about the Flight Planner after assigning a checkride. I usually mention this flight planner to pilots who are flying the DVA installer MD88. For those of you who haven't completed the MD88 checkride, it basically consists of a flight from Orlando (MCO) to Atlanta (ATL) via a specified route (MCO.JAG3.DBN.CANUK3.ATL). For those of you planning on taking this checkride in the near future, pay close attention. You will see this again.

The first step in setting up your flight plan in FSFP is to pull up the expected SID (Standard Instrument Departure) and STAR (Standard Terminal Arrival Route). You can either find those on the DVA site or via <http://www.myairplane.com/databases/approach/index.php>. It's an outstanding site for looking up charts you'll need while flying in the US. In this scenario, our SID is the JAG3 departure. We will be flying from KMCO to the ORL VOR, then to MATEO, VQQ and so forth.

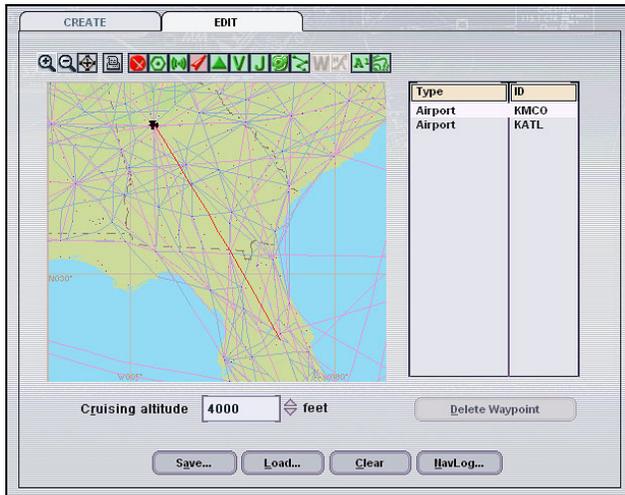


So now let's move to the Flight Planner. Where do you find it? You can simply go to the "Create a Flight" option in FS and click on the "Flight Planner" button to the right. You may also want to select the aircraft you will be using at this point.

Once in the Flight Planner menu, you will be prompted to select the departure airport, destination, flight type (IFR) and routing. I normally prefer to select "Direct-GPS" for the routing as it provides a clean page between both locations for setting up your flight plan. Although I don't plan to fly a direct path, it's nice to start off with at least point A and point Z of your flight plan. Once you selected those, click on "Find Route"

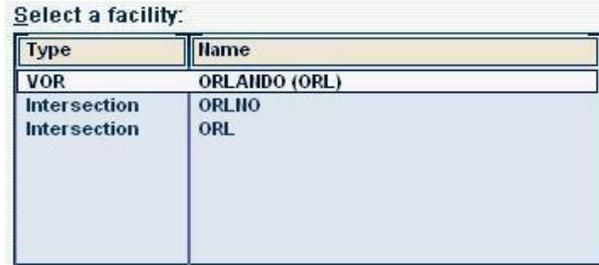


The next page that should display is the map view of the planner. The only two points currently shown here should be the start and end point of your flight. Make sure to click on the "edit" tab to begin entering your flight plan.



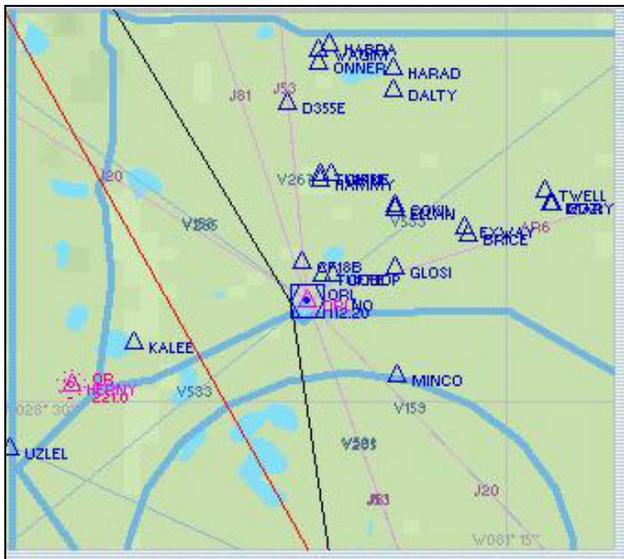
So now we begin entering the points. Unfortunately, you can't simply type in the waypoints (at least I haven't found a way) in FSFP to complete the route. You will need to basically drag the red route line to each point in your route. In this example, our first waypoint is the ORL VOR just north of our flight origin. Left click and hold on the red route line and move it to the ORL location. Once there, release the mouse button. Some waypoints can be difficult to find. Zooming in and out using the buttons in the upper menu may help in finding the waypoints. Zooming out slightly can sometimes make VORs easier to find as it removes a lot of the other clutter. Experiment with it to find what works for you.

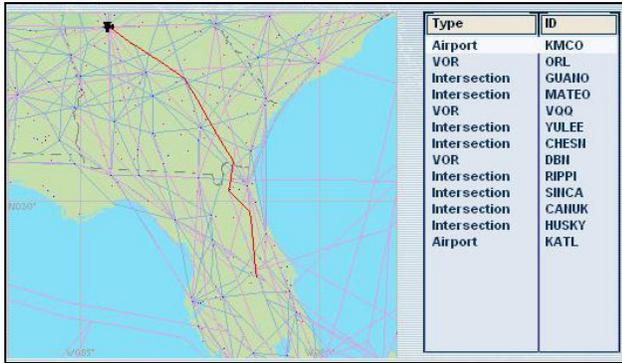
If there are multiple options in the same location, you will be asked to select a specific waypoint. In this situation, you would select the VOR.



As you continue plotting your course, notice that the flight plan will appear in order on the right side. If you select the wrong waypoint, simply select the waypoint and click on the delete waypoint button.

Some waypoints can be sometimes tough to find. If you get stuck, you always have the option to start working backwards from the destination or select another waypoint further in the plan and then fill in the gap after that. Many times after doing so, the route line will be near the elusive waypoint. Skipping to a VOR sometimes helps as well. VORs are normally much easier to find and can help in finding the navpoints in between.





Above you will see the completed flight plan into Atlanta. Once complete, you can save the route for future use and print a copy of the flight log for a handy reference during your flight. You can also assign a planned altitude for each waypoint if you'd like. In addition, FSFP will ask you if you'd like to move the aircraft to the departure airport. If flying online, make sure you are not already connected to the network as it will move you to the active runway. That normally makes ATC and any pilot on final pretty upset.

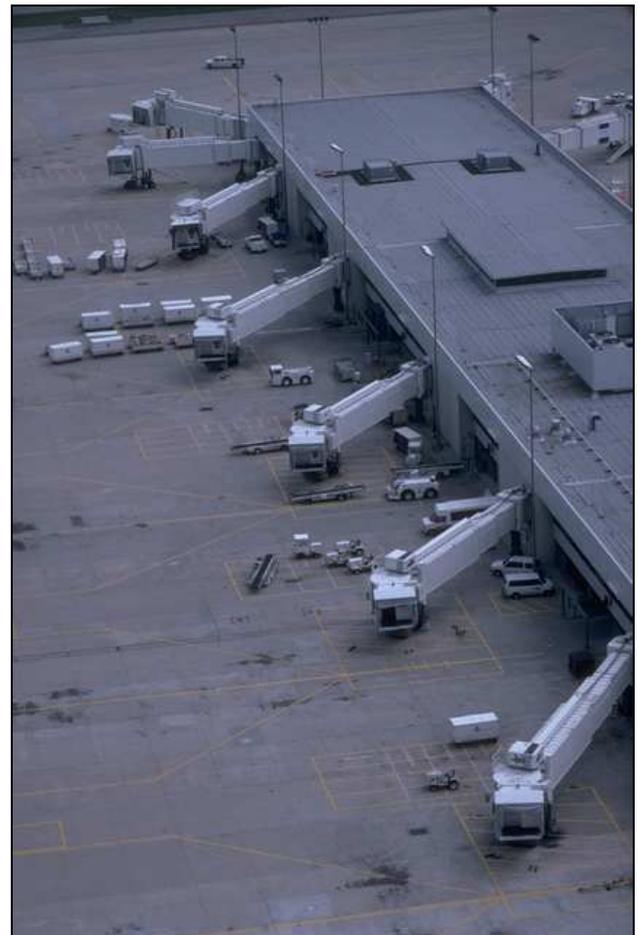
If you're using the FSFP, you most likely will be flying one of the GPS equipped DVA installer aircraft or a default FS aircraft. Once in the cockpit of the desired aircraft, you can view the flight plan by bringing up the GPS. If everything looks good, it's time to get moving!



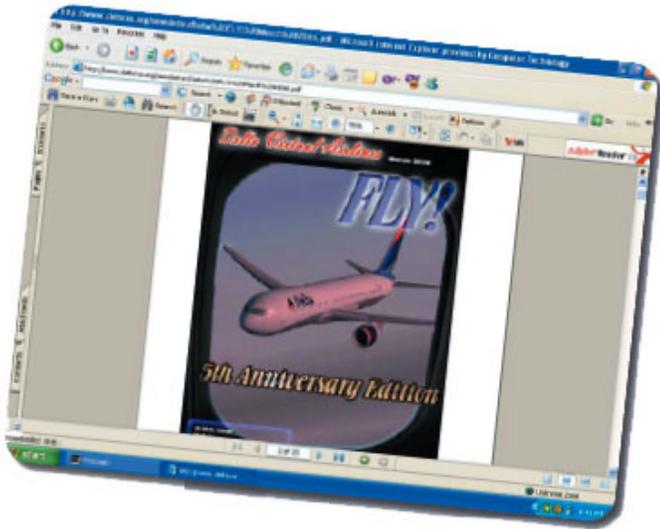
Using the DVA MD-88 as an example, flying your flight plan is rather simple.

Once in the air, you can click on the GPS toggle button in the lower left of the panel view to bring up the GPS. On the autopilot stack (top portion of the glareshield), make sure to select GPS on the GPS/NAV toggle switch. NAV will be used when utilizing the navigation radios and GPS...well...when using the GPS. Once that's done, simply select the VOR button and the aircraft will follow the flight plan.

So in conclusion. Is FSFP tedious? Yes, but it gets the job done. Although short flights aren't too bad, long flights can take quite some time to plot out. Yep, setting up a flight from Atlanta to Frankfurt, Germany for the DVA 777 was loads of fun. ☺



Delta Virtual Airlines (DVA) www.deltava.org



Good things do come in small packages. Delta Virtual is a rather unassuming virtual airline that quietly goes about its business efficiently and productively while promoting its motto "Taking the Virtual Airline World One Step Ahead". It was the #2 VA in total responses in the 2006 VATSIM survey with 110 pilots declaring that they fly for DVA. The surprising fact is that this represents only 7% of its active roster...over 1500 pilots! This roster crew amassed a total of 21,267 flights / 50,744 hrs in the first half of 2006.

The VA recently moved its operations to a larger server in order to accommodate its needs and the sheer number of pilots would seem to have dictated this move. However, the move was predicated more on the desire to maintain an extensive and very detailed database of the VA activities. The very impressive recordkeeping system allows the stored information to be viewed in a variety of interesting ways; by pilot names, by hours flown, by legs flown, by distance flown and the system also tracks the average hours per flight/leg/length as well. This is a powerful tool for VA managers to be able to gauge the way its pilots use its route system and it makes for interesting reading as well.

My favorite feature at DVA is the Live Online ACARS Map. This allows for viewing of flights in progress as it tracks each airplane's position and indicates it via a color-coded marker to depict the phase of flight. Placing a cursor over the marker brings up a description of the flight; pilot name, route, altitude, airspeed and groundspeed. Additional information available includes position, heading, active autopilot settings, flap setting, fuel burn rate, N1 and N2 engine turbine speeds, and vertical speed. Be aware... Big Brother IS watching! The robust capability of the 20 channel data recording system allows DVA to have pilots fly checkrides and transmit the ACARS summary in lieu of making a flight video or having a check airman monitor the flight. The flight depiction and route can also be projected over a Google Earth map.



The seminal concept setting DVA apart from many other VAs is the fact that amassing flight hours will not earn promotions for pilots. DVA is more interested in tracking pilot proficiency, efficiency and their record for flight completions. In fact, the application to join DVA asks about verifiable hours, but more emphasis is placed on pilot knowledge as evidenced by a 10-question questionnaire also asked of applicants. Evaluation of these responses allows DVA management to make a determination as to which of the three entry-level aircraft stages the pilot will be initially certified to fly as a First Officer. Rank promotions to Captain are actually type-ratings granted only after flying a minimum of 10 flights and successful

completion of a written examination on the desired aircraft type. In order to be rated in an additional aircraft type the pilot needs to pass an exam and check ride.

However, rather than using the usual milestone of x number of hours to achieve the rank of Senior Captain as is the case in most VAs, that level is achieved at DVA only by a combination of aeronautical skills and a demonstrated record of participation in the DVA forums, online fly-ins, and rendering of assistance to other pilots. It is intended to signify a pilot who has displayed exceptional dedication to the virtual airline.

DVA offers an extensive array of resources for its pilots with newsletters; some aircraft-specific, aircraft manuals and tutorials, a flight academy offering instruction leading to granting of a private pilot license, and a very impressive fleet library featuring an all-in-one installer that downloads and installs an entire aircraft package to the pilot's computer.

The company water cooler is a well-monitored forum encompassing a variety of subjects and it routinely receives 400 postings each day. I recently posted a question there and within 15 minutes had received 2 answering responses.

DVA management is extensive with administrators to run the various aspects of the VA and chief pilots for each of its aircraft programs who are the primary point of contact for the line pilots.

With all that it has going for it, President Terry Eshenour maintains, "In the final analysis of what makes Delta Virtual Airlines great, are its pilots and volunteers who share their time, talents and experience unselfishly. We have a great community that provides strong support to one another."

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