Skyways Magazine

What's included in the latest issue:

Editor: Craig Tyler
(UKV2189)

The Skyways Team:
- Stuart McIntyre (UKV2183)
- Adam Salisbury (UKV1375)

February 2014 Screenshot Competition— "Big City"
City of Gold by Jason Dilley

Allan's Facts:

1) A plastic bottle takes around 450 years to decompose.
2) Next time your fishing line breaks, don't throw it in the water. A Monofilament fishing line takes 600 years to decompose!
3) Nearly 50% of all bank robberies take place on Friday.
4) Einstein couldn't speak fluently when he was nine. His parents thought he might be retarded.

London Stansted

ICAO: EGSS
IATA: STN

Charts: Click Here

Runways

Runway	Elevation	Length	Surface	ILS Frequency/Course
04	322FT	10,000FT/3,048M	Grooved Asphalt	110.500/044
22	348FT	10,000FT/3,048M	Grooved Asphalt	110.500/224

Stand Allocation

Low Cost Operations	Main Terminal—Apron B	Stands: 20,21,22,23
Cargo Operations	Cargo Centre—Apron A	Stands: 1,2,3,4

Scenery

Simulator	Freeware		Payware	
FSX	UK2000	Download Here	UK2000	Download Here
FS9	UK2000		UK2000	

SID's

Departure	04	22
BKY (Barkway)	2S	5R
BUZAD	2S	7R
CLN (Clacton)	4S	8R
CPT (Compton)	2S	4R
DVR (Dover)	5S	7R
LAM (Lambourne) <For EGLL arrivals ONLY>	2S	3R
LYD (Lydd)	4S	5R

STAR's

Last Waypoint	STAR	Last Waypoint	STAR
BKY	ABBOT1A	MCT (>FL150)	LOREL3G
BARMI	ABBOT1B	MCT (<FL140)	LOREL1J
IDESI	ABBOT1C	DTY	LOREL1K
LOGAN	ABBOT1D	KENET (>FL090)	LOREL2L
DET	ABBOT1E	KENET (<FL080)	LOREL2M
WCO	LOREL5A	HAZEL	LOREL2N
KATHY	LOREL1B	SAM	LOREL2P
MID	LOREL3C	GURLU	LOREL2Q
GIBSO	LOREL1D	ABBOT	LOREL1R
WAL (>FL200)	LOREL4F	BEDEK	LOREL2S
WAL (<FL190)	LOREL1H		

Complied by: Stuart McIntyre (UKV2183)

Fly UK January Monthly Round-Up

Monthly Report
Beginning: Monday, 6th January 2014
Ending: Sunday, 2nd February 2014

Within the last month a total of 3,936 PIREPS totalling 6,863 hours were filed.

IVAO Flights: 394*
VATSIM Flights: 467*
FSD Flights: 116*
Offline Flights: 2,735*

Mainstream Flights: 1,965
Event Flights: 86
Tour Flights: 1,209
Training Flights: 20
Flying Club Flights: 255

* - figure does not include flying club PIREPS.
Green - increase compared October.
Yellow - equal compared to October.
Red - decrease compared to October.

Birthdays

UKV1277 - Andrew Millar - 12th Jan
UKV2221 - Rae Johns - 12th Jan
UKV1439 - Guenter Reiners - 12th Jan
UKV1488 - Alan Smith - 12th Jan
UKV1724 - William Bruce - 12th Jan
UKV1762 - Peter Slater - 12th Jan
UKV1235 - John Mosuela - 13th Jan
UKV1418 - Harry Stewart - 13th Jan
UKV1191 - Gavin Watt - 14th Jan
UKV2140 - Mudrik Ali - 14th Jan
UKV2767 - Phil Derbyshire - 15th Jan
UKV1220 - Frans Santbrink - 16th Jan
UKV1311 - Michael Starckey - 16th Jan
UKV1339 - Shane Gibney - 16th Jan
UKV1754 - Emil Joensen - 16th Jan
UKV1295 - Jo Dow - 17th Jan
UKV1306 - Trevor Walden - 17th Jan
UKV1233 - Robert Wells - 18th Jan
UKV1982 - Steve West - 18th Jan
UKV1725 - Jack Ellis - 19th Jan
UKV3375 - Vincent Pizzey - 20th Jan
UKV1512 - John Littleford - 20th Jan
UKV1330 - Chris May - 21st Jan
UKV1343 - Darren Chadwick - 21st Jan
UKV1403 - José Lopes - 22nd Jan
UKV3394 - Matthew Charman - 23rd Jan
UKV1441 - Tommy Gilbert - 24th Jan
UKV1500 - James Crawley - 24th Jan
UKV1704 - John Metcalfe - 24th Jan
UKV1483 - Richard Wraith - 25th Jan
UKV2971 - Jason Vos - 25th Jan
UKV1535 - Kevin Byrne - 26th Jan
UKV1215 - Richard Barkus - 27th Jan
UKV1659 - Chris Gibbons - 27th Jan
UKV1594 - Ian Fielding - 27th Jan
UKV2954 - John Hendry - 27th Jan
UKV1344 - Doug Wilkinson - 28th Jan
UKV1455 - Ignacio Robla - 28th Jan
UKV1635 - Stephen Tyhurst - 28th Jan
UKV1875 - Richard Otevrel - 28th Jan
UKV1405 - Thomas McGreevy - 29th Jan
UKV1528 - Mark Ramsden - 29th Jan
UKV1585 - Dave Robinson - 29th Jan
UKV1586 - Carl Chamberlain - 29th Jan
UKV1401 - Jack Plumb - 30th Jan
UKV1554 - Christopher Conroy - 1st Feb
UKV2156 - Andy Mclernan - 1st Feb
UKV1217 - Leo Malagar - 2nd Feb
UKV1196 - Joseph Davis - 2nd Feb
UKV1497 - Rory Kruger - 2nd Feb
UKV1593 - Lucian Vasile - 2nd Feb
UKV1616 - James Collins - 2nd Feb
UKV1196 - Joseph Davis - 2nd Feb
UKV1497 - Rory Kruger - 2nd Feb
UKV1593 - Lucian Vasile - 2nd Feb
UKV1616 - James Collins - 2nd Feb
UKV1641 - Leo Malagar - 2nd Feb
UKV1737 - Jamie Munn - 4th Feb
UKV2074 - Alex Twigg - 4th Feb
UKV1197 - Derek Butterworth - 5th Feb
UKV1354 - Luis Ortiz - 6th Feb
UKV1286 - Nick Shaw - 7th Feb
UKV1429 - William Bolingford - 7th Feb
UKV1662 - George Hunter - 7th Feb
UKV1710 - Andrew Cross - 8th Feb

Fly UK February Monthly Round-Up

Monthly Report
Beginning: Monday, 3rd February 2014
Ending: Sunday, 2nd March 2014

Within the last month a total of 4,161 PIREPS totalling 6,692 hours were filed.

IVAO Flights: 315*
VATSIM Flights: 522*
FSD Flights: 86*
Offline Flights: 2,739*

Mainstream Flights: 2,130
Event Flights: 78
Tour Flights: 1,419
Training Flights: 38
Flying Club Flights: 495

* - figure does not include flying club PIREPS.
Green - increase compared October.
Yellow - equal compared to October.
Red - decrease compared to October.

Birthdays

UKV3712 - Marc Cadmore - 9th Feb
UKV1565 - Martin Abbott - 10th Feb
UKV1524 - Daniel Libman - 11th Feb
UKV1608 - Jamie Borland - 12th Feb
UKV1724 - Phil Ngoma - 12th Feb
UKV1213 - Henry Hill - 13th Feb
UKV1223 - Grahame Radford - 13th Feb
UKV1683 - Dan Wilkes - 13th Feb
UKV1737 - Terry Danos - 13th Feb
UKV1917 - Nathan Chivers - 14th Feb
UKV3384 - James Smith - 15th Feb
UKV1409 - Harry Piercey - 15th Feb
UKV1600 - James Beaumont - 16th Feb
UKV2032 - Peter Sawley - 16th Feb
UKV1480 - James Highton - 17th Feb
UKV1502 - Graeme Crawford - 18th Feb
UKV1163 - Nicolas Abdelnour - 19th Feb
UKV1717 - Jeff Best - 19th Feb
UKV2765 - Jordan Gallacher - 19th Feb
UKV3743 - Colin Paxton - 19th Feb
UKV1292 - Anton Blake - 20th Feb
UKV1350 - Marconi Menezes - 20th Feb
UKV1428 - Peter Manning - 21st Feb
UKV1470 - Paul Cools - 21st Feb
UKV1584 - Alan Scott - 21st Feb
UKV3752 - Sam Sheppard - 22nd Feb
UKV1224 - Alex Tudor - 23rd Feb
UKV1195 - Mark Garforth - 24th Feb
UKV1424 - Derek Boxer - 24th Feb
UKV1268 - Adam Brough - 25th Feb
UKV1216 - Karl Taverner - 25th Feb
UKV2122 - Wojciech Binkowski - 25th Feb
UKV1176 - Johan Grauers - 26th Feb
UKV3732 - Joe Lewis - 26th Feb
UKV3386 - John Hill - 26th Feb
UKV1634 - Ken Dixon - 26th Feb
UKV1598 - Roger Pilgrem - 26th Feb
UKV1605 - Geoff Scott - 26th Feb
UKV1745 - Anders Christiansen - 26th Feb
UKV1323 - Jamie Beddow - 27th Feb
UKV1510 - Ruben Caetano - 28th Feb
UKV3365 - Jamie Woodington - 1st Mar
UKV1658 - Peter Andre - 1st Mar
UKV1309 - Guillermo Patterson - 2nd Mar
UKV1622 - Rudy Lyngvig - 2nd Mar
UKV1774 - Jacob Whitby - 2nd Mar
UKV1309 - Guillermo Patterson - 2nd Mar
UKV1622 - Rudy Lyngvig - 2nd Mar
UKV1774 - Jacob Whitby - 2nd Mar
UKV1701 - Jonas Lundborg - 3rd Mar
UKV1728 - Dan Fog - 3rd Mar
UKV1311 - Robert Orr - 4th Mar
UKV1349 - Ramzi Mejri - 4th Mar
UKV1555 - Graham Smith - 4th Mar
UKV1432 - Greg Martin - 5th Mar
UKV1559 - John Mcdonald - 5th Mar
UKV1730 - Reece Wellington - 5th Mar
UKV1690 - Chris Fuller - 5th Mar
UKV2117 - Paul Ayles - 5th Mar
UKV2183 - Stuart McIntyre - 5th Mar
UKV1352 - John Lowke - 6th Mar
UKV1518 - Goncalo Gregorio - 6th Mar
UKV1592 - Dale Ketchen - 6th Mar
UKV1964 - John Kerr - 6th Mar
UKV1126 - Tyler Richards - 8th Mar
UKV1496 - Matthew Weekly - 8th Mar
UKV1254 - Andrew Wiggins - 9th Mar
UKV1601 - Joshua Bird - 9th Mar

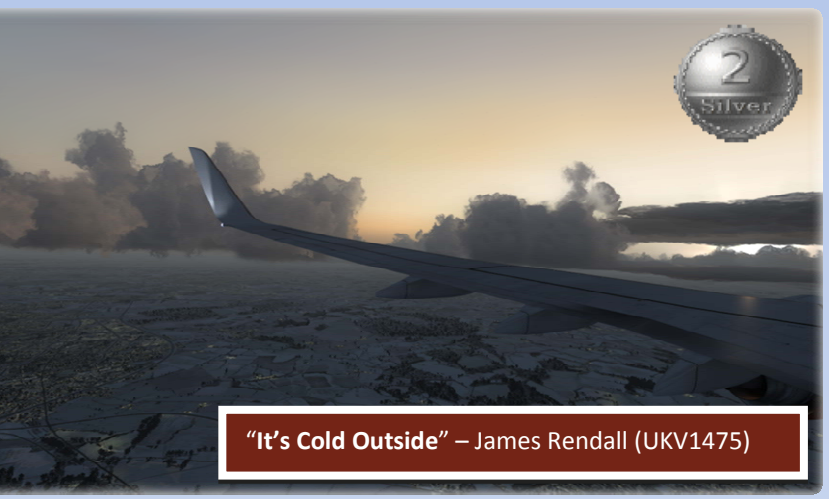
Screenshot Competition | January **2014**

In association with UK2000 Scenery

"Winter Wonderland"

"**Highland Snow**" – Pete Gill (UKV1390)

"**Over white silence**" – Zvi Bernstein (UKV1282)



"**It's Cold Outside**" – James Rendall (UKV1475)

"**Low clouds, snow, snow and...snow this is winter!**" – Massimo Solimbergo (UKV1485)

"**A very snowy Leeds/Bradford**" – Graham Hammill (UKV1625)

Want your screenshot to feature on this page?

By entering the Fly UK Screenshot Competition you could be in for a chance to win a UK2000 scenery of your choice and have your shot featured in next edition!

Screenshot Competition | February **2014**

In association with UK2000 Scenery

"Big City"

"**City of Gold"** – Jason Dilley (UKV1525)

"**Let someone tell me that it is a small town**" – Zvi Bernstein (UKV1282)

"**Plane Sailing**" – Graham Hammill (UKV1625)

Want your screenshot to feature on this page?

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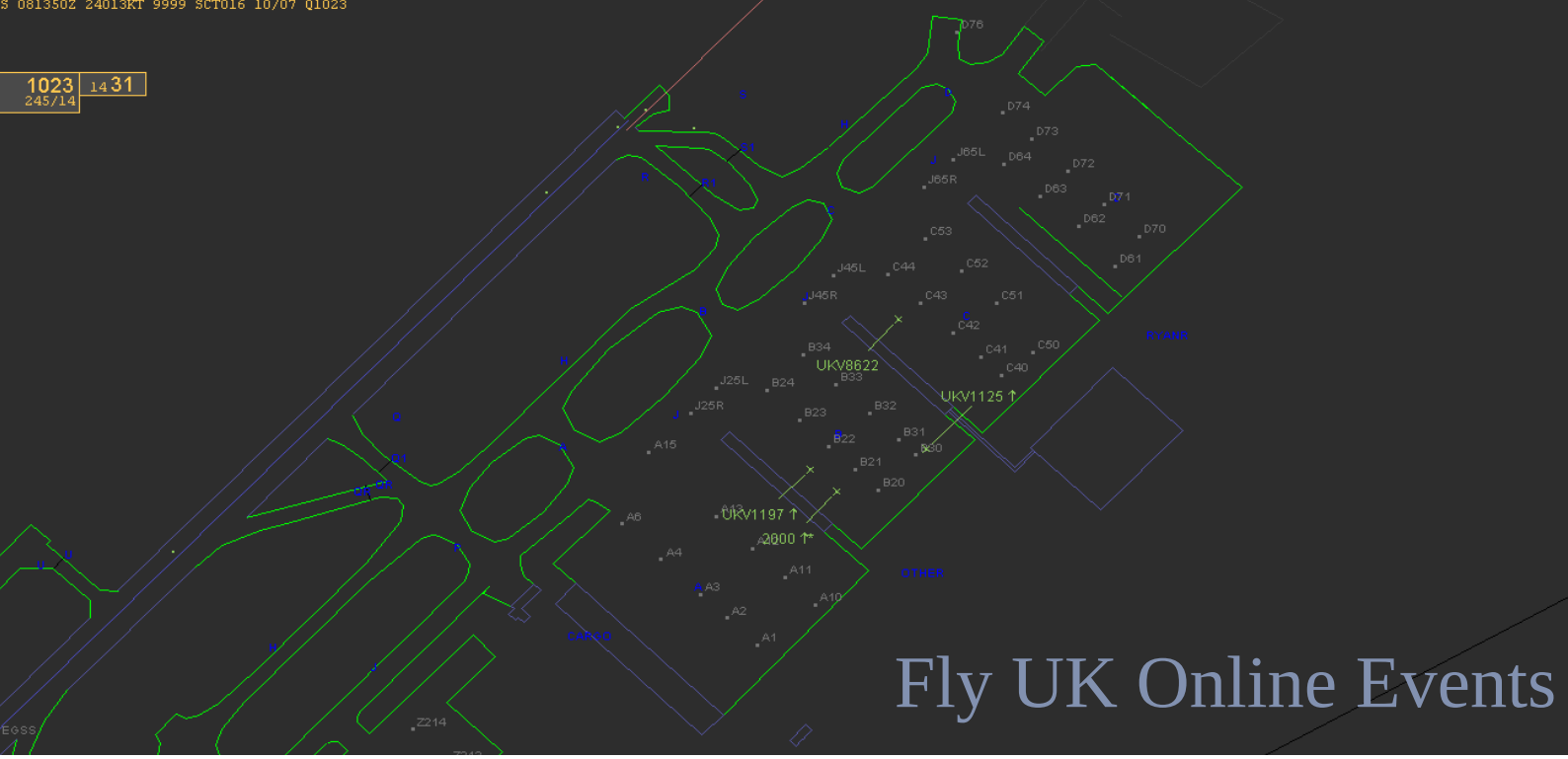


Well we have had a good start to 2014 with figures up on this time last year. The newly introduced Thursday afternoon event on VATSIM for 2014 has a regular members on which we hope we can build.

Top tips when flying online, be sure you are used to the aircraft you are flying , never try a new aircraft online till you are happy with it offline. Always ensure you know what the controller has ask you to do, if not ask him to re-peat the instruction and if still not sure ask him to text the information, as this is usually easier to understand.

Our Event Calendar for March and April 2014 is sorted and is below, April as its our 10th Anniversary we are flying the different operations of Fly UK to celebrate it and May's event are being chosen by Howard UKV1316 and John UKV1420, who both Fly on the Thursday VATSIM events.

IVAO Saturdays 0700z, VATSIM Tuesdays 1930z and VATSIM Thursdays 1400z

Please note zulu time becomes 1 hour behind Local UK from 30th March, so events in April will be **0600, 1830 and 1300** local time in UK.

<u>March</u>
1st 4th 6th EGLL -> EDDF
8th 11th 13th EDDF -> EIDW
15th 18th 20th EIDW -> EHAM
22nd 25th 27th EHAM -> EGGP
29th -- -- EGGP -> EGJJ

<u>April</u>
-- 1st 3rd EGGP -> EGJJ
5th 8th 10th (Cargo) EGSS -> LEMD
12th 15th 17th Multi start
19th 22nd 24th (Fly2) LFSB-> EGSS
26th 29th 1st (Highland Connections) EGPH-> EGSH

By: Derek Butterworth, Richard Jones and Mike Higgins

January *2014 - Using the Instruments*

Our January event was the first of our quarterly technical events, designed by Clint, where we go a bit beyond flying the blue line. I'm not decrying the fact that some pilots, especially newcomers, will use AP and the GPS to fly our routes - we probably all started out that way! However, although the main aim of the Flying Club is to have fun, we do try to encourage members not to switch the autopilot on and to learn and practice using the instruments.

The event found us flying in Norway beginning at ENKR (Hoybuktmoen Airport at Kirknes) and flying touch and go's to Hammerfest using NDB's to navigate and LOC DME's to approach the runway. It all sounds technical, but in fact is really easy when you know how - and more to the point - doing it without the autopilot, FMC or whatever and just using the ADF and DME instruments manually gives a real sense of satisfaction when it all comes together and you are lined up for that touch and go!

It seems that some of our regular flyers are a bit wary of the technical events and this one was perhaps no exception being attended by six of our experienced pilots.

I hope to be able to encourage some others to join in by providing some preliminary taster flights prior to our regular event. Watch the forums for news of this.

February 2014 - Mississippi Magic

The February event took us to New Orleans - Lakefront Airport (KNEW) for the start of a flight along the Mississippi River. The area is generally flat and with the river to follow, it meant that navigation was easier. However, there were tempting bridges to fly under (we do break the rules sometimes!) - some very low indeed and a real challenge! The area is also dotted with chimneys, cooling towers and radio masts so everyone had to keep a watchful eye - especially if flying below 500ft. (All part of the fun!) The flight ended at Jackson - some way from the river having flown over a large dam on the Ross Barnett Reservoir (which sadly, wasn't well modelled in FSX). 9 Flying Club pilots joined the flight. The Club plans to continue the journey up river later in our programme.

Future plans for the Club events include the second part of our Columbia River route, a special Fly UK 10th Anniversary flight in April which will be the second of our technical events this year - no doubt this will be a busy month, and our May event will be a fly-in to Southampton because the Flying Club is holding a real world meet up that weekend on Saturday 19th May at Poole in Dorset. If you are interested there are details in the forums so if you can't join us for real that weekend, then why not pay a virtual visit instead?

Don't forget - the Flying Club meets every Wednesday evening for an informal flight - why not come along and enjoy the fun!

By: Jim Lowery and Mark Dring

Speech Recognition and Checklist Processing

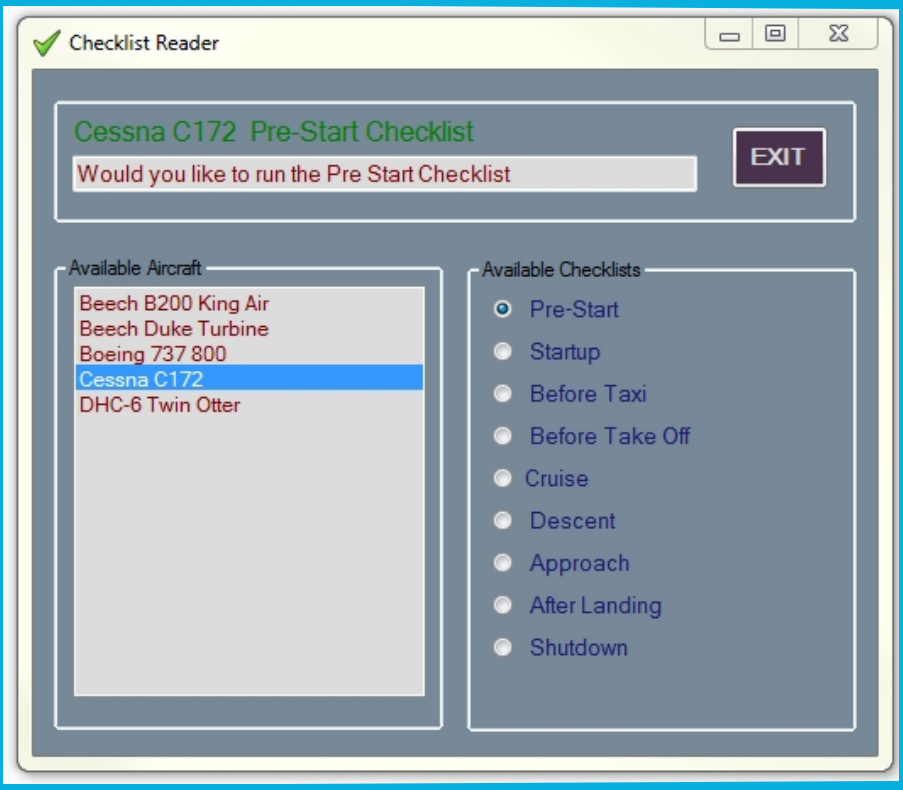
Many years ago (*in the 'good old days' of Microsoft DOS*), as a CAD manager in a large architectural practice, I was intrigued by the concept of using speech recognition to issue the basic drawing and editing commands vocally to gain greater efficiency. Unfortunately, my attempts to develop something functional in this regard met with little success, due mainly to the primitive nature of speech recognition software available at that time. Even with extensive voice training of the software, the incidence of misunderstood commands was so frequent and frustrating that any thoughts of gains in efficiency ended as a pipe dream. I put such thoughts to one side. As time passed, voice recognition software improved, but so did the CAD interface (*and the OS)* with added GUI toolbars, mouse menus etc. etc. providing greater productivity, thereby precluding speech recognition as a viable option.

Regardless of my initial disappointment, my fascination with speech recognition software and its potential usage has remained with me, and now for the last five years or so, I have been using proprietary software add-ons as a virtual co-pilot in a variety of aircraft in both FS9 and FSX. There are a number of these applications available at varying prices and functional abilities. All require some input of voice training initially, and having done that your co-pilot is there at your vocal command, thus enhancing the world of flight simulation experience.

Whilst I currently have installed on my PC, ***It's Your Plane***©, ***FS2Crew***© (*737-NGX and JS41 versions*) and that wonderfully configurable ***Multi Crew Experience***©, as a strictly amateur and part-time programmer, I recently thought it would be fun to put together a small application in VB .Net that could interface with the Windows Speech Engine to process aircraft specific checklists that the user could construct in a text file format. The application would step through each checklist item consecutively in a 'hands free' environment, using the default Microsoft Text to Speech (TTS) voice as the co-pilot that reads out each checklist item to be processed and waits for confirmation to advance to the following item. The app, I called ***Checklist Reader*** operates separately from Flight Simulator and after initialisation can be put into the background to run with voice interaction only.

This is how my application works……..
A series of text files are created, one for each checklist section for the specific aircraft. The text files are created with the name reflecting the particular checklist section contained, i.e. ***Before Taxi.txt, Approach.txt*** etc..
A single line of text in the file represents the checklist item to be read by the co-pilot i.e. **Master Battery, ON**
The folder that these checklist files are saved in is named to represent the subject aircraft, i.e. ***Cessna C172*** etc..

At start-up, the Checklist Reader application gets the names of all the folders in the root directory and displays the list in the **Available Aircraft** window (see Illustration below). When the pilot selects an aircraft from the list, all the checklist sections for that aircraft are displayed in the **Available Checklists** widow adjacent. This window supports a list of up to 20 checklist sections, with window expanding automatically to display them all.



A mouse click on the radio button beside any checklist section will start the ball rolling, with the first item being read out by the co-pilot.
A response by the pilot with a command , like, "*Checked*", "*Confirmed*", "*Set*" etc. will have the co-pilot advance to the next item.
Confirmation of what item is being read out is displayed in the text window above the aircraft list.
Now it's all 'hands free'…… and when all the items in that section have been read out and processed, a command of "*Next checklist*" will advance to the following section. At any stage, the pilot can intervene manually and select any particular checklist section by clicking on the radio button adjacent.

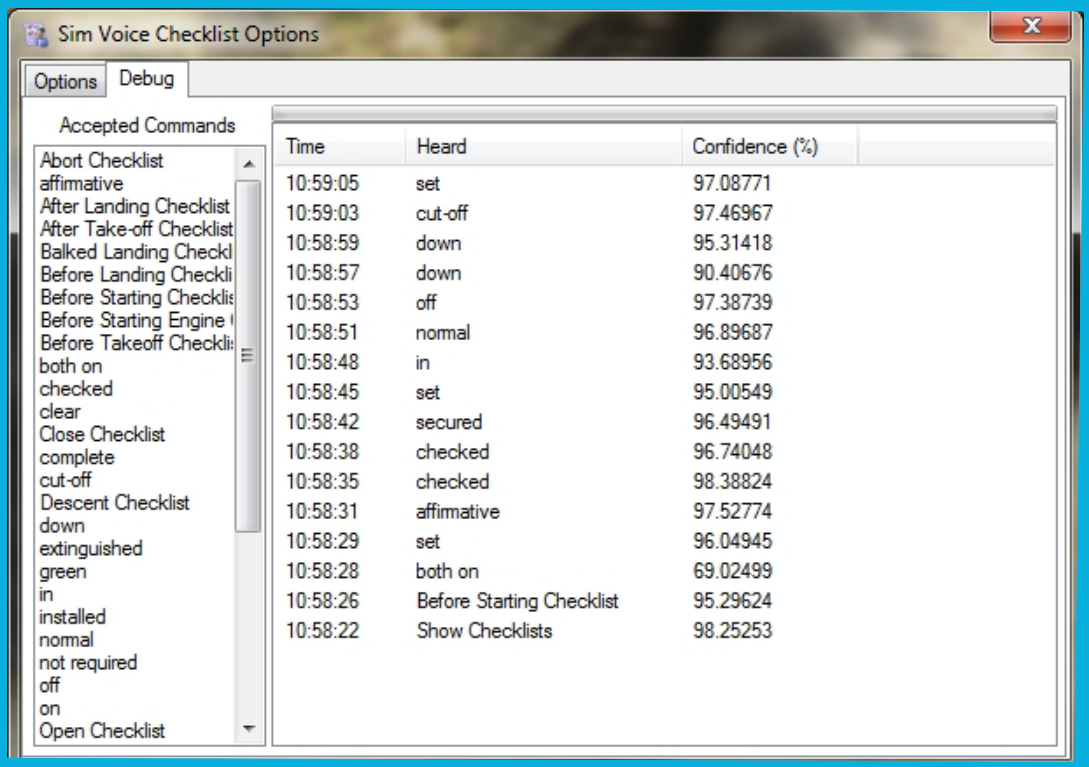
I had just reached the final stages of developing my Checklist Reader application, when I happened across news of a similar app that had just been released as open source. Of course, my interest was immediate and so I downloaded and ran the program straight away to checkout what the opposition was doing.

Sim Voice Checklists, as the application is called, was programmed by Paul Endersby, a Senior Software Engineer living in Tadley, UK. So not surprisingly, his credentials in the programming field are way beyond my modest hobby approach, and it certainly shows in the comparative level of sophistication displayed in this program. Fundamentally, the objectives of each application are essentially the same. That is to run a series of checklists for any given aircraft by means of speech recognition and text to speech (TTS) using Windows Speech Engine, and allow for the checklists to be fully editable by the user. However, Paul Endersby's program really shines with some particularly good features that make it stand head and shoulders above my modest **Checklist Reader**.

In the first place, his interface with the Windows Speech Engine is such that each pilot response to any given checklist item is vastly more configurable by the user, unlike mine that limits the responses to a much smaller predetermined vocabulary programmed in the app. Secondly, **Checklist Reader** uses the default Windows TTS voices, which makes the co-pilot voice a little 'clunky' and unrealistic, whereas **Sim Voice** has the option to allow user generated .WAV files to be attached to each command. So, you can record your own, or preferably a friend or partner's voice as the co-pilot making it much more realistic and lifelike.

He has also included an adjustable "*Confidence Threshold*" value, which allows the user to set the threshold for the command recognition for their voice. The best way to adjust this is to run the app and go through a number of commands, then open the debug window and from the displayed data note down the lowest value in the confidence column and adjust the value to suit. It's a form of voice training that proves to be rather effective.

This illustration shows the confidence values recorded when I ran through the first few items of a checklist. The Confidence level I had set was 93%, so you can see that all the issued responses by me were understood. The exception was at 10:58:26 when some sound was picked up by the microphone and the app translated it as "both on" (an accepted command) but didn't process it because it was below the value set as my Confidence Level.



If your system doesn't support Windows Speech, it's not a problem. In the options window simply configure a key press to use, instead of a voice command, to progress to the next checklist item. After the key press the app will play the associated WAV file which still gives a level of functionality, you can just say "Checked" or something appropriate when you press the key if you want to be more realistic. Just be aware that you'll need to record WAV files for all the checklist items, since without the Windows TTS voice, you'll hear nothing. The preferred audio output device can also be selected from a drop down list of installed audio hardware.

Unlike my app which uses a number of simple text files to represent a set of checklists for an aircraft, **SimVoice** reads from a single XML format file that contains all the checklists in the one file (much tidier) and each line represents the checklist item and also includes the accepted response/s from the pilot. Whilst this is a much more elegant and flexible solution, the downside is that the user needs to be watchful that the XML format is

Beech Duke Turbine.checklist

```
<checklists>
  <checklist name="Before Starting">
    <item name="Cabin door, escape hatch and baggage, secured" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked"/>
    <item name="Airplane weight and balance checked" instruction="" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked"/>
    <item name="Flight controls" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked"/>
    <item name="Seat belts and harnesses secured" vcommand="Affirmative,Secured,Checked"/>
    <item name="Parking brake set?" vcommand="Affirmative,Set,Checked"/>
    <item name="Circuit breakers" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked,In"/>
    <item name="Alternate static source" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked,Normal"/>
    <item name="Cabin Temperature Mode " vcommand="Affirmative,off"/>
    <item name="Landing gear handle, down?" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked,Down"/>
    <item name="Condition levers, cut off" vcommand="Affirmative,Cut-off,Checked"/>
    <item name="Propeller levers set to high RPM" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked,Set"/>
    <item name="Power levers set to idle" vcommand="Set,Checked,Affirmative"/>
    <item name="Left subpanel switches off?" vcommand="Affirmative,Set,Checked,Off"/>
    <item name="Battery switch, on?" vcommand="Affirmative,On,Checked"/>
    <item name="Annunciators Checked?" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked"/>
    <item name="Fuel selectors (left and right)" vcommand="Affirmative,Set,Both On"/>
    <item name="Engine and Fuel Pressure annunciators illuminated" vcommand="Set,Checked,Affirmative"/>
    <item name="Left and right fuel pump switches " vcommand="Affirmative,Set,Checked,On"/>
    <item name="Engine and Fuel Pressure annunciators, check off" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked,Yes"/>
    <item name="Fuel pressure, Check" vcommand="Affirmative,Checked,Green"/>
    <item name="Check Voltmeter" vcommand="Affirmative,      Checked"/>
  </checklist>
```

scrupulously maintained and the syntax of each line is strictly adhered to otherwise the application will throw up an error.

Above is an illustration of the “Before Starting” checklist section for a Beech Duke Turbine where :
<checklist name = “Before Starting”> opens the checklist section and the mandatory </checklist> terminates it.
The line syntax is constructed so that the <item name=“ ” represents either the name of the WAV file to be played, or in its absence the TTS voice output reads the quoted text as the checklist item being processed. The location of the folder containing the WAV files is configured in the General Options window.

To be frank, I don’t record any WAV files, simply because I have an appalling voice quality which I just hate listening to, and in any case I have an Ivona TTS voice installed which sounds just great, very realistic and humanlike and has the added advantage of pronunciation fine tuning whenever necessary.

Clearly vcommand=“ “ is the acceptable response/s to the checklist item spoken by you, the pilot. As you can see from the illustration, these can vary as much as is necessary which you can select from the fairly extensive list of Accepted Commands (refer to illustration on the previous page) that are inbuilt in the application.

So, there you have it, ***Sim Voice Checklists*** is a very nice little freeware application that does the job beautifully of allowing virtual pilots to process even the most extensive of checklists absolutely ’hands free’ and without the need to refer to a hard copy of the checklists cluttering the desktop……..all at no cost, and just a little effort.

Paul has a few videos on his YouTube account that show ***Sim Voice Checklists*** in action and he also has one on setting up the app after installation (there is no user manual at the time of writing), so why not go and check it out, it’ll cost you nothing, and that’s what this is all about.

You’ll find a download of this application on Paul’s Code Page and the videos on Paul’s YouTube Page.

By: Paul Bayley (UKV1513)

Am I losing it?

Sometimes (only sometimes, mind), I get to thinking that encroaching old age scrambles the grey cells when it comes to separating reality from virtual reality, especially in FS. I'm fairly certain that we've all taken the time during a flight to dash into the kitchen, make a cup of coffee and race back to the computer before ATC demands a response.

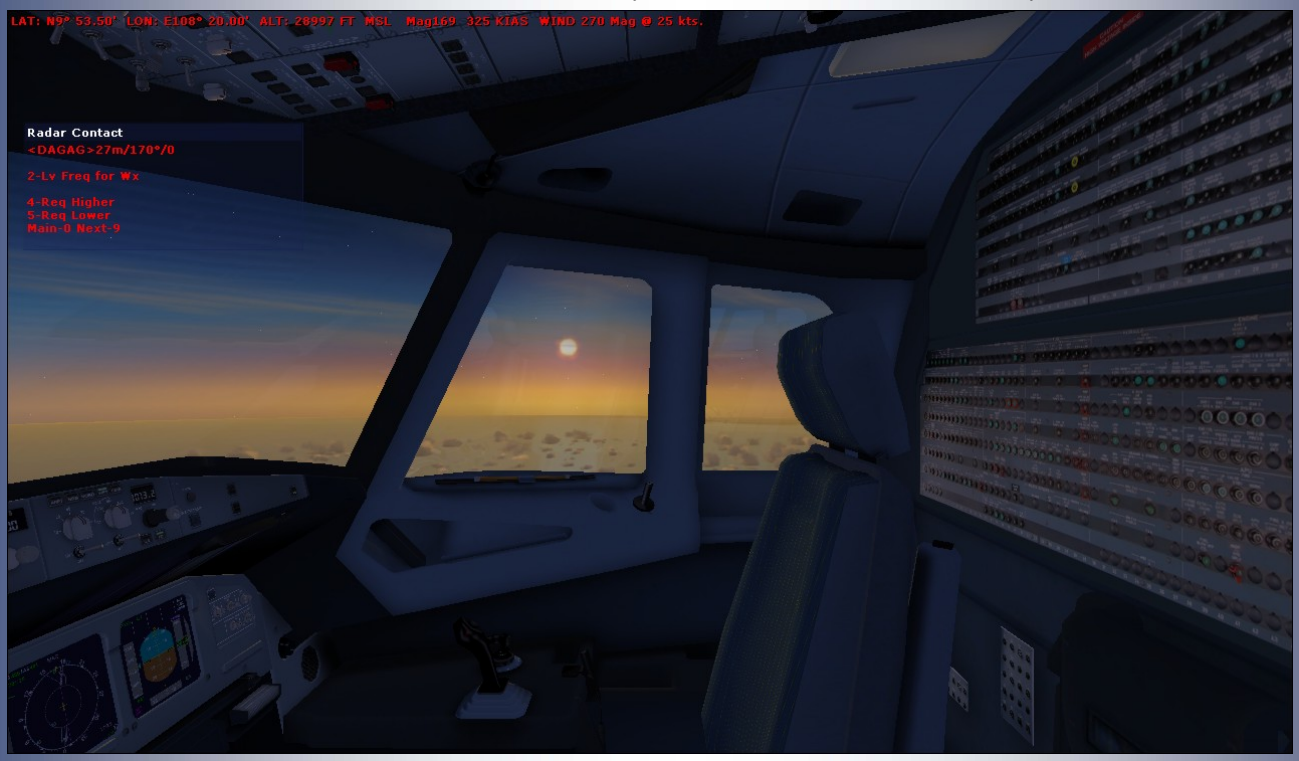
Well, several weeks ago a couple of "in-the-know" Fly UK pilots introduced me to a natty little program called **Radar Contact**, which I bought. Among its varied features is the option to choose a co-pilot (I chose a nice, clear-voiced, British female with whom I've since become very attached!!). She's now permanent on all my flights.

Another superb feature is that your chosen co-pilot can not only fly the plane, but also handle all comms, with the result that one can now happily take a little time away from the flight deck without having to respond to ATC. Brilliant ...no more spilt coffee or mad rush to get back!

This morning, I was on a lengthy flight to Bali, fancied a coffee, and handed all the controls to "Kath" - my co-pilot. Inevitably, while I was in the kitchen, ATC made contact, and I heard "Kath" respond. As I listened, without thinking I reached into the cupboard, withdrew **TWO** mugs, and almost called "Want a coffee?" before realising that "Kath" wasn't really there!

I have to ask; ***Am I losing it?***

The invisible Co-Pilot (Note the Radar Contact Menu)



By: Charles Griffiths (UKV1546)

In Soviet Russia, plane flies you.

Here's a small quiz. Name for me please, your three favourite Russian-built civilian aircraft.
No?
Me neither. I suppose it's a left-over from the Berlin Wall, plus the fact that most of the Russian-built planes rarely fly in Western Europe. Even Aeroflot only has two russian-built models in their fleet at present (the IL96-300 and SU100-95)
Rarer still are payware add-ons depicting any of these planes.
But they do exist. SibWings have made an absolutely wonderful AN-2 Anushka.

For those of you who haven't a clue as to what the AN-2 is or looks like, it's a rugged STOL bi-plane used for just about anything. Passengers, freight, parachuting, crop-dusting, you name it.
The closest thing to compare it to would probably be the DHC3 Otter.
The AN-2 prototype flew for the first time in 1947, so obviously it's got a few years on its back.
But to give you an idea of how wide-spread this plane actually is, production didn't stop until 1991, and in that time well over 18,000 of them had been produced.
No, that's not a typo, eighteen thousand. And there are several thousand of them still flying today.

Before the actual review, it should perhaps be noted that I absolutely *love* vintage airplanes.
Possibly bordering on a fetish. I've logged untold (virtual) hours in my beloved PBY Catalina, adore swanning about in my Tiger Moth, and couldn't be happier than when I'm carefully watching the gauges in my DC-2 , looking for signs of over-heating.
Maybe it's just because I'm getting older and find myself surrounded by increasingly younger people who wouldn't know how to use a hammer unless someone made an app for it, but there's something to be said for the age when you could actually tell airplanes apart.
Don't get me wrong, I'm not a Luddite. I love the comfort and speed provided by our increasingly complex jets, and I do love flying in them.
But all these polished darts that surround us simply don't have the *charm* of these loud, clunking piston-powered oldies.
So bear that in mind when reading on.

The SibWings model is the AN-2T 12-passenger wheeled version. It's only (as far as I know) available from their own web-shop, and it'll cost you a very reasonable €15,99. That's about half of a good Carenado plane. Can't complain there.
FSX only, and there is no trace of 2D panels.

Space-constraints won't really allow me to burden you with screen-shots, so a brief description will have to make do. Plenty of pics on their site anyway.
The exterior is absolutely stunning. Full of details, HD textures and bump-maps. Very, very good.
The only complaint I might have is that the liveries that come with it are.....Too nice.
The planes look factory-fresh, which they certainly shouldn't be.
Not to worry though, there's a paint-kit and a ton of user-made liveries that look like they should.
Weathered, well-used and in some cases with fuselage patches.

The interior is equally well done. Crisp, clear textures, and this time they've got the weathering right.
You'll be hard-pressed to find a single painted surface that doesn't have scuff-marks, or isn't worn down to the bare metal.
Plus, there are fun little details. For example, there's a small fan mounted on the pilot-side.
And yes, there's a switch for it on your breaker-panel. And if you look on the shelf behind the pilots seat, you'll find a small key. Not an ignition-key, but it does unlock something in the plane.
Won't tell you what though, you'll have to figure that one out yourselves.
And all of this comes with zero impact on your frame-rates.

When it comes to flying it, there are a few things that you'll have to get used to.
First of all, this is a Russian plane so most of the gauges and switches are labelled in Cyrillic.
They're explained in the manual though, and besides given the lack of complexity of this bird, you quickly get used to it.
What is a little harder to get used to is that the instruments are in metric. Speeds in km/h and altitude in meters. Good for flying in Russia, less so for flying just about anywhere else.

The engine start-up is something else, to put it mildly.
The Ctrl+E short-cut has been disabled, so you have to go through the manual sequence yourself.
Unfortunately the process isn't very well described in the manual, so I spend an hour or so experimenting and reading forums before I figured it out.
But it is so worth it. The starter is nothing like you're used to.
First it has to be primed, like all vintage planes. Then you can't just crank a starter-motor and let 'er rip.
The AN-2 starter spins a fly-wheel, and when that is up to speed, you pop the clutch which will then engage the main engine. Not unlike bump-starting a car, I suppose. Definitely low-tech.
Usually takes a few attempts before it catches, but I have to admit that the first time I got it right and witnessed the marvellous sounds of a 1,000hp engine spluttering into life while belching smoke, I was cackling like a maniac out of sheer glee.

Then there's the navigation equipment, or rather lack of same. I honestly didn't think there was a plane with less equipment than my PBY, but there you go.
There's one comm-radio, and a dual-channel ADF. And that's it.
Granted, there's a retro-fitted FSX default GPS as a pop-up, but that's for situational awareness only, it's not connected to anything. Certainly not connected to the AP, because there isn't one.

So how does it fly?
Bearing in mind that I've never actually flown an AN-2 (or any other plane for that matter) it *feels* right.
This isn't some sleek modern turbo-prop, effortlessly zipping through the air, it's an airborne dump-truck.
The biplane configuration gives you massive lift, and thus the STOL capability, but you're not going anywhere fast. It cruises at around 100km/h, and you really have to think ahead when turning because just banking it will take a while.
On the other hand, it is incredibly stable. Once you have it trimmed, it'll putter merrily along without further input from you. The only thing that it doesn't like is crosswinds.

Big and slow makes it very vulnerable to gusting, and if you're navigating without the GPS you really have to take wind-drift into account or you'll end up somewhere else.
So it's slow, there are no nav-aids and no AP. In case you haven't guessed by now, this is very much a plane meant for bush-flying.
And it excels at that. Granted, I haven't tried doing everything it can do (mainly because I'm not very good at bush-flying), but it can do some very interesting things.
Take-off in 170m, and land in 215m, obviously depending on the payload, and you can land it at 30mph.
There's no stall-speed mentioned in the manual, because it can't stall. In fact, it has the very best engine-out procedure that I have ever read:
“Keep the wings level and pull back on the stick” :o)
What happens is that around 40mph the slats automatically deploys, and at around 25mph it will simply descend at parachute-speeds until it hits the ground.
You *can* probably destroy this plane, but you'll have to work at it.

So to wrap this up, here's a few pro/cons:
Con:

- It's not quite finished. There are still a few bugs that they're working on, and they're still tweaking the flight-model. None of the bugs are game-breakers, but they are there.
- The manual isn't quite up to scratch. There's an additional Pilots Guide you can download, but I would've preferred if they'd included everything you need in the actual download package.
- You can't use it in FlyUK activities. There's no way it'll ever be added to the fleet, and it is far too heavy to be used in the Flying Club.

Pros:

- It's something completely different. It handles like nothing else you have ever flown.
- For the price-tag, you get a massive amount of content. Even given the lack of systems, the VC, modelling and sounds are right up there with the best payware companies.
- It's *fun*. It's a quirky little plane that simply oozes personality, and with the low speed and stable flight-model it is tailor-made for some VFR bush-flying.

Final verdict?
I like it. *Really* like it. But as I said, I have a thing for vintage planes.
Granted, it's very specialized and you can't use it on official FlyUK business.
But I don't care. Maybe half my sim-time is actually logged, the rest is doing odd flights in odd planes.
And I'm pretty sure that once I get to know it better, the AN-2 will be taking over for my PBY on my RTW tour.

By: Lars Hansen (UKV1757)

Stu's Review

London Stansted Airport is situated in Essex, about 30 miles north east of London. It is well known for its low cost carriers and cargo operators. With 3 passenger terminals, it holds its own as one of the premiere London airports.

At Fly UK we operate 4 x 747F's, 4 x MD11F's and 4 x 757F's in our Cargo fleet, the most popular flight being UKV8621-EGSS-BIKF-B744F as well as 3 x 737-700's and 2 x 757-200's in our Low Cost division.

Stansted is the main base for cargo operations for Fly UK operating from stands 1, 2, 3 and 4 at the main cargo centre, with our Low Cost division operating from stands 20, 21, 22 and 23 from Apron B.

I always enjoy flying in to or out of Stansted especially on VATSIM, as there is usually good ATC coverage either from TWR or from London Control. The airport layout is also very good, with an inner and outer taxiway for inbound flights to taxi on one and outbound to taxi on the other, avoiding any conflict, so make sure you pay attention to what the controllers have given you for taxi clearance!

As far as scenery goes there is really only one option, UK2000, they do a freeware and also a payware version of the airport, both very well produced and are definitely worth checking out, especially if you fly the Low Cost or Cargo routes as this will be an airport you will visit again and again.

Interesting fact… did you know that in the event of a high jacking, Stansted is the UK Governments designated airport for flights that request to land in the UK. This is because of the layout of the airport; the aircraft could be isolated away from the main passenger terminal or runways' allowing the airport to continue operating while negotiations are underway or even while a rescue mission is underway! The Airport staff receive special training on how to deal with these incidents.

By: Stuart McIntyre (UKV2183)

VOR Approach

Non-precision approaches are my personal favourite approach as it's much more interesting than setting up an ILS and letting the plane land itself. There is lots of chart reading and airmanship involved and this can sometimes intimidate newcomers, but the satisfaction of getting it right is definitely worth it. With this short explanation I hope you all have a go!

For the purposes of this tutorial I will be presuming that you will be flying to Glasgow from the south in the 737-800 (I am using the NGX for screenshots) That you can program and fly a holding pattern and that you are also fairly proficient in hand flying the aircraft as there is no auto land capability on a non-precision approach!

Mostly all flights into Glasgow from the south route on the LANAK1A arrival, this terminates at LANAK usually at FL070. So this is where I will be starting the tutorial before flying to the hold at GOW VOR then starting the VOR approach.

The chart for this approach is located here

Landing Briefing

Today we will be flying the VOR/DME approach for runway 05, after LANAK we will fly direct to the VOR descending to 3000ft and enter a holding pattern with inbound course 231 degrees and right hand turns with a timing of 1 min. After the hold we will proceed beacon outbound on heading 200, at 4.4 dme GOW we will start descending to 2400. At 10 dme GOW we will turn for a 043 offset inbound course, at 6.7 dme we will start descending to our MDA which is 1030 ft before disconnecting the autopilot and visually landing the plane.

Programming the FMC

Within the FMC you only have to setup 3 items **LEGS** page **HOLD** page and **FIX** page. Before arriving at LANAK preferably before top of descent go to the **LEGS** page all you need is LANAK at FL070 followed by GOW, on the **HOLD** page setup the hold with 231 inbound course with right hand turns and 1 minute legs. Finally the **FIX** page and set GOW as the fix with 200/10 as the rad/dis, /4.4 as the second and /6.7 as the third
You generally don't want to put any more info in there as I've found it can mess up the display unit and confuse the AP

At this point you should also set your NAV1 and NAV2 to 115.4(GOW VOR) and set the captains course to 200 (outbound) and the first officers course to 043 (inbound)

Flying the Approach

If you have setup everything correctly your Display unit should look like this (note I have VOR course lines turned on in the PMDG options)

It looks a little complex so I added a couple of points, the **yellow dot** is where you descend from 3000 to 2400, the **red line** is your turn to the inbound course and the **blue dot** is where you start descending to the MDA(1030ft)

Once you're established in the hold, stable at 3000ft and 180 knots you can continue with the procedure. Double check at this point the captain's course is set to 200 for the outbound leg and the NAV1 and NAV2 are set to 115.4 for the VOR.

Approaching GOW VOR whilst still using LNAV in the hold change the captains display unit to VOR, and set heading 200 but don't engage heading select until your overhead the VOR. You can still view the range rings on the first officers DU.
Overhead the VOR click heading select followed by VOR/LOC on the MCP arming the VOR mode, you will most probably need to change the heading up to 30 degrees either side of 200 once starting the turn to get yourself on track, especially if you're a little early or late starting the turn.

When the aircraft has a good track you will pick up the VOR and you are flying beacon outbound. Set the next altitude constraint of 2400 on the MCP. Once you have carried out the above steps your instruments should look a little like this, note that the VOR course needle isn't quite correct, that's because you are directly overhead the VOR and it will fluctuate until you start going outbound.

Once the aircraft picks up the VOR course this is what you should be seeing, VOR/LOC and the VOR needle in the centre, this is you tracking the 200 degree radial outbound from the beacon. At 4.4 dme start the descent to 2400ft using Vertical speed and using the green banana on the first officers display unit to gauge where you will reach 2400.

At 10 DME start the turn by using heading select, but be careful not to turn too far and cut the inbound course too much, during the turn change the captains course selector to 043 and re-arm the VOR/LOC, start slowing the aircraft to 160 knots once inbound at 6.7 DME start the descent to the MDA of 1030 FT drop the gear and slow to your VREF, using the rate of descent chart on the VOR chart you can see at 140 knots you need to descend at about 900 FPM (870) so dial this into the v/s window on the MCP upon reaching 6.7 DME.

On the chart it says we need to be at our MDA 1030ft at 3 DME using the green banana on the first officers display unit you can see roughly it's about right

At 3 DME you should be at about 1000ft and you must now switch off the autopilot, auto throttle and flight director and hand fly the rest of the approach. This is your decision height or MDA (minimum descent altitude) you need to be visual with the runway, or go around start making a slight left turn and visually get lined up with the runway, using the PAPI lights to guide you, from here it's up to you captain!

Debrief

I hope you can see now how easy it is to fly the VOR approach, done correctly it's a piece of cake and really rewarding when those wheels touch the ground. I've not gone into over detail with this tutorial but highlighted the main steps you would need to take to get the aircraft on the ground. The key is being able to read the charts correctly, taking the time to extract the important information.

VOR frequency
Altitude (leaving the VOR and turning final)
Outbound course
DME to start your turn
Inbound course
Minimum descent altitude.

Other information that is very handy is the rate of descent table which gives you in ft/min how fast you have to descend.

Through the next few issues I plan to do NDB approaches, RNAV-RNP approaches as well as a couple other challenging approaches so stay tuned!

By: Stuart McIntyre (UKV2183)

Announcements

Fly UK Online Events:

At this point in 2013 **97** PIREP's, total for 2014 is **176** PIREP's, so we are 90% up on last year at this point.

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Deadline date for next edition (14): Sunday, 27th April 2014.