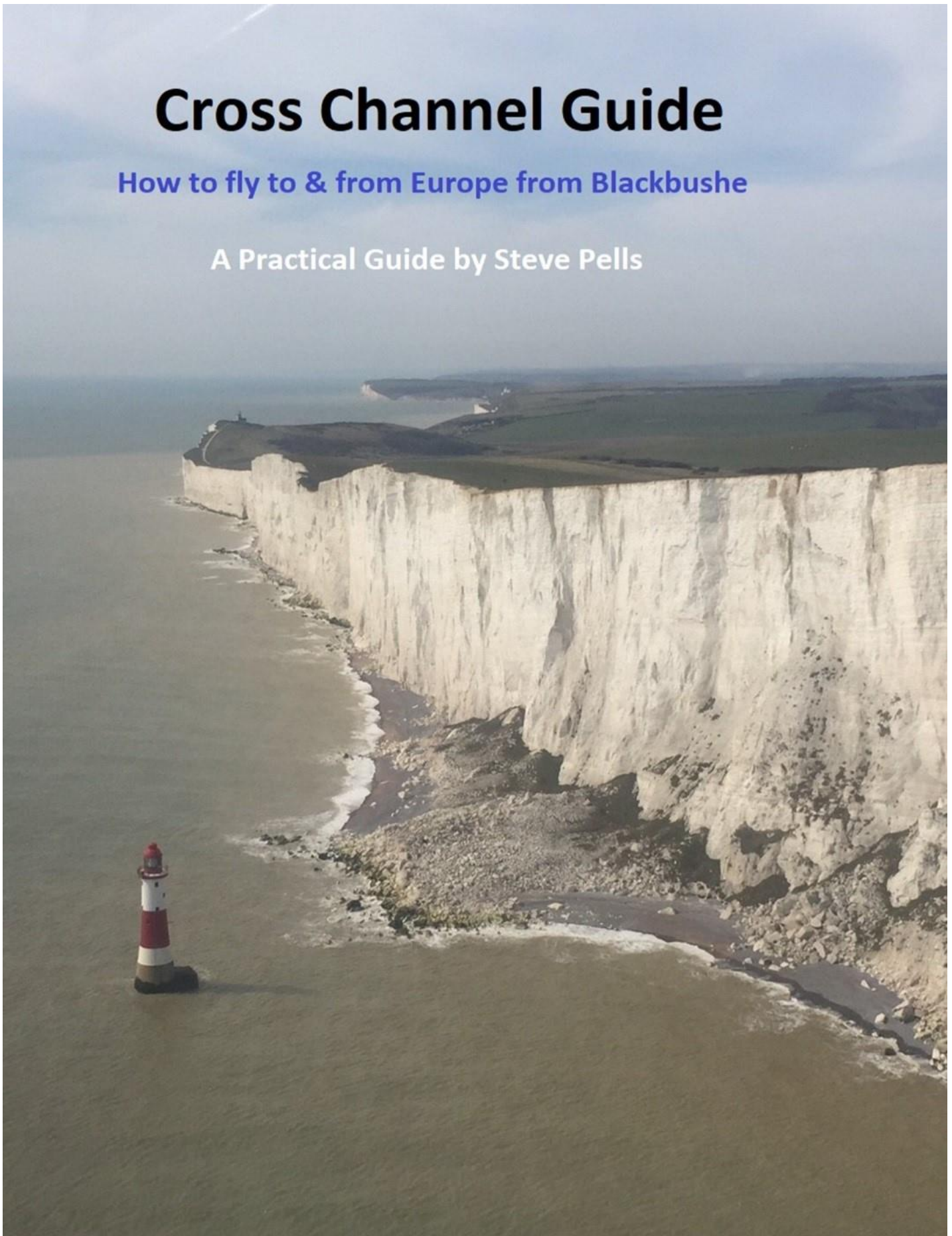


Cross Channel Guide

How to fly to & from Europe from Blackbushe

A Practical Guide by Steve Pells



Introduction:

Flying from Blackbushe over the Channel to Europe and the Channel Islands can seem daunting to many people, but it is much easier than you would expect. Generally, airspace in continental Europe is much easier than in the UK. There are a few necessary pieces of paperwork that need to be completed, and a few simple guidelines.

Where can I fly?

When crossing into Europe, the first point of landing generally needs to be made at a customs and immigration airport. You may then depart to another airport within that country without restriction. This generally means the larger airports such as:

Channel Islands: Alderney (EGJA), Guernsey (EGJB) & Jersey (EGJJ)

France: Le Touquet (LFAT), Deauville (LFRG), Caen (LFRK), Cherbourg (LFRC), Dinard (LFRD), Brest (LFRB), and many more further south.

Belgium: Oostende (EBOS), Antwerp (EBAW), Liege (EBLG)

Netherlands: Rotterdam (EHRD), Hilversum (EHHV)

Luxembourg: Luxembourg (ELLX)

Republic of Ireland: Dublin (EIDW), Waterford (EIWF), Cork (EICK), Shannon (EINN)

Germany: Frankfurt Hahn (EDFH), Baden-Baden (EDSB), Bonn (EDKB) etc

Planning:

Start the planning a day or 2 before if you can, although to many destinations, it is quite possible to wake up in the morning and decide where to go and just depart.

When planning, you need to consider the following:

PPR (Prior Permission and airport availability)

Route

Flight Plan

GAR (General Aviation Report to UK Border Force). New procedures from Apr 2024. See later.

Special Equipment

Let's look at each of these in turn:

1: Do I Need Permission?

In the UK, more or less every time you take off or land, a telephone call, or internet request is needed beforehand. This is often NOT the case once you leave the UK. Most airfields in France do not require advance notice. For example, you can arrive at Deauville, Cherbourg and many more without any prior permission. I always like to contact the airfield involved, though, as these rules sometimes change. Le Touquet requires passport details to be sent by e-mail prior to arrival. Caen requires 24 hrs PPR. Dinard sometimes requires PPR. Many French airfields offer optional handling. This is not necessary unless you want access to briefing lounges etc. German airfields do not generally require PPR. Dublin will require handling as well as PPR. The Channel Islands do not usually require PPR, but at busy times they may, so always check in advance.

The best way is to check the AIP for the relevant handling phone number or e-mail address and get in touch.

Do not forget to book out with Blackbushe either by phone or text or online. Remember to tell them when you are coming back, or message them on the day of return also.

2: ROUTE

Route:

Obviously, depending on where your destination is, the route will differ. However, there are a few basic things to consider. This section will assume you will be using Sky Demon (why wouldn't you!!?).

General Considerations:

Since you will be filing a flight plan for your flights, it is worth giving some consideration to how you will plan the route.

Planning via towns and other points of interest will result in a flight plan being sent which contains multiple lat/long coordinates, which will be unfamiliar to ATC. Better to plan via recognizable points such as VORs, DMEs, NDBs, airways reporting points (remember you need to turn these on in Sky Demon). Such a routing will be much easier for ATC to

understand, and makes loading into a Garmin unit on the aircraft much easier too. Remember, just because you have filed a VFR flight plan along a certain route, does not mean you are obliged to follow it exactly. It is just a guide of intended route (so the rescue services know where to look if you don't arrive!!). So, even though you have filed via VORs and waypoints, you can still fly a slightly different route if you wish.

When crossing FIR boundaries, it helps to do so at a recognized airways reporting point, as this will give controllers an idea of what time you expect to enter their airspace. The FIR boundary between the London FIR and the French and Belgian FIRs are littered with suitable waypoints, so try to route via one of them. So, for example, when routing to the Channel Islands, route via ORIST or ORTAC, to Cherbourg via GARMI, to Le Touquet via TUKVI or SOVAT and to Oostende via MOTOX or RINTI.

You will probably want as direct a route as possible (to save time and money) and as high a route as possible (to mitigate against engine failure in a single). The ideal route is often a compromise.

Departure:

After take-off from Blackbushe, things can get a little busy, whether you are VFR or IFR, mostly because you have to transit busy Farnborough airspace. You will have to avoid the Odiham ATZ. Getting in touch with Farnborough radar as soon as possible after departure, may result in a timely permission for Farnborough ATZ transit and Odiham MATZ penetration en-route to your first turning point to the south, say GWC or MID VORs or HAZEL.



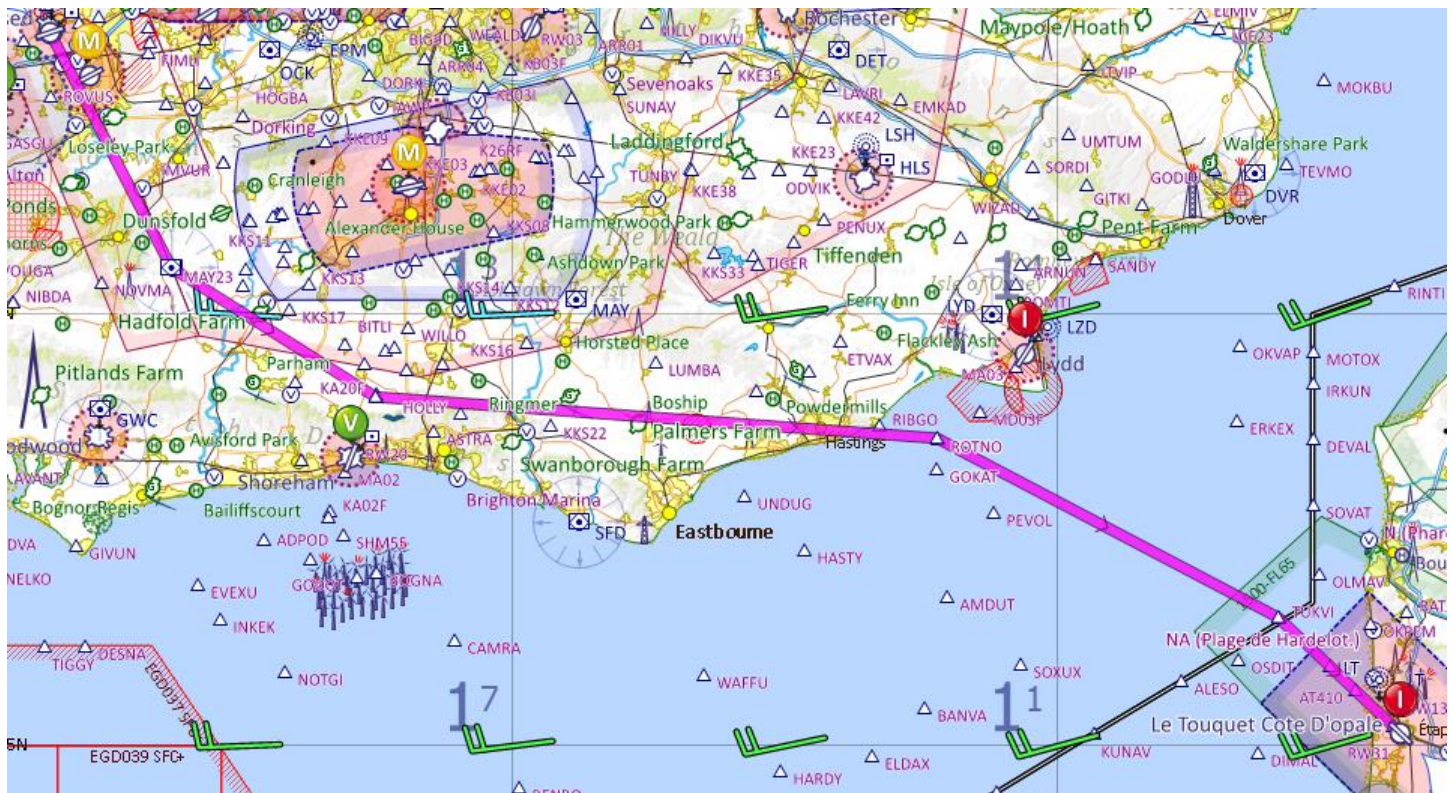
En-Route:

Generally, you will want to climb up as airspace permits to give you the best gliding range for the crossing. Also, you will probably want to minimize your distance from land as much as you can. Some of the routes, especially to the south of the Isle of Wight have Danger areas that can be active at certain times. EGD036 is the main one that is right on the way to Cherbourg. London Information on 14.6 or 124.75 will be able to tell you if it is active and try to arrange permission to cross. Alternatively, you can call Plymouth Radar on 01752 557550.

En-route communications should proceed as normal, but as you approach the coast on a VFR flight plan, make sure you are in contact with London Information. They will give you a squawk of 1177, but they do not have radar and they are not able to provide much in terms of navigation. However, they are someone to talk to in case of difficulties, they can give you weather reports for your destination, and they will give you the next frequency to contact. They will probably ask you where you are 'coasting out', or 'coasting in' on your return flight. This is a town or beacon or landmark where you will cross the coast. They may ask for an ETA for this position, and/or ask you to report coasting in/out. They may also ask you to report 'mid-channel'.

Suggested Routes:

- EGLK-LFAT:** EGLK – MID – SFD – TUKVI – LFAT or EGLK – MID – HOLLY - ROTNO – TUKVI – LFAT or EGLK - OCK – LAVRI – LYD – TUKVI - LFAT
- EGLK-LFRG:** EGLK – GWC – DRAKE – SITET - ETRAT – DVL - LFRG
- EGLK-LFRK:** EGLK – GWC – ETRAT – LFRK
- EGLK-LFRC:** EGLK – GWC – RUDMO – KATHY - GARMY – MP – LFRC
- EGLK-LFRD:** EGLK – GWC – ORTAC – JSY – LFRD
- EGLK-EGJA:** EGLK – GWC – ORTAC – EGJA
- EGLK-EGJB:** EGLK – GWC – ORTAC – EGJB
- EGLK-EGJJ:** EGLK – GWC – ORTAC – JSY – EGJJ
- EGLK-EBOS:** EGLK – OCK – LAVRI – DVR – KONAN – EBOS



Suggested route to Le Touquet

3: Flight Plan

General:

A flight plan will need to be filed as you are crossing an international FIR boundary. The flight plan can be VFR or IFR depending on the weather conditions. To fly IFR in Europe, you will need a full IR, an IMC rating or IR(R) is not sufficient. VFR flight plans can be filed quickly and easily via Sky Demon or other similar programs. IFR flight plans can be filed via AFPEX or more user-friendly apps.

CAA Guide to Flight Plans (a bit heavy): <https://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/CAP%20694.pdf>

CAA Safety Sense Leaflet (much easier!): <https://publicapps.caa.co.uk/docs/33/20130121SSL20.pdf>

Flight Plan Addressing:

Flight plans are automatically addressed to the departure, arrival and any nominated alternate airports. Sometimes, it is a good idea to address the plan to additional addresses such as airports who will provide an en-route radar service. For example:

Farnborough Tower EGLFZTX, Guernsey App EGJBZPX, Jersey App EGJJZTX, Nantes FIR LFRSZPX, Lille Approach LFQQZTX. All London FIR VFR airfields EGZVFRT.

Details on filing flight plans can be found in other documentation (please ask).

A typical paper flight plan is shown below:

FLIGHT PLAN									
PRIORITY <<≡ FF →		ADDRESSEE(S) EGLKZTX EGLFZTX EGZVFRT LFATZTX LFFFZFX LFBZPX LFQQZTX LFACZTX							
FILING TIME [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] →		ORIGINATOR [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] [] <<≡							
SPECIFIC IDENTIFICATION OF ADDRESSEE(S) AND/OR ORIGINATOR									
3 MESSAGE TYPE <<≡ (FPL		7 AIRCRAFT IDENTIFICATION - G.C.B.Z.R.			8 FLIGHT RULES - V		TYPE OF FLIGHT G <<≡		
9 NUMBER - []		TYPE OF AIRCRAFT P.28R		WAKE TURBULENCE CAT 1 L		10 EQUIPMENT - SDFG/C <<≡			
13 DEPARTURE AERODROME - E.G.L.K				TIME 09.00 <<≡					
15 CRUISING SPEED - N0130		LEVEL V		ROUTE DCT MID DCT HOLLY DCT ROTNO DCT TUKVI DCT					
<<≡									
16 DESTINATION AERODROME - L.F.A.T		TOTAL EET HR. MIN 0105		ALTN AERODROME → L.F.A.C		2ND ALTN AERODROME → E.G.L.K <<≡			
18 OTHER INFORMATION DOF/180514 EET/TUKVI 0057 NAV/GARMIN 530									
) <<≡									
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION (NOT TO BE TRANSMITTED IN FPL MESSAGES)									
19 ENDURANCE HR MIN - E / 0400				PERSONS ON BOARD → P / 003			EMERGENCY RADIO UHF VHF ELT → R / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> E		
SURVIVAL EQUIPMENT POLAR DESERT MARITIME JUNGLE JACKETS LIGHT FLUORES UHF VHF → S <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> → J <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>									
DINGHIES NUMBER CAPACITY COVER COLOUR → D / 01 → 004 → <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> → YELLOW <<≡									
AIRCRAFT COLOUR AND MARKINGS A / WHITE AND GREY									
REMARKS → N / PIC TEL +44 1234 56789 <<≡									
PILOT IN COMMAND C / AVE EAYTOR) <<≡									
FILED BY				SPACE RESERVED FOR ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS Please provide a telephone number so our operators can contact you if needed					

4: General Aviation Report (GAR)

The UK Border force will need to be advised of your intended flight(s). This is done by using a GAR report. The easiest way is to set up an account with OnlineGAR at <https://www.onlinegar.com/>. Here you can keep details of aircraft you regularly fly and of passengers you often fly with. Simply select the aircraft and passengers for that flight and send.

For flights to Europe (excluding Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Northern Ireland) no GAR is required for the outbound flight. A GAR is required for the return flight, and must be filed at least 4 hours before intended landing back at Blackbushe. On arrival at Blackbushe, Border Force officers may meet the aircraft to inspect passports and baggage, however this is unusual. It is best to put the earliest time you will be departing the European airfield, as if Border Force decide to meet you and you have arrived early and gone home, they will not be best pleased. However, if you are late, they are required to wait for you. They can track your inbound progress via ATC.

For flights to the Channel Islands, Isle of Man and Northern Ireland a GAR is required in both directions, at least 12 hours before landing. GAROnline offers to print a GenDec (General Declaration) for some flights. For the Channel Islands it is a good idea to print out 2 copies and take them with you. One for arrival, one for departure. It makes getting through security easier, for one thing.

STOP PRESS:

As from April 2024, a new system will be in operation:

The General Aviation (Flight Information, Persons on Board and Civil Penalties) Regulations 2024 ('the 2024 regulations')

What is being introduced and when?

It is anticipated that on Saturday 6th April 2024, the 2024 regulations will enter into force. A draft version of the regulations is available online: The General Aviation (Persons on Board, Flight Information and Civil Penalties) Regulations 2024.

Which flights do the 2024 regulations apply to?

The 2024 regulations apply to all General Aviation aircraft making international flights who are expecting to arrive in and depart from the UK (including within the Common Travel Area).

What do the regulations mean for pilots, owners and operators?

International GA flights that are arriving in or departing from the UK will be required to be submit information online about the flight and persons on board (both passengers and crew), no earlier than 48 hours and no later than 2 hours prior to the expected time of departure. General Aviation Reports emailed directly to Border Force will not be compliant and will not be accepted.

What are the acceptable online submission methods?

The information is to be provided online using one of the following methods:

1. The Government's free-to-use submit a GAR 'sGAR' webservice;
2. Via an approved existing third-party application¹; or
3. If you are a business operator, established direct connections to Home Office systems can also be used.

¹ Typically, these are private member subscriptions to applications such as Airbox, Cloud Aviation, Online GAR, Sky Demon and Rocket Route. However, a full published list of acceptable third-party applications will be published on gov.uk.

Civil Penalties

Border Force will be operating a civil penalty regime that will underpin the 2024 regulations. Failing to comply with the 2024 regulations *may* result in a civil penalty of up to £10,000 per breach. Complete guidance on the civil penalty regime will be available on gov.uk in due course.

5: Special Equipment

For the water crossing it is a very good idea to carry the necessary flotation devices that can be borrowed free of charge from Blackbushe Aviation if you are an associate member. There should be lifejackets for every person on board. These should either be worn for the whole flight, or be readily to hand. A dinghy is also a good idea, but they are heavy and will need to be considered in your mass and balance calculation. How you manage to access, open, extricate, inflate and board the dinghy is a matter for further discussion!!




6: HMRC Fuel Drawback

As you are exporting fuel and oil from the UK, on which UK duty has been paid, when you fly away from the UK (including the Channel Islands), you can claim this duty back. This is known as Fuel Drawback. HMRC has a [website](#) to make life easier, and the form can be submitted online or by post. You have up to 2 years from the date of the flight to claim your refund which will be paid direct to a nominated bank account. In practice, the amount of oil in question is minimal, so I just claim for the fuel. The procedure is detailed below:

- 1: First click on the [website](#) or if you intend to claim online, click [here](#). Note, you will need a Government Gateway ID or you will need to set one up. When you sign in, sometimes a verification code is sent to your phone as a security measure.
- 2: Once successfully signed in, the data gathering begins. Below are example screenshots. (Remember to use your own name and data!! For 'Position in Business', I suggest 'pilot'.

 HM Revenue & Customs [GB] <https://www.tax.service.gov.uk/forms/form/drawback-of-duty-oils-used-as-fuel-on-foreign-going-aircr>

BETA This is a new service – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

 HM Revenue & Customs

Stephen Dominic Pells, you last signed in 8:29am, Tuesday 12 June 2018

[Sign out](#)

[Business tax account home](#)

Drawback of duty oils used as fuel on foreign going aircraft

About you

First name

Pontius

Last name

Pilot

Position in the business

For example, director, proprietor

Sitting Mostly

Save and continue

Save and come back later

Exporter details

Name of exporter (shipper)

Pontius Pilot

Is the exporter's address in the UK?

Yes No

Postcode

VC10 1AA

Property name or number (optional)

Include your flat number if you have one

24

Find address

[Enter the address manually](#)

Telephone number

If this is a UK landline or an overseas number, you must include the area or dialling code

01234 567890

Save and continue

Payee details

Is this the payee's first claim?

Yes No

Has the payee changed their address since their last claim?

Yes No

Do you know the payee's Unique Reference Number?

Yes No

Payee's Unique Reference Number

0123456789

Is the payee different from the exporter?

Yes No

Would the payee like to be paid into a bank account?

Yes No

Is this a UK bank account?

Yes No

Bank or building society details

Bank or building society name

BOAC Bank of Air Craft

Account holder's name

Capt Pontius Pilot

Sort code

The sort code is 6 numbers, like 123456. Don't include spaces.

146146

Account number of the bank or building society

The account number is 8 numbers, like 12345678.

74740000

Save and continue

Flight details

Flight 1

Date of landing in the UK from previous foreign flight

For example 20/03/1976

4/9/2018

UK airport of departure

EGLK

Foreign airport of destination

LFAT

Date of flight

For example 20/03/1976

5/9/2018

Type of aircraft

M20K

Registered letters or numbers

G-OSUS

Capacity of tank(s)

286 litres

Normal consumption per flying hour

45 litres

Category of fuel used by the aircraft

- Aviation spirit (for example, Avgas)
- Unleaded
- Aviation turbine fuel used for private pleasure flying
- Other

Number of invoice or delivery note

101805004

Litres loaded

250 litres

[Add fuel details](#)

Total quantity of fuel loaded: 250.00 litres

Fuel in tank before departure from the UK

286 litres

Quantity on which drawback is claimed

You may load fuel on to an aircraft at any place in the UK for use on a flight to a place outside the UK. Fuel used on an inland flight between the place of loading and the airfield of departure is not eligible for drawback. Fuel used in this way is to be deducted from your final claim. You may not claim drawback on the fuels consumed on any flight where the aircraft does not land abroad. Additionally, you may only claim the lower of the tank capacity of the aircraft, or the amount of fuel for which you have evidence of loading since your last arrival from outside the UK.

250 litres

Rate of duty on drawback

£ 0.377

Amount of drawback claim: £ 94.25

[Add flight](#)

Total amount for repayment: £ 94.25

Details of fuel loaded before departure for foreign destination 1

Place loaded

Blackbushe Airport

Date loaded

For example 20/03/1976

5/9/2018

Name of supplier

Blackbushe Airport

Suppliers UK address

Postcode

GU17 9LQ

Property name or number (optional)

Include your flat number if you have one

[Find address](#)

- Blackbushe Airport Blackwater, Camberley, GU17 9LQ
- Blackbushe Airport Blackwater, Camberley, GU17 9LQ
- Heliview, Blackbushe Airport, London Road, Blackwater, Camberley, GU17 9LQ
- Heliview, Terminal Buildings, London Road, Blackwater, Camberley, GU17 9LQ
- Manhattan Air Ltd, Terminal Building, London Road, Blackwater, Camberley, GU17 9LQ
- Terminal Building, Blackbushe Airpor, London Road, Blackwater, Camberley, GU17 9LQ
- Terminal Buildings, Blackbushe Airport Blackwater, Camberley, GU17 9LQ

[Edit this address](#)

[Enter the address manually](#)

If you want to send any invoices or other documents to support your claim, make a note of the reference number given when you submit this form. Send any documents with a covering letter quoting this reference number to:

HM Revenue and Customs
Mineral Oil Reliefs Centre
Local Compliance
BP4002
Benton Park View
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE
NE98 1ZZ

Save and continue

Drawback of duty oils used as fuel on foreign going aircraft

Declaration

By submitting this claim, you confirm that all the information you've provided and in any accompanying document is correct and complete.

- ! The conditions under which drawback is payable have been met and no other claim for this drawback has been or will be made under any other scheme.
- The proper excise duties have been paid on the quantities shown.
- If called upon by HM Revenue & Customs, you undertake to prove that the amount claimed is not more than that due, and if they are not satisfied with such proof, you will repay the excess.

If you provide your email address, we'll send you an email to confirm your application has been sent.

Email address (optional)

pontius.pilot@romanempire.com

Confirm email address (optional)

pontius.pilot@romanempire.com

Confirm and send

✓ Submitted

Your reference number is

1P7-IC60-IKC

You've been sent a confirmation email that gives you your reference number. If you don't receive this email, check your spam or junk folder.

You can [save a copy of your submission \(opens in a new window\)](#)

Next steps

You'll normally receive a response within 35 days.

You can track the progress of this form (after 24 hours) from your tax account.

Track your form

Then, it's just a matter of waiting for payment, usually 4-6 weeks.