

Hungary

Phone: (+361) 293-4471
AFS: LHBPYNYN
Email: pubsdo@hungarocontrol.hu
URL: www.hungarocontrol.hu

HungaroControl Pte. Ltd. Co.
Hungarian Air Navigation Services
Aeronautical Information Service
H-1675 Budapest, PO Box 80

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FF-ICE R1 Implementation

1. Introduction

FF-ICE (Flight & Flow Information for a Collaborative Environment) is a concept from ICAO that is guided by the requirement to eliminate or reduce the limitations of the current ICAO flight plan format (FPL 2012) and to accommodate the future environment detailed in the Global ATM Operational Concept (Doc 9854).

FF-ICE refers to flight and flow information necessary for the notification, management, and coordination of flights between members of the ATM community within a collaborative environment.

FF-ICE/R1 (Release 1) primarily refers to pre-departure data and procedures. This is the first step towards full FF-ICE deployment and initiates the transition to the new types of information exchanges required by TBO (Trajectory Based Operations) and enabled by SWIM (System Wide Information Management).

The technical and operational requirements in this circular derive from European Commission implementing regulation (EU) 2021/116 (Common Project One or CP1) and the SESAR Deployment Programme 2022 (SDP2022).

FF-ICE flight plan data must be used to enhance the quality of the planned trajectory information in all systems that currently use FPL 2012.

FF-ICE/R1 will therefore be introduced as a requirement for stakeholders (ANSPs, airspace users, Network Manager) operating in the FIRs/UIRs of EU Member States plus Switzerland and Norway and the oceanic transition areas of Shanwick FIR, where flight planning is required for IFR flights.

The intention of this circular is to:

- a. notify airspace users of the FF-ICE requirements that will apply to them.
- b. provide airspace users with high level information on the means to comply with the FF-ICE requirements that apply to them.
- c. explain where and how to find additional information and support.

2. FF-ICE benefits

FF-ICE/R1 will help to overcome many limitations of FPL 2012, allowing ANSPs to optimise their resources, airspace users to fly closer to their preferred trajectories and is an enabler for future TBO.

Implementation of the (mandatory for airspace users) FF-ICE Filing Service will enable the airspace users to share more detailed trajectory information with the EUROCONTROL Network Manager (NM) and ANSPs. Airspace users will therefore, based on known constraints, be offered opportunities to optimise flight operations earlier and more accurately.

Implementation of the (optional for airspace users) FF-ICE Trial Service will allow an airspace user to test out alternative trajectories without committing to them; with this, airspace users will be able to assess the feasibility of alternative trajectories before submitting a change to their filed flight plans.

3. Requirements & recommendations for airspace users

FF-ICE flight plan data must be exchanged to enhance the quality of the planned trajectory information, thus enhancing flight planning and complexity assessments.

Airspace users shall consume the Filing Service provided by NM in support of information exchange of FF-ICE.

Airspace users are not mandated to consume the Trial Service but are recommended to upgrade their systems to be able to use it.

4. FF-ICE compliance requirements for airspace users

For airspace users, consumption of the Filing Service (mandatory for airspace users) using NM B2B services means:

- a. Use of the NM B2B Filing Service to file/update/cancel FF-ICE flight plans (also referred to as eFPLs) and to receive an immediate submission response and filing status.
- b. Use of the NM B2B Data Publication Service or the NM B2B Flight Data Request Service to ensure that submission response and filing status updates can be received.

For airspace users, consumption of the Trial Service (optional but recommended for airspace users) means use of the NM B2B Trial Service. This service is similar to the request/reply interface of the NM B2B Filing Service, with the exception that Trial Service data will not be retained by the NM system. Use of the NM B2B Trial Service by airspace users is therefore expected to be a straightforward and low-cost development.

5. Area of applicability

The FIRs/UIRs of EU Member States plus Switzerland and Norway and the oceanic transition areas of Shanwick FIR, where flight planning is required for IFR flights.

Upper airspace:

Amsterdam FIR (EHAA), Barcelona UIR (LECB), Bratislava FIR (LZBB), Brindisi UIR (LIBB), Brussels UIR (EBUR), Bucuresti FIR (LRBB), Budapest FIR (LHCC), Canarias UIR (GCCC), FIR Praha (LKAA), France UIR (LFFF), Hannover UIR (EDVV), Hellas UIR (LGEG), Helsinki FIR (EFIN), Koebenhavn FIR (EKDK), Lisboa FIR (LPPC), Ljubljana FIR (LJLA), Madrid UIR (LECM), Malta UIR (LMMM), Milano UIR (LIMM), Nicosia FIR (LCCC), Polaris FIR (ENOR), Rhein UIR (EDUU), Riga FIR (EVRR), Roma UIR (LIRR), Shannon UIR (EISN), Sofia FIR (LBSR), Sweden FIR (ESAA), Switzerland UIR (LSAS), Tallinn FIR (EETT), Vilnius UIR (EYVL), Warszawa FIR (EPWW), Wien FIR (LOVV), Zagreb FIR/UIR (LDZO)

Lower airspace:

Amsterdam FIR (EHAA), Athinai FIR (LGEG), Barcelona FIR (LECB), Bordeaux (LFBB), Bratislava FIR (LZBB), Brest (LFRR), Bremen FIR (EDWW), Brindisi FIR (LIBB), Brussels FIR (EBBU), Bucuresti FIR (LRBB), Budapest FIR (LHCC), Canarias FIR (GCCC), FIR Praha (LKAA), Helsinki FIR (EFIN), Koebenhavn FIR (EKDK), Langen FIR (EDGG), Lisboa FIR (LPPC), Ljubljana FIR (LJLA), Madrid FIR (LECM), Malta FIR (LMMM), Marseille (LFMM), Milano FIR (LIMM), Muenchen FIR (EDMM), Nicosia FIR (LCCC), Paris FIR (LFFF), Polaris FIR (ENOR), Reims (LFEE), Riga FIR (EVRR), Roma FIR (LIRR), Shannon FIR (EISN), Sofia FIR (LBSR), Sweden FIR (ESAA), Switzerland FIR (LSAS), Tallinn FIR (EETT), Vilnius FIR (EYVL), Warszawa FIR (EPWW), Wien FIR (LOVV), Zagreb FIR/UIR (LDZO).

Shanwick FIR: NOTA (Northern Atlantic Transition Area), SOTA (Shannon Oceanic Transition Area) and BOTA (Brest Oceanic Transition Area).

For flights operated in other FIRs/UIRs within the IFPZ (Integrated Initial Flight Plan Processing System Zone) in addition to those listed above, the EUROCONTROL Network Manager will continue to support FPL 2012 and will provide an eFPL to FPL 2012 translation service for the FIRs/UIRs that are not listed above, where FF-ICE/R1 is not mandated to be implemented.

6. Applicable airspace users

The requirements for airspace users set out in paragraph 4 apply to all GAT (General Air Traffic) operating under IFR (Instrument Flight Rules) in the area of applicability, including non-EU based airspace users.

This includes military GAT but does not include OAT (Operational Air Traffic).

7. Filing of FF-ICE flight plans through ATS reporting offices

Information will be available from EUROCONTROL - LLSIP HUNGARY document.

8. Date of applicability

The requirements set out in this circular shall be applicable from 31 December 2025.

9. Exemptions

The following are exempt from the requirements of this circular:

- a. VFR flights
- b. OAT flights

10. Reference documentation

- European SWIM Registry
- EUROCONTROL Network Manager IFPS Users Manual
- NM B2B Reference Manual
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/116 (Common Project One)

11. Additional Information

For additional information on FF-ICE, please contact the EUROCONTROL FF-ICE Support by email: ffice@eurocontrol.int

Further information on the policy, planning and implementation of FF-ICE R1 in Hungary are available from EUROCONTROL - LLSIP HUNGARY document.

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