

Aircraft security search now a requirement departing France

David Mumford
20 July, 2018



Update July 20th: Looks like this is not only happening in France, but some other EU countries too: we've had reports of the same procedure being required at some airports in Italy, Greece, and the Netherlands. If you have any further knowledge or recent experience to share, please let us know!

According to various reports we've had from Business Aviation aircrew and handlers, as of July 16, all aircraft departing specific French airports are now required to have completed a **security search** before departure, and to complete a form to be left with the handler. This applies to all aircraft **unless** the previous departure point was one of the following:

- 28 countries of the European Union + Norway / Iceland / Switzerland / Lichtenstein
- USA
- Canada
- Isle of Man
- Montenegro
- Faeroe Islands
- Guernsey and Jersey

This new rule applies to **all aircraft**, no matter the country of registration or status (private, commercial or charter).

The security search is basically to check that no “**prohibited articles**” are on board (the usual things – guns, explosives, etc.). It’s common practice amongst airlines, but seems until now not to have been enforced as a rule for business aviation or private operations.

Once completed, this form must then be given to the ground handler, who will store it, in case the French authorities want to see it at some point.

It seems this new procedure is governed by an EU directive that was published in 2015, namely: **the European decision (UE) C (2015) 8005 (Appendix 3-A) and the regulation (UE n°2015/1998 (Appendix 3-B32)**. Who would have thought that a new rule with such a tantalising name as this could go unnoticed until now ?

So it seems that all EU countries should be implementing this new procedure, but so far only certain French airports have done so – the ones we know about so far are:

LFMN/Nice

LFMD/Cannes

LFPB/Paris-le-Bourget

(Quite possibly the reason that it’s only French airports which have implemented the new procedure is that it was something that was cited in a French national audit conducted in Nov 2017!)

Can the handler provide the crew with a “security search” form?

Answer – Probably not. As the security search is done by the crew, it’s down to the operator to provide the form – the only responsibility of the handler is to receive it signed from the Captain and store it, that’s it.

What about flights that have arrived from the United Kingdom ?

Answer – You won’t need to do the search, as the UK is still part of the EU... for now! We will wait and see what their status will be once the “Brexit” happens, but until then, no worries ☐

If a flight is operating PART 135 Air Ambulance, would they be subject to this search as well ?

Answer – Yes, if they arrived in from somewhere other than those countries mentioned above. The procedure is linked to where the aircraft came from, not to the aircraft reg or its status (be it commercial, private, charter, cargo, air ambulance, quick-turn, night-stop, fuel stop, transit flight, etc).

What kind of info should be in the form?

Answer – This kind of info:

Flight Information: Flight number / Date / Aircraft Number / Airport of Origin / Airport of Destination

Aircraft Interior: Flight Deck / Storage Area in the Galleys / Lavatories / Catering Trolley and Containers / Seat Pockets / Area Under the Seats / Area Between Seats / Area Between Seats and Bulkheads/ Jump Seats / Trash Bins / Overhead compartments / Pax and Crew Storage Compartment.

Between 5 and 10% of the life vest bags are to be checked as well.

Aircraft Exterior: Aircraft Holds / Service Panels / Bays / Wheel Wells / Fuselage / Engines / AOG Spare in Hold

Search Information : The search must be performed by a member of the cockpit crew. The name of the Captain must appear on the form as well as the date and a place for him/her to sign the document.

You probably have a standard form in your OEM for something like this. But if not, then fear not! The good folks at Signature have provided us with a standard template. Click the image below to download!

AIRCRAFT SECURITY SEARCH LIST

According to EU 2008/300, 2015/1998, (2015)8005 and their amendments

Departure Airport..... Origin of previous flight..... .Flight number.....
Date.....Time search was completed.....

LIST OF INTERIOR AREAS OF AIRCRAFT TO BE EXAMINED

Aircraft security search of the interior of aircraft shall consist of an examination of all of the following areas, when they are accessible without the use of tools, keys or other aids, without breaking seals, and where a prohibited article could reasonably be concealed:

- ˆ overhead bins
- ˆ cupboards and storage compartments, including crew storage areas
- ˆ areas to which passengers have private access, including toilet compartments, showers, bathrooms
- ˆ cupboards, storage compartments, bars, refrigerators and bins in galley areas;
- ˆ seat pockets
- ˆ areas that exist under seats, between seats and between the seat and the wall;
- ˆ flight deck, if left unattended
- ˆ between 5% and 10% of lifejacket pouches.

Person responsible for conducting the search :

Flight deck : Name.....Signature.....
Cabin : Name.....Signature.....

LIST OF EXTERIOR AREAS OF AIRCRAFT TO BE EXAMINED

- ˆ aircraft service panels and hatches, if accessible without the use of tools, keys, stairs or other aids, without breaking seals, and where a prohibited article could be reasonably concealed
- ˆ aircraft hold, unless sealed
- ˆ items contained within the hold, if accessible without the use of tools, keys or other aids, without breaking seals, and where a prohibited article could be reasonably be concealed
- ˆ wheel wells, if accessible from the ground without the use of stairs or other aids.

Person responsible for conducting the search :

Holds / items within: Name.....Signature.....
Rest exterior areas : Name.....Signature.....

If you have any further knowledge or recent experience to share, please **let us know!**

Further reading:

- **EU SAFA ramp checks not on the rise - but are you ready for one?**