Pilot vs Crew: ID Confusion in Nice

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We've had a few reports from crews facing problems at LFMN/Nice because their ID cards said **"PILOT"** instead of **"CREW."** In one case, a delay caused a missed slot. Other incidents have been reported elsewhere, such as LSGG/Geneva. The issue isn't just a matter of wording—it's about how rules are being applied differently to EU and non-EU operators.

Why the Confusion?

At the heart of this is EU security law:

- **EU-based crews:** Under EU Reg. 2015/1998, airport authorities are right to insist on IDs that show **"CREW."** Section 1.2.4.1 requires this wording in English, along with a validity date and other criteria. IDs showing "PILOT" do not meet the EU requirement.
- **Non-EU crews:** These rules don't apply to you. Instead, you must meet your own national crew ID requirements. ICAO provides guidance in Annex 17 and Doc 8973, but leaves specifics to each country. This means ID formats can vary widely, which sometimes leads to problems at European airports.

Reality at LFMN/Nice

Despite the legal distinctions, local security often applies a simpler standard—they just want to see **"CREW"** on the badge. If your ID lacks it, you could face delays, requests for extra docs (licence, passport), and additional paperwork from your handler (Signature advise that in the case of flight attendants, they will need to be listed as PAX on the Gen Dec if their IDs are not accepted).

Some members report that using IDs from services like IBAC or CrewID has avoided problems entirely.



Security may require an escort or additional security clearance if your ID differs from EU requirements.

What Should You Do?

- **EU crews:** Ensure your ID meets EU requirements—“CREW” must appear.
- **Non-EU crews:** Even though it’s not legally required, consider carrying an ID with **“CREW”** clearly displayed. It can save you time and hassle. And just brief your handler in advance if you think your ID might raise questions.

Have Something to Report?

We rely on member reports to discover these kinds of issues. If you have some extra info, chances are it will be a huge help to other operators.

Please get in touch with us on blog@ops.group around the clock.