

The New EASA Fuel Policy: Does it affect you?

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So EASA have changed their fuel rules and the 'Decision' they have published ain't an easy thing to read. Here is what we think it says, in plainer English, to help you work out what it all means for you.

We are no pros on fuel planning through so this is more of a heads-up that things are a-changing. For the full regulations you will need to dive in yourself and try to fathom it out, but hopefully this gives some info on bits to really look out for.

First of all, in EASA's own words...

...What the change is all about?

"The objective of this Decision is to facilitate the implementation of the new requirements on fuel/energy planning and management introduced into Regulation (EU) No 965/2012 (the 'Air OPS Regulation') by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2021/1296. The amended Regulation, which shall apply from 30 October 2022, will improve efficiency as regards fuel/energy planning and management for commercial air transport (CAT) aeroplanes, while maintaining a high level of safety in air operations."

Words and more words

They also say:

“According to the scenarios analysed in the NPA 2016-06 (A), the maximum fuel reduction would be in the order of magnitude of 1 million tonnes per year for the EU MSs’ operators on the basis of the flights in 2015. This would translate in a potential estimated annual saving of 3 million tonnes of CO2 (based on the assumption of 1 tonne of fuel producing 3 tonnes of CO2).

According NPA 2016-06 (A), this would mean a potential saving estimate of 0.29 kg per minute in a short-haul flight, and of 2.31 kg per minute on a long-haul flight. This potential saving would represent approximately 1% of European flight emissions.”

Give it to me in plain English.

- It will **improve fuel efficiency**.
- It will be **nicer for the environment**.
- It will apply from **October 30 2022**.
- The big change in fuel policy applies to **Commercial Air Transport (CAT) operators** (but there are a lot of changes for other folk in there too)

If you want to jump straight in and read it all yourself, then here is the link.

What’s changed then?

Remember the old Fuel Policy that we all know and love?

The one where you have to carry taxi fuel, trip fuel, fuel to get to your alternate, contingency fuel (and some additional bits in there about whether that needs to be 5% or 5 mins at 1500’, or 3% or if you can use STATCON...) plus your final reserve and any extra you might want...

AMC1-CAT.OP.MPA.150(b) Fuel policy

PLANNING CRITERIA — AEROPLANES

The operator should base the defined fuel policy, including calculation of the amount of fuel to be on board for departure, on the following planning criteria:

(a) — Basic procedure

The usable fuel to be on board for departure should be the sum of the following:

(1) — Taxi fuel, which should not be less than the amount expected to be used prior to take-off. Local conditions at the departure aerodrome and auxiliary power unit (APU) consumption should be taken into account.

(2) — Trip fuel, which should include:

(i) — fuel for take-off and climb from aerodrome elevation to initial cruising level/altitude, taking into account the expected departure routing;

(ii) — fuel from top of climb to top of descent, including any step climb/descent;

(iii) — fuel from top of descent to the point where the approach is initiated, taking into account the expected arrival procedure; and

(iv) — fuel for approach and landing at the destination aerodrome.

(3) — Contingency fuel, except as provided for in (b), which should be the higher of:

(i) — Either:

(A) — 5 % of the planned trip fuel or, in the event of in-flight replanning, 5 % of the trip fuel for the remainder of the flight;

Out with the red, in with the blue, the new fuel scheme, is confusing for you?

Well, that is out and in its place are three new fuel schemes -

- the Individual.
- the Basic.
- the Basic, with variations.

So the old fuel policy is chopped and there are three new schemes instead.

Here's the deal with them. The first thing to know is that the individual and the basic + variations are both **voluntary**, meaning you'll need to meet a **bunch of criteria** to opt for them. The basic is what you'll be on if the other two don't apply.

Oh, and should have said it earlier, but this only applies if you're an EASA operator.

Any idea which fuel scheme to read up on?

If you're not a CAT Operator (now that header picture makes sense, right?) then the Individual Fuel Scheme (and all the many, many pages of info referring to that) probably won't apply to you. That's not to say it isn't useful to read and know about anyway.

If you know you **don't have particularly enhanced fuel monitoring capabilities** then the basic scheme is the one for you, and this is not really different from the current fuel policy as we know it. There are however a lot of small changes which you will need to know about.

EASA say

"The transition from the current rules to the basic fuel scheme requires little additional effort from the perspective of an air operator. The other two schemes are voluntary and will take more resources to implement as they require enhanced monitoring capabilities from the airlines."

So let's look at the schemes.

1. The Individual Fuel Scheme.

This applies to **big operators with big fuel monitoring systems** in place which let them say *"I know how much fuel I need all the time because I fly there a lot, monitor it and know about all the possible changes and risks and all that stuff that might affect it!"*

So EASA are all *"well, if you meet all our criteria then we're gonna trust that you do know better, and can take just what you need and that'll be better for you and the environment."*

OK, there might be a bit more to it than that, but in a nutshell if you're a big operator and think this might apply then dig in and read all the new blue and see if you can opt for this scheme.

If you know this doesn't apply, then read on.

2. The Basic Scheme.

Ah now this is more familiar. It is **basically our old Fuel Policy made simple**. 5% for your contingency. Done.

Here's the actual contingency bit for reference:

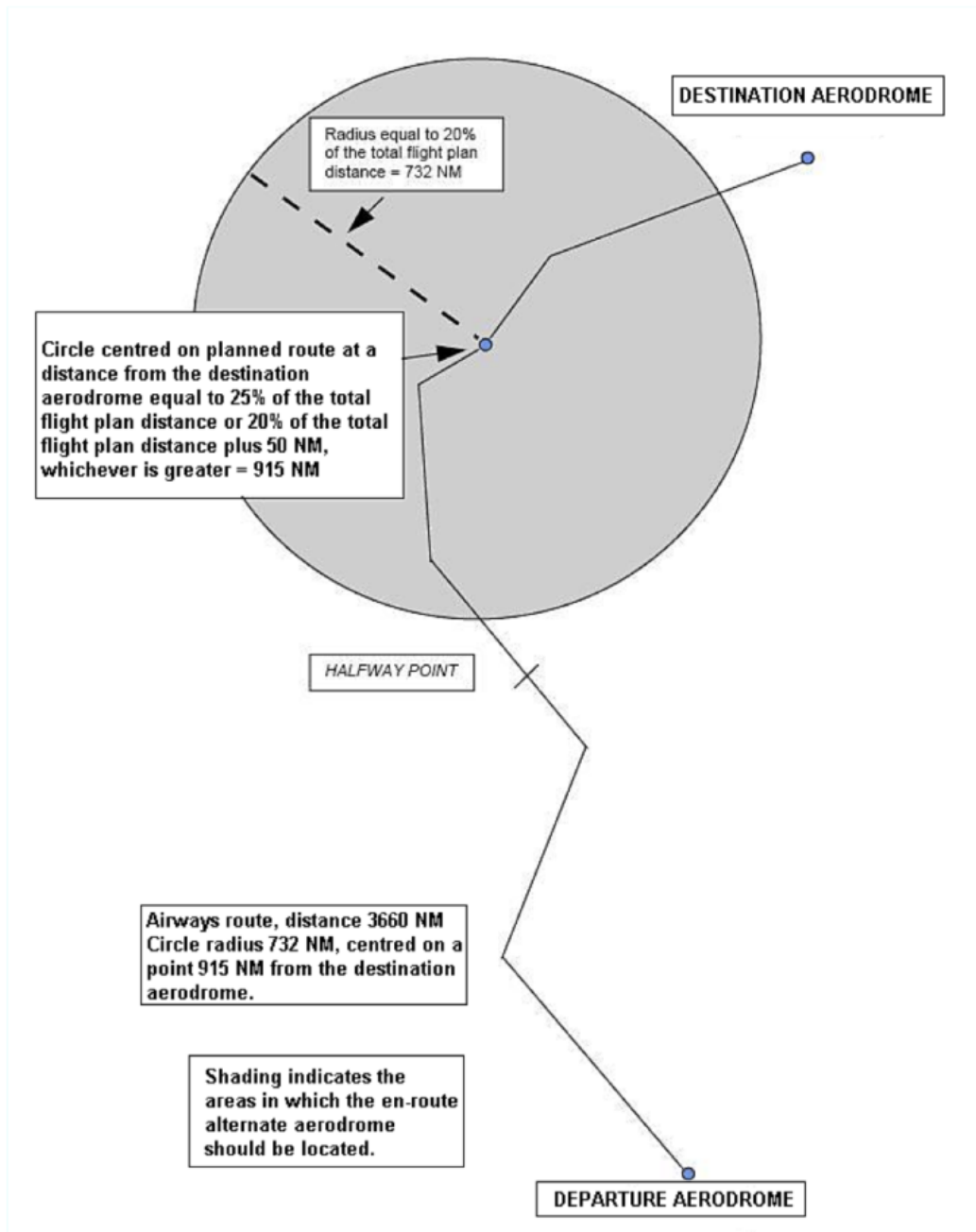
For contingency fuel, calculate for unforeseen factors either: whichever is the higher; (1) 5 % of the planned trip fuel or, in the event of in-flight re-planning, 5 % of the trip fuel for the remainder of the flight; or (2) an amount to fly for 5 minutes at holding speed at 1 500 ft (450 m) above the destination aerodrome in standard conditions,

This is not voluntary. The other two are, and if you don't go for either of them then this is the policy you'll need to apply.

3. The Basic with variations.

From what we can see, those variations really apply to the contingency and whether you can reduce to 3% or use STATCON, which is based on whether you have some sort of monitoring program in place, amongst other things.

Figure 1 — Location of the fuel ERA aerodrome to reduce contingency fuel to 3 %



Same, but bluer

Seems like a lot of blue just for that?

There is a lot because **the two voluntary schemes have a lot of points attached** to them which you need to know about if you're planning on applying for one of those schemes.

Aside from the big policy changes, there are some **changes and clarifications to definitions** and what have you which are worth a read.

Do you need to read the Explanatory Note?

Not unless you really want an **in-depth explanation as to why they need the new AMC and GM**

(acceptable means of compliance and guidance material) on fuel/energy planning, and a whole long list of references.

You can read it here if you do want to.

Annex I

This is the changes to the definitions annex. It is fairly short (they've removed acronyms) and made a few definition changes.

You can read it here, but you're better off reading the full definitions annex here if it's definitions you're after.

Here's one we found interesting:

- **Relevant safety information that might affect the safety of the flight: unforeseen hazards**

They've published **a nice list here of stuff to think about** (which you were probably were anyway but just incase) it means stuff like unexpected ATC delays, met conditions which weren't forecast, sudden obstructions on the runway, failure of some bit of the airplane that means you suddenly need a lot more runway. Sudden acts of nature that you didn't expect...

The other Annexes

We jumped straight in to **Annex IV** because it is the Commercial Air Operators annex, and they did say at the start that most of the changes apply to this. If you are not a CAT Operator then take a browse through the annex that does apply.

This contains all the info on the new schemes and the changes, criteria for opting for them etc. so this is what you need to read!

Some other bits worth looking out for.

- **Alternate Planning:** We aren't here to get into the nitty-gritty of the changes but someone very helpful and with more knowledge on it that us said that this *"basically rewrites everything we learned"* about flight planning. One of the big rewrites is on the Alternate Planning.
 - The old 'step-down' method of alternate planning doesn't apply anymore. Instead it must be looked at individually each time.
 - Wind gusts also need to be considered.
 - Take a look at the tables (here's the one for the basic + variations scheme) to get a better idea.

Table 4 — Basic fuel scheme with variations — planning minima

Destination alternate aerodrome, fuel ERA aerodrome, isolated destination aerodrome

Row	Type of approach	Aerodrome ceiling (cloud base or vertical VIS)	RVR/VIS
1	Two or more usable type B instrument approach operations to two separate runways***	DA/H* + 100 ft	RVR** + 300 m
2	One usable type B instrument approach operation	DA/H + 150 ft	RVR + 450 m
3	3D Type A instrument approach operations, based on a facility with a system minimum of 200 ft or less	DA/H or MDA/H* + 200 ft	RVR/VIS** + 800 m
4	Two or more usable type A instrument approach operations ***, each based on a separate navigation aid	DA/H or MDA/H* + 200 ft	RVR/VIS** + 1 000 m
5	One usable type A instrument approach operation	DA/H or MDA/H + 400 ft	RVR/VIS + 1 500 m
6	Circling approach operations	MDA/H + 400 ft	VIS + 1 500 m
Crosswind planning minima: see Table 1 of AMC3 CAT.OP.MPA.182			

Alternate planning changes

There are also some nicely updated or reclarified definitions throughout so even if the new optional schemes don't apply to you, its good opportunity to remind yourself about certain meanings which apply to any fuel policy, even non-EASA ones.

- **Appropriate Meteorological information:** There is a whole lot of blue here and they seem to have updated the definition on what this means and where you can get this weather from. Basically you can reproduce information from a reliable “weather man” source so long as you are just changing the layout, not the content.
 - Reliable means it as some sort of quality assurance in terms of accuracy and integrity.
 - You can also use supplementary weather info - like some nice colourful charts.
- **Verifying weather conditions for adequate aerodromes:** You have two choices, and the requirement for RFFS seems to have been removed from the adequate definition:
 - **Adequate** This means an aerodrome that you can fly to and use because its runway characteristics and anything else relevant meets your performance requirements. You don't have to consider weather conditions to decide if an aerodrome is adequate.
 - **Weather permissible** You do need to consider the weather to determine if an adequate aerodrome is weather permissible for your planning purposes.
- **Minimum Fuel:** This is worth a read, and because we think it is worth a read, we've recreated it here for you so you can just read that without everything else around it, if you so wish.

Is there a good way to read this?

It is a fairly unreadable document. The amount of blue and red makes it quite hard to work out what applies to you and what doesn't. We suggest **finding a way to separate the scheme that applies to you from the rest**, and then read through the definitions and sections along side your current fuel policy

to identify what has specifically changed.

Still totally confused?

We are too if we're being totally honest. There are some big changes going on here and working out which fuel scheme applies to you is just step on.

EASA are holding a Webinar on this later in the year (Currently planned for July 7). You can register for it here.

If you're not already on it then it might be worth signing up to the EASA community network because they post updates, and folk have discussions on all things EASA on here so you might find more answers here.

There are some bits we were confused on so if you spot any errors or issues in this, please let us know at team@ops.group