SET STANDARD

— SET THE REFERENCE. FLY THE STANDARD. —

SET STANDARD TRAINING

FLIGHT CREW TRAINING DOCUMENT
EASA · SERA · ICAO · PART-FCL

IFR RADIOTELEPHONY MANUAL · STANDARD PHRASEOLOGY

IFR Comms

Standard phraseology for instrument flight, with a complete example IFR flight
From the ATC clearance to the approach, holding and communication failure



INTENDED FOR
IR · BIR students · IFR pilots

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK
SERA · ICAO · EASA

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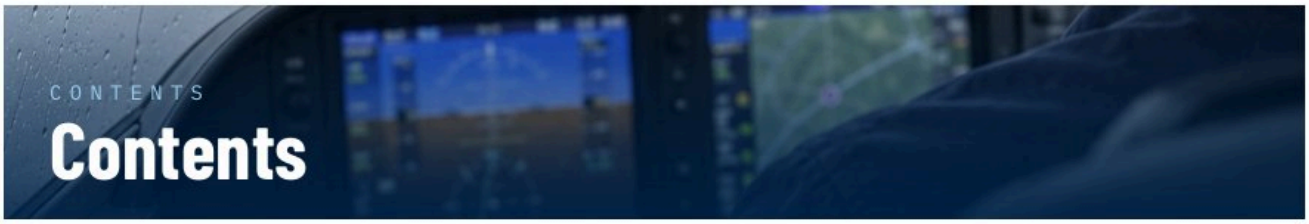
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01–04 FUNDAMENTALS ›
05–08 PHASES OF FLIGHT ›
09–10 CONTINGENCIES ›
11–12 FLIGHT & TEST ›
A ANNEXES ›
≡ CONTENTS ›

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CONTENTS

Contents

PART I FUNDAMENTALS

01 Radio in instrument flight: what changes from VFR 4

02 Regulations, language and language proficiency 9

03 IFR flight plan and ATC clearance 15

04 Taxi, take-off and instrument departure 20

PART II PHASES OF FLIGHT

05 Climb, cruise and level changes 25

06 ATS surveillance: identification, vectors and position reports 30

07 Arrival: ATIS, STAR, holding and expected approach time 37

08 Instrument approach, landing and missed approach 42

PART III CONTINGENCIES

09 Emergency, urgency and communication failure in IFR 47

10 Weather, deviations and common errors in IFR 54

PART IV FLIGHT & TEST

11 A complete IFR flight, from Arbazo to Valdelobos 60

12 Self-assessment 66

REFERENCE

A Annexes: IFR quick card, glossary and references 75

Record of revisions

EDITION / REV.	DATE	CHANGES
1 / 1.0	November 2026	First edition. Sources: Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 923/2012 (SERA, in particular Section 14, SERA.8015 and SERA. 14083), as amended by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2024/404 (applicable from 1 May 2025), Commission Regulation (EU) No 1178/2011 (FCL.055), ICAO Annex 10 Vol. II, Doc 4444, Doc 9432 and Doc 8168.

3.1 The flight plan and the clearance

Every IFR flight starts with a **flight plan** submitted with the notice required by the rules (SERA.4001; as a general rule, at least 60 minutes before the estimated off-block time) and accepted by the system. With it, air traffic control prepares the **clearance** you will receive by radio before taxiing. The clearance is the contract for the flight: it tells you how far you are cleared, by which route, at what level and how to make contact after departure.

To write it down quickly and without omissions, use the **CRAFT** rule:



Example: C Valdelobos · R SOMIR 2A, flight planned route · A 5000 ft · F 120.250 · T 4521

FIG 3.1 *The CRAFT rule for writing down a departure clearance. ATC may transmit the items in a different order.*

REGULATION · SERA.8015

Depending on the case, the clearance contains: aircraft identification, clearance limit, route, levels for the whole flight or part of it, and any necessary instructions and information, such as the standard instrument departure (SID), the SSR code or the frequency. The **route clearance** must always be read back.

3.2 Before you call: ATIS and preparation

Before requesting your clearance, listen to the ATIS and prepare the cockpit. The call will then be short and you can give all your attention to writing it down.

PREPARE	WHY
ATIS copied	Information letter, runway in use, QNH, transition level.
Flight plan in the G1000	Route and expected SID loaded, to compare with the clearance.
SID chart	Initial altitude, restrictions and departure frequency.
Clearance sheet	The five CRAFT boxes already written out.

Instructor's tip · template

ATIS ___ · RWY ___ · QNH ____
C _____
R _____
A _____ · EXPECT _____
F _____ · T _____

3.3 Requesting, writing down and reading back the clearance

At airports with a clearance delivery frequency, request your clearance there. Where there is none, request it from ground or tower. The call includes aircraft type, position, destination, the ATIS letter and your request.

((·)) Requesting and receiving the IFR clearance — Arbazo Delivery 121.950

PLT	Arbazo Delivery, EC-ABC, DA40 at the general aviation apron, IFR to Valdelobos, information Lima, request clearance.
ATC	EC-ABC, cleared to Valdelobos, SOMIR two Alfa departure, flight planned route, climb to altitude five thousand feet, expect flight level one hundred ten minutes after departure, departure frequency one two zero decimal two five zero, squawk four five two one.
PLT	Cleared to Valdelobos, SOMIR two Alfa departure, flight planned route, altitude five thousand feet, flight level one hundred ten minutes after departure, one two zero decimal two five zero, squawk four five two one, EC-ABC.
ATC	EC-ABC, readback correct, contact Arbazo Ground one two one decimal seven.
PLT	Arbazo Ground one two one decimal seven, EC-ABC.

The "expected" level is not a clearance to climb: it is a forecast for your planning. If you lose communications, apply the procedure published on the SID chart or that of SERA.14083 (Chapter 9). Climb only to the cleared altitude, five thousand feet.

((·)) Correcting a wrong readback — The SSR code read back does not match

PLT	...squawk four five one two, EC-ABC.
ATC	EC-ABC, negative, squawk four five two one.
PLT	Squawk four five two one, EC-ABC.

It is enough to repeat the corrected item. If you are unsure of any item, ask for it specifically: "say again squawk".

COMMON ERROR · CONFUSING "CLEARED" WITH "EXPECT"

"*Expect* flight level one hundred" is a forecast, not a clearance. Your cleared level is the last one you were given with "*climb*".

8.1 Approach clearance and "established"

The approach clearance always names the **type of approach and the runway**. With it, the pilot may descend according to the published chart profile from the point at which the aircraft joins the procedure. Until you hear it, maintain the last cleared level or altitude.

((·)) Vectors to the ILS	Valdelobos Approach, at 4000 ft
ATC	EC-ABC, turn right heading two four zero, descend to altitude three thousand feet, QNH one zero one five, vectoring for ILS approach runway two seven.
PLT	Right heading two four zero, descending to altitude three thousand feet, QNH one zero one five, EC-ABC.
ATC	EC-ABC, eight miles from touchdown, turn right heading two five five, cleared ILS approach runway two seven, report established on the localizer.
PLT	Right heading two five five, cleared ILS approach runway two seven, wilco, EC-ABC.
PLT	EC-ABC, established on the localizer.
ATC	EC-ABC, contact Valdelobos Tower one one eight decimal seven.
PLT	One one eight decimal seven, EC-ABC.
	Heading, altitude, QNH and the approach clearance are read back. On an intercept heading, do not descend on the glide path until established on the localizer.

⚠ CAUTION · INTERCEPT HEADING WITHOUT AN APPROACH CLEARANCE

If you are given a heading that crosses the localizer **without** an instruction to intercept it or to "**report established**", and without an approach clearance, **do not turn onto the course on your own**: maintain heading and altitude and ask. If you have been told to intercept or to report established but have not been cleared for the approach, establish on the localizer and **do not descend on the glide path** until you hear "cleared … approach".



FIG 8.1 *Vectors to the ILS for runway 27 at Valdelobos: intercept heading, approach clearance and the "established" report (schematic, not to scale).*