

Photographs, aviation and weather memories of trips to airports Worldwide



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Title page: Emirates Airbus A380-861 A6-EOY on short final for runway 33 at Birmingham (EGBB) on the 8th July 2018 and Madrid Barajas Airport 21st October 2010 with Air Europa Embraer ERJ-195LP EC-KYP in the foreground.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Pierre de Villiers was born in Durban, South Africa. He was trained to World Meteorological Organization class one meteorologist and multi-discipline weather forecaster in the South African Weather Service where he reached the rank of Director. He served on a weather ship in the South Atlantic. He served on World Meteorological Organization expert teams and was World Meteorological Organization rapporteur for the Africa region. He was also a commercial pilot and flying instructor. More recently he was a weather forecaster in the United Arab Emirates, then in England. Now retired.

M. P. de Villiers
PhD MSc MDip (FRMetS CMet retired)
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INTRODUCTION

The photographs in the album are of travels worldwide on aircraft, initially international flights when resident and employed in South Africa then a few from Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) while resident there and employed, finally trips internationally and regionally from England where resident and employed.

While concentrating on the aviation aspect of trips, such as the aircraft and airports, experiences and observations on the ground and inflight have been included, as well as where available, weather affecting aviation at the airports. Similarly, photographs are not limited to aircraft and airports. Included are photographs taken while en route. Details of the flight, such as timings, seating and route that may be boring to some readers have been detailed at times. Less fastidious readers may want to skip these. Some trips to airports did not include any flying, however, the visit was aviation related. Strictly speaking there is one that should not be included. Nevertheless, it is interesting for its historical value. It is about the remains of an old airport at Sharjah in the UAE.

A few trips do not include photographs for specific reasons. These days one can go from entry to the terminal building, onto the aircraft, disembark the other end and exit the terminal building without seeing anything of the airport and aircraft, as well as in flight especially at night and when seated two more seats from a window. While in Nigeria it was, maybe still is, illegal to take photographs at airports, whether airside or outside. As will be told later, a delegate a conference was almost assaulted by a security officer outside the terminal entrance at Lagos.

Most of the initial trips are brief due to keeping very brief notes and lack of photographs. In days gone by the author did not always meticulously record aircraft details and photograph dates. Now, when discussing these photographs, one has to rely on saved short (sometimes cryptic) notes, general knowledge and memory, corroborated where possible, by life events, articles written and research papers. Also important, is the use of the Internet searches, cross referenced where possible.

The photographs are definitely not professional standard. Some of the photographs are of rather poor quality. This can be attributed to; poor atmospheric conditions, such as very hazy weather or during precipitation; taken in great haste, use it or lose it; or taken at maximum zoom. Pre-digital camera photographs had to be scanned. Photographs date from around the 1990s, so they are post Kodak Brownie Box Camera era, mostly more sophisticated automated Kodak Instamatic 35 mm film and a highly efficient and well liked 35mm wind on spool film Pentax ESPIO 738G with zoom lens, built in flash, red-eye reduction, autofocus and light sensor. From 2004 digital camera. The first one a Canon IXUS II 3.2 mega pixels for about GBP155, then a Canon IXUS 82 IS 8.0 mega pixels (still have it), finally a Canon SX240 HS 12.1 mega pixels.

It is tedious having to repeatedly write the names of the major aircraft manufacturers (these days referred to as airframers). Therefore, after establishing the manufacturers name, they are

referred to in abbreviated form along with the model aircraft. For example, Boeing 727 becomes B727, Airbus A300 simply becomes A300. Not always. Unfortunately, the use of acronyms have proliferated. Unfortunate, because it means the reader has to remember each acronym when reading and it spoils the flow of comprehension if one does not remember its meaning, particularly if not used for some time. Therefore, an attempt is made to keep acronyms to a minimum especially if rarely referenced while at times refreshing the readers memory by abandoning the acronym by providing the full title, or meaning.

Time zones across the world can be confusing. Therefore, local time (B) is used in the respective countries. At times Universal Time Coordinated (UTC or Z) is used. UTC has succeeded GMT Greenwich Mean Time. For the UK BST is also used. BST is British Summer Time. BST is 1 hour ahead of local time B which is the same as UTC. European countries also use summer time. Europe and Scandinavia local time B is 1 hour ahead of UTC, in summer its local time is 2 hours ahead of UTC. Clocks are moved forward 1 hour at 01:00 on the last Sunday of March and back again at 01:00 on the last Sunday of October. All aviation operations are according to Z (UTC) irrespective where one is in the world. This includes aspects such as radio communication and any other communication, such as written messages and documentation. For example, flight plans and weather reports, observed and forecast. Airline tickets, boarding passes, etc., for passengers are always in local time at the departure airport and at the destination airport. To keep it simple, B means the country's local time irrespective whether it is summer or winter time and Z means UTC irrespective of where one is in the world.

Mention is occasionally made of an Instrument landing System (ILS). It consists of two transmitters, the localiser and the glide path. Situated at the end of runways they provide a beam aligned with and away from the runway that provides the direction to be flown to the runway. The glide path provides an angled beam or slope (usually 3°) that must be followed down to runway touchdown position on the runway. An analog instrument on the instrument panel has a vertical and horizontal indicators that form a perfect cross with exactly aligned on the approach. Deflection of the vertical indicator to left or right indicates deviation to the right or left of the centreline. Deflection of the horizontal indicator up or down indicates too low or too high on the glide path. These days the instrument is part of with the so called glass cockpit display and aircraft can be flown to a totally automated computer controlled landing.

An ILS CAT I approach and landing has a 200ft (61m) decision height/cloud base and 800m visibility, or 550m Runway Visual Range (RVR). Note, ft = feet and m = metres. Runway visual range is provided by electronic equipment that measures the visibility alongside the runway, usually at touchdown point. The minimum values for an ILS CAT II are cloud base 100ft (30m) visibility RVR 350m and ILS CAT III 0ft (0m) visibility RVR 200m. Much less in use are; ILS CAT IIIB 0ft 50m RVR and CAT IIIC 0ft RVR 0m. Autopilot is approved for CAT II and III. CAT IIIC is a full auto land with after landing roll, but rare due to ground manoeuvring problems in such poor visibility.

While on the subject of reduced visibility and cloud base, there is also what is known as Low Visibility Procedure (LVP). During LVP preliminary and activation stages, airport ground operations are limited. LVP usually applies when conditions deteriorate to below CAT I ILS minimums. The preliminary stage is below 800m visibility and below 300ft cloud base. The activation stage is RVR is less than 550m and cloud base 200ft or less. It is a safety measure that restricts movement on the ground to protect any aeroplane on the ground, particularly during landing and take-off.

It is worth briefly mentioning some of the more significant weather that can disrupt airport operations. Thunderstorms pose a problem for all aircraft activity (particularly in the air). Passing thunderstorms can ground aircraft as well as disrupt the approach and departure paths at an airport leading to diversions in the air and delays on the ground. When lightning is near all outdoor operations, such as aircraft refuelling, loading and unloading and passenger movement to and from aircraft should cease.

Diversions and delays can occur if strong winds can exceed the wind velocity at which aircraft can land, or take off. Particularly there is a strong crosswind component that exceeds the maximum velocity allowed for an aircraft type. Another consideration is an increased headwind on the approach. While approach airspeeds remain the same, a stronger headwind on the approach means slower approach ground speeds. For safety, aircraft approach separation is increased, the resulting restriction means the landing rate will decrease. At peak arrival times and operating at, or near, traffic capacity, will result in delays on the ground, possibly diversions in the air. Wind shear on the approach landing and take off can be extremely dangerous. An aircraft relies on air flow over the wings to remain airborne. If the air flow over the wing decreases to below a critical speed, due to rapid decrease and/or change to a tailwind, the aircraft will stall, that is begin to sink. Near the ground, at the approach, at the landing stage and take off, this is dangerous.

Higher temperatures above the surface than on the ground lead to degradation of engine performance instead of improved performance in the normally lower temperatures higher in the atmosphere. Less dense air due to the higher temperature also results in less lift and aircraft sink.

Ground operators are particularly concerned about snow. When will it start and end, the intensity and amount of ground accumulation is important. Runways and taxiway need to be cleared. Ice on aircraft, runways, taxiways and walkway surfaces are a danger. Strong wind speed and gusts at an airport can hamper cargo operations. There limits above which aircraft cargo doors may not be opened, or remain open, if already open. It is also disruptive for ground equipment. There is the risk of baggage trolleys being blown over, or blown out of control on the apron, or flying debris causing human injury and damage to vehicles and equipment.

Plan charts of airport runways, ILS categories and wind roses, are shown in the appendix with the city name and its ICAO code. In some instances, only the airport name is given because it is not closely related to any city or town. For example, Ronaldsway on the Isle of Man and Jersey on the island of Jersey. Some cities have more than one airport. Here the ICAO code identifies the particular airport, usually the local major international airport. An exception is mane for London where Heathrow and London City are named to avoid confusion.

Sources of information. For those aircraft I photographed for which I could not fully identify the type and had its registration, Airfleets.net was essential. Another excellent source is Planespotters.net. Airport information, used in the text and the appendix, was obtained by going to the relevant country's civil aviation authorities. For example: Airports in Europe can be found at Eurocontrol, also the UK at the National Air Traffic Services (NATS) was very useful; the United States of America at the Federal Aviation Authority; Airservices Australia; AIP New Zealand; South African Civil Aviation Authority (SACAA) and Air Traffic Navigation Service (ATNS). Some countries were difficult, one could say impossible to find. For these Rossiya Airlines.com was valuable. Wind roses used in the appendix were provided courtesy of the Iowa State University Iowa Environmental Mesonet (IEM).

EARLY DAYS TRIPS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

LONDON, ENGLAND 1975

My first international trip was on holiday with my wife 11th September 1975. We flew to London on what was then sold by South African Airways (SAA) as an Apex return package that involved returning after a minimum number of days. My memory is hazy, I think it was 21 days, maybe 28 days. We left Johannesburg's Jan Smuts International Airport (FAJS) about 5 hours late due to an engine problem and I believe an aircraft change, arriving late at Heathrow (EGLL) on the 12th returning around the 15th October. At the time Jan Smuts International Airport had one runway 03/21 4418m (14495ft).

During the 1970's, political relations between South Africa and Africa had deteriorated due to the South African Apartheid policy. The result was the refusal of overflight rights over African countries to Europe. SAA had to fly their B747's and B747SP's around the western bulge of Africa. They were obliged to land at Ile do Sol (a Portuguese possession) to refuel and take about 3 hours longer to get to Europe. The wife and I travelled on one of these trips to London in a B747 200B. The trip took about 13 hours and also went via Paris Gard du Nord. I remember we landed at Ile do Sol in the early hours, it was still dark. We disembarked and stood on the apron where the aircraft was parked well away from the terminal while the aircraft was refuelled. It was warm and humid and the place looked bleak. Still, it was good to stretch one's legs. Our holiday included a trip train and ferry trip to Paris. Passport control was done while crossing on the ferry. By mistake I handed my South African Identity Booklet to the passport officer who stamped it. Externally both documents were similar size and colour. It was much later that I realised the mistake.

LONDON, ENGLAND 1994

During 1994, I spent 2 weeks at the United Kingdom (UK) Meteorological Office training establishment, then at Shinfield Park, Reading on numerical weather prediction and remote sensing courses. A year or so later another short visit, this time to the headquarters in Bracknell. Each time using British Airways Johannesburg to Heathrow in B747s.

By the mid to late 1980s Johannesburg International Airport (FAJS), later O.R. Tembo



A 1994 or 1995 photograph of a British Airways B747-400 at Johannesburg International Airport. Until August 1994 it was Jan Smuts International Airport.

International Airport (FAOR) had a second runway. Runways were numbered 03L/21R 4418m (14495ft) and the new 03R/21L 3400m (11155ft).

Regarding the earlier trip during the South Africa winter in June and early July 1994, my wife drove me from Pretoria to Johannesburg airport for a late evening departure then returned home after dark. I said after a suitable period of time I would telephone from our office at the airport so that I knew they were safely home. This may sound odd to non-South Africans. These were anxious times. Crime was endemic. Motor car hijacking was also common, this often

resulted in the driver being shot, yanked out of the car and then driving off with the car. With modern anti-theft devices, it was easier to steal a car with the engine running than having to try and start it. It was common to strike while stopped at a red traffic light. The police advised driving off, if one saw anything suspicious, while obviously avoiding other traffic. Another practise on open roads or highway, usually at night, was to place a small tree, or large branch, or stones in the road. The car was hijacked when one got out of the car to remove them. I inherited a Spanish Star 9mm short semi-automatic pistol from my father. We often travelled between Pretoria to Sandton north of Johannesburg to visit the in-laws and my wife's sister's family at nearby Fourways, often coming home late at night. I always carried the gun with me, placed down the side of the seat next to the door. One magazine in the gun, one spare magazine in my pocket, each loaded with eight 9mm short soft nosed bullets (they do more damage). I had considerable target practise.

To get back to the original story. After numerous telephone calls I called a nearby family friend. She knew nothing, but said she would keep calling home. I was now very concerned. Did I cancel the trip and head home? I hoped all was OK. I had to go through security and customs and board the aircraft really worried. I was seated in the aircraft about to taxi when a cabin steward came to me and asked my name. She then told me that she had a message that my family was home safely. I was very relieved, but wondered how the message got to me. I later learnt that my wife stopped to visit a different friend. When she got home, she heard from our friend that I had been calling. My wife telephoned our office at the airport, they contacted air traffic control (ATC), who radioed the message to the flight crew, who got the steward to speak to me. I was and am still grateful to the people involved, who no doubt understood my anxiety and the British Airways crew's kind co-operation.

ABUJA, NIGERIA 1997

From the 2nd to 23rd May 1997, I was sent to Abuja, the federal capital of Nigeria, as part of a South African delegation to an International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conference. I thought I was chosen for my ability, but on reflection, having been there, I think it was because no one else wanted to go. The following, courtesy of the South African Weather Bureau (SAWB), now South African Weather Service (SAWS)), is an excerpt from a lengthy report of the conference.



A circa 1990-1995 photograph of a SAA A300 at Jan Smuts International Airport. From August 1994 Johannesburg International Airport.

It was not easy getting there and back. Six flights were needed for the round trip. Two days there and just over a day back. One first had to go to Abidjan (DIAP) in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. To be there by the Monday morning, I left Johannesburg early on the Friday afternoon on a SAA Airbus A300. We left late. Firstly, because we had to go via Kinshasa (FZAA) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo where Kabinda's rebels were close to invading the place it was not certain whether we would land there. Then we were delayed because some the cabin crew did not turn up and relief crew had to be called out. Finally, we were on our way via Kinshasa.

Kinshasa was typically hot and humid as tropical places can be, much like Durban in February. The temperature on the ground was 31°C. To me that is lovely. I'd rather be hot than cold. But what a decrepit and rundown place. The approach was done visually. The runway looked bad with no sign of a fenced perimeter. There were wrecked and broken aircraft all over the place, especially old DC-4s. To push back the aircraft prior to taxi, they used a front end loader. Eventually we got airborne. Kinshasa from the air looks like a sprawling shantytown, but the view of the wide Congo River was amazing.

Apparently, the half empty aircraft was too much for the cabin crew, because about an hour after take-off they were nowhere to be seen. Going to the rear in search of fruit juice, they were found at the rear of the aircraft in states ranging from comatose to semi-comatose. This was a let-down, because up till then the cabin crew had been very good and the captain most informative.

Abidjan was a nightmare. We got there well after dark. Before one even got into the terminal building one was being badgered by people to carry your bag, to show you the way, to escort you through customs, you name it. Inside was chaos and the same pestering continued while clearing customs. Where, by the way, there was a table where those not with suitable vaccination proof such as for yellow fever, had get an immediate jab. Glad I was OK. Fortunately for us delegates, an arranged overnight hotel sent a bus and driver. The driver collected a group of us and shepherded us through. While waiting to board the hotel bus, I put my bag down for a second, a person grabbed it and literally swung it three feet onto the steps of the bus, then demanded payment for his unsolicited service. I told him not a chance, which he did not accept and got more demanding, so I thought sod you and gave him some South African coins. He threw this back at me in disgust and walked off. Possibly because the hotel driver now appeared. Two fellow delegates from Air Traffic Navigation Services (ATNS) and I got to the hotel and our rooms at about 11 pm, tired and dirty. It was bath and bed because we had to be up at 4 a.m. for the trip back to the airport.

Abidjan to Lagos (DNMM) was on Cameroon Airlines. Back at the airport we sat around waiting and waiting to board. No announcement nothing. Upon enquiry, the airport staff said they did not know what was happening. We were checked in with nowhere to go in a hot and dirty international lounge. I use the word lounge in the most flattering sense. We could see the aircraft outside, but there was no activity. The crew arrived two and a half hours late with no explanation. With not a word the aircrew came filing passed to the aircraft.

Eventually it was time to board. When boarding, seat numbers on your boarding pass meant nothing. There is simply a rush for the aircraft, with all the paraphernalia under the sun. One wondered how all this was going to fit into the Boeing 737 cabin. But halfway to the aircraft there was a check point and now the fight started. The big mammas wanted to take big bags, big buckets and heaven knows what else on board and the ground staff wanted them in the hold. To a large extent the ground staff lost, because once everyone was on board there was almost nowhere to walk in the aisle. They all filled the aircraft from the front, so a fellow delegate and I found that we had to clamber all the way to the back to find empty seats.

I think the 737-200C, circa 1960's, was the first one off the assembly line. It looked so old. I do not believe it had ever been refurbished. Then to my alarm, from my window seat I saw what looked like a crack in the outside window. I could picture the window giving way at altitude with drastic decompression and me doing the African version of a spacewalk. I

mentioned it to my fellow delegate from the South African Air Traffic Navigation Services. He shrugged and left it at that. To my relief when we began to taxi, it began to vibrate and I realised it was a small seed with a thin stem attached to it which was stuck in the join between the inside of the glass and the frame. I felt better, but wondered how it got there in the first place.

Before we taxied there was more fun and games. All were on board and we began to wonder why we were not moving. There was considerable commotion up front. Eventually all calmed down and we began to move. Another South African delegate, from the Airport Company, sitting up front in 1st class, if one can call it that, later told us that he began knocking back the free whiskies in 1st class when he saw what the commotion was about. The cabin door would not shut properly and it was kicked shut by three crew members.

The pilot taxied at grand prix speeds with plenty of braking. In-flight refreshment on the 1 hour 35 minute flight consisted of a plastic cup of Coke-Cola or orange Fanta. The captain was a very sociable person, because for virtually the whole way to Lagos he sat in 1st class talking to a friend. Needless to say, the captain spent no time in the economy class section.

Landing and taxing at Lagos it was interesting to note that there was no perimeter fence. There was a farmer tending his mealies (maize) almost up to the edge of the taxiway. One can see why there were incidents of aircraft holds being emptied of luggage before reaching the passengers. Tactics included putting rocks across the taxiway and when the aircraft stopped the holds were opened and emptied, with the free enterprise persons disappearing into the bush.

Officials of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), met us at the airport even before we got our luggage. During all our movements in the country we were escorted and transported by these officials. There were some hiccups, which caused moments of concern and sometimes their methods seemed strange, but matters worked out in the end.

It was Saturday midday when we arrived at Lagos and we were booked into the Airport Hotel, which was miles and miles from the airport in the centre of Lagos. We were booked in because we were late and there were no further flights to Abuja (DNAA) that day.

The next morning FAAN people arrived and we were bussed back to Lagos Airport, but this time to the domestic part, where we were informed that if we gave them the money the FAAN would purchase our special charter flight tickets. The money is not worth much there. It takes a wad of notes about two centimetres thick to pay for a one way ticket from Lagos to Abuja.

After an interminable wait our charter aircraft arrived. Lagos to Abuja was in an old Oriental Airlines BAC 111-500, but it was a good flight. In-flight refreshment on the 55 minute flight was a bun, or a meat pie, wrapped in a tissue and a triangular container of Caprisonne fruit juice. We had to hold for about 20 minutes, because the Libyan leader Ghaddafi was paying a visit. The USA government was not happy about this, because he was, at the time, supposed to be in siege in Libya, banned from other countries, because of the Lockerbie Pan Am B747 bombing.

After the opening ceremony a General Assembly was held. The head delegate from Nigeria was elected Chairman. South Africa caused a commotion when Lesotho was proposed as vice-chairman. There were objections because many members felt that South Africa could not propose a province of South Africa, not realising that Lesotho is an independent state. Not a part of South Africa at all. Finally, Lesotho was accepted.

The meeting took place amid accusations that African air safety was becoming, if it had not already become, dangerous. European airlines were, in the post-apartheid era, flying with increasing frequency to South Africa and it was becoming blatantly obvious how little there was in the way of air navigation facilities over Africa. To crown it all the Americans boycotted the meeting on the grounds that Nigeria was not a safe place.

The Meteorological sub-committee was involved in items 7, 8 and 14 of the main agenda. A chairman was elected for the meeting (Senegal) and a vice chairman (South Africa - the author). 22 states and 4 observer organisations attended the meetings, which dealt mainly with updating the tables of services, facilities and requirements of member states. Item 14 was important with respect to the recommendations for the implementation of meteorological services, communications and training.

The SAWB was informed of the meeting at too late a stage to prepare and present working papers. However, there was enough time prior to the event for me to prepare an information paper, which was handed in at the beginning of the meeting and was issued to delegates as an information paper that gave a broad view of its organisation, its activities and future plans.

A good spirit prevailed in the Met. Committee meetings, with the lack of boundaries with respect to weather mentioned on a few occasions. The Met. Committee was the only committee to pose for a group photograph on our last day of business, before joining the other committees for the final general meeting.

Numerous States expressed problems with financial constraints and that they received no financial enumeration from aviation users/clients. Some of the poorer states quite openly asked for financial aid. Certain States were beginning to look into the possibilities of recovering costs from aviation authorities, but they are hampered by a policy that all services provided by the meteorological service are free.

The people generally seem to be very tolerant, but when aroused can be quite aggressive and outspoken. Every time they did one a service and were thanked, they respond with you're welcome.

During my stay the weather at Abuja was generally sunny, hot (30-33°C) and mildly humid compared with Lagos, with the odd cloudy morning. During the 12 day stay there were about 6 days when thunderstorms occurred. They were not particularly severe, apart from one on the 17th which was accompanied by lots of lightning. They occurred late in the afternoon and gone by sunset. An exception occurred on the 21st. This storm occurred at about 2140B (2240 SAST) and had strong preceding wind gusts. At Lagos on the 24th, numerous rain squalls came from the sea in the morning, but little in the way of cloud remained in the afternoon and evening.

Finally, on Friday the 23rd, it was time to return home. But there were still surprises in store. The return flight from Abuja to Lagos was in the same type of aircraft, namely a BAC 111-500. However, this one had a 20 cm long, and about 3 cm deep, dent in the port wing leading edge. The captain was very informative, but said nothing about the dent in the wing.

Nigerian aircraft were banned from flying to the United Kingdom (UK) during our visit. According to a report in The Nigeria Guardian (22nd May 1997), it appears that the aircraft of two airlines in particular (ADC and Merchant according to The Guardian), persistently had

numerous defects. This was pointed out to the airlines, and lo and behold they arrive back in the UK with more defects and a new airworthiness certificate. A source close to ADC Airlines denied the aircraft had many defects and it only had a "cracked wind shield." By way of retaliation, Nigeria banned British flights to Nigeria.

Now at Lagos airport where we disembarked after our flight from Abuja, was a long way from the international terminal and there was a distinct lack of transport. This was taking ages to be arranged. However, those of us going on earlier flights were bundled into cars and taken to the terminal. The driver of my car had a quaint idea of how to get there. He took a short cut out of the airport and back in again to cross the threshold of the active runway, all without radio contact with the tower, and then back out of the airport on to a public road. Where we came to a halt with a very hot engine and oil warning light on. I had visions of never getting home. The driver explained that he was out of oil, but he can get some at a roadside stall. However, he has no money. I need to explain that in Nigeria you can buy everything at the roadside and I mean everything. Furniture, cars, crates of Coca-Cola, the works. Well, I give the driver the money and he crossed the road to a Nigerian lady with luggage, who looks like she is standing waiting for a bus. But it turns out she sells oil in Coke bottles. Well, he poured the oil in and we were on our way, finally getting to the airport entrance.

There we met others that had gathered. Among them is a Canadian ICAO member who thought it was a good idea to get a group photograph. Not a good idea. Photographing of airports, government buildings and anything of the state is strictly forbidden. Hence my total lack of photographs. The next instant a security officer came racing across wielding a short whip. How no one was hurt, I do not know. Anyway, he was pacified and it was explained to him that he was Canadian, did not know and all was OK. Apart from a very ruffled and paler than usual Canadian.

Well! We went into the terminal. What chaos. No one queues. All have tickets, but all push, shout, surge and harass all and sundry. Finally, despite prior confirmation by myself twice checking with the travel company, it turns out that two South African delegates have been bumped from our Ethiopian Airlines flight to Nairobi and I am one of them and no FAAN officials in sight. They were busy getting delegates booked on a British Airways flight on to the KLM flight, because of the UK aircraft ban. Fortunately, two members of the South African High Commission in Lagos, were present seeing off the High Commissioner and they were able to assist us. Due to official delegate status, the Department of Foreign Affairs in South Africa had notified them of our presence in Nigeria. The South African High Commissioner was flying out on the same flight and even he could not help us. If I understood correctly, he had enough trouble making sure that he always got out on his flight when travelling out of the country.

We were escorted to a hotel for the night, fetched us the next day and took us to the Ethiopian Airlines office to arrange passage on the Saturday night flight to Nairobi and Sunday SAA flight to Johannesburg. There was some hesitance, until my ATNS fellow bumpee, pointed out that he allocated airline slot times at Johannesburg International Airport and his airline could possibly find themselves landing at Outer Mongolia before they got another slot time at Johannesburg International Airport. Chris, the High Commission official, then took the two of us to the High Commission office so that we could phone home and let our families at home know we were going to be a day late. After that he took us to his home, where we ate and rested watching South Africa rugby on Multichoice DSTV, before going to the airport in the evening, where suddenly there were FAAN officials. Given the circumstances, we would have been in

serious difficulty if it had not been for the presence and assistance of the High Commission staff. By this time I had developed a stomach bug.

Life returned to normal on the Ethiopian Airline B767 night flight to Nairobi, via Brazzaville where transit passengers remained on board. The cabin crew very good, flight crew informative at take-off and landing. Then SAA A300 from Nairobi to Johannesburg with the same service as before and saw Mount Kilimanjaro on the way, although unable to get a photograph. Glad to be home and the now serious stomach bug treated with antibiotics.

The trip was a notable experience, perhaps one of the experiences of a lifetime that can be looked back on with a sense of achievement and wry humour, but not a trip that would be lightly recommended to others.

LANGEN, GERMANY 1999

December 1999, I was in Germany for a World Meteorological Organization (WMO) meeting as part of an Implementation Coordination Team on Public Weather Services. It was hosted by the Deutscher Wetterdienst at their Langen educational centre and academy where we were also accommodated. It was very convenient and comfortable.

The flights were SAA B747-300s from Johannesburg to Frankfurt (EDDF) on SA260 11th December departure 2035B local time or 1835Z/UTC. South Africa local time is 2 hours ahead of Z/UTC, always. No summer time. Arrival at Frankfurt 10 hours 35 minutes later. Return SA261 17th December 2205B (2105Z) arrival at Johannesburg 0925B (0725Z).

Although it was a SAA aircraft and crew it was code shared with Lufthansa. Curiously, all announcements (and menus) were in German and English while the in-flight entertainment was in German. In those days, in spite of having paid, one still had to telephone to confirm flights.

During the Friday afternoon, the last day of our stay, it started to snow, quite heavily. I was due to fly back to South Africa later in the evening. Our host was going to drive me to Frankfurt airport. He was concerned that he would have difficulty getting me there. Instead, he took me to the railway station with the assurance that this was better, because the train was sure to get me to the airport. Sure enough, it was no problem.

The problem arose on boarding the SAA B747-300 aircraft. Due to the snow, we were delayed on board to await what we in the business way back then called self-loading cargo (passengers)



Boarding at Frankfurt in the snow after bussed to the SAA B747-300.

from connecting flights. I see on the Internet there now a web site called selfloadingcargo. As it was some still did not arrive. Our departure time was also delayed due to the aircraft needing de-icing and anti-icing. The delay was not a big issue to me. What was not pleasing was the cabin purser. Within hearing of passengers and close next to me, she agitated among cabin crew to get the flight cancelled, because they would be time expired by the time we reached Johannesburg. Not the way to behave in front

of passengers. In any event, the cabin crew were not interested. We made a late departure.

WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 2000

15th to 18th February 2000 I was in Silver Spring, Washington, USA, for a week of work at a WMO Meeting of the Expert Team on Internet Practices to compile a Guide on Internet Practices, hosted by NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration).

Travelled British Airways, so called World Traveller class, B747 Johannesburg BA054 evening of the 13th, via London Heathrow BA217 Sunday 14th midday to Washington Dulles International Airport (KIAD) arriving in Washington Sunday 1525B. Returning BA222 on the Friday evening the 18th to Heathrow on the morning of the 19th to Johannesburg BA057 in the evening arriving 0900B Monday the 20th. All went according to plan. World Traveller sounds classy, but essentially it is economy class or, cynically, cattle class.

A cold trip. One late afternoon the Hong Kong member and I did manage to go to central Washington on the Metrorail underground. It was cold with snow and ice, which made walking



tricky, because I did not have appropriate shoes. Even the locals were heavily wrapped. I wore a special hood that my son had bought for me. We even went into a department store for a while to get warm. The light was failing. However, I did get a few photographs, such as of the White House. Also a few photographs at the airport while waiting to return home. Shown here, an American Airlines B767 (left), Midwest Express DC-9 (below left) and a United Airlines B757-200



(below right).

MONTREAL, CANADA 2000

Then in July of 2000 it was off to Montreal, Canada to chair a WMO expert team meeting on Public Weather Services Warnings and Forecast Exchange Issues from Monday the 10th to the Friday the 14th July. Arrived the Sunday 9th at Montréal–Trudeau International Airport (CYUL) with British Airways, also World Traveller class, left the following Saturday 15th back in Johannesburg on Sunday the 16th. The route Johannesburg via Heathrow to Montreal return.

This was a better trip. The Canadians were much more sociable. We were given a tour of the facilities and informative discussions with forecasters and modelling experts. Although hosted at the Montreal office of the Meteorological Service of Canada, one day we were taken on the rubber tyred and quiet Metro underground (much quieter compared with the steel wheel London underground), to the La Biosphère on the Ile Sainte-Helene where the meeting was conducted at the exhibition centre. As a group we also managed a brief visit to pretty Old Montreal. French looking with Caleche rides. These were ornate horse-drawn carriages. Banned since 2019.

Central Montreal is amazing. There are about 32 kilometres of pedestrian tunnels in a 12 square kilometre area with more than 120 exterior access points to the network, excluding links via the Metro. I could walk from the hotel to restaurants and shopping plazas without surfacing. Really useful in winter. However, this was summer, so apart from a trial run, I stayed above ground.

Did not see much of the airport and opportunity to get photographs of aircraft. However, took some photographs at Heathrow while waiting for the evening flight home. Seen below left is a British Airways British Aircraft Corporation (BAC)/Sud Aviation Concorde, believed to be G-BOAB. Below right, a photograph of two British Airways B747s, one in the latest 1997 tail design and one in an earlier 1984 design on the right. On the left is a British Airways B737 while in the background an American Airlines B767 with a landing aircraft distant right.



CAIRO, EGYPT 2001

During March 2001, more specifically the 19th to the 23rd, I went to Cairo International Airport (HECA), Egypt, to attend a WMO meeting of the Africa Region Working Group on Planning and Implementation of the World Weather Watch (what a mouthful!), where I presented a report in my capacity as Public Weather Service Rapporteur for Africa. The meeting was hosted by the Egyptian Meteorological Authority (EMA).

We spent most of the week working, but we did manage to spend a Thursday afternoon out with our hosts. Went inside one of those pointy things, Cheops pyramid I think it was. Whenever I aimed my camera to take a photograph of a pyramid, men on camels would race to fill the camera view. The aim being that you would then have to tip them. As a rule, I do not like people in my photographs. Therefore, the trick was to pretend I was aiming at something else. When they rush to get in view, then quickly turn and take the photograph you wanted. The Sphinx is smaller than I expected.

The traffic was unbelievable. Within one day our EMA bus to and from the hotel was in an accident. The way you have to go around star shaped intersections and compete with the commuter trains is intriguing. The traffic cops are masters of energy conservation. One gets the impression they are there to stand at the corners talking to each other. The cops are drafted you see, 3 years compulsory national service, hence the lack of conviction (excuse the pun).

Cairo was really different and interesting. The people were friendly and one did not feel threatened, like one did in South Africa.

Had a very good trip there and back on Emirates. Flew from Johannesburg on Emirates to Dubai Saturday 17th March EK464, seat 28J, on an Airbus A330 and then Sunday 18th EK401 A310-300 to Cairo. Same way on my way back home, except flight numbers EK402 Friday evening and early hours of Sunday on EK463 arriving in Johannesburg around 1000B Sunday morning. By now, one could request seats in the non-smoking section of the aircraft. From 1994, the Tobacco Products Control Act, 1993 (No. 83 of 1993) prohibited or restricted smoking in public places.

The flight from Dubai to Cairo was a daylight flight across Saudi Arabia, so it was interesting



Descent over Cairo looking into the sun.



Turning off the runway at Cairo International Airport.

to see the desert and the big dunes from the air. Also to see the Red Sea and the approach to Cairo over the Nile in a dusty sky with widely brown sand coloured buildings below as seen in the not at all good photograph. These were my first flights with Emirates. Different from the usual national airlines of the time that employed citizens from the home country. From what I could tell the flight and cabin crews on my flights were from England, Scotland, Holland, South Africa, Pakistan and the Emirates. From what I can gather the flight crews on my flights were from England, Scotland and Holland. It is a good airline.

Since then, we have flown with them whenever possible, even when there have been more direct flights to destinations, for various reasons, including what I regard as a dodgy airline. When we moved to Abu Dhabi, in the United Arab Emirates, to my new employment, we travelled with Emirates from Johannesburg to Dubai, also when we moved to England, again to new employment.

TRIPS FROM THE UAE

SHARJAH OLD AIRPORT, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES 2002

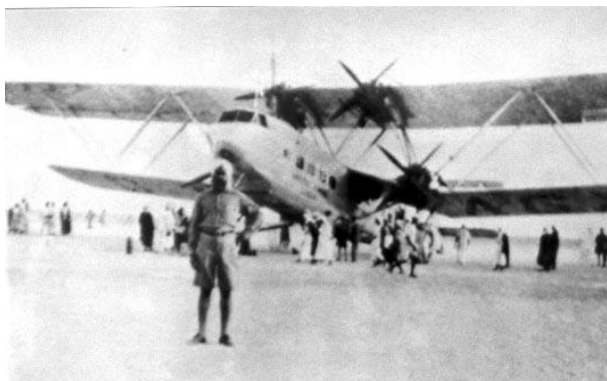
By now I had left the SAWS to employment in Abu Dhabi. Late in November 2002, my wife and I drove to the Sharjah Al Mahattah Museum with friend Darryl (and colleague, also a colleague in South Africa) and friend/wife Corrine. The museum includes the Aviation Museum located in a restored fort and rest house. This and the air traffic control (ATC) tower, are all that remains of the old airport. The old runway forms part of present day Shari' al-Malik Abd al-Azeez Street, or King Abdul Aziz Street (take your pick). The old runway can be identified by a very straight section of the road.

The fort-cum-hotel was built in a couple of months during the summer heat and high humidity of 1932 to house night stopping passengers and aircrew flying between the UK and India. The fort-cum-hotel, complete with “electric light, fans and a Frigidaire” was necessary because the airport was about 22 kilometres from Sharjah and the passengers were not allowed into the town without permission from the Sheikh. All building material, fittings and furnishings were brought by ship from India.



The restored fort/hotel and control tower building.

The route was operated by Imperial Airways, a forerunner of British Airways. In 1932 the first of the new Handley Page HP42 aircraft landed at Sharjah. Imperial airways owned 8 of the aircraft, named, Hadrian, Hannibal, Hanno, Helena, Hengist, Heracles, Horatio and Horsa. Hanno is reputed to be the name of the first HP42 to land at Sharjah. The 10400 kg (13 ton) four engine aircraft, nicknamed the flying banana, was the world's biggest civil airliner at the time.



Photograph of a photograph at the museum of a HP42 at Sharjah circa 1932.

It cruised at 168 kph (105 mph) with a maximum speed of 192 kph (130 mph), carried a crew of 4 and 38 passengers. On this eastern route it carried 20 passengers and more fuel. It took 7 days from London to Karachi. Over the Arabian Peninsula, passengers and crew spent the night at Basra, had lunch at Bahrein, night stopped at Sharjah then westward over the Hajar Mountains, across the Gulf of Oman to Gwadar on the south-west coast of Pakistan (Kay, 1995).

Emergency airstrips and water facilities for flying boats, were constructed in the region to be maintained by the Royal Air Force. The British authority in the region had to negotiate terms and conditions and payment for the use of land from the various Sheikhs between 1934 and 1936. These included Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan of Abu Dhabi for the use of Sir Bani Yas Island and a site near Abu Dhabi and Sheikh Saeed bin Hamad of Kalba for a site at Kalba now part of Fujairah and later at Dubai in 1937.

A typical agreement was that concluded with Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan bin Faïd ruler of Abu Dhabi and Lieutenant-Colonel G. Loch, Political Agent, Bahrain, on the night of Tuesday the 12th February 1935 equivalent to the 9th Dhul Qidah 1353 in the Islamic Calendar (Records of the Emirates Primary Documents 1820-1958, Volume 8 1935-1948, edited by Penelope Tuson (1990).

“Agreement between the Royal Air Force and ruler of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Shakhbut bin Sultan bin Faïd, for providing facilities for aircraft at the island of Sir Bani Yas and at Abu Dhabi.

I, Shakhbut bin Sultan bin Faïd, ruler of Abu Dhabi, do hereby agree to the following facilities for the Royal Air Force aircraft at Sir Bani Yas Island and near Abu Dhabi –

(i). At Sir Bani Yas Island there may be a petrol tank where the seaplanes anchor and near the tank a landing ground for the aeroplanes of the Royal Air Force.

(ii). At a place about three or four miles from Abu Dhabi there may be a landing ground for the aeroplanes of the Royal Air Force.

(iii). I will post sufficient guards at Sir Bani Yas Island and near Abu Dhabi for the purpose of guarding these facilities and the guards will be paid by me.

(iv). With effect from the date of signing of this Agreement the High British Government will pay me the sum of Rs.400/- each month. High British Government will grant me with the sum of Rs.5,000/- as a token of friendship and goodwill.

(v). The High British Government will not interfere in the internal affairs of my State.

(vi). The people of the aeroplanes shall have no right to interfere with my Island of Sir Bani Yas or to interfere with the residents or others in the said island nor shall they have any right to interfere with the diving sailors or with the diving.

(vii). The people of the aeroplanes shall have no right to go about in the town of Abu Dhabi without my permission.

(viii). If, God forbid, there be misunderstanding or any incident takes place due to my people, I shall take action against them and in the case of a foreigner I shall do my best to investigate in the matter as far as I can and will let the High British Government know about it.

(ix). This agreement will be for a period of twelve years and let it not be hidden.”

The Kalba agreement, signed on the 26th August 1936, 9th Jamad Ath Thani 1355, by Sheikh Saeed bin Hamad of Kalba and Captain T. Hickinbotham, Political Agent, Bahrain, was essentially the same apart from a few notable differences. Namely: A shelter for passengers with permission required for additional buildings; Dhows and other craft not permitted to tie to the buoys or anchor nearby; No alcohol (liquor) consumed; No flag flown from the aerodrome buildings; The British Government will give ten rifles for the guards and one rifle for the Sheikh.

The agreement at Dubai was to use Khor Dubai (or Dubai Creek) specifically for flying boats, namely the Short S23 C-Class Empire. Another site, at nearby Umm al Quwain Emirate, was surveyed by the British Admiralty. The Dubai site was preferred. Imperial Airways agreed to use Dubai. Overnight stop passengers had a 5-mile (8km) commute to the Sharjah airport accommodation.

Passing by in February the following year, I stopped at the Al Mahattah Aviation Museum to retake some photographs that were poor. My wife sat in the car. I said she doesn't know the spiritual experience she is missing. She said it would be too sinful to experience it again.

HEATHROW, ENGLAND 2003

2nd to 25th July 2003 we visited England. From the summer heat of the UAE in the 30s°C to 14 to 19°C in England. Flew with Royal Brunei on B767-33A(ER)s Abu Dhabi (OMAA) to Heathrow (EGLL). Outbound on BI 93 departing 2nd July 2003 0140B or 2140Z, arriving 0625B summer local time (0525Z). Returned 25th BI 94 departing 1330B (1230Z) back at Abu Dhabi 2340B (1940Z). Brunei, being a strictly Muslim country, does not serve alcohol. However, you are allowed to bring your own on board. My wife pre-bought two dinky bottles of wine and I had two tots of whisky. Good flights. On time, good service and food.



The photograph shows part of the departure lounge at Abu Dhabi at the time. The airport has vastly changed in all aspects, including new terminals and two runways. While I worked there the airport had one runway 13/31 with CAT III Instrument Landing System (ILS). This means that aircraft could land with a minimum runway visual range (RVR) of 200m and 0m decision height. Fog with very poor visibility is the most serious weather experienced, occasionally dust

storms and thunderstorms. Since 2006, an additional runway 13L and 31R to the east of and parallel with the existing runway has been built with CAT III ILS, except 13R that now has CAT I ILS. While at Abu Dhabi, where our office was not too far from the runway, in early morning thick fog, I once saw a Cargolux B747-400 freighter appear in the fog and stop on the runway. It remained there until a follow me vehicle with flashing lights appeared to lead the pilots to the taxiway and the apron. By the way Dubai International Airport (OMDB) has CAT IIIB on all runways, that is, 12R, 30L, 12L and 30R.

The biggest problem in the UAE is forecasting fog. Most likely during the period from September to March. The most vulnerable areas are the coastal plains slightly away from the sea. The afternoon sea breeze advects moist air inland. Radiation fog forms overnight in cold desert areas slightly inland, light land breezes in the early morning then advects the fog to the coast and airport around dawn. The visibility during fog is usually reduced to between 100 and 500 metres but can on occasions be as low as 50 metres. Fog generally forms between 2:00 and 4:00 am local time and will clear in the hour or two after sunrise. Less frequent dust storms are most prevalent during March and April in the Gulf. The southerly wind off the desert usually begins around sunrise in conjunction with the land breeze. With strong southerly winds aloft in the boundary layer, about 1000 metres above ground level, dust is quickly lifted and the visibility can deteriorate down to 800 metres and sometimes less. Thunderstorms can be a problem with local flooding.

The aircraft photographs below look like the same aircraft at the same time. The overcast sky in both photographs is not a good indicator. They date from the day of arrival and the day of departure, both at the same docking bay. Closer inspection reveals differences. In the first of the two photographs, having disembarked and walking along the terminal concourse one could

see luggage being removed from the rear hold via a conveyor belt. The second image shows stairs at a closed rear door. Possibly about to load the rear galley from the blue lorry. Although, one would expect this to a lift type loader. Foreground ground equipment is also different. Notably the tug and container loader in the second photograph. Small white lights in the sky are not UFOs (unidentified flying objects), they are the reflection of lights in the terminal building.



Royal Brunei B767-33A(ER)s. Left V8-BRH on the 2nd, right V8-BRF on the 25th.

HEATHROW, ENGLAND 2004

August 5th 2004 0145B UAE local time (2145Z), I flew KLM flight KL455 B767-306ER PH-BKZ Zeelandbrug from Abu Dhabi to Schiphol, Amsterdam (EHAM), Netherlands, then still on the 5th 1020B local summer time (0820Z) Schiphol to Heathrow KLM flight KL1009 B737-406 PH-BDS Joris van Spilbergen. ER means extended range. The photographs show the B767 and B737 at Schiphol. What amused me about the flight booking information was the passenger status for each flight. It was Class: Economy (Lowest).



In flight announcements were made in Dutch then English. At first, I wondered why they were making both announcements in English. Then I realised I was subconsciously translating the first announcement. The Dutch was sufficiently similar to Afrikaans for me to understand what was being said.

The third photograph, on the next page, shows a KLM B767 and the rear of a KLM McDonnell Douglas MD-11 on the 28th at Schiphol. Finally, a photograph on the descent to Heathrow and on the runway with fully extended Fowler flaps and spoilers fully raised to destroy lift.



Amsterdam Schiphol has numerous runways, six. CAT III ILS on all runways bar one which is CAT I. It has three parallel runways and one of the three parallel runways. Runway (RWY) 18R/36L, is so far from the terminal to the west in farmland that when taxiing there from the terminal building one feels that one is going to drive to one's destination. It also has complicated preferential and restricted runway system depending on wind speed, night operations and inconvenience reduction to the populace. LVP is also complicated, divided

into phases A, B, C and D from 1500m RVR and cloud base/ceiling 300ft to 200m RVR and 200ft ceiling.

Most frequent adverse weather conditions are due to low visibility, strong winds and thunderstorms. During approaches to the RWYs 04 and 22 pilots must be prepared for turbulence, wind shear and wind gradient, whether or not in combination due to the presence of large buildings and a jet testing station underneath the circuits. When lightning discharges are observed in the vicinity of the airport, the flow manager aircraft will announce that all ground handling and re-fuelling operations are prohibited until further notice. The snow season



On the 5th, approach to Schiphol in KLM B767-300ER PH-BZK on the 5th and approach to Heathrow in KLM B737-400 PH-BDS.



KLM B737-400 BDS landed at Heathrow, flaps fully extended and spoilers deployed to destroy lift.

lasts from the middle of November to the end of March.

My wife flew there earlier on the 24th July. I had instructions from her that while at Schiphol awaiting departure to Heathrow, I had instructions to buy duty free tulip bulbs.

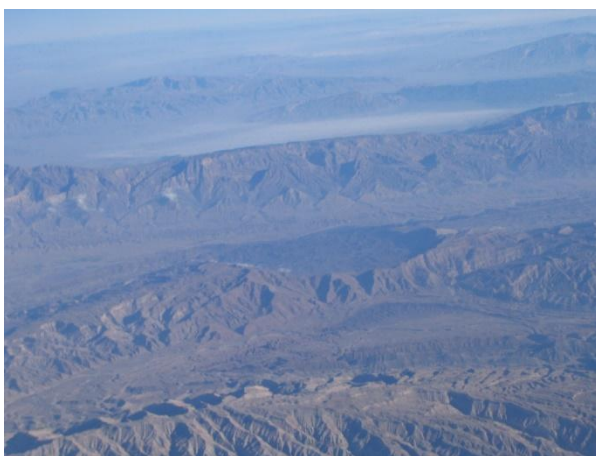
My camera stopped working prior to our Canterbury trip, so I could not take any photographs. Rather than fix my camera, I bought a digital camera, a Canon Ixus II for £155. We had a really good holiday.

We returned together to the UAE on the 28th. Heathrow to Schiphol KLM KL1002 B737-406 at 0840BST (0740Z). Schiphol to Abu Dhabi KLM KL451 B767-306ER at 1425B summer local time (1225Z), scheduled to arrive at Abu Dhabi on the 28th at 2315B (1915Z).

On the return trip, our flight from Schiphol was delayed, because we had to wait for the arrival of a standby pilot due to one of the flight crew becoming ill. The captain promised us they would do their best to make up time. This they did by loading extra fuel while waiting, then flying at a lower than normal cruise flight level where the aircraft could be flown in warmer air at higher air speed while still at a safe Mach number, but use more fuel.

BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND 2005

On the 20th January 2005 we departed Dubai on Emirates EK 39 B777-300ER scheduled departure 0750B (0350Z) to arrive at Birmingham International Airport (EGBB) at 1140B (and



Climbing from Dubai passing Abu Musa in the Gulf Sea and over western Iran.



Snow clad mountains over northern Iran, possibly the Lesser Caucasus Mountains.

1140Z) for me to begin new employment in the UK.

The daylight flight and access to a window seat presented endless time to see the view outside. No in-flight entertainment required.

The airport had a single RWY 15/33 2599m with ILS CAT III with LVP during CAT II and III. July 2014 it was extended to the south-east, the approach to RWY 33 to 3052m. A second RWY 06/24 1315m has not been used since 2008. It is now a taxiway.

The runway is also somewhat like a roller coaster that follows the undulating terrain. It has been argued that design improves water drainage, less hydroplaning, better traction and improves aircraft performance during take-off and landing. My feeling is that the last thing one wants when landing is a runway that slopes away from one. For one thing one wants go slower after landing, not having an opposite effect. It also creates a visual illusion that one is too low on very short final.



Descent to Birmingham with spoilers used to increase rate of descent or reduce speed and final approach with flaps extended and leading edge slat visible extended in front of the right end of the wing.

Winter convection sleet and snow showers, due to air that is unstable to sea temperatures, in a north-westerly flow off the Irish Sea through the Cheshire gap. In a N flow it is sheltered by high ground to the north. Days tend to be clear, cold and frosty winter nights. Dry and fairer weather in an E flow dried out by long track across land. Personal observation is that it is more prone to fog than the surrounding lower land to the south and east and lower cloud base in low Stratus cloud. Air flow from the SW brings low Stratus and in summer air off the sea is unstable with respect to land temperatures and afternoon convection showers occur, possibly thundershowers.

TRIPS FROM ENGLAND

CARDIFF 2006

I travelled to Cardiff on Virgin Trains on the 2nd October 2006, then changed at Bristol Temple Meads to the Great Western Railway, returning direct on Central Trains. Catching the train back from Cardiff was a strange experience. It was like something out of a Harry Potter book where one has to walk through a wall to platform 8¾, or something like that. At Cardiff one had to first pass through an entrance that said Marks and Spencer's Food Store. It really was their entrance! Then one had to turn right through a door and up a flight of stairs to platform 0. Not 1, 2 or 3, etc., but platform 0.

I was met at Cardiff station by a colleague from aviation sales who drove us to the airport to meet an airport operations client. The airport is situated close to the south coast of Wales to the west of the city 67 metres (220 feet above sea level). It has one CAT I ILS RWY 12/30. The wind is predominantly from the west with considerably lower frequency from the north-east and much lower frequency from other directions. The airport is exposed to a WSW to SW wind off the sea that can bring low stratus cloud and drizzle in tropical maritime air and sea fog if it extends above 67 metres. Apparently, sea fog often laps up against the edge of the south-eastern end of the runway. The airport is not prone to radiation fog and air frost is not that common either. Mechanical (terrain induced) turbulence occurs on short finals when landing on runway 30 in strong westerly to south-westerly winds and downdraft on the approach over the coast



where the land drops sharply to the nearby sea. Mechanical turbulence is also likely at the threshold of RWY 12 during strong north-westerly to north-easterly winds due to the hanger north-east of the RWY 12 threshold.

The passenger terminal area is seen in the photograph from the fire station area south of the runway. The airport is also the home of major British Airways aircraft maintenance facility with a three bay hanger and two nose in bays for interior modification. It is off to the left of the photograph.

JERSEY 2006

The following day, 3rd October 2006, it was a 5 am start to Birmingham Airport and board a flight to Jersey, one of the British Crown Dependency Channel Islands near the north-west coast of France. Flew in Flybe de Havilland Dash 8 Q400 G-JEDN twin turboprop to Jersey. Flight BE501 left at 0715BST. Returned on BE512. Left 30 minutes late, but arrived 25 minutes after the scheduled time of 1805BST. My first flight on this aircraft type. Quiet and comfortable. Had not flown in a turboprop for ages. Banged my head each time I boarded the aircraft due to the low door. It's about now that all flights were non-smoking, if I remember correctly. Enjoyable flights.

Got good views of the ground and sightings of other aircraft. Took numerous photographs, mainly of cloud overflown. This was mainly low level shallow Cumulus form cloud with patchy high level Cirrus, although by the time of the trip back the Cumulus cloud had developed

vertically with the odd cloud almost to our flight level around 20000ft (FL200). Nearing journey end the sky was overcast with thickened Cirrus and middle layer Altostratus.



On the way we passed Guernsey, Herm and Sark islands, before turning onto the approach over the north-east coast to land at Jersey. Guernsey is not very big. Jersey is not much bigger at 45 square miles, but they say it swells to twice that size at low tide. The composite photographs show Guernsey (top left), Herm (top right), Sark (bottom left) and Jersey passing westward over the eastern coast on approach to RWY 26. While I was there, land was being reclaimed on the south-west side at St Helier, away from Guernsey so that they can get further away from Guernsey, so they say.



The two de Havilland Dash 8 Q400s are G-JEDN, my ride from Birmingham (left) and G-JECF about to depart.



Arriving is a British Airways B737 from Gatwick with a colleague from aviation sales on board. We met in the airport terminal and met our client. Our meeting was with a client at the airport control tower building, where it was pointed out to me that the control tower building was built to the same plans as the old control tower building at Birmingham airport, where it is now part of the cargo section.

The airport, with a single ILS CAT I RWY 08/26 and only 0.04°E magnetic variation, is situated on the south-west of the island, close to the coast, has a marked drop in the terrain at the western end of the runway, shown in the photograph to the left. A case of either on the runway or in the sea. It more closely resembles a cliff with houses below along the coast. Mechanical (terrain induced) turbulence occurs in a strong wind from the east when on short final to RWY 08. Fortunately, the strongest wind is in the prevailing westerly wind and aircraft land from the other end of the runway, that is, RWY 26. Fog can be a problem, which is

most frequent on the west of the island, where the airport is situated. The annual average is 76 days when at least one observation is $<1000\text{m}$ visibility. Radiation fog is rare. Mostly advection fog. Typically, in a tropical westerly air flow from the west to south-west. Mostly late spring/early summer when the sea is at its coldest and can last many hours. A type of radiation fog forms over low lying NE Brittany & SW Normandy in France and is advected to the island on strengthening SE winds. This is most common late autumn and winter months. It does not occur in summer. On average, 13 thunderstorms per year, mostly May to September tending to move northward to north-westward from the direction of Spain, the Bay of Biscay and France. Hail can occur with winter convection showers, although they look more like ice pellets.

Business over, we went into the capital St Helier by taxi to have lunch and look around where I saw the bank building housing my then offshore account from UAE days, soon to be consolidated with my UK onshore account. Looked safe as houses, as they say. Then back to the airport and our flights home. My colleague going to Gatwick. The taxi drivers listen to your conversation and chip in as natural as they like whenever they feel like it. Most amusing and interesting, because they add anything from advice, factual information to gossip.

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND 2006

25th October 2006, it was again an early 5 am start to Birmingham airport and onto a British Airways Connect British Aerospace Engineering (now BAe) 4 jet engined 146/Avro RJ100 to Edinburgh. Outbound BA1820 0645B seat 6A, returned BA1827B, seat 8A, an hour late at 2020BST (scheduled 1920BST). Booking done on the Internet and the first time checked in the

night before getting boarding passes and chosen seats there and back before leaving for the airport.

My first flight on this aircraft type. Some course flight controls on the flight there. Noticed immediately on turn after take-off climb out. Not well handled when flaps were extended on approach to land. Lack of attitude change appreciation.

Silly cabin steward told me to turn my camera off when we were about to land at Edinburgh. First time in over 38 years of flying have I ever been told that. Don't know what she thought it was. Some sort of computer game I suppose. I've seen photographs taken in the cockpit when about to land and done it myself when flying (not landing).

An interesting airport weatherwise. The airport is situated west of the city, about 5 km south of the Firth of Forth. Firth means estuary. The prevailing wind is west-south-westerly, well aligned with the 06/24 RWY. High ground to the south quickly accumulates low cloud, but the base will be relatively higher at the airport. This was noticeable on one of my visits. A tablecloth of stratus layer cloud was present on the hills during a southerly wind in the morning and when the wind swung to east-north-easterly during a later afternoon, while the base of the layer over the airport was 4000 ft. The hills have a slight rain shadow effect over the airport, but are not high enough to be a real deterrent to rain. Rain came in from the east after 1700 UTC. In this situation the base fell from 2000ft to 1200ft and later in the night temporarily down to 900 ft. Scattered low cloud varied between 500ft to 700ft. Visibility was 6000 – 9000m in light to moderate rain and 5000 metres in a brief heavy rain spell.

In general, the airport is sheltered from weather from the north-north-west to north-west by the higher ground to the north. North-easterly sea breezes can be quite strong, particularly in summer, with a south-westerly compensating wind at 500 feet. The airport is particularly exposed to weather from the north-east off the Firth and the North Sea, in particular low cloud and especially in a Haar situation. Haar is a cold sea fog, formed when warmer air passes over the colder North Sea. It is most frequent along the east coast of Scotland and England April to September.



Higher ground to the north-west (left) and south (right) with low cloud tablecloth.

Wind from the NE to E tends to be channelled/funnelled into a ENE direction by the estuary and strengthened. Similarly, wind from the W to SW tends to be channelled in a WSW direction by the valley from Glasgow and strengthened. Low cloud can be brought from the west coast,

but it is less likely and not as low as experienced at Glasgow. Fog is also less likely in wind from this direction.

A south-westerly wind can be a particular problem in positioning aircraft on the approach to RWY 24. The tailwind on downwind results in a high ground speed and the downwind leg has to be extended with aircraft taken through the centreline when turning inbound to intercept the centreline from right in order to adequately decrease the ground speed. This slows the landing rate to about 12 per hour. Unlike Heathrow with parallel runways, Edinburgh has to also slot take-off aircraft between the landing aircraft.

Fog is common. Mist and shallow fog develop along the estuary that borders along the northern side of ILS CAT III RWY 06/24. LVP is implemented during CAT II and III. Advection fog is also common from the north-east off the wider part of the estuary and the open sea further east. Prestwick airport on the opposite west coast gets advection fog from the sea to the west, while Glasgow gets mainly radiation fog. Fog at Edinburgh can be seen to be held at bay to the north-east by a south-westerly wind, but as and when, the wind changes to north-easterly, the fog quickly moves in and the weather goes from ceiling and visibility OK (CAVOK) to very low in no time at all. Fog tends to lift off the ground as soon as the wind speed gets above 7 knots.

At the passenger terminal we were led us down to the wrong gate to get on the aircraft. Although we could walk from there to the aircraft on the apron, we had to walk all the way back up again and out of the correct gate next door. It was raining but they provided no umbrellas. I had my fold up one in my bag, but others had had theirs confiscated as dangerous weapons at the security check. The airline did not use gates with a covered walkway to the aircraft because it costs extra. The airline has subsequently been taken over by Flybe and no longer operates these flights, because they were in competition with their own schedule. The aircraft landed at 2020BST. Disembarked, straight through the terminal, into a taxi and home at 2045BST. Must be some sort of record, it is for me.

LIEGE, BELGUIM 2007

2007 January 14th to 17th it was off to Liège in Belgium. My wife accompanied me. She did the tourist thing while I worked. We flew Brussels Airlines BAe 146 Avro RJ100 OO-DWA Birmingham to Brussels SN2044 1635B arrival 1850B. Returned BAe 146 Avro RJ100 OO-DWC SN2043 1545B arrival 1555B. Note Bravo local times. One hour ahead at Brussels. Hence the apparently longer flight there and only 10 minutes difference returning. On time there and back. Smoothly flown. Booking done on the Internet, but could not choose seats. Seat 17A there and 15F back. Wife 17C and 15E back. First time for wife on this aircraft type, not that she would have noticed or cared, as long as everything worked. Fair snack on the flight there and back. Landed at Brussels on RWY 25R. Took off on RWY 20. Flight smooth there, bumpy take off and climb in rain coming back. Smoother later. Windy and gusty landing at Birmingham.

Nearly had my laptop stolen while we were sitting in a terminal restaurant with a colleague from aviation sales waiting for another colleague. Middle East looking thieves actually managed to take my bag from next to my feet, take out the laptop and cables which were zipped in the bag and then sauntered off. My wife was suspicious of them because they were noisy and kept bumping me. I was trying to ignore their bad behaviour. She asked me if my bag was there, which it was, but I picked it up and felt it was light. So I charged after them shouting stop thieves. They stopped and meekly handed it all over when I ordered them. They then

quickly walked off, before I could even think of the police. Obviously, professionals who wanted no fuss. Better give this one up and go and try another. A Belgian couple who saw it later came up to us and asked if we had lost a wallet, as they saw them sitting in another eating place going through a wallet.

We then travelled by hired car to Liège where we stayed in the Holiday Inn, Esplanade de l'Europe, 2, in Liège next to the Muese River. More specifically, the hotel was on an island in the Muese. Liège is a quiet place. Next to the river with the barges going passed. It is a rather grubby city as it has been in decline since the coal mines nearby closed. To the south is the Ardennes where the 2nd World War Battle of the Bulge took place.



All glass no wall Liège passenger terminal.

My colleagues were there to sign contracts with a client company. I had to give lectures to the courier airline client at the airport. Most of their flights arrive about 10 to 11 pm and depart by 3 am, but they have others during the day and handle flights for other airlines. Now they were introducing a B747 freighter flight to Shanghai and they wanted more weather training.

Situated about 95 km (60 miles) ESE of Brussels in Belgium 201m above sea level (659ft), it has two parallel RWYs, the longer main RWY 05R/23L 3287m and the shorter 2340m RWY 05L/23R. It is quite an exposed

airfield on open hills at nearly 210 m (700ft). The hills rise steadily from the north coast, but just to the south of the airport the land drops steeply down for nearly 150m (~500ft) to the Meuse River valley. It rises again to fairly high hills in southern Belgium (610m 2000ft). Consequently, the airport is reasonably sheltered from south and south-east directions, but quite exposed from the north and west.

Heavy convective precipitation can sweep south from the North Sea to Liege. In January 2004 they had several feet of snow with a very unstable northerly wind from the North Sea and the airport was closed for several days. Cloud bases also have a tendency to drop down to near the



Back at Brussels airport. British Airways A321-231 G-EUXH, Brussels Airlines British Aerospace Avro RJ85 OO-DJV and in the distance Brussels Airlines British Aerospace Avro RJ100 85 OO-DWC our aircraft home. Now airborne in rain with take off flaps extended.

surface in moist south-westerly or westerly wind directions. Any easterly wind is often dry coming off the continent so mist and fog is less of a problem, but the air mass can be quite hazy, more so in summer months.

I was informed that strong wind and gusts limit cargo loading and unloading. Opening aircraft doors, maximum wind gust 40 knots (65kph). When doors are open, maximum wind gust 60 knots (112kph). If lightning is within 10 kilometres, refuelling may cease. Lightning within 5 kilometres, apron personnel take shelter.

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND 2007

Another trip to Edinburgh 28th February 2007. Flew BMIbaby B737, arrival 0810B returned arrival time at Birmingham 1920B, 30 minutes late. I did an electronic book in and boarding pass on the Internet from home the evening before the flight and chose the 19A seats I wanted there and back.

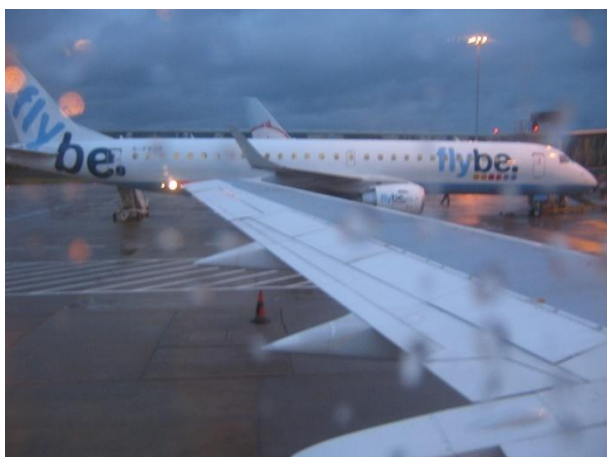
Enjoyable flight. Pilot said that there would be lots of rain and turbulence about, but that they would do their best to avoid it. However, thin layer cloud, clear above about FL150 and slight turbulence. I was at work the previous day and I know that was the previous day's forecast. So I do not know where he obtained his forecast. Not very re-assuring. He also said it was 50 mph (~45 knots) at Edinburgh. This I heard as gusting 50 mph on TV the night before. So now I think I know where he obtained part of his information. An exaggeration, the mean speed would be lower. Anyway, when we arrived the wind was gusting 25-30 kt at the airport. So not bad at all. Got good views of the ground through the cloud and of another aircraft below flying on a similar track to the west. He also said it was the morning rush and to expect a delay getting in, but we went straight in, no delay. I then met the sales rep guys in the concourse.



On final approach to RWY 24 landing flaps beginning to extend and on the runway passing abeam the control tower with flaps and spoilers extended. The angle of the middle section is perfectly aligned with the camera giving the appearance that it is not there.

We finished our airport work by lunchtime so we went to Edinburgh by taxi. I took my two sales aviation sales colleagues to the same pub I went to last time. They had a good laugh when we arrived. The previous time I had not noticed the name. It was called the Dirty Dick. Established 1850. Inside, charmingly cluttered with nearly everything imaginable.

Flight back was 30 minutes late. No apologies from the pilot, or cabin crew. But when we taxied to a stop at Birmingham the stewardess now says they are running late and to speed up



Waiting to push back. Flybe Embraer ERJ 195LR next door.

the turn around would we neatly cross fold our seat belts and take newspapers, etc., out of the seatback holders. What a cheek! You pay for everything and then they want you to clean the aircraft for them free! I was tempted to say if you pay me, I'll clean it for you. Sorry, I was not obliging and I noticed most of the other passengers weren't either.

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND 2007

July 3rd and 4th July 2007 was a visit to Geneva for a meeting with a client at the airport. July was a busy month with business trips to Geneva, Zurich and Brussels and also a problem with the Belgian Embassy.

Travelling on a South African passport meant I needed a valid Schengen visa to travel to European Union countries. However, my Schengen visa was due to expire just before my already planned trip to Brussels later in July, so I had to organise it quickly before I went to Geneva. I put a covering letter with it to explain the situation, but they ignored it. Fortunately, I followed it up. They saw that I only needed it on the 25th for Brussels, so they gave it low priority. I needed my passport in a few days to go to Geneva where South Africans do not need a visa. So I had to arrange for them to hold it and dash down by train on the Monday to collect it in London and then the following day, 3rd July, leave for Geneva.

The Geneva trip was a series of delays. The bus from home to the airport was late. The flight to Zurich and then on to Geneva was late and the return flights. The flight problem being lack of ATC staff at Zurich, them working to rule and thunderstorms in the London part of the route from Birmingham to Zurich. Credit to the captain of Swiss LX423 BAe146 Avro Jet scheduled to depart at 1340B. He met everyone at the entrance door. A first and only experience. Being July, all times are summer daylight saving times. Then when everyone was seated (I was in seat 5F), he explained everything on the intercom. The colleague from aviation sales travelling with me and I missed our Zurich to Geneva flight and had a long wait. We would have got to Geneva from Zurich quicker by train. Because the flights were already paid, we had no choice. Because we were delayed, we were given SFr 10 vouchers for a meal, so we decided to eat at the airport, as we would get to Geneva too late for the hotel to be serving meals, unless we went into the city to a restaurant.

We finally left on Swiss flight LX2816, an Airbus A320. This flight was also delayed. Supposed to depart Zurich at 2025B, but departed nearly an hour late arriving at Geneva at 2230B. Strange, after all these years this was my first flight on this aircraft type. Then, like busses they all came along together. The flight back to Zurich was the same type and then the flight back to Birmingham. Then on the trip later in the month to Zurich was the same.

An amusing incident happened while getting to my seat 27A in the aircraft on this late evening delayed flight. A man stopped to load his luggage in the overhead bin. He took a bit too long so the woman in front of me simply prodded him in the ribs with a finger. While waiting for my luggage at carousel in the Geneva terminal, I watched a woman who could not work out how to release the brakes on a luggage trolley in a row of trolleys. Eventually she worked it out on a trolley standing on its own and blissfully walked off with it. Unfortunately, it was a

trolley another passenger had positioned for his luggage. When he swung around with his luggage off the conveyor belt there was no trolley. By then the lady had merged with other waiting passengers.

We arrived at Geneva close to 2230B. It poured with rain on the 10 minute walk to the airport Express Holiday Inn. We walked into the foyer and up to reception leaving a trail of water. 30 minutes to clean up, us that is, not the water, then back down to the combined reception/bar for 2 beers (each).



The room with a view.

The airport has a single RWY 05/23 3900m with an adjacent much shorter grass runway used in visual flight rules by small general aviation aircraft. It also has a lavatory that is most definitely a room with a view. Situated in the tall tower immediately below the air traffic control platform, it has a window facing toward the north-east with a view of about two thirds of the airport plus the surrounding scenery.

Situated at the south-western end of Lake Geneva and west of the city at 430m (1411ft) above sea level, the south-west to north-east airport runway is hemmed in by the Alps and

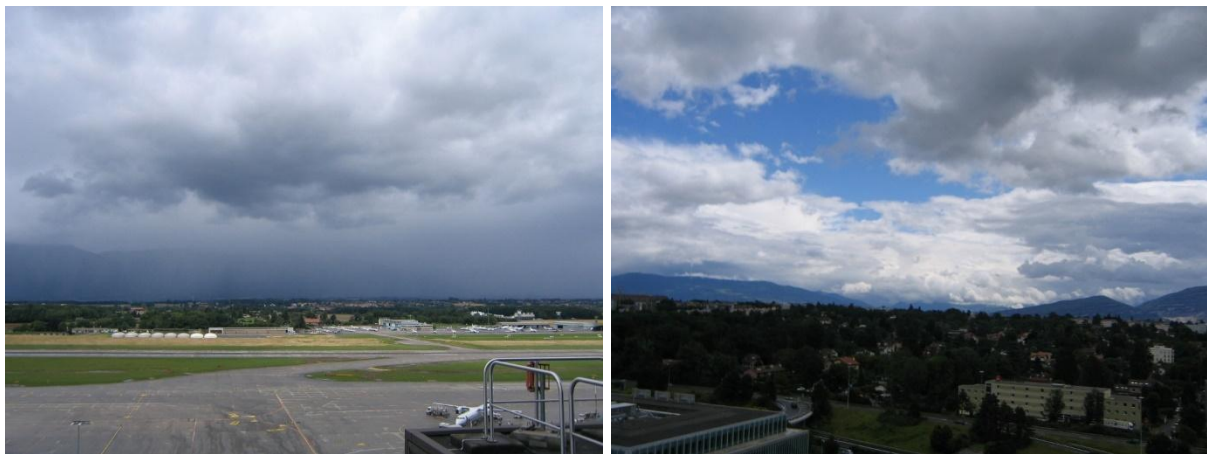
Jura Mountains. Apart from the usual important weather warning situation, namely low cloud base, poor visibility, snow and ice, three important weather warning situations for the ATCs at Geneva are, thunderstorms, wind direction change and tail winds aloft. The meeting aside, I learnt a lot from staff of Skyguide (the Swiss air navigation service) and a MeteoSwiss document (the Swiss meteorological service).



The approach to RWY 05 left. Approach to RWY 23 right. At least 12 different airlines counted and many business jets. Geneva is home to the United Nations in Europe.

Thunderstorm line squalls that pass through are of particular importance, due to the usual thunderstorm weather effects. If a thunderstorm is within 5 km loading and refuelling of aircraft ceases. Thunderstorms on the approaches are of importance, in particular the approach to RWY 23. This is the preferred runway. The airport lies at the southern end of the converging lines of the Alps to the south-east and the Jura to the north-west. In the more open ground on the

approach to RWY 23, ILS intercepts can be made from FL070 or 7000 ft above mean sea level (MSL), to 4000ft MSL (or ± 5600 ft above ground level (AGL) to ± 2600 ft AGL). Whereas approaches to RWY 05, at the opposite end, are restricted to FL070 intercepts. Thunderstorms often form on the Jura Mountains to the immediate NW and the foothills of the Alps to the SE. These are not a problem as long as they stay there and do not move over the airport, or cross the approaches. On the day of our visit on the 4th July 2007, thundershowers regularly formed on the mountains in the westerly flow and orographic lift on the upwind side. Those that formed on the Jura Mountains decayed as soon as they moved to the lee between the mountains and the airport with decaying rain showers occasionally coming close enough to reduce the visibility to about 2000 metres. Those that formed on the upwind side of the Alps to the south simply moved further away to the east over the Alps. Thunderstorms also tend to form over the nearby lake to the south-east and these can be near enough to be a problem on the approach to RWY 23.



Left, the view to the north-west. The hills indicate the border with France. The Jura Mountains are more distant. Right, the view toward the distant Alps. The southern end of Lake Geneva is behind the ridge in the foreground.

Advance warning of the expected wind direction, particularly at the beginning of the day at about 6 am are important. Due to the surrounding terrain, it is not a simple matter of making runway changes during the day. As mentioned above, lower intercepts are possible to RWY 23 than RWY 05. Usually, a 5 kt tailwind at the ground can be acceptable before a change has to be made. So if it is known that the wind, at say 050 degrees 4 kts, is going to change to 230 degrees 10 kt in the next few hours it is worthwhile using runway 23 with a 4 kt tailwind until it changes to 230 degrees and a headwind. Apparently due to the range of mountains close by to the north-west and south-east, crosswinds are rare. That is, Fohn winds, anabatic and katabatic effects are usually not an issue. But, the Joran wind (lee northerly off the Jura Mountains) can gust 15-25 kt and sometimes surge to 30 kt gusts for 1 to 2 hours. The funnelling effect means that easterly winds can be strong and gusty.

Tail winds aloft. Because aircraft fly according to air speed (that is, the speed of air flowing over the wings) a tailwind at FL070 (± 5600 ft AGL) and at about 2600 to 3000ft AGL is important. It translates to excess ground speed on approach. 15 knots tailwind being the critical speed aloft.

As with UK airports, snow and ice creates the same problems, but more often. Also, as with any airport, whether the snow is wet, or dry, is important. Dry snow simply blows off the aircraft, but wet snow sticks. Snow clearance priority is runway then taxiways. Available all s

easons were 7 blowers, 18 blades 25 trucks. Under de-icing conditions ice becomes a particular problem as they can only treat approximately 7 aircraft per hour.

Business over with our client at the airport, the flight from Geneva to Zurich LX2813 seat 26B A320 (2nd flight on an A320) departure 1525B was slightly late, but enough to cause concern and give us about 30 minutes to get to the boarding gate for the flight to Birmingham. It was a bit worrying sitting in the aircraft waiting for the push back. The captain made his announcement in English then in French then in English again. If he has this sort of problem with short term memory, I certainly hoped the co-pilot was keeping a close watch on him.

There was no need to worry about the connecting flight back to Birmingham on Swiss LX424 seat 18B, right at the back in the BAe 146. Yes, it was delayed. To our surprise this flight was a wet lease operation by Flightline BAe 146 for Swiss. A wet lease being one where the primary operator pays the secondary operator who provides everything, the aircraft, the crew, fuel, etc. We boarded about 30 minutes late. Then the pilot announced that we were all ready to go, but there was now a 30 to 40 minute delay. Yes, it was the ATC problem again. So instead of getting to Birmingham at 1815B we arrived at 1930B. Then the gantry would not fit against the aircraft door. So we had to wait while mobile steps were brought up and another 20 minute delay. Finally, through immigration and customs. I was the only one off our flight that was not an EU citizen, so I did not have to queue at the foreigner's counter at Birmingham. The immigration guy politely asked me how long I intended to stay. Told him I live here. Silly billy. It helps to check the passport before asking these questions.

ZURICH, SWITZERLAND 2007

Eight days later, 11th July 2007, it was off to Zürich. This time I was with two colleagues from aviation sales. Once again it was the 1340BST Birmingham to Zurich flight LX423 BAe 146 Avro Jet, this time seat 3B. Interestingly, only two rows of business seats in front of us. Once again, the flight was late. About 30 minutes this time. This time there was no connection to worry about. Interestingly, the immigration woman did not stamp my passport, but this time scanned it. Just missed the hotel bus, so we had to wait 20 minutes. Checked into the Novotel Zurich Airport, which looked just like the Holiday Inn place, but smaller.

Half hour clean up, then off to Opfikon station and on one of the Swiss double-decker S – Bahnen trains on the 11 minute trip to Hauptbahnhof Zurich station. The train arrived spot on time and arrived at Hauptbahnhof Zurich spot on time. Better than the aircraft. We went upstairs where we saw what we thought was a 1st class sign. But we stayed put. What do we know, we are foreigners? Real posh train. Thick and clean carpets, soundproofing and tables.

We then walked along the cobbled Munstergasse (one street inland from the river) and looked at the sights. Took a photograph of a statue of something that seemed important. Stopped at the Andorra and had a Belgian Maredsous beer and then a Swiss Ittinger beer. Then it was off to another small place, the Rheinfelder Bierhaus to eat and another beer. Can't remember the food, but it was good and served with soup first and bread. Then it was off again to another place more like a disco for another beer. We then returned by taxi to the hotel. The taxi was driven by a substantial sized woman who had miniature toy taxis glued all over the dashboard.

The next morning, we hotel bussed it back to the airport to our meeting with the client at the airport. The meeting was good. Got a free lunch. The meeting aside, I again learnt a lot from

staff of Skyguide (the Swiss air navigation service) and a MeteoSwiss document (the Swiss meteorological service).



View of the approach to RWY 34 (left) and across RWY 10/28 to the Swiss terminal.



United Airlines B767 airborne from RWY 16.

At 432m (1416ft), Zurich airport is north of the city. In more open countryside than at Geneva, it has the luxury of three runways. RWY 16/34 3700m (12139ft), RWY 14/32 3300m (10827ft) and RWY 10/28 2500m (8202ft). ILS CAT IIIb on RWYs 16 and 14 (0ft cloud base, RVR 50m) and ILS CAT I on RWYs 34 and 28 (200ft, RVR 550m). RWY 28 has an uncategorised ILS. The ILS signal meets ICAO regulations but with acceptable coverage restrictions. Approach to this runway has a minimum of 4300m visibility and 1200ft AGL cloud base. RWYs 10 and 32 are visual approaches.

An advance LVP, or preparatory stage is instigated when the visibility falls to 1500m and/or 220ft cloud base. LVP is instituted at 750m observed visibility or 550m RVR and/or 200ft cloud base. Forecasting the onset and ending times are important.

Runway use is severely restricted by political and noise abatement restrictions. Some runways can only be used Monday to Friday 0900 to 2400 hours local time and not on Saturdays, Sundays and German holidays, due to its proximity to the German border. This means that runways often have to be used that have tailwinds for landing and departure. Terrain can also be an issue. No approaches are made to RWY 10 due to a hill on the approach. For noise abatement reasons the airport is closed between 2330Z to 0500Z, although it is still open for emergency services and diversion traffic. Local time is UTC + 1, but UTC + 2 during daylight saving.

Advance warning of the expected wind direction and speed for the day are important. As already mentioned, due to the severe restrictions imposed on the airport, runways often have to be used with a tailwind component. In general, the maximum tailwind speed is 5 knots, but they can get away with up to 10 knots for some operators on RWY 14. According to ATC Föhn

winds are rare. However, a northerly Föhn results in lowering of the cloud base to 400 to 800 ft with poorer visibility on the windward side of the Alps that can spread into the vicinity of the airport. The southerly Föhn brings dry and hotter weather with turbulence. The orography of the Swiss plateau is such that winds are predominantly north-easterly or south-westerly. The greatest operational problems and a cause for capacity limitation, are strong westerly to south-westerly winds. It was pointed out that they were more prevalent this year (2007) than is usual. Low level wind shear can be a problem and it is difficult to forecast. A warning to this effect is usually instigated by a report from a pilot.

The fact that the airport lies in a broad plateau of low hills, the orographic thunderstorm problems associated with Geneva are not prevalent. According to the ATCs spoken to, thunderstorms approach from the west or south-west. This suggests that they are driven by fronts and troughs. They do not threaten from the south off the Alps. Line squalls that pass through are of particular importance, due to the usual thunderstorm weather effects. The critical radius for thunderstorms in the airport vicinity is 9 nautical miles (nm), particularly if they are move to the approach of an active runway. Generally, thunderstorms within 30 nm radius of the airport are significant.

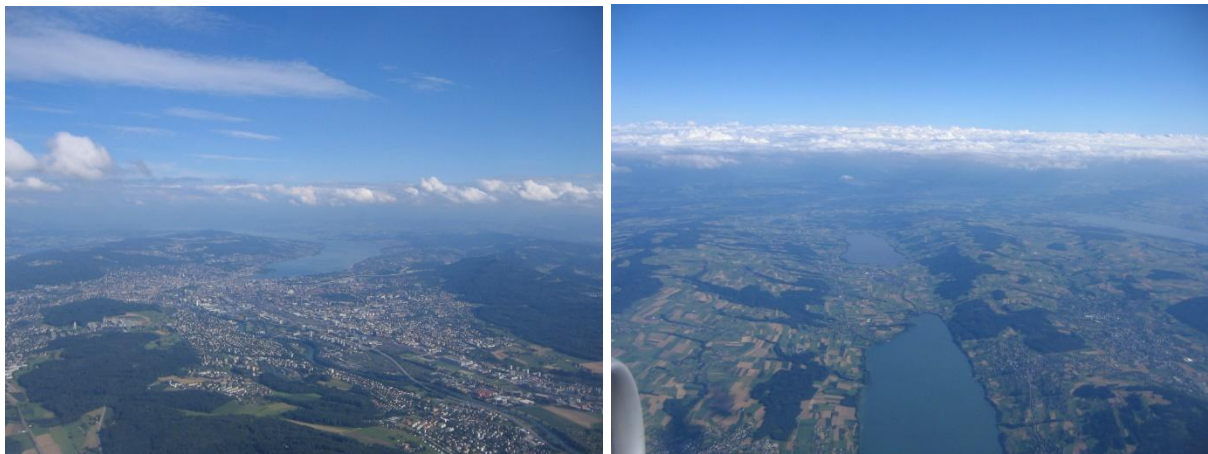
From their webcam I noticed that mist, or shallow fog patches, tend to form most often on the north-western end at RWYs 16 and 14 where there is marshy ground further to the north. According to the ATC, radiation fog always forms from the north on the marshy terrain there and drifts onto the airport on a 1 to 2 knots northerly wind. Most fog occurs September to March, although it can also still occur in summer. Fog is frequent between 2100 UTC to 0900 UTC in winter. It can sometimes last the whole day with no clearing under an anticyclone subsidence inversion, the top of the fog being about 2000ft MSL. That is, about 600ft thick. According to the local ATC, fog can form about 2100Z then lift and develop again toward sunrise. Visibility can drop rapidly from 1000-800m to 200-100m.

According to the people spoken to significant snow occurs only about 2 to 3 times per year. Of greater significance are icing conditions. Snow is most likely in a warm front and is of short duration, lasting about 2 to 3 hours, then followed by rain. As with any airport, whether the snow is wet, or dry, is important. Dry snow simply blowing off the aircraft, but wet snow sticks. Snowfall is usually from November to April with peaks in December and February. Snow occurs when the freezing level falls to 2500 to 4000 ft MSL. Freezing rain tends to be a rare occurrence, occurring in December and January and rarely in February. During severe winters freezing conditions may last for several weeks.

Meeting over, we walked through corridors to the passenger terminal to check in and wait for our flight back. Longish wait for our return flight, so I had time to take numerous photographs of the airport runways. Also photographs on the flight home.

Once again, the flight back to Birmingham was on Swiss LX424 my seat 5A. When we booked prior to the trip, there were no seats left in economy so we booked business class. It would seem that they subsequently had a lot more demand and that the Avro RJ we should have been on was far too small, or unserviceable, because when we boarded our aircraft, it was now an A320. I suspect that this was a fairly late decision and that we were originally destined to fly back on a Flightline aircraft again, because I recognised one of the cabin crew from last week. She and the rest of the crew were deadheading (as it is called) back to the UK. We saw them when we were checking in through security. Although they were travelling with us as passengers, they still used their crew status to jump the queue. Business class was much better.

More legroom. My colleagues and I were spread across 5 seats (3 seats on one side of the aisle and 2 seats on the other side. No roll and a cool drink like the plebs, but a proper meal with real plates and cutlery.



After take off from RWY 16 a righthand turn to climb to England. Left, Zurich and Zurichsee (lake) in the background. Right, passing over Hallwilersee, Baldeggersee in the distance and Sempachersee to the far right.

Only me again at the foreigner counter, so I again sailed through. This immigration guy was more with it. Looked properly through my passport and did not make any comments, like how long do I intend to stay.

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM 2007

On the 25th July 2007 it was off to Brussels and an early start for this day trip. Up at 0445BST for the taxi at 0515BST and the 0630BST SN Brussels BAe 146 Avro RJ flight SN2050, seat 17A, from Birmingham to Brussels. I checked in via the Internet from work the previous day so I already had my boarding pass, which cut down the time necessary to be there before the flight.

Not a good start. The taxi company sent the taxi at 5:15 pm the previous day instead of 5:15 am the following morning. Fortunately, I had just arrived home from work so I could sort it and rearrange it. At 5:15 am the following morning, I could not believe it but 2 taxis arrived. I took my mobile out to call the taxi company, but the drivers sorted it amongst themselves and I climbed into a taxi. On the way there I must have put my mobile down on the seat, something I never do, because when I reached airport security, I found I was minus my mobile. I then had to make calls to the taxi company and home on a pay phone. The pay phones are a form of robbery, which I found out to my cost because they do not give back unused money. Which meant I then had to get change. The taxi lady, after explaining that my mobile was in the taxi, asked me to give her my mobile number and she would call me back. Obviously intending to call the number to find out who would answer. Hopefully the taxi driver. In any event I did not know my mobile number. We had guests from the UAE staying. Apparently, they heard my 3 calls, but did not answer, so I had to leave more and more frantic messages as the flight was already boarding. Eventually, I had to get on the aircraft. The flight was on time. In fact, it arrived 10 minutes early.

This created a problem the other end at Brussels. I had arranged to meet the two sales colleagues from our previous visit to Zurich at the arrivals exit, because we were arriving on different

flights. They came in from East Midlands airport at Nottingham on BMIbaby. Although I arrived before them, I was held up by a long queue, which took nearly an hour to get through, while those at the EU queues were going through quickly. I saw a colleague go through in the distance, but I could do nothing to attract his attention. When I finally got out, I could not see them. I waited for a considerable time, but no joy. So I went to the Information desk, to enquire about getting to the client. I was told to catch a number 12 bus and get off at the NATO building, or there were taxis around the corner. I went back to the arrivals point. Still no one. I went down the corridor to the lavatory and back. Still no one. By now I decided they had gone on ahead so I caught a taxi to the client. But they were not there. I met one of the guys from our Swiss visit that was going to be at the meeting. He called Colin on his mobile. When they arrived, they tried to contact me, but of course there was no answer. They realised my immigration queue was long and assumed I had been held up. But where they were waiting, I do not know.



Crossing the Belgium coast and very short final RWY 25R. ATC tower in the background.

The meeting with the European air navigation client was worthwhile. Taxi back to the airport. They left 3 hours before me. Brussels has three runways, two parallel ILS CAT III, RWYs 07R/25L and 07L/25R, with one diagonal, ILS CAT I RWY 02/20, forming a letter Z. LVP is in operation for CAT II and III. As usual, I was not bored watching the numerous airline aircraft arrive and depart.



Arrival of Etihad A330-243 A6-EYD 1630 BST (left). Right, Etihad A330, El Al B737, SN Brussels BAe 146 Avro RJ and TUI B737.

The terminal departure hall renovation had been completed since we were last there in January. Looked much better with big aviation theme murals and photographs of Belgium from the air. They also have different chapels upstairs, namely, Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Protestant, a synagogue, mosque and a humanist councillor.

Eventually back to Birmingham on SN Brussels. As before from this airport, because of the



Over England on board SN Brussels BAe 146 Avro RJ at 1953 BST.

hour time difference, I arrived at Birmingham at the same local time as it was local time when I left Brussels. Not as impressed by SN Brussels as before when we went to Liège via Brussels. They no longer give you a bread roll and cool drink, or coffee/tea. It is now pay for everything like the UK no frills airlines.

Only 3 of us off the flight at the foreigner counter. The other 2 did not fill in their cards on the aircraft, so I again sailed through. The immigration lady made the same mistake as before and asked how long I intended to stay, before looking through the passport. I said I lived here.

I was reconciled to having to buy a new mobile, but when I arrived home my wife surprised me by producing it. She received my message soon after I called. Called my mobile which was on and spoke to the taxi driver who said he was on the nightshift and he would return it that evening. It was delivered by him about an hour before I came home. So my grateful thanks to Asam, also known as Green 52 at TOA taxis.

Between 2007 to 2012 I made another 5 visits to the same client. Every time seeing nothing of Belgium other than the trip from and to the airport. Until 2012, when I travelled with the boss and my wife on Eurostar and nowhere near the airport, so it does not count.

LONDON CITY AIRPORT 2007

Went to London, Friday 28th September 2007 to visit a new client at London City Airport. It was a good trip. Chiltern trains to Marylebone, then underground to Bank and then the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) to the Airport. Always like travelling on the DLR. There is no driver. All the trains are automatically controlled by computer. So one can sit at the front as if one were the driver. They are called trains, but look more like trams. The train has a conductor. They monitor the train at the stations and do not allow the doors to shut until the passengers are all on or off. Otherwise, it is all done by computers monitored in a central control room.

London City Airport is located in the Royal Docks, part of London Docklands, about 10km (~6 miles) east of the London centre. The London Docklands was formally the largest enclosed docks in the world. Completed around 1920, they provided safe births for large ships that could not be accommodated further upriver as well as isolated from Thames Estuary tidal changes. These days the docks are being regenerated as a commercial area. London City Airport is located between the northern and southern part of the Royal Docks, surrounded by water except



at the south-western side where the apron and passenger terminal are located. The 10/28 runway is 1508m (4947ft) long.

The photograph was taken on the 5th April 2008 when returning from Geneva (see account of the trip below). The runway is situated between the two dark parallel strips of the remaining docklands water with another docklands water section to the left. The Thames River is nearby to the south, curving to near to the docks at their eastern end (on the right of the docks).

There are numerous restrictions for aircraft operation at the airport due to its position near the centre of London. Restrictions were those in existence at the time of my visit.

Due to its location, the airport is severely restricted with respect to hours of operation, noise control, types and number of aircraft permitted to fly in and out. Operating hours (local time) are Monday to Friday 0630-2200, Saturday 0500-1240B and Sunday 1100-2200B. The airport may not be used by aircraft producing noise more than 94.5 PNdB. No helicopters, or single engine aircraft are allowed. The biggest jets are the BAe 146, Canadair RJ85, Fokker 70, the Embraer 135 and British Airways A319. The biggest turboprops are the ATR 42/72, Fokker 50 and the De Havilland Canada DHC-8, or Dash 8.

Due to the built-up surroundings, there can be considerable mechanical turbulence and wind shear on the approach and landing in strong winds. Particularly from the west to RWY 10 with the higher buildings that end.

The Instrument Landing System (ILS) is CAT I at 5½° approach as opposed to the normal 3°, due built-up area with higher minimum RVR 500-600m and 400 to 450ft cloud base. That is, higher than usual for CAT I ILS. However, it is uncertified. It is, therefore, used at the pilot's discretion.

There are also stricter wet runway restrictions due to the length of the runway, effect on braking and acceleration drag. Operations are only permitted when the runway is dry, or predominantly dry. No operations are permitted when there is more than 3 mm of standing water, ice or slush to a depth of 3 mm is exceeded and dry snow to a depth of 10 mm. At the time of my visit, the airport had three de-icing rigs for aircraft and two runway snow clearing vehicles. In winter, due to low sun to the south and the position of the terminal building to the south of the apron, it has been noted that ice forms in the building shadow area before any other place on the airport.

Close proximity to the Thames and surrounded by the docklands water, mist, radiation and/or advection fog can be a problem, with the usual problems in winter of freezing fog. But due to the urban location, it is probably not as prone as it would be if it was in the open countryside.

Being to the east of London, the heat island effect is more likely with a westerly wind. The heat island effect in a westerly wind results in higher cloud bases than in an easterly wind when cooler and more moist air arrives from the Thames Estuary and the English Channel. Cloud

bases between Heathrow and London City can differ by 200-600ft. In low cloud from the east the cloud base at London City can be 200-500ft lower than Heathrow, but 200-500 ft higher in a westerly wind

HEATHROW, ENGLAND 2008

29th March 2008, a rare visit to Heathrow. With regard to travel, we avoid the airport at all time. It operates at too high capacity with serious disruption if there is below minimum weather, strikes, internet technology and other equipment problems. However, on occasions to and from Heathrow and transiting long ago, as previously mentioned, have been trouble free. More recently I did go to the airport on a number occasions to visit a client with no problems at all and good hospitality, albeit by train.

This occasion was to meet my wife who returned from a trip to South Africa from the 25th February concerning private business and to visit relatives. She travelled with Virgin Atlantic arriving at Heathrow on the 29th March on flight VS602 in an A340.



Seen from the viewpoint on a parking garage. Left, Heathrow's new 87m (285ft) ATC tower opened in 2007. In the background behind the tower is the new British Airways Terminal 5, recently opened earlier in this month of March 2008. Right, the Virgin Atlantic A340 taxiing to its docking bay left of the yellow tail Royal Brunei aircraft.³⁷

The airport is to the west of London and at only 25m (83ft) above AMSL in the Thames River Valley. It has two RWYs 09L/27R 3901m (12798ft) and 09R/27L 3660m (12008ft), equipped with ILS CAT III. Surface winds are markedly more frequent and stronger from the south-west to west. Consequently this, combined with a noise abatement agreement with residents to the eastern London city side of the airport, means landing is much more often than not on RWY 27L and take-off on RWY 27R, provided the tailwind component is no higher than 5 knots. Night noise restrictions are 2300-0700B RWYs 09L/09R and 2300-0600B for RWYs 27L/27R.

Building induced turbulence and wind shear when landing on RWY 27R occurs with strong southerly to south-westerly winds. Building induced turbulence also occurs when landing on RWY 27L in a strong northerly wind, as well as the mid-section of the runway in a strong northerly or southerly wind.

In an easterly wind, the heat island effect mentioned at London City airport, can result in a higher cloud base than in a westerly wind in similar atmospheric conditions. More noticeable

is the warming effect in an easterly wind when Heathrow has a higher maximum temperature than the centre of London.

The airport is sheltered to some extent by the 213m (700ft) high Chiltern Hills located E-W to the north and by the 244m (800ft) South Downs located E-W to the south. It is quite exposed from the east to north-east from the North Sea. For example, heavy snow showers in the right wind direction can cross London to Heathrow from the North Sea in an easterly to north-easterly flow.

In summer and winter post cold front/trough, afternoon convective showers can arrive from the north-west via the Cheshire gap, or from the north east of the Pennines, also in a post trough westerly flow. Summer thundershowers can move northward from France. Apparently, there is no specific limit for operations to be curtailed or totally cease in the event of an approaching thunderstorm. A common sense approach seems to be used, with 5 km being one of the suggested thresholds. Thunderstorms are most likely in a westerly to south-westerly air flow in summer

Fog can be a problem since it is a wide and marshy river valley providing moisture. The nearby reservoirs to the south-west of the airport can be a source of fog in marginal conditions. That is, radiation fog with calm to light winds close to dew-point temperature r). A light 1 to 2 knots north-north-westerly katabatic wind off the Chiltern Hills later in the night can result in the pooling of over a series of lakes to the north-north-west of Heathrow airport facilitating fog formation. The fog can then drift to the airport, especially shortly after dawn. High pressure, with a clear night sky and sufficient near surface moisture, is always a recipe radiation for fog.

Freezing fog is a significant issue. There are two types - super cooled fog whose droplets freeze on contact with surfaces below 0°C and ice fog. The super-cooled fog is particularly troublesome and can, on occasion, result in ground crew needing to check engines before allowing a plane to fly. Other extreme examples include having an aircraft taxi out and then having to bring it back for de-icing and anti-icing, or for a 30-minute de-icing and anti-icing process to be wiped out by freezing fog in only 15 minutes.

Aircraft wings are also said to be cold-soaked when they contain very cold fuel as a result of having just landed after a prolonged flight at high altitude, or having refuelled with very cold fuel. Fuel tanks in the wings (amongst other places) can cool the wings to the point that icing occurs if the wings are wet as a result of, for example, falling precipitation rain or fog. Factors that contribute to cold soak are the length of time at high altitude, temperature and quantity of fuel in the wings, type and location of fuel cells, the temperature of refuelled fuel and the time since refuelling. Cold soak icing can become an issue when the air temperature is around $+6^{\circ}\text{C}$. Above this temperature, the air is usually warm enough to warm the wings and the fuel before any icing can take place.

De-icing fluid is used to remove any ice once it has formed. Anti-icing fluid is used to prevent the formation of icing no matter how slight it is anticipated to be. Typical areas that need protecting are the leading edges of the wings, tailfin, tail plane and propellers.

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND 2008

April 14th and 15th 2008 was a return trip to Geneva airport. This time I was accompanied by the boss.



At the Zurich departure gate. Swiss A320 in the foreground, a Helvetic F100 background right.

The flight outbound from Birmingham to Zurich was on Swiss Air LX421 departure time 0840B (0740Z), seat 12A, but operated by Helvetic using a Fokker 100. Departed about 15 minutes late. The aircraft has one forward door. All cleaners, catering loaders, etc., have to work through the front door and the one group cannot do their job until the previous lot have finished. A 35 minute turn around time was allowed for this flight, but due to their using this aircraft it was not be done in less than 45 minutes.

From Zurich to Geneva, it was aboard Swiss Air LX2806 departure time 1255B (1055Z) in an A320, me in seat 15F.



Geneva approach to RWY 23. Snow on the distant mountains to the north.

There was snow on the mountains to the north and the Alps to the south and quite low down. The temperature was -4C at 4000ft. Stayed at the Ibis Hotel, about 15 minutes walk from the airport.

They gave free public transport tickets to residents, so the boss and I caught a number 10 bus into town. We got off near to the Lake Geneva, Geneva is at the western end of the lake. It was a gloomy evening with snow falling, but melting before it reached the ground at city level. We then went into the Grand Duke Pub, down a side street back from the lake side. Had a Cardinal beer there

and then walked further up the street to a restaurant where we ate and had more Cardinal beer.



Final approach RWY 23 and landing. A320 flaps and spoilers similar design to the B737.



Lake Geneva with virga precipitation, a fancy way of saying precipitation evaporating and not reaching the ground.

On the way to the restaurant, we passed young women standing in doorways and it suddenly dawned on me that these were prostitutes. They were not bad looking. It always intrigued me that in the UK and Europe they are usually fairly attractive and some even quite pretty, not like the rubbish you see in South Africa.

Something I have not seen since the South Africa days was people coming to one's table to sell flowers, either for themselves or a charity. In this instance it was an elderly deaf mute lady who came around to all the tables with small items to buy and a letter, in French, explaining her situation (I assume).

Also a guy came in and sang one song while playing a guitar. Then came around with a collection ash tray. When we left the restaurant to catch a bus back to the hotel we got soaked. Just like last time I was there. We had more beers at the hotel and then to bed.



Crossing the France coast and passing London City Airport with the white circular Millenium Dome visible next to the Thames River.



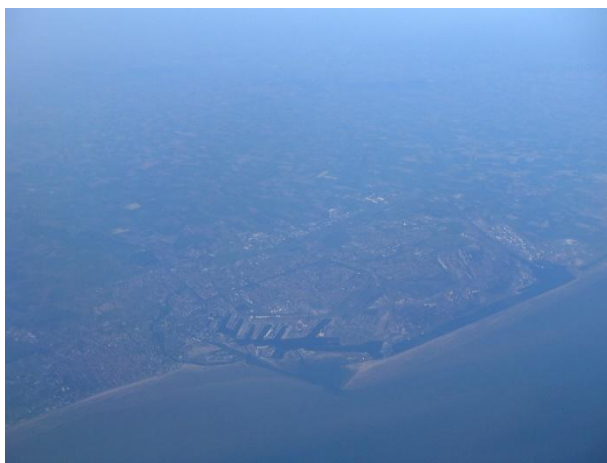
Birmingham Airport. Positioning downwind for a righthand approach to RWY 15.

Client meeting over at the airport, we returned to the passenger terminal for our Swiss Air flight to Zurich, flight LX2807 departure 1020B (0820Z), my seat 37B (last row next to lavatories). We were in a long queue to check in when I spotted the self check in machines. Got a nice young Swiss Air lady to do our check in for us on the machine for this flight and our next flight. Just as well because, although there was an hour between connections, being in the last row in the aircraft we were last off and had about 30 minutes to get off our flight and onto the Zurich flight to Birmingham.

Our flight to Birmingham was as Swiss Air LX422 departure 1210B (1010Z), my seat 16F on an Avro RJ100 (basically a BAe 146, or earlier HS 146). More room on their RJ100 than the previous time when I flew on the Flightline aircraft. Flightline had more seat rows so as to cram in more passengers for holiday package flights, I think. No refreshments on their flights either, whereas one gets some on the Swiss flights. My opinion, for what it is worth, it is no wonder they lost the wet lease contract to Helvetic, which operated according to Swiss standards.

BRUSSELS, BELGUIM 2008

An early start for this day trip on the 7th May 2008. Up at 0445BST for the taxi at 0515BST and the 0635BST SN Brussels BAe 146 Avro RJ flight SN2050, my seat 14F, from Birmingham to Brussels. I checked in via the Internet from home the previous day so I already had my boarding pass, which cut down the time necessary to be there before the flight.



The flight was on time, only 5 minutes late push back. I was with an aviation sales colleague, however, because we checked in separately, we were in different parts of the aircraft. No drinks or snacks unless one paid.

The photograph shows the flight en route to Brussels passing (from right to left) to the north of the docking basin, the Bassin de Freycinet, at Dunkerque (or Dunkirk in English).

We were quickly through Customs, not a long and slow moving line like last time in July 2007. Although this time, a long queue for the taxi. 20 minutes before we got a taxi.

The meeting with the European air navigation client began before 10:30, an hour break for lunch at 12, finished at 2 pm. Taxi back to the airport.

Back to Birmingham on SN Brussels Bae 146 Avro RJ 1630 Brussels time flight SN2045, seat 14A but hardly any seat taken at the back so I swapped at times with seat 14F to get pictures.

Only 3 of us at the back were B.Light Economy tickets, everyone else on B.Flexi. So they all got food and drinks, we got nothing. I think the stewardess felt sorry for us because she offered us a drink.

Only 4 of us off the flight at the foreigner counter. Got through second. I think the immigration lady remembered me, because she looked at the passport first and then stamped everything and let me through.

DUBLIN, IRELAND 2008

September 2008 it was off to Ireland from the 9th to the 15th. Although I was on 3 weeks leave, I agreed to go to Dublin to lecture to an Irish airline's dispatchers for 2 days. My wife went with me on this trip.

We departed from Birmingham on Aer Lingus A320 flight EI273 1430B (1330Z), seats 8E and F, 30 minutes late. Sitting in a window seat Identified Liverpool airport and Liverpool when we passed to the south of them. Saw a gas flame from a gas rig near the English coast in the Irish Sea. Quite windy on the sea with large waves breaking. Saw the inlet and large lagoon north of Malahide when we did our approach to Dublin Airport.



We stayed in the Clarion Airport Hotel (excellent hotel), within a short walking distance from the airport, during the first 2 nights while I did 2 days of training lectures then we moved to a B&B while we toured in a hired car. While on a Sunday morning walk, the day before our return home, we went to the Glasnevin National Botanic Gardens. On our return to the B&B we passed the Met Eireann (Irish Meteorological Service) headquarters. A most unusual building as seen in the photograph.

Monday morning 15th, we returned the car at the airport then went to check in for the flight home. The departure terminal at Dublin airport was interesting. The sign on the ground floor at the centre of the arrival terminal, where the hotel busses drop passengers, shows one must go up the escalator at the left end of the hall to the departures check in desks. When one gets up there the board says all Aer Lingus flights are at area 14. This is all the way along the length of the hall to the other end. When one gets there a sign says that one must go back down to the ground floor to area 14. We are now almost back where we started when we entered the terminal building. Here another sign said one must go to the basement to area 14. Finally, we check in. We then had to go back up a different set of 2 escalators beyond the arrival hall and back up to the departure hall where we go through the security checks and into the departure lounge and duty free shops. No embolisms for Aer Lingus passengers. They are all fit before they board a flight.



Our flight home, an Aer Lingus A320 and a Ryanair B737.

We returned on EL272 A320 departure 1300 (1200Z). Window seat 14F, Roz 14E, but we changed seats so that my wife could be next to the window for the return. Unfortunately, this row was over the wing. I should have thought of it when we checked in, but I was busy quickly

locking the suitcase, as we had forgotten to do it. We were in cloud, or above cloud, from shortly after take-off until long finals directly to RWY 13 at Birmingham.

I was back at Dublin airport 16th to 18th November. Same client, different despatchers, same hotel, but did not venture into Dublin.

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND 2008 AND 2009



EGCC winter sunrise 11th February 2009.

Another not a flying visit. Travelled by road to provide lectures to an airport client on the 9th December 2008, returning on the 11th February 2009 to provide lectures to a big aviation organisation client at the airport.

I travelled north the day before the appointment on the 9th, spending the night in a hotel overlooking the airport, because lectures started early. February the 11th I left home early. It was nearly a mistake, because there was heavy snow during the night. However, heavy lorries during the night kept at least one lane open on the motorway.

Situated on open ground at 78m (257ft) above sea level although near to the city, the airport is open 24 hours for all aircraft types. However, noise restrictions apply between 0000 and 0600 local time. The airport has two parallel RWYs 05L/23R 3048m (10000ft) with ILS CAT III and 05R/23L 3047m (9997ft) with ILS CAT I on RWY 05R. LVP is 600m visibility and 200ft cloud base during CAT II and CAT III operations.

The airport, is to some extent, sheltered by the high ground over Wales and low cloud is rare if the wind is from the south to west-south-west. It is much more susceptible to low cloud off the Irish Sea in a west-north-west to north-north-westerly wind (the cloud base usually about $\frac{1}{2}$ the base at Liverpool) and prone to rain showers from the west off the sea.

From the east it is to some extent protected by the Pennines. Driest and sunny weather in an easterly flow. Rain/snow showers from the east battle to get through to the airport. However, prone to rain showers from the west off the sea. An easterly wind can be gusty in a lee wave effect. Turbulence and wind shear is possible when landing on RWY 24R in a strong north-westerly wind. It can be colder than expected in a katabatic wind effect.

It is prone to fog in a light wind from the south-east to south and a clear sky night, particularly in winter. In winter the warmer air off the sea can lead to overnight fog. It is to some extent sheltered by the high ground over Wales and low cloud is rare if the wind is from the west-south-west to south. It is much more susceptible to low cloud off the Irish Sea in a west-north-west to north-north-westerly wind.

During the first visit I was given a tour airside of the airport runways and perimeter. I was shown a spot where a tunnel had to be built under the fence because it is a route used by badgers. I thought this strange. Wildlife is supposed to be kept off airports for their own safety. At

another spot we saw a fox that had entered through a new hole in the fence. My guide immediately radioed the information to the people responsible for immediate attention.



Behind a taxiing Lufthansa A320 with landing aircraft and at the start of RWY 05R.



Got a good look at hybrid B747/DC-10 structure use for airport emergency training. The airport also has a Sud-Aviation (later Aérospatiale)/British Aircraft Corporation (BAC) Concorde on static display and a Hawker Siddeley Trident. The Concorde is G-BOAC and the Trident is Trident 3B G-AWZK.

Just as the Concorde was revolutionary in that it was the first and only successful supersonic passenger airliner, although financially not successful, the Hawker

Siddeley Trident, with its three rear-mounted Rolls-Royce Spey low-bypass turbofans (similar to the B727), was equally revolutionary, in fact more so. A Trident performed the first civil airliner automatic landing on a scheduled passenger service on the 10th June 1965 and the first real "blind" landing in scheduled passenger service on 4 November 1966. It was able to automatically guide the aircraft during the approach to the runway, flare, land and even do the landing run after touchdown. A tremendous step forward in the ability to land in low cloud and



BAC Concorde G-BOAC and Hawker Siddeley Trident 3B G-AWZK.

poor visibility, especially in fog. A major problem for aborted landings, diversions to another airport and airport delays. Today, the ability to land in fog is almost considered commonplace. The main problem now is at congested airports with high landing rates. For safety, increased aircraft spacing on the approach is applied, therefore reduced landing rates. This means delays and cancelled flights. Usually short haul flights.

DUBLIN, IRELAND 2009

2nd and 3rd March 2009, I was back in Ireland for 2 days of training lectures for the same Ireland airline, but different dispatchers.



Ryanair B737-800 at Dublin with and Aer Lingus A330-300 in the distance. On the right, the memorable Oliver St. John Gogarty bar and restaurant in Temple Bar.

This time I had to fly Ryanair due to flight availability and timing. Not impressed. One is not allocated a seat unless differently graded, so there is a mad scramble to board. Do not know how it happened, but I was graded preferential, which allowed me and similar others to board first and select a seat. During push back the cabin crew were still head counting to determine whether they had the correct number of passengers. Gaudy and basic interior. This and a few other things, although their safety record is excellent, decided me against flying Ryanair. After my first day of training, I travelled by bus, route number 747, to Dublin centre and the Temple Bar area (again) to stroll before eating at The Oliver St. John Gogarty bar and restaurant (again) then back to the Clarion Airport Hotel. Did I mention it before, it is an excellent hotel?

BRUSSELS, BELGUIM 2009

May 2009 I was off to Brussels again to attend an air traffic management workshop the hosted by the European air navigation client on the 27 and 28th May 2009. Attendance and previous meetings/seminars were important to my employer and led to an increased contract.

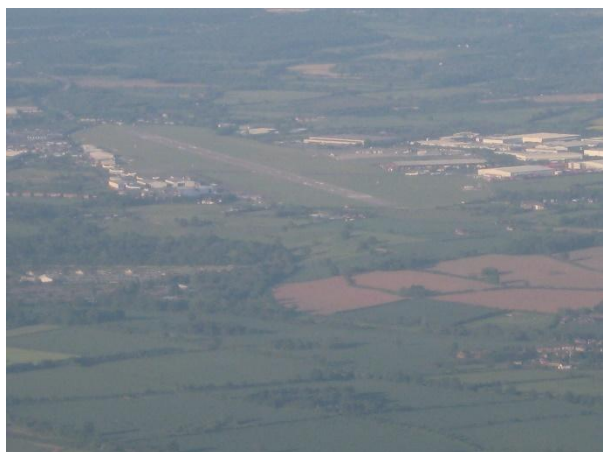
These events required my compiling detailed reports. However, I was getting blasé about keeping travel records, although on this trip I still took photographs at the airport (through viewing windows and in the air. I did record that I travelled from Birmingham to Brussels return flying Brussels Airlines. Outward bound during the afternoon of the 26th in an Avro RJ85

(a more model version of the BAe 146) flight SN2046 returning in an A319 flight SN2047 during the evening of the 28th.



VLM's Fokker 50 registration OO-VLJ. Behind is a Pegasus Airline B737-800. Behind it a TUI B767. Right is an Ethiopian Airlines B767-300ER registration ET-AMQ.

I did see two aircraft that attracted my interest. One was a twin turboprop Fokker 50, an improved version of the Fokker F27 Friendship. I had not seen a F27 since my days in Durban. The aircraft was OO-VLJ of VLM airline, now ceased operation. VLM stood for Vlaamse Luchttransport Maatschappij (Flemish Air Transport Company). The other was an Ethiopian Airlines B767-300, an airline that I flew with when returning home from Nigeria. Below a Turkish Airlines A321-231 and BMI (British Midland International) A320-232, ceased operation in 2012. The original A320 was stretched to the A321, then the A320 was shortened to the A319.



Turkish Airlines A321-231 registration TC-JMI and BMI A320-232 registration G-MEDH at Brussels and an enlarged image of Coventry airport on the approach to Birmingham airport in Brussels Airlines A319. The cluster of buildings at the near left of the runway is the Midland Air Museum.

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA 2010

This time I travelled in a private capacity on a truly flying visit South Africa to the University of Pretoria. Departing on the 31st January 2010 returning on the 5th February.

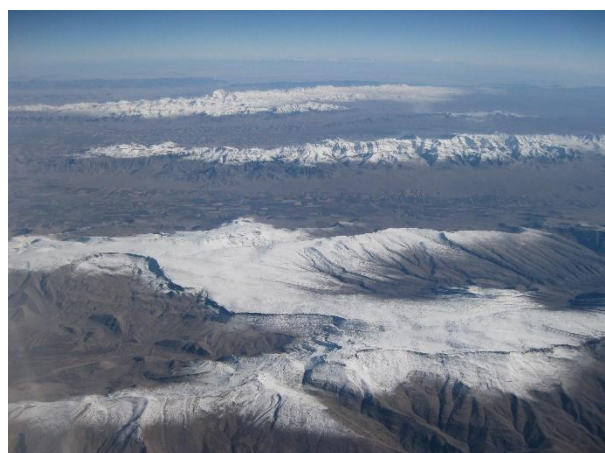
Departure was at 1320B Sunday 31st on Emirates EK040 B777-300ER to Dubai, scheduled flying time 6 hours 55 minutes, arrival 0015B on Monday 1st February. Then 0440B EK0761 B777-300ER to Johannesburg, scheduled flying time 8 hours 10 minutes flying time, arrival at Dubai 1050B on Monday.

The return flights, EK0764 B777-300ER departing Johannesburg 1915B on Thursday the 4th February, scheduled flying time 8 hours, arrival at Dubai 0515B on Friday the 5th. Then EK039 B777-300ER at 0805B, scheduled flying time 7 hours 35 minutes, arrival 1140B at Birmingham Airport.



Snow somewhere over central Europe about 2 hours out from Birmingham on the 31st. Right, O. R. Tambo airport on the 4th showing aircraft parked to the north toward the freight area. A wet day with Stratus fractus cloud under dark overcast Stratocumulus.

While flying in daylight over Europe to Dubai the common theme was snow on the ground. Meanwhile, at Johannesburg, one could see latest improvements to Johannesburg's O. R. Tambo International Airport. Most noticeable being the addition of an international jetty at the northern end of the main terminal building and the domestic terminal extended at the south. There are many more parking bays to the north to park aircraft not immediately required at a passenger terminal docking bay and the freight area increased. Changes also had to be made to accommodate the Airbus A380. Bonero Park at the north-east was larger, as was the Atlas, now Denal Aviation area east of the eastern parallel runway.



Emirates A6-EAI A330-243 at Dubai on the 5th and mountain snow in northern Iran.

Johannesburg's O.R. Tambo International airport has two parallel runways. RWY 03L/21R 4421m (14505ft) and 03R/21L 3405m (11171ft), all equipped with CAT II ILS. The runways are particularly long, because it is a hot and high airport. At 1694m (5558) above MSL the air is a lot less dense than at sea level. Combined with temperatures over 30°C at times, this adds to the air being even less dense. Warmer air is less dense than colder air. The lower density altitude means that aircraft engines do not perform as well as at sea level and in colder air. Therefore, requiring a longer runway for take off. LVP is in operation when the lowest RVR is (a) less than 600m and (b) when the cloud ceiling is 200ft or less.

The two big issues forecasting at the airport are thunderstorms and fog. Thunderstorms can be severe with large hail. In 1980 approximately one third of SAAs fleet of aircraft on the ground at the airport were damaged by large hail, some were withdrawn from service for some time. Fog occurs on average 35 days per year. It can be purely radiation fog or a combination of advection/radiation from an easterly to northerly direction between 0400-0700B in summer, 0500-0800B in winter. After 1000B it is rare. Times local, there is no summer daylight saving. I remember one occasion in Durban when the fog was so bad at Jan Smuts airport, we had nearly all the early morning international arrivals parked on a packed apron. A few went to Bloemfontein. I remember smaller B737s tucked close between B707s and DC-8s. Anyway, the fog is not that big a problem, because CAT II ILS is considered sufficient. That is, minimum 100ft cloud base and RVR not less than 300m.



Passing Luton Airport before descent to Birmingham where once again positioning righthand downwind for RWY 15 with Cumulus fractus cloud. The long building in the foreground in the Solihull Jaguar Land Rover factory.

Once again, excellent Emirates service. My only worry was that I forgot to lock my luggage before handing over at the check in for the return flight. I had heard a lot about luggage being tampered with and contents stolen between check in and loading onto the aircraft at Johannesburg. It arrived safely via Dubai with all its contents at the Birmingham airport carousel.

MADRID, SPAIN 2010

While on leave I agreed to prepare for two trips to Madrid, Spain, on the 12th to 14th October 2010 and 19th to 21st October, to provide training to 30-35 dispatchers and pilots for a Spain airline on both occasions. Being daylight flights outbound, I had much pleasure taking lots of inflight photographs and at airports. I could clearly see the wind turbines near the Pyrenees and the rather barren looking northern Spain and snow on the Alps. As usual on these trips, I saw

very little of Madrid. All I saw was within walking distance of the nearby hotel and the airport during lunch breaks. However, plenty of time watching activity at the airport in the departure area prior to both departures.

The airport has an unusual dog leg arrangement of two sets of parallel runways. RWY 14L/32R 3500m (11483ft) with 32R CAT II III ILS, RWY 14R/32L 3988 (13084ft) with 32L CAT II III ILS, RWY 18L/36R 3500m (11483ft) with 18L CAT II III ILS and RWY 18R/36R 4179m (13710ft) with 18R CAT II III ILS.

LVP: The RVR value is 700m or less on, at least, one transmissometer, or a visibility value less than 800m is obtained (observed) in the case that the transmissometers are out of service, or the cloud ceiling is 290ft or less (in the METAR / SPECI cloud layer of BKN, or OVC and height <200ft, or vertical visibility <VV002. METAR and SPECI are meteorological observations. METAR is a meteorological aviation report and SPECI is a special meteorological aviation report. BKN = 4-7 oktas of sky obscured by cloud, OVC = 8 oktas. VV002 indicates 200ft, measured by a transmissometers, or automatic weather station.

Interestingly, there are two aircraft de-icing/anti-icing areas. One in the vicinity of the threshold of RWY 36L, the other one in the vicinity of the threshold of RWY 36R. The aircraft are treated with aircraft engines at idle and ready for take-off. That is, pre-take off checks complete. Essentially, no messing around, wash and go.

The trips were quite a mission. There were no direct flights from Birmingham. Still no direct flights to the best of my knowledge. The first trip, 12th to 14th October, was supposedly with Lufthansa via Frankfurt outbound and via Munich return. I did not notice that the Frankfurt to Madrid sector was operated by Spanair, an airline of which I was not a fan. Being an ex-pilot and involved in the aviation industry, I have opinions about which airlines to avoid. Two years previously a Spanair DC-9-82 crashed after take-off killing all but 18 of 154 people on board, including all six crew members. The “probable” cause was a stall after take-off due to non-deployment of the slats/flaps and improper crew reaction to counter the stall.



My Lufthansa B737-300 to Frankfurt

The outbound from Birmingham to Frankfurt flight on the 12th was Lufthansa LH4903 B737-300 departing 1345B, seat 21F, arrival 1620B. Then to Madrid Barajas on Spanair LH2582 A320, seat 20F, departing 1755B arrival 2025B. An hour late getting there on the 2nd flight due to Spain ATC go slow strike. Spanair good, but a no-frills airline. Pay for everything. No free water during the hour sitting in the aircraft waiting for pushback from the gate and minimum air conditioning.

My arrival at Madrid was not auspicious. Not knowing the exact location of my hotel, as well as it being dark at about 8:30pm, I went to the taxi rank. The taxi driver was all smiles until I showed him where I wanted to go. He then irritably gesticulated and complained that it was too short a trip. Fortunately, a policeman was nearby, so off we went. It appears there is always a long queue of taxis waiting for passengers. A short trip for little financial gain and

return to the end of a long queue was not an ideal way to earn a living. The next morning and thereafter, I knew of a short route and walked to and from the airport.



A sample of two aircraft at Madrid Barajas. Air Europa B767-3Q8ER EC-HSV and Egypt Air B737-866 SU-GCP.



A landing LAN (or LANTAM) of Chile 767-316ER and over the north of Spain in a Lufthansa A320-200.

The trip back was via Munich. Lufthansa LH4427 A320-200, seat 19F, departing Madrid Barajas 1800B, arrival Munich 2030B then Lufthansa Cityline LH4920, seat 18F, Bombardier CRJ 900 (CRJ = Canadair Regional Jet) departing 2140B arrival Birmingham 2240B. The CRJ 900 was very cramped. The Embraer 190/195 is much better. More cabin room, marginally wider and higher, Both aircraft 4 abreast with a centre aisle. The Bombardier is extra cramped if one has a window seat due to the curved cabin side. Nearly missed the connection back to the UK, due to late 1st flight and ATC continuing go slow. It keeps the adrenalin flowing. A long day after a second day of lecturing.

The next week it was back again, this time on KLM via Amsterdam leaving Birmingham early in the afternoon back home during the evening of the 21st. The flights outbound were 19th October 2010 B737-400, registration PH-BPB, flight KL1424, seat 18F departing Birmingham 1305B. Then Departing Amsterdam Schiphol B737-300, registration PH-BDP, KL1705, seat 18A, departure 1640B arrival at Madrid Barajas 1910B.



KLM PH-BPB B737-400 at Birmingham. In the background is a Thomas Cook B757 and a TUI B737. Both tour operators. Right, an Air France Bombardier CRJ-100ER F-GRJJ.



Approach to EHAM flaps extended, Cumulonimbus in the distance and final approach.

Transit at Amsterdam was interesting. I disembarked then had to go all the way to security to clear for the next flight, then all the way back to where I had disembarked to board an aircraft parked next to the one in which I had arrived.



At Amsterdam, PH-BDP photographed from PH-BPB before disembarking. Right, PH-BPB photographed after embarking in PH-BDP.

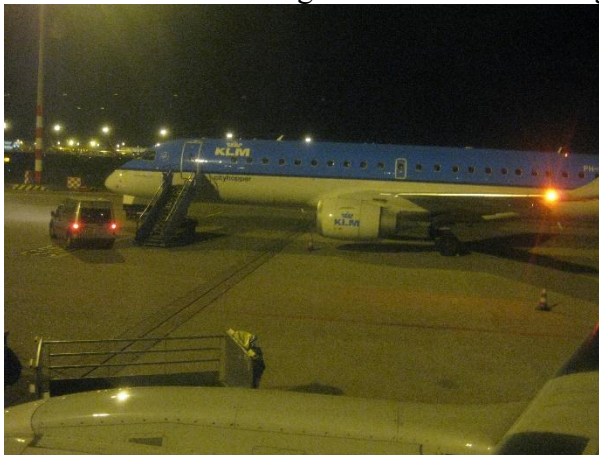


Heading south passing west of Arrondissement of Antwerp Docks and over the Pyrenees



At Madrid Barajas Airport. A Spanair A320-232 EC-HRP. Right, Air Europa B737-85P EC-JAP. The hotel used for both visits is close to the church spire in the background.

Flights to and from Madrid again late. To Madrid due to continuing go slow. From Madrid to Schiphol due to restriction at Schiphol and delayed take-off due to surface wind restricting the airport to one runway for take-off and one for landing. Mad rush to get to connecting flight home. Persuaded cabin crew to let me sit at the front of business class for the landing at Schiphol so I could get off first. Others to other destinations not so fortunate and missed their connections. All stirring stuff. Back at Birmingham at 09:30pm and home by 10pm. As far as



On board a KLM ERJ-190 at Amsterdam with another ERJ-190 alongside.

I am concerned KLM remains a very good airline to fly. Flight and cabin crew very approachable. No airs and graces. Just calm and common sense.

Return 21st October Madrid Barajas KL1704 B737-900, seat 29A, departure 1655B arrival Amsterdam Schiphol 1940. Then Amsterdam Schiphol KL1435 Embraer 190, seat 10F, departure 2125B arrival Birmingham 2140B. At Amsterdam returning home and passing through security one of the of the officials recognised my accent and began talking to me in Afrikaans. Said she lived in South Africa for some time.

My report afterward of the lectures said “I think it was well received. Pleasing ovation at the end.” The three most senior members of the Dispatch Department also attended the course. Numerous participants made copies of the presentation on their own memory sticks, particularly pilots.

The main concerns of dispatchers and pilots were routing in the vicinity of jet streams and clear air turbulence (CAT), thunderstorms, tropical cyclones, volcanic ash and how to interpret upper wind/temperature charts, significant weather charts, satellite images, TAFs (Terminal Area Forecast) and METARs (Meteorological Aerodrome Report). The United States METAR remarks part of the code was a bit of a mystery to them (this was also previously apparent at another airline). Upon return to the office, I emailed a simplified US code to the organiser.

An A320 captain told me that during the Iceland volcanic ash episode, he flew through ash over Europe, but did not know about it until after landing and the ground engineer informed him there was silicate fusion on some of the high pressure turbine blades and guide vanes. He said there were no abnormal engine temperature, or engine pressure instrument indications during flight. Another was told by ATC that he was flying near to volcanic cloud, but could see nothing and experienced no damage.

The pilots confirmed my research that most of the time jet streams have no CAT, especially when not associated with a marked, or developing, trough, or strengthening ridge and that significant weather charts tend to over-forecast CAT. Two pilots were interested to learn that a guide to potential moderate and severe CAT can be found on the wind/temperature charts by calculating the temperature and speed shear between grid points. These can help to confirm/substantiate CAT shown on the significant weather charts.

Tropical cyclones and thunderstorms in the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone are a particular problem on the routes to South America, especially destinations further south, because they are at the limits of their range and do not have the reserves to divert too far off course even with 3% extra fuel added to normal route fuel and obligatory reserves

BRUSSELS, BELGUIM 2011

February 2011 another trip to Brussels to attend the European air navigation client to a support to air traffic management workshop from the 1st to the 3rd of February.

Again, there and back flying in Brussels Airlines BAe Avro RJ100 aircraft, departing Birmingham 1st February flight SN2050, seat 15A, departure 0630B, scheduled arrival at Brussels 0845B. Return on the 3rd flight SN2049, seat 14F, departure 2125B, scheduled arrival at Birmingham 2135B. The terminal wing where I boarded was almost deserted. Possibly the last regional departure.

I got the impression that the workshop was slowly getting around to Meteorological Services (MET) working with air traffic management (ATM) in the way that our company already worked. I refer in particular to a presentation made by a member of the organisers.

Perhaps I was biased, but to me it was becoming increasingly apparent that meteorological organisations were developing increasingly sophisticated Internet based products along the lines that our company had been doing for some time. The proposed model put forward by a WMO speaker could very well have been a model of our organisation's product, while the

presentations by two large national meteorological their products were very similar to ours, but with more up to date developments.

It is also becoming apparent that this forum was becoming a show case for the large established government role players to give presentations. I was reminded of a previous workshop when an eastern country delegate, who was also a client, asked the chair to allow me to make a presentation, but was told that this is not a suitable forum.

I was becoming rather blasé regarding photographs. Being winter, it was still dark when we departed Birmingham. I did get some photographs of the blue sky above with a pink tinge to the top of the cloud before we descended on approach into the cloud.



A Brussels Airline BAe 146/Avro RJ85/100 photographed from the hotel climbing from the airport 20th October 2011.

18th October it was off to Brussels again to the European air navigation client to a support to air traffic management final workshop from the 19th and 20th. Again, flying Brussels Airlines in a BAe Avro RJ100.

This time, although I still filed reports of the trips, I did not keep any record of the trip flight schedules and limited photographs to a few of clouds seen from the hotel.

By now, I did feel entitled to some amusement, so where speakers used “outrageous” expressions, made up words,

words out of context, or used words of obscure meaning, I added them to the report under my title Yukspeak, Such as, Teasing out = developing, de-conflict = separate, ATC playbook routes = ATC routes manual, mapped into = incorporated.

A delegate from the United States of America Federal Aviation Administration was particularly proliferate

Yukspeak: Wet tasks = jobs to be done, or being done.

Playbook = operations manual

Plugged into = connected with

Translation of winds to compression on final = stronger approach headwind, lower landing rate

Operational bridging = training and communication

Cartoon = figure

“Table top” demonstration = demonstration at a meeting

DUBLIN 2011

April 2011 4th and 5th it was back Ireland for 2 days of training lectures for the same Irish airline, but different dispatchers. Obviously, I was doing something right.

Travelled the day before on the 3rd Aer Lingus A320-214, registration EI-CVD, flight EI273, seat 18A, Birmingham departure 1550B, scheduled arrival at Dublin 1650B. Flight on time. Flying time about 40 minutes, top of climb FL200 according to the pilot. Ground/flight crew

efficient and friendly. Towering Cumulus (TCU) cloud, but not to a great height. Light turbulence on the climb. We were above the cloud before reaching FL200 (flight level 20 000ft), which changed to patches of stratiform cloud before reaching the UK coast. I thought FL200 (~20000ft) was a bit low for an A320



Arrival of Aer Lingus A320-214 EI-CVD and Lufthansa Eurowings CRJ-900LR D-ACNA later named CityLine.

This time, between lectures, I was taken inside an Aer Lingus hanger and shown a circa early 1930s six-seater, twin Gypsy Six engines, de Havilland 84 Dragon biplane, named Iolar (Eagle) in Gaelige the Irish branch of the Celtic language family. The Aer Lingus' inaugural service used a DH.84 Dragon, registration EI-ABI and named Iolar. To celebrate the airline's 50th anniversary of the airline in 1986, a Dragon was obtained and restored and reregistered. The Dragon was originally designated the Dragon Moth. It was soon replaced by the very similar looking Dragon Rapide. It was also made of plywood with two Gypsy Six engines, but seated 6-8 passengers. It was a Rapide that I saw many years before when one visited Durban's then Louis Botha Airport where I worked at the time.



The restored de Havilland DH.84 Dragon Iolar (Eagle).

Returned home on the 5th after completing lectures on an Aer Lingus A320, flight EI276, seat 20A, departure 1815B, scheduled arrival at Birmingham 1915B. The flight level was not announced, although it looked about FL200 and given the climb time. Flight on time. Flying time about 35 minutes. Ground/flight crew efficient and friendly. Stratiform cloud. Take-off at Dublin was in a fresh to strong wind, which extended to Birmingham and a turbulent approach with a good landing.

ISLE OF MAN 2012

A close relative, employed as a computer programmer/system designer with a South African company decided to open a branch on the Isle of Man. He agreed to move to the new location as part of the new staff with his family. We were asked to view various houses to get an idea of what was available. So, December 11th 2012 we flew Flybe from Birmingham Airport to Ronaldsway Airport at Ballasalla, in the south-west of the Isle of Man and returned late on the 12th. We spent the night at the Sefton Express Hotel across the road from the airport and had our one evening meal at the White Stone Inn, Ballasalla. Ronaldsway airport has two runways, RWY 08/26 2110m with CAT I ILS and 03/21 1199m which rarely used.

The flight BE190 from Birmingham, departing 0715B, seats 21A and 21B, arriving at Ronaldsway at 0810B, was supposed to be operated by a de Havilland Dash 8-400 twin turbo-prop aircraft. However, due to a technical problem, it had to be replaced by a twin-jet Embraer ERJ-195LR, registration G-FBEB. This meant a delayed departure. Our arrival time was 0840B. Thirty minutes late. Not bad considering a replacement aircraft and crew.



Left, over Liverpool, the Mersey Estuary below the wing and Irish Sea inlet at River Dee in the distance. Right, leaving the coast with a pink contrail high in the sky.

The early winter departure meant with sunrise at 0808B and civil twilight from 0707B meant it was still half-light when we departed albeit a bit late. We then climbed into a sunrise that created a pink horizon with pink hues on the aircraft.



Passing east of Port Erin final approach for RWY 08. and disembarking Flybe E195LR G-FBEB at Ronaldsway Airport.

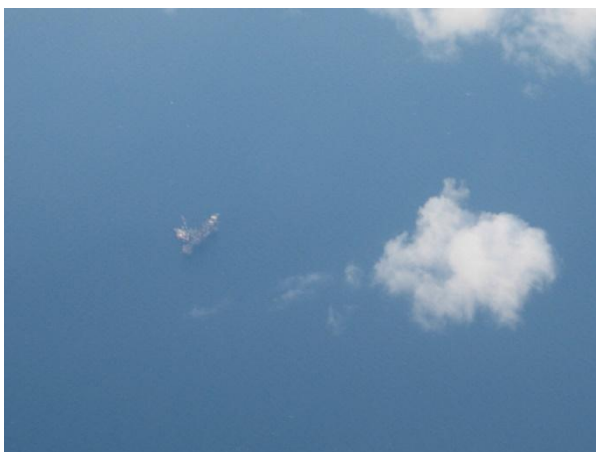
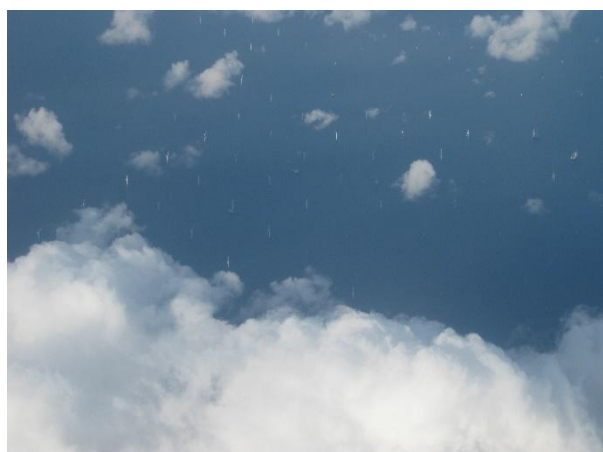
We were concerned that we would be late for our first house viewing appointment, considering we first had to collect our rented car and find the place on a strange island. That is, new to us. In the end we made it with some time to spare. The car we hired was a very nice red Nissan Micra. Ideal for the rather flat island and frequently narrow winding roads.

We returned on BE197, de Havilland Dash 8-400, seats 20A and 20B, departing Ronaldsway Airport on time at 1920B, arriving back at Birmingham close to our scheduled time of 2015B.

ISLE OF MAN 2013

With the close relative and family ensconced on the Isle of Man, it was time to visit during September 2013. We departed from Birmingham on the 14th on Flybe flight BE190 at 0755B, seats 21A and B. The aircraft was a twin turboprop Bombardier DHC-8-402, or Dash 8-Q402, or originally a de Havilland Canada DHC-8 Dash 8. All the same aircraft, but different names under changing manufacturer ownership during different ownership.

A good flight above fair weather Cumulus with high level cirrus patches well above. Leaving the coast near Liverpool I had a clear sighting of the wind turbines in the sea off the Wales north coast. Shortly thereafter seeing the Douglas Complex, an oilrig consisting of three linked platforms in the Irish Sea 24 kilometres (15 miles) also off the Wales north coast. It consists of a central wellhead drilling platform, a processing platform that separates oil, gas and water and an accommodation platform. Apparently, there are other platforms in the area.



The wind farm off the Wales north coast and the Douglas Complex gas and oilrig.



Before leaving the airport, I photographed three aircraft on the apron, one Let L-140 and two de Havilland Canada DHC-8s, one of which was our aircraft from Birmingham. Unfortunately, I cannot remember which one. The aircraft viewed from foreground to background were Czech Republic registered Let L-410UVP-E5 or E9 Turbolet OK-RDA and Bombardier DHC-8s G-JECF and G-JEDM

Citywing Aviation Services Limited was an Isle of Man company that did not have its

own aircraft. It sold seats on scheduled air flights lease chartered from Van Air Europe, a Czech Republic company using four Let L-410s, routes to Belfast City airport, Blackpool, Gloucester, Leeds/Bradford, Newcastle upon Tyne and Jersey. That is, until the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) suspended their operating licence in 2017, confirmed in 2018.

Upon arrival we collected our Blue Nissan Micra 1200cc, 3 door car the airport Athol car hire. A newer version of the red one hired on our scouting trip in December 2012. A most enjoyable 4 days travelling more of the island than before. This time purely as tourists

We were back at Ronaldsway Airport on Tuesday the 17th for our flight home on Flybe BE197 departing 1920B, booked in seats 21C and D. While waiting for our flight, I got a good photograph (below left) of the BAe ATP(F) G-BTPH, built in 1989 and operated by West Atlantic UK Limited. West Atlantic UK Limited (part of the Air West Sweden group) is a UK registered contract and ad-hoc freighter operator based at East Midlands Airport. Its prime activity is night-time freight contract operations. The airline's speciality is the transport of dangerous goods and radioactive products. The airline flies mail and freight between the Isle of Man and East Midlands departing Ronaldsway Airport last out in the evening, returning first flight in the early hours the next morning. I understand every night except Saturday night.

I also took a photograph of an Aer Lingus Regional flight, ATR 42-300 EI-CBK, later operated by Stobart Air for Aer Lingus (below right).



DUSSELDORF AND ESSEN, GERMANY 2014



Terrible photograph of the ERJ175 with lots of reflections, including photographer.

February 2014 12th and 13th, I was in Essen to help staff our stall at an E-world energy and water Exhibition. Essen is clean and functional, but the part I saw says give it a miss if you are a tourist. Good tram service, all yellow and the bendy busses. Excellent exhibition centre.

Left 6 am Wednesday 12th for a 0700B Flybe Essentials (cheapest) flight BE7041, seat 7B, in an Embraer ERJ-175, to Düsseldorf, scheduled arrival 0930B. Returned Thursday 13th BE7048, seat 12A, departure scheduled

2050B arrival Birmingham 2120B, but departed 40 minutes late.

At Düsseldorf it was through a docking tunnel, through passport control, through the terminal building onto an Airport Express bus shuttle for trade fair visitors directly to the Messe Essen Place of Events. Return ticket €20. The route, on the Federal Highway 52 to Essen, passes over the 1830 metres long Mulheimer Ruhrtal bridge. The bridge spans a wide river valley at Mülheim an der Ruhr. It is the longest road bridge made of steel in Germany resting on 18 hollow ferro concrete pillars, in a wide arc 65m (approximately 200ft) high. At first, from where I was seated, I thought we were simply going across a bridge. Then I could see it curving away to my right. A stunning sight. I was apprehensive. If any part collapses while on it, bus and all were goners. I thought I would rather be in an aircraft at this height. Unfortunately, I could not get a good photograph from my position in the bus.

The work was rather boring. Mainly standing waiting for visitors to our stand so that we can impart our knowledge and guidance in response to their enquiries. Some sitting unobtrusively allowed. Not good to sit. Unwelcoming. Discourages visitors. Occasionally, taking it in turns



to stroll viewing the opposition. The Express by Holiday Inn accommodation was very good. A poor view from my rear facing room was of a retail centre. Facing me was Ikea and Roller GmbH & Co a retailer of household furniture, kitchen and bath fittings and garden products in fact anything for the home. One could say a combined B&Q and Homebase. The front of the hotel was more pleasing, facing a small grass and tree area. Dinner was at the very good Matheno Ellinika Greek restaurant (seen left). Highly ornate, complete with Ionic columns, Greek

friezes and statues.

BOSTON, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 2017

July 23rd to 30th 2017, I was in Andover, near Boston, Massachusetts, in the United States of America (USA). I was sent to the head office in connection with aviation forecasting. All work no play. Flew Aer Lingus to Boston from Birmingham via Dublin, return the same.

The first flight was 23rd July EI263, seat 25C, A320-200 departure 0810B Birmingham to Dublin then Dublin to Boston EI137 departure 1130B, seat 30K, A330-300.

The aircraft was late arriving from Dublin, due to an aircraft change. Ground equipment damaged the original aircraft. The delay was such that I could see me missing my connection at Dublin. Aer Lingus were very good and organised. Some passengers were already re-routed to their destinations from Birmingham. Others were assured that arrangements had already been made at Dublin. Before landing at Dublin, we were informed that upon disembarking there would be staff at key points to direct everyone. It was excellent. Quickly cleared through security, passport control, including USA passport control (with U.S. Customs and Border Protection Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) in hand) by USA staff permanently based at Dublin and on board the aircraft. We departed slightly late, but landed at Boston on time. It was strange walking straight from the aircraft to luggage collection. I was

alarmed to see that luggage carousels were open to the public and one walked from there directly to the street outside and waiting taxis. Anyone could nick luggage that took their fancy.

The daylight outbound flight passed south of Sligo, passing the coast near Easky, then a great circle route over Newfoundland, between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick then seaward of the USA coast to Boston. The daylight flight meant I took some good en route photographs. Some over Ireland and over Newfoundland and an excellent photograph of Boston airport on our righthand downwind descent. One aspect of flying with Aer Lingus was their limitless obsession with putting on the seat belt warning signs and telling us to be seated because turbulence is expected. As I pointed out to Aer Lingus in a survey I was asked to complete after my return, while the service was excellent, the flights across the Atlantic were the by far the most perpetually smoothest flights I had ever encountered in my numerous travels.



Passing Sligo on the Ireland west coast and righthand downwind, spoilers extended to increase descent at Boston Logan Airport, either RWY 04L or 04R, probably 04R.

Boston Logan International, built mostly on reclaimed land in Boston Harbour, is another airport with a myriad of runways, six in total. RWY 04L/22R 2397m (7864ft), RWY 04R/22L 3050m (10006ft), RWY 09/27 2134m (7001ft), RWY 14/32 1524m (5000ft), RWY 15L/33R 779m (2557ft) and RWY 15R/33L 3073m (10083ft). The only runways with ILS are 04R and 33L CAT III and CAT I on RWYs 22L, 27 and 15R. The prevailing offshore westerly minimizes the moderating effect of the Atlantic Ocean. The airport has frequent fog, especially spring and early summer. Summer tends to be warm and humid with temperatures up to 28°C and 32°C at



JetBlue ERJ-190 B324JB pushed back, starting engines prior to taxi for take off.

times. Winters are windy and cold. Average minimum temperatures -6°C. -12°C is not uncommon, but short-lived. It is prone to snow and rain from the north-east. The average annual snowfall is 104cm. Most of the snow is in December to March with little or no snow in April and November. rare in May and October. Occasionally it may experience a tropical storm, mainly early autumn. The storm being the remnants of a hurricane.

Back at Boston airport passport control on the 29th, for the return trip, the lady behind the desk conversationally said “is that the

time of the year already?” (late July). I replied “Yes. Soon we will be going to work in the dark, home in the dark and kept in the dark at work.” She and her colleague next to her laughed. No doubt thinking of the way Trump was continually messing around with immigration and visitor policy. Boston airport was a plane spotters delight. Aircraft: Boeing 737, 747, 757, 787, Airbus A220 (Bombardier C series), A320, A330 and Embraer 190. Airlines: TAP, American, jetBlue, Delta, United, Thomas Cook, Lufthansa, Iberia, SAS, Swiss, Norwegian, Hainan Airlines. I am not a plane spotter, I tell you.



Top to bottom, left to right: SAS B737 and TAP A330-243 CS-TOS, Thomas Cook A330-200 about to dock. Then arriving in succession Lufthansa B747-8 D-ABYM, Iberia A330, Swiss A330-343 HB-JHJ, JetBlue A320 and Hainan Airlines B787-9 Dreamliner B-6998.



Aer Lingus A330-302 EI-EAV at Boston with a Delta Connection ERJ-170 in the background. Right, Final approach for Birmingham RWY 33. The lake is part of the West Midlands Golf Club. The 18th hole is on the island on the right. Many golf balls finish in the water.

Return flights on EI136, seat 29G, A330-302 EI-EAV (aircraft named St Ronan) departure 1750B to Dublin and EI262, seat 11C, A320-200 departure 0630B to Birmingham. All on time. In the terminal, I switched on my mobile to find a message that my wife was sick and I must find my own way home, which I did by bus.

All friendly and very polite while there, but glad to be back.

ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA AND WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND 2017

October 2017, my first visit to Australia and New Zealand. Departed EGBB Birmingham International (actually in Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council) 30th September. Armed with Australia eVisitor visas and passports, we were ready to travel. My wife was already in Adelaide with a close relative and family. Returned home on the 16th.



While waiting at EGBB: Aer Lingus Regional ATR72-600 EI-FAW pushed back, engines started, ready to taxi; Right in new livery and now ceased trading operating Flybe Bombardier DHC-8-402 Dash 8 G-PRPD about to taxi

Flew Emirates two legs each way. All flights on the Boeing 777-31H(ER). 1H is the customer code for Emirates, 3 means 300. More commonly referred to as 777-300ER. ER means



Emirates B777-300ER A6-ECZ. In the background yellow tail Monarch Airlines A320s ceased operation 2nd October, two days after this photograph.

extended range. A higher maximum take-off weight and increased fuel capacity compared with other B777 models gives it a maximum range of 13650 kilometres or 7370 nautical miles. To achieve this, it has a strengthened fuselage and wings with raked and extended wingtips, modified main landing gear and in 2021, the world's most powerful turbofan jet engine with a maximum thrust of 513 kN. There is a saying in aviation, if it looks good, it flies good. I agree, although the Boeing 747 is still my favourite.

My notes made at the time. All schedule times local: EK040: Departure Birmingham International Airport (EGBB) 1420B Sat 30 Sep 2017. Arrival Dubai International Airport (OMDB) 0035B 01 Oct 2017.

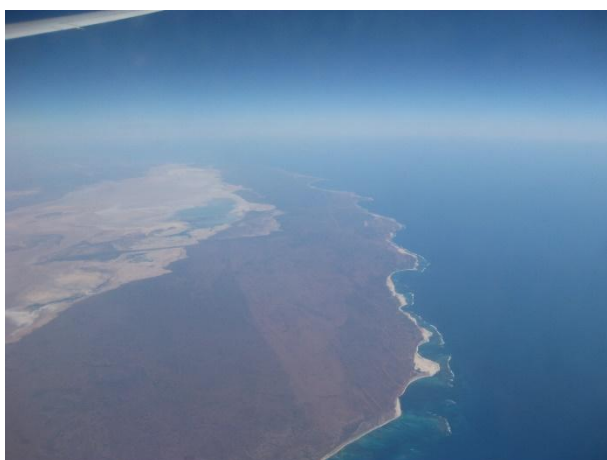
Operated by Emirates B777-300ER A6-ECZ. Seat 46B zone C. Departed on time.

The route from England is over the Netherlands, through central Germany The Czech Republic, Slovakia, eastern Hungary, through central Romania, touching north-eastern Bulgaria, across north-eastern Turkey, then along westernmost Iran, or easternmost Iraq and over the Gulf Sea.

It is approximately 6½ hours to Dubai. Although one leaves Birmingham airport in the early afternoon, due to time differences one arrives close to midnight. Then, taking off in the dark at 02:20 at Dubai, it is a 12 hour flight, arriving over the north-west coast of Australia in daylight, landing at Adelaide in the dark at nearly 9pm on runway 23. Total travelling time about 21 hours. The first two days of one's leave is spent travelling.

My notes made at the time. All schedule times local: EK440: Departure Dubai International Airport (OMDB) 0205B Sun 01 Oct 2017. Arrival Adelaide Airport (YPAD) 2050B Sun 01 Oct 2017. Operated by Emirates B777-300ER A6-ECG. Seat 48J zone C. Departed on time.

The Dubai to Adelaide route is over the northern tip of the Sultanate of Oman, over the Arabian Sea well seaward of India, over the Indian Ocean, crossing the north-west Australia coast at approximately Exmouth in western Australia, then on to seaward of the south coast of South Australia to Adelaide in the south-east.



First sighting of Australia somewhere near to the north of Exmouth.

Adelaide has two runways, RWY 05/23 3100m (10170ft) and RWY 12/30 1652m (5420ft) with ILS CAT 1 on RWY 23 only with 250ft cloud base and 800m visibility. VOR (Very High Frequency (VHF) Omnidirectional Range short-range radio navigation system) on the other runways with the cloud base varying between 430ft to 500ft

and 2000-2500m visibility A surprise to me. I would have thought at least CAT I on both 05 and 23. Obviously, the weather does not warrant any lower limit systems.

Early on the 4th, my wife drove me to the airport for my flight to Wellington, New Zealand, via Melbourne to see my brother, his wife, whom I had not seen since they left South Africa in 1996. I had since seen my two nieces and one nephew when they briefly visited England. Still not seen one nephew in Australia.

Bit of a scare upon arrival at Adelaide airport for the first flight. Saw a long queue and thought I am never going to get through check in and security in time. Fortunately, found a Qantas staff



Waiting to push back at Adelaide. Jetstar A320-232 VH-VQE in the background.

member. He was most helpful. As I had pre-checked in he showed me where to go and helped with the automated checking in of baggage. Made it through with time to spare. Then there he was again at boarding. Then here he was again on the flight as cabin crew. Never seen that before.

My notes made at the time. All schedule times local: QF674: Departure Adelaide (YPAD) 0645B 04 Oct 2017. Arrival Melbourne (YMML) 0835B 04 Oct 2017. Operated by Qantas B737-800. Seat 23B. Departed 20 minutes late due to late towing of the aircraft to the docking bay gate due to earlier traffic.

Melbourne has two runways, RWY 16/34 3657m (11998ft) and RWY 09/27 2296m (7532ft) with RWY 16 ILS CAT 111b, IIIa and II and RWY 27 ILS CAT I. VOR approaches on 09 and 27 and 34 with differing cloud bases between 430 and 633ft, visibility 2400m to 3200m.

Flight time just over an hour to Melbourne. Got really confused moving from arrivals to departure for the flight from Melbourne to Wellington. Fortunately, about a 2 hour stopover. Time to see many different airlines and airliners arrive and depart, including airlines never seen before such as Vietnam, Shanghai and Xiamen. In my element. Why do people find waiting at airports boring? Watched my aircraft arrive at the gate.

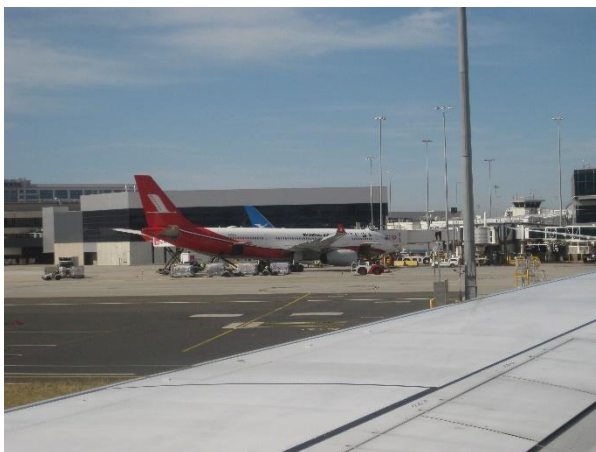


Qantas A330-300 VH-QPG and Vietnam Airlines B787 Dreamliner at D4 docking bay.



The photograph left shows my flight to Melbourne arriving, a Qantas B737-800 QF171, with numerous Virgin Australia aircraft at their terminal.

From my notes. Local schedule times: Departure Melbourne (YMML) 1025B 04 Oct 2017. Arrival Wellington (NZWN) 1555B 04 Oct 2017. Operated by Qantas Jetconnect B737-800. Seat 19F. Departed 25 minutes late. Arrived on time.



Top to bottom, left to right, photographed during a seemingly endless taxi & hold: Virgin Australia B737-800 VH-YFI, Emirates A380-861 A6-EOT, Royal Brunei B787 Dreamliner and Shanghai Airlines A330-243 B-5931 a subsidiary of China Eastern Airlines.

Approximately 3 hours from Melbourne to Wellington, slightly less outbound due to prevailing westerly winds at flight level, slightly longer on the return trip. Flew over the north-west part of New Zealand South Island on the great circle route to Wellington. Saw snow covered mountains from my starboard window seat. Then passed out to sea over the Cook Strait north of the Wairau River delta, a lagoon and the northernmost Wairau Diversion before a direct approach to runway 05 at Wellington, landing after a Singapore Airlines B777 around 4pm local time.



Over the north-west end of North Island nearing Wellington and the view below at the time.



Descending at Cloudy Bay and over Cook Strait. Snow clad Kaikoura Mountains in the background. On final approach to Wellington RWY 34.



Landed. Spoilers deployed to destroy lift. Landed before us is taxiing Singapore Airlines B777-212ER 9V-SQK.

Another surprise at Wellington airport. It has one runway 16/34 that is only 1815m (5955ft) long with ILS CAT I on RWY 16 and RWY 34. One can say almost certainly that the airport never experiences crosswinds. The wind rose in the appendix shows distinct prevailing stronger northerly winds and less strong southerly winds off the sea and almost total absence from the east and west.

An easy process through arrivals to see my brother waiting after many years of not seeing each other. He then took me directly home to Aoter, Porirua, on the coast about 20 kilometres north of Wellington. Porirua is administered by Porirua City Council, which is part of the Greater Wellington Regional

Council. Aoter is a higher altitude inland suburb. From their house there is a good all-round view to the coast and inland with an even better view from the nearby hill to the north.

While touring to the north at Taihape, saw a well-preserved silver, blue and white Douglas DC-3 aircraft on trusses advertising the Mangawaka Adventure Company. Then further north, at a holiday camp at Hula falls saw an old yellow and blue Russian Mil Mi-8, Mi-14, or possibly the newer Mi-17, helicopter on display. Unfortunately, the photograph I took failed to include the tail rotor, so I do not know whether it is an 8 or 14. The tail rotor is the most recognisable method of identification. The 8 has the rotor on the starboard side, the 14 and 17 to port. Then in Taupo, saw another DC-3, this time in red and white with McDonald's written on the side, outside a business of the same name, in Ruapehu Street. Apparently, having old aircraft on display in the region is a popular way of attracting attention and business,



The Mil Mi-8 or Mi-14 near Hula falls and the DC-3 in Taupo.

At Lake Rotorua waterfront near to the large Lakeland Queen Cruises paddle steamer were two moored Volcanic Air seaplanes, one of which was a de Havilland Otter DHC-3, the other a Cessna 206G Stationair. The 206 a type that I flew many years ago in South Africa. Volcanic Air offers scenic flights and air tours.



Flight above Altocumulus cloud and higher Cirrus in the distance over the Tasman Sea Wellington to Melbourne.

On the 11th, after a quiet day spent talking to my brother went to the airport and return to Adelaide. My notes made at the time. All schedule times local: QF172 Departure Wellington (NZWN) 1700B 11 Oct 2017. Arrival Melbourne 1900B 11 Oct 2017. Still a confusing airport. Operated by Qantas Jetconnect B737-800. Seat 22B. Departed the gate 23 minutes late (late incoming flight). Arrived 58 minutes late. Suspect adverse headwind had an effect.

QF701 Departure Melbourne (YMML) 2035B 11 Oct 2017. Arrival Adelaide (YPAD) 2125B 11 Oct 2017. Operated by Qantas B737-800. Seat 16E. Departed 43

minutes late (late incoming flight). Arrived 32 minutes late.

The 15th, our last day in Australia, while relaxing in the afternoon sun at home, captured a photograph of an Emirates A380 trailing 4 short contrails heading to Melbourne in a deep blue and cloudless sky. In the evening my wife and I were taken to the airport.

My notes made at the time. All schedule times local: EK441: Departure Adelaide Airport (YPAD) 2235B Sun 15 Oct 2017. Arrival Dubai International Airport (OMDB) 0515B Mon 16 Oct 2017. Operated by Emirates B777-300ER A6-EQB seat 45H zone C. Arrived 30 minutes early.

On the 16th: EK039: Departure Dubai International Airport (OMDB) 0735B 16 Oct 2017. Arrival Birmingham International Airport (EGBB) 1220B Mon 16 Oct 2017. Operated by Emirates B777-300ER A6-EBX seat 45H zone C. Arrived 15 minutes early.

Finally, two unusual photographs of our aircraft home. The Emirates B777-300ERs, A6-EQB at Adelaide and A6-EBX at Dubai.



ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA 2018

Did a few hours of aircraft spotting on the southern approach to Birmingham airport on the 7th July. Not the first time. I am not a plane spotter, I tell you. This time the objective was to photograph the Emirates Airbus A380 and again in August (I was not entirely happy with the previous photographs), because later in the year we were going to Australia again, this would be my first flight in the A380 from Birmingham to Dubai.

We both love Australia and could easily relocate if we won the Lottery. My wife went to Adelaide for 10 weeks from later in to be nanny to a 3½ year old granddaughter and maternity nurse to mother and new granddaughter. I went for the last 2 weeks from the 31st September and we did the tourist thing.



Emirates A380-843 A6-EUY landing at Birmingham and at the docking bay.

My notes made at the time. All schedule times local: EK040: Departure Birmingham International Airport (EGBB) 1420B Saturday 30 August 2018. Arrival Dubai International Airport (OMDB) 0025B Sunday 31 August 2018. Operated by Emirates A380-842 A6-EUY. Seat 57H zone E. Departed about 30 minutes late.



A TUI taxiing B737-800 G-TAWS and a Norwegian Air Shuttle B787 Dreamliner minus engines covered. Another aircraft can be seen at the hanger in the photograph left.

EK440: Departure Dubai International Airport (OMDB) 0205 Sunday 31 August 2018. Arrival Adelaide Airport (YPAD) 2050 Sunday 01 October 2018. Operated by Emirates B777-300ER A6-EQG. Seat 45H zone C. Departed on time.

I deliberately booked an aisle seat as near the front as possible on the A380 flight to Dubai. Knowing how long it takes to offload passengers from the A380, I did not want to miss my connecting flight in the event the flight was delayed. As it so happened, the flight departed late from Birmingham. What with the time disembarking, going through the arrival security check, then bussed to the far end of the terminal and going through another pre-boarding security check, I arrived at the gate after boarding had already started. I had the thought that my luggage would not be so fortunate. Fortunately, my luggage appeared on the carousel at Adelaide.

After a very enjoyable stay, a visit to Kangaroo Island for a few days, a day trip on the Murray River and a quiet day on Thursday 13th we were taken to the airport for a late evening flight to Dubai then England. A wonderful holiday.

My wife and I travelled home together in seats pre-booked next to each other. No photographs. Left Adelaide in the dark, not possible at Dubai and no window seats Occupied by my wife. My notes made at the time. All schedule times local:

EK441. Departure Adelaide Airport (YPAD) 2150B Thursday 13 September 2018. Arrival Dubai International Airport (OMDB) 0530B Friday 14 September 2018. Operated by Emirates B777-300ER A6-EQE seat 45B zone C. Arrived 18 minutes early.

EK039. Departure Dubai International Airport (OMDB) 0735B Friday 14 September 2018. Arrival Birmingham International Airport (EGBB) 1220 Friday 14 September 2018. Operated by Emirates A380-861 A6-EOY seat 79J zone D. Arrived 24 minutes early.

ADELAIDE AND SUNSHINE COAST, AUSTRALIA 2022

Could happily live in Australia. Holiday was great, although both caught colds in Adelaide. It was colder in Adelaide in the south than the UK at the time and did not help that houses there are designed for warm/hot weather, so the house was very cold. I spent a week north of Brisbane

at the Sunshine Coast with my eldest niece, her son and my brother visiting from New Zealand. Much warmer in the north. Altogether 9 flights for me in total, 6 for my wife.

While waiting at Birmingham airport there was, for me, the unusual opportunity to see two aircraft from the Channel Islands. An ATR 72-500 G-ISLK of Blue Islands based at Jersey and an ATR72-202 G-BXTN of Aurigny based at Guernsey. The 202s have since been replaced by 600s.



Jet2 B737-8MG G-JZHX and Blue Islands ATR 72-500 G-ISLK in the background. Right an Aurigny ATR72-202 G-BXTN.



Our Emirates B777-300ER (31HER) A6-ENF at Birmingham.

Emirates flights mostly on time, or close to on time. Aircraft and duration of flights being B777-300ER flight time 7:15 to Dubai, A380-800 flight time 13:25 Dubai to Melbourne, Qantas B737-800 flight time 1:20 to Adelaide. We had to fly via Melbourne, because since COVID19 Emirates did not fly direct to Adelaide. It was not until 2024 that the Dubai to Adelaide route was restored. The great circle route Dubai to Melbourne flies over Adelaide. A bit frustrating that one has to fly back again from Melbourne. Return flight times were interesting using the same aircraft types. The

flight times make allowance for headwind upper westerly winds over south of Australia and more northern part of Europe. Adelaide to Melbourne still 1:20, Melbourne to Dubai 14:00 (35 minutes longer) and Dubai to Birmingham 7:45 (20 minutes longer). Melbourne to Adelaide legs were code share Qantas flights.

Below is a detailed list of the outbound flights from my notes at the time. All times local. The list can be skipped by non-aviation enthusiasts.

24th September 2022 Birmingham to Dubai

EK038 B777-300ER (31HER) A6-ENF. Duration 07:35. Dep 2140B seat 14C, zone F, moved to seat 12C. Left gate 2150B. ETA Dubai 0755B. Arrived at Dubai gate C4 0741B.

25th September 2022 Dubai to Melbourne

EK406 A380-800 A6-EUS. Duration 13:25. Dep 1005B seat 54C, zone E. Boarded 0945B at Gate B31. Push back 25 minutes late. Take off 45 minutes late RWY 30R. ETA Melbourne 0530B. Arrived at gate 16 at 0556B, 26 minutes late.

26th September 2022 Melbourne to Adelaide

EK5675/QF0675 B737-800 VH-VXE. Duration 1:20. Dep 0845B seat 28A. Dep gate 1 exactly on time from gate. Arrival on time at 0935B.

As ever, good service and food on Emirates. Still highly recommend them. Although Emirates needs to improve loading A380s at Dubai. Poor communication with self-loading cargo (passengers) regarding loading procedure. Pushback from the gate was 25 minutes late, in spite of beginning boarding at the indicated time. The opposite at Melbourne. Efficient and pushback 10 minutes early. Both flights were close to full. Qantas very efficient service. Offloading and loading turnaround very efficient. Some flights a bit late. However, I allowed sufficient time between flights to allow for delays. As mentioned earlier, my wife travelled 3 weeks earlier. Her flight from Dubai to Melbourne left 2.5 hours late. Even allowing 3 hours stopover for the flight to Adelaide, she did not make the flight and had to travel later.

Aussie airports good and efficient, except Melbourne spoilt by some poor signs. I have passed through that airport 4 times in the last 5 years and still get confused. Birmingham airport is a different kettle of fish. During my numerous work related and private travels, I always believed it is an embarrassment for the 2nd largest conurbation area in the UK. Arriving back, we waited almost an hour and half for luggage. Carousel broke twice. Escalators not working. People with disabilities have to use stairs. No clear signs to lifts for the use of. No one in sight to assist. I said to my wife it is like leaving 1st world countries and arriving in 3rd world.

Back to the beginning and departure from Birmingham, arrived at Emirates check in at Birmingham airport just over 4 hours before departure time late in the afternoon Saturday 24th. I was 1st in line to check in when the desks opened. The airport, post COVID19 still had a poor reputation for processing passengers. I wanted no Problems. We did the same when my wife checked in 3 weeks earlier. She was 6th in line. As usual with previous trips to Australia, we could not complete the check in the day before. Boarding passes would not print. This is because entering Australia requires an eVisitor visa. The airline needs to see the visa before providing boarding passes. We obtained these in March 2022 prior to making our bookings for our September to October 2022 holiday. We were reasonably sure COVID restrictions would be lifted before we travelled. This was the case. Only masks were necessary when we travelled.

The aircraft from Dubai arrived 20 minutes late. Departed from the gate 10 minutes late with a short taxi to RWY 33 and right-hand climb toward Dubai. During descent to Dubai, we were held in a holding pattern for one loop, north-west of the airport, before approach to RWY 30L and a short taxi to gate C4 at 0741B, a 14 minute early arrival Sunday 25th. Clearing security, it was a long walk from one end of the terminal to the southern end for the flight to Melbourne at gate B31. All told 44 minutes after arriving at gate C4. Dubai likes its passengers to be fit. In spite of beginning boarding the A380 on time, push back was 25 minutes late. Add to this the often long aircraft taxi time, in this instance to RWY 30R, we took off 45 minutes after leaving the gate. Landing at Melbourne on RWY 34 and a fairly short taxi to gate 16, arriving at 0556B, 26 minutes late, on Monday 26th. Frustratingly, the flight passes overhead Adelaide. So near yet so far.

Getting through immigration with the passport face recognition technology was effortless. I became concerned by the long wait for luggage at the carousel, because I could see two long queues waiting to pass through customs. Ours was not the only early morning international arrival. However, having completed the landing card during the flight saved time. The customs official quickly looked at my card, asked a few questions, then waved me through with no inspection. Then confusion. Although my wife had already briefed me from when she passed through, I was still at a loss as to the direction to the Qantas domestic terminal, even though I had a plan of the terminals. The lady at the information desk was most helpful with directions. Thereafter check in and deposit of my luggage was swift, as was clearing security. The Qantas flight to Adelaide, nearly full, was loaded on time, departed and arrived on time.

The 3rd to the 8th I headed north to visit aforementioned relatives. My flights from Adelaide to Sunshine Coast (Maroochydore Airport) via Sydney on the 3rd October, were on B737-800 aircraft (aircraft at Adelaide photograph left), flight times 1 hour 50 minutes and 1 hour 35 minutes. Return on the 8th was direct from Sunshine Coast to Adelaide on a code share Jetstar A320-232, flight time 2 hours 45 minutes.

My notes made at the time. All local schedule times. 3rd October 2022 Adelaide to Sydney QF740 B737-800 VH-VXU. Duration 1:50. Dep 1255B seat 28A. Aircraft arrived 10 minutes late. Push back 17 minutes late. Landed RWY34L. Arrive 1515B. At gate 1528B.

Arrived 3 hours early at Adelaide airport for the beginning of my trip to the Sunshine Coast from the 3rd to the 8th. Time to get photographs of, to me that is, the more exotic airlines at the airport.





Including photographs from the previous page, top to bottom, left to right: Alliance VH-UYI ERJ-190AR, QantasLink VH-UZD ERJ-190AR wet lease from Alliance, QantasLink VH-SBB DHC-8-315Q operated by Eastern Australia Airlines, Alliance VH-XWS Fokker 100, Rex Airlines VH-KDQ Saab 340B, Fiji Airways DQ-FAH B373-8MAX, Air New Zealand ZK-NNG A321-271NG and Qantas VH-VXU B737-838 my aircraft to Sydney.

The photographs included a Fiji Airways B737 MAX 8. The MAX 8 was the aircraft grounded from March 2019 to November 2020 due to recurring failure in the Manoeuvring Characteristics Augmentation System that caused two fatal crashes, Lion Air Flight 610 and Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302.



The approach to Sydney from the west was out to sea and a left-hand turn onto long final to RWY 34L. The runway extends southward of the coast on reclaimed land in Botany Bay. Took a number of good photographs that showed our track to the airport, extension of flaps and landing. The photograph shows our approach south of Sydney before a turn to the left to land at the airport next to the bay in the top left of the photograph.

Sydney airport has three runways, RWY 16L/34R 2438m (7999ft) and RWY 16R/34L



3962m (12999ft) with CAT II ILS at all four ends and RWY 07/25 2530m (8300ft) with CAT I ILS at each end. The photograph left shows the aircraft on final approach to RWY 34L.

It is also a much easier terminal to navigate when travelling domestically. If one needed to transfer to the international terminal it is some distance away. How does one get between the domestic and international

terminals? There is a free 10 minute shuttle bus between 0530B to 2130B, or a train link that takes 2 minutes from 0500B to 2400B costing AUS \$8.50.

After departure from Sydney to the south and climbing left-hand from Sydney, from my window seat 28A, I saw the Sydney Opera House and steel arch Sydney Harbour Bridge that carries the Bradfield Highway, However, I could not get my camera out of its pouch at my side in time due to an overweight male passenger cramping me. My mistake I suppose. The camera should have been to hand prior to take off.

Sydney to Sunshine Coast (Maroochydore): QF904. B737-800 VH-VZA. Duration 1:35. Dep 1855B seat 28A. Boarded at gate 12. Push back 5 minutes early. Approach left-hand for RWY13. Arrived 1930B. At gate on time.

The Sunshine Coast airport is rather small and rather basic, although with a pleasant neat and tidy terminal building. Difficult to get lost and confused. It has one runway 13/31 2800m (9186ft) long. VOR/DME approach only. DME (distance measuring equipment) is radio navigation technology that measures the slant distance between an aircraft and a ground station. When landing on RWY 31 one has to continue to the northern end to a turning basin and back backtrack about half the runway length before one can turn off the runway to taxi to the apron and terminal building at the southern end of the runway. Taking off on RWY 13 has to do the same in reverse to get to the northern basin for take off. Needless to say, whenever possible, it is best land on RWY 13 and take off from RWY 31.

After an enjoyable reunion visit with brother, niece and her son, on the 8th October, I was at Maroochydore Airport for my return to Adelaide.



Below are details of the return flight. All times local. It can be skipped by non-aviation enthusiasts. Come to think of it, non-aviation enthusiasts would not be reading any of this anyway. 8th October 2022 Sunshine Coast (Maroochydore) to Adelaide flight JQ805, aircraft A320-232, registration VH-VGV. Duration 2:45. Departure 1630B seat 29A. Arrival 1945B. Departure and arrival on time. Coincidentally, I also photographed VH-VGV arriving at Adelaide while waiting for my flight to Sydney.

Arrival of VH-VGV and on to Adelaide.

I was not impressed with Jetstar. Paid for flexi plus flights, which included seat selection, extra weight luggage and changeable flight times. When I checked in the afternoon before the flight, I saw that my booked 23A seat had changed with no notification to what I regard as the worst seat, in the middle of the aircraft over the wing and middle of central row 15E. My niece called them and I got the last window seat near the back at 29A. Not impressed with the way they did cabin service either. Very haphazard. Although, good flight and on time. While sitting in Jetstar VH-VGV waiting for push back from the gate, I took a photograph of another B737-8 Max. This time VH-UJT belonging to Bonza Airline.

After take-off on RWY 31 Maroochydore I thought a strange climb from the airport. After the usual climb straight ahead to the north-west, I thought there would be a left-hand turn on course to Adelaide. Instead, there was a right-hand climbing turn that took us south of Noosa Head out to sea then back inland passing to the north Moreton Island and west of Brisbane heading south-west to Adelaide. I thought a left-hand climb and quicker heading to the south-west would have been better. The route taken was possibly due to traffic requirements associated with Brisbane. To my advantage I did get a photograph of Noosa Heads, which we visited the previous day and of the northern end of Moreton Island. I have subsequently found that this is the RWY31 Standard Instrument Departure (SID) Moolo one departure.



The Moolo one right-hand climbing turn departure south of Noosa Head, out to sea then back inland. Right: Descent over Adelaide near central Adelaide with the Adelaide Oval in the far right of the photograph beneath the wing with landing flap extended.

Descent to Adelaide from the north-east to RWY23 was in fading daylight with middle and high layer cloud. The flight path passes slightly to the west of central Adelaide. For the first time I was able to get a good ground view. We first passed west of the Little Para Reservoir then the hope Valley Reservoir, before passing north-west of the Adelaide Oval sports ground near the city centre then, on short finals over the SAinSA shop at 233 Sir Donald Bradman Drive next to Wilson Street. The shop sells only imported South African groceries. Wife and her son were amused by my g'day mate greeting, great to be back from walkabout. Wife not impressed by my new Aussie hat.

Homeward bound, we were at Adelaide airport 3 hours before departure on Friday the 14th October. Two hours before departure is stipulated for regional flights, three hours for international. Although our first leg of the journey was regional, we believed it prudent to be there earlier. As it was the process was quick and easy with our luggage booked through to Birmingham, via Melbourne and Dubai. When booking our flights in March, we did them together so that we could coordinate seating on the return trip. Each of us on our laptops. Somehow there was a mix up. I booked 25B, my wife was supposed to book 25A (window

seat). When we boarded, she went to seat 26C. One behind me and an aisle seat. I was confused. We were supposed to be together. For some reason she had either booked the wrong seat, or Qantas had allocated a seat which turned out to be close to mine. There was no problem with seating on the following two Emirates flights when we had seats as arranged.

Anyway, we arrived on time at Melbourne where we again found signs to the international terminal confusing, went the wrong way and had to ask for guidance. Everything went smoothly boarding the A380 to Dubai. Push back was 5 minutes early and arrived at the Dubai gate 4 minutes late. Would have been early, except we were held in a single holding pattern over Fujairah to the south-east of Dubai then positioned for right hand circuit to an approach from the north-west to 12L. Circuits are usually left hand. However, the UAE General Civil Aviation Authority OMBD AD 2.20 Local Traffic Regulations state right hand traffic circuit RWY 12R and RWY 12L with the base leg over the sea to be established on final track before crossing the coast inbound. Visual Circuits/approaches both runways downwind leg to be made south of Dubai town avoiding Zabeel palace.

This time the gate was close to our departure gate A16 to Birmingham. Push back from the gate was 10 minutes late at 07:55 on Sunday 15th and take off at 08:15 after a short taxi but behind other aircraft waiting to take off. Take off was to the south on runway 12R with a climbing turn to the right slightly to the west of the city centre, so we had a good view of central Dubai in the morning light and the new reclaimed offshore islands that are always being added to the coastline. Managed two photographs of the Burj Khalifa (Khalifa Tower). It is the tallest structure and building in the world. Has been since 2009. Total height of 829.8m (2,722ft).



Climbing after take off from RWY 12R and a righthand turn to the north to a north-west heading over dusty desert air becoming clearer over the Gulf Sea.

An uneventful flight. By now we just wanted to be home. We landed RWY 33 at Birmingham, 12 minutes late at the gate at 1247B. Conditions in the terminal have already been described. No problem at customs. Quickly through and on a taxi home. £27 plus a 30% tip because the driver was friendly and he loaded and unloaded our heavy luggage.

Below is a detailed list of the return flights. All times local. The list can be skipped by non-aviation enthusiasts.

14th October 2022 Adelaide to Melbourne

EK5694/QF0694. B737-800 VH-VXG. Duration 1:20 seat 25B. Dep 1745B. Inbound flight arrived 10 minutes late. Arrive 1935B. Arrived at gate on schedule.

Melbourne to Dubai

EK407. A380-800 A6-EUV. Duration 14:00 seat 46B, zone F. Dep 2215B gate 16. Push back 5 minutes early. ETA 15th 0515B. Held in single holding pattern over Fujairah then positioned for right hand circuit to RWY 12L. Arrived at gate 0519B.

15 October 2022 Dubai to Birmingham

EK039 B777-300ER A6-EPQ. Duration 7:45 seat 45J, zone C. Dep 0750B. Push back 0755B. Take off 0815B. Landed RWY 33 1235B at gate 1247B.

ISLE OF MAN 2023 MARCH

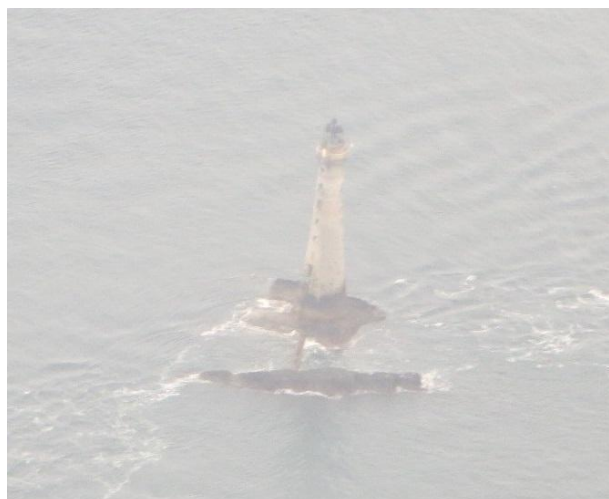
We arrived home Wednesday afternoon 8th March 2023 from the Isle of Man. Went there Saturday 4th. Had a good time visiting close relatives with good walks in dry but cold weather.

Flew Loganair LM0638 from Birmingham (EGBB) to Ronaldsway (EGNS) Isle of Man on the 4th March 2023, returned LM0637. My first flights in the ATR 72. Not a particular fan of this aircraft type, mainly due to its early wing icing history and not as good crosswind limits as the de Havilland Dash 8, largely due to narrower undercarriage. The ATRs fold into the fuselage, whereas the Dah 8 fold further out into the engine nacelles on the wing. However, we had good flights and was impressed by the flight and cabin crews.



Taxying TUI B787-8 Dreamliner G-TUYL and boarding Loganair ATR72-600 G-LMTD
Clan Duncan, 8 years old at the time.

4th March 2023: Departed on time 1125Z ATR 72-600 G-LMTD, seat 12D (window seat). Wife in 12C. Cruise FL160 between cloud layers duration of flight. Good views during lower descent on to righthand turn to final for runway 08.



Took some not good vary hazy photographs of the Chicken Rock Lighthouse on the righthand base leg to finals for runway 03 at Ronaldsway. Very hazy. Kept one. It was built between 1870 to 1875 on an isolated rock about 2.5 kilometres south of the Calf of Man. Building could only take place during lower tide, about five hours per day. The tower height is 44 metres. The light was first shown 1st January 1875. The light became solar powered. It is now decommissioned.



8th March 2023, we were back at the airport homeward bound. ATR 72-600 G-LMTA aircraft (shown left). Really like the aircraft (registered) tartan livery. While waiting to board, G-LMTD, our outward bound aircraft arrived.

Had seat 12B booked. Wife let me sit in her 12A window seat. Intended departure time 1110Z. Departed gate 50 minutes late 1200B. Arrived 45 minutes late. Cruise FL150. In

cloud during climb at approximately FL100, until long final and Birmingham International.

Before departure, I naturally had to photograph aircraft. Remember the BAe ATP(F) G-BTPH aircraft used by West Atlantic UK Limited mentioned during the 2013 visit? The company had changed to an ATR72-211F. This one registered G-NPTE then 34 years old. Apparently sold a month later. Also, a photograph of an ex-West Atlantic BAe ATP in storage minus engines, now registered SE-MHH and ex G-BTPH in newer livery. Both aircraft shown left and right below. Also a Nextjet BAe ATP SE-MEX in storage (second below left).



Had fun departing Ronaldsway airport on the Isle of Man. Everyone was on board ready to go and pushed back on time. Then stood with engines run up on the ATR 72 twin turboprop aircraft. The weather fine at the Isle of Man. Engines sounded fine. Said to Roz there is a problem. After some time, the captain said there was a technical problem with number 2 engine (starboard). They were going to do a restart. Not happy with restart. Said they were returning to the gate for a ground

engine inspection. Engineer came on board. After some time we were told they believe they had fixed the problem. Did another start, then shut down. Reset fault code in computer. Engineer left the aircraft. Said to Roz maybe he should stay on board. Started engine number 1 during push back then engine 2. Stood for a while, while flight crew did further checks, then taxied for departure. Arrived at Birmingham 51 minutes late in light snow at 1238Z instead of 1147Z, visibility 2200 metres cloud overcast at 1100ft wind easterly 12 knots, temperature +1C, dew point temperature zero as shown in the 1220Z METAR. METAR weather

observations prior to and to around the time of landing. Do not agree with the METARs. SHGS = small hail and or ice pellets, or SHGR = hail reported earlier. Although not there at the time of the earlier observations, do not believe the weather conditions were conducive.

EGBB 081250Z 08011KT 1800 SN BKN012 01/M01 Q0992 RESHGS RESN RERA
EGBB 081220Z 08012KT 2200 SHGS BKN011 01/M00 Q0992
EGBB 081150Z 08010KT 2200 -SN OVC010 01/M01 Q0992 RESHGR
EGBB 081120Z 09011KT 1600 SHGR OVC013 01/M01 Q0992 RESN RERA

While the weather was good at the Isle of Man, I was concerned we were going to get stuck on the island due the weather changing at Birmingham airport. It did look like we would be OK. The Met office got it wrong in their forecasts. Said snow would not be at the airport until 1600-1800 UTC. Light sleety wet snow was already at the airport in the early morning. Temperatures slightly above freezing, so tending to melt and not settling. As it was, we caught the X1 bus home from the airport to the top of the hill at Showell Lane, then 15 minutes walk home downhill in light wet snow. My luggage had a broken missing wheel when collected at the carousal. Had to drag it minus a wheel at the airport and on the walk home. It was quite invigorating in +1C. The real snow arrived overnight. It was still snowing Thursday morning, 9th. Had about 6-8 cm.

ISLE OF MAN 2023 JUNE

We went to the Isle of Man again late in June, 24th to 28th 2023. A family occasion. Saw the wind farm passing out to sea again and the Douglas Complex gas and oilrig last seen in 2013. A good visit, but some palaver getting there and back on Loganair ATR72-600s flights. Arrived Saturday at the Isle of Man after an interesting flight. Outbound flight Loganair ATR 72-600 G-LMTE. First of all left 50 minutes late from Birmingham. Supposed to leave at 0820BST. As usual Birmingham airport screw-up. No equipment available at our push-back time. While we were ready to pushback on time, I understand Swissport did not provide the necessary ground support. I noticed the tug first pushed back an Aer Lingus aircraft well after our start time before coming to attend to our flight.

Then, when we arrived at Ronaldsway airport we had to abort the approach due to below minimum cloud, went into a hold for about 30 minutes, tried again, aborted again, diverted to Liverpool. From my window seat (disturbingly one row rear of the port propeller and concern if it detaches) and the flight crew could see the ground vertically. However, as the captain later explained forward vision prevented them from seeing the runway at decision height (Isle of Man has a CAT I ILS and 200 feet decision height) he had to overshoot on both approaches. The aircraft was supposed to go to Liverpool after landing at the Isle of Man and return to the Isle of Man. So everyone remained on board while we took on board the passengers that were going to the Isle of Man. We departed with the new delayed flight number, then tried again, landed at 1232BST. See attached flight Birmingham to Isle of Man.

Over four hours on an aircraft for a flight that should have been 45 minutes. Excellent flight crew. Kept well informed. The same crew on the two flights must be congratulated for their highly professional conduct, especially the captain for keeping the passengers informed at appropriate times, bearing in mind the rule is to aviate, navigate communicate, in that order and the friendly 1st officer while on the ground at Liverpool. Plus, the wise move of taking on board more fuel at Birmingham. The pilots being aware of the dodgy weather at Ronaldsway.



G-LMTE at Liverpool having been pushed back, engines started and about to taxi and right climbing after take off from RWY 27.



An unfortunately over exposed photograph while taxiing after landing on RWY 27 of a West Atlantic B737-322F G-JMCL and disembarked from Loganair ATR72-600 G-LMTE.



Abandoned G-LMTE.

Returning Wednesday 28th, more fun and games. From the departure lounge, I saw our aircraft ATR72-600 G-LMTE arrive, the same one we flew in from Birmingham. Then watched the passengers disembark, then the cabin crew, then the flight crew. Said to my wife this does not look good. Usually, the new crew stands at the aircraft waiting to board for quick turnaround. Our Loganair LM0637 flight at 1230 BST was cancelled at 1232 BST due technical. We were asked to collect our luggage and return to your Menzies airport representative to arrange suitable transport.

When we collected our luggage, I discovered that mine had been damaged and had grease stains on it. It was not damaged when checked-in earlier. When back at Menzies Passenger Services check-in, I drew attention to the now damaged luggage. I was told to take a photograph of it and submit it to Loganair. I thought this strange because it was their own company that did the loading and unloading of the luggage. We were rebooked (along with others on the same flight as us) on flight LM0697 departing at 1535BST to Manchester then a coach trip from Manchester Airport to Birmingham Airport. The flight was delayed to 1635BST. This was

already known at 1330 BST when booking in. I asked for meal vouchers. I was told there were no meal vouchers.



Meanwhile, there were two EasyJet visitors. A320-214 G-EZTX and A319-111 G-EZGH.



G-LMTC our aircraft to Manchester.

We duly left at to Manchester 1635 BST on recently returned Loganair ATR72-600 G-LMTC. This aircraft was at the airport when our flight on G-LMTE was cancelled. I have another photograph as proof.

Loganair specially hired a Sky Coaches luxury Volvo bus trip from Manchester Airport to Birmingham Airport. We and other passengers, departed Manchester 1800 BST, arrived Birmingham Airport 1940BST. Excellent trip. Had to wait for the X1 bus home at 2020BST. Walked from the top of

the hill at Showell Lane, arrived home 2045BST. Left for the airport at the Isle of Man at 1030ST. All in all, 10 hours15 minutes in transit.

I made a claim against Loganair for damage to the luggage and no meal vouchers. Airlines are liable for lost or damaged baggage, based on the value of your luggage. Aviation Passenger Charter: summary of passenger rights - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Aviation Passenger Charter - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). As our original flight from the Isle of Man was scheduled at 1230BST and our alternative flight was already listed as delayed to 1635BST, this exceeded the at least 2 hour delay necessary for meals and refreshments, that is, 4 hours and 5 minutes. I referred Loganair to: If your flight was cancelled or you were denied boarding and you are waiting for an alternative flight, or there is a long delay (at least 2 hours) to your flight, the airline must provide you with care and support, such as meals and refreshments. Length of flight, short-haul flight of under 1500km (e.g. Glasgow to Amsterdam), waiting time more than two hours. Aviation Passenger Charter: summary of passenger rights - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and Aviation Passenger Charter - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). I have received confirmation of my claim and that there is a 28 day processing delay. Expected procrastination and denial. Amazingly and to Loganair's credit, it was all sorted with no problems at all within 28 days.

ISLE OF MAN 2024 FEBRUARY

February Thursday 29th to March Monday 3rd 2024 we were again on the Isle of Man. Another good trip. Good walks. Also photographs of Snaefell mountain covered in snow. Excellent

service from Loganair apart from a late departure from Ronaldsway. It was no problem for us. It was one flight home, but for people with connecting flights from Birmingham likely to be an issue.

The outbound flight was Loganair 49 passenger seats Embraer ERJ-145 G-SAJO LM0638 seat 7F wife 7D departure Birmingham 0900Z arrival Ronaldsway 1000Z.



Embraer ERJ-145 G-SAJO arrival at Ronaldsway. ERJ-145 G-SAJN back at Birmingham.

We returned 3rd March Loganair Embraer ERJ-145 G-SAJN LM0637 seat 12D wife 12C scheduled departure Ronaldsway 1210Z scheduled arrival Birmingham 1310Z. The flight was delayed. My camera photograph times show G-SAJN arrived at the Ronaldsway gate at 1359Z, landing at Birmingham at 1518Z and at the gate at 1530Z. We stood on the apron for some time before being allowed to turn in to the gate and park.

While waiting at Ronaldsway took photographs of Loganair ATR 72-600 G-LMTA and EasyJet Airbus A319-100 G-EZBV.

We departed RWY 26 with photographs during the take off and climb as well as on final and landing on runway 33 at Birmingham. Plus, photographs of Emirates A380 at its gate and Qatar B787-8 Dreamliner A7-BCL photographed having been pushed back and starting engines while I was walking from our aircraft to a waiting transit bus.



Take off from RWY 26 at Ronaldsway and Qatar B787-8 Dreamliner A7-BCL at Birmingham.

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APPENDIX

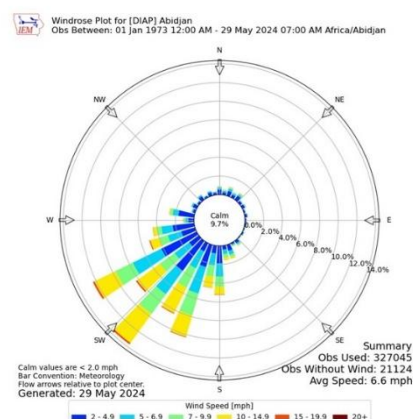
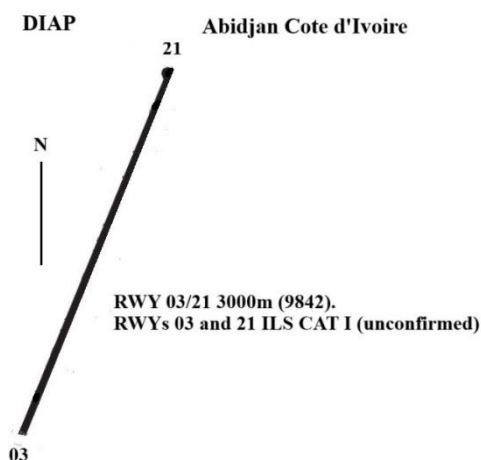
The north indicator, on the maps, is true north. Runways are numbered according to magnetic north. A runway marked 36 for 360° magnetic direction is not necessarily aligned with true north. Aircraft are flown according to magnetic directions. For example, magnetic variation 21°W means magnetic runways 05/23 are, to the nearest 10°, 03° and 21° true north. Magnetic variation west is added to the true direction, variation east is subtracted. Magnetic variation slowly changes with time. Therefore, over decades, runway numbers can change by about 1°.

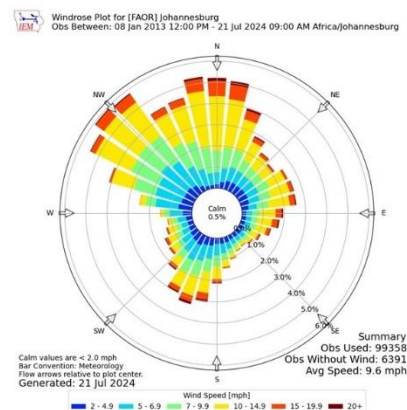
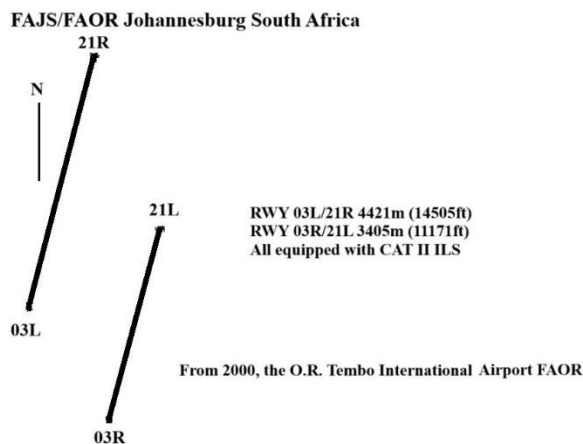
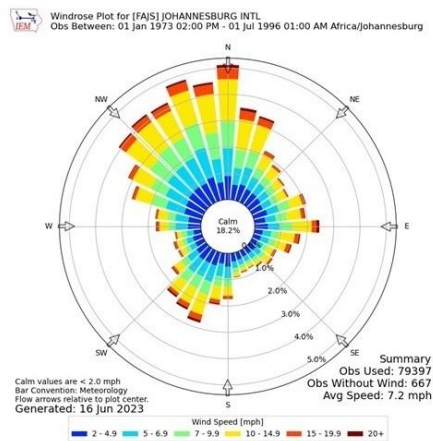
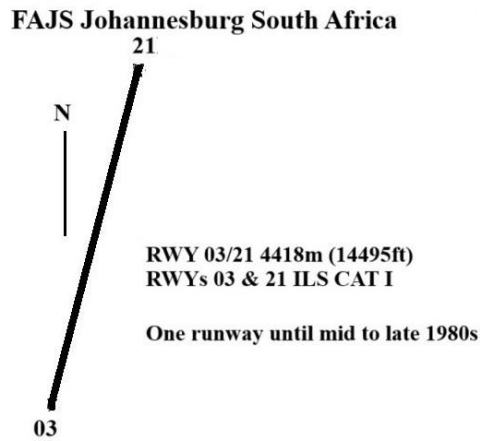
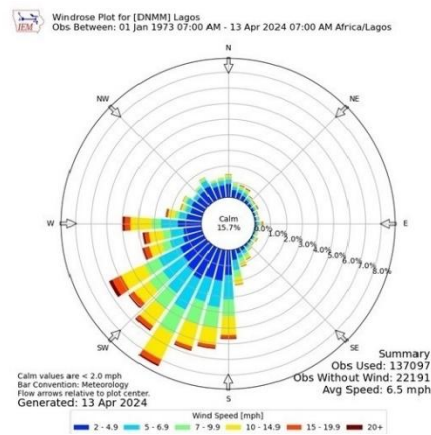
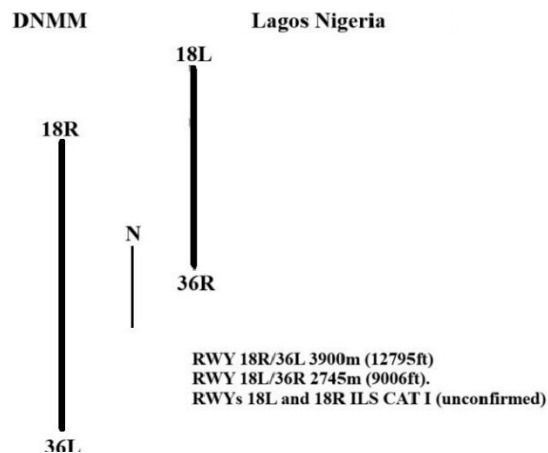
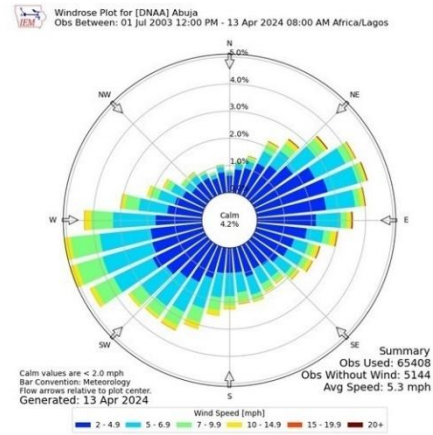
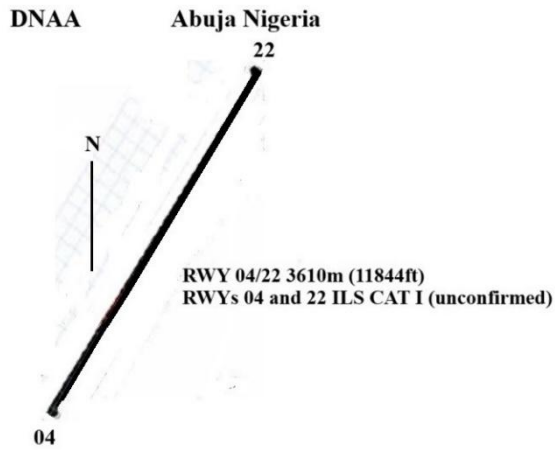
Individual charts are not intended to be to the same scale. However, where there are two or more runways, the runways are correct according to scale and position in relation to each other on the particular chart, but not necessarily width. Some runways are not as wide as others at a particular airport. Narrower, usually shorter, runways restrict the size of aircraft that can land and take off from them. The charts are presented in alphabetical order according to the ICAO code.

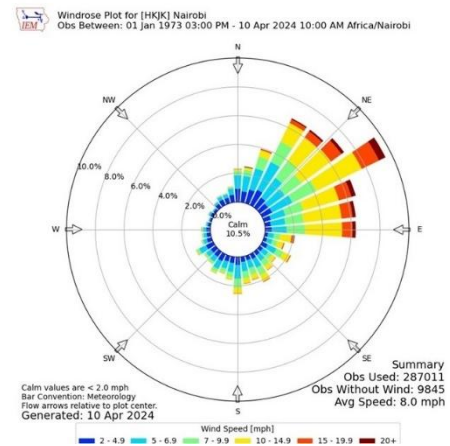
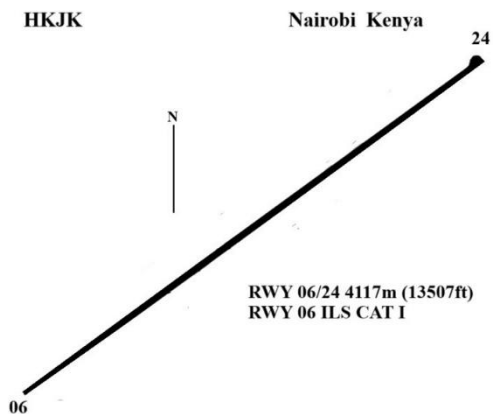
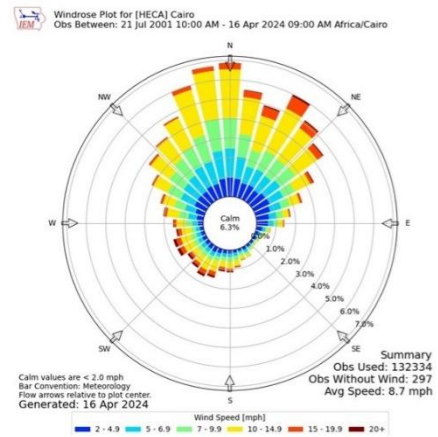
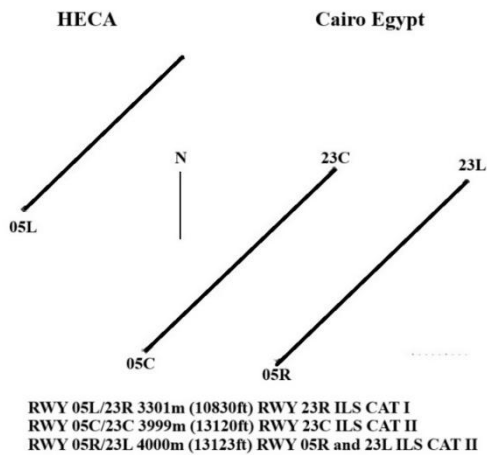
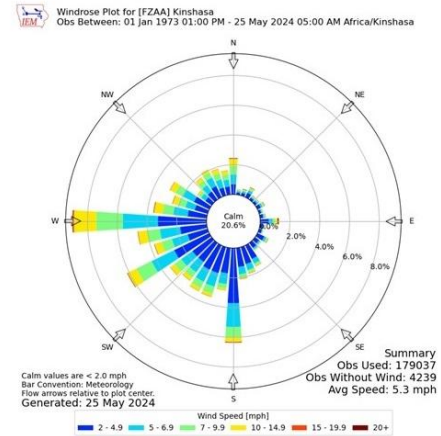
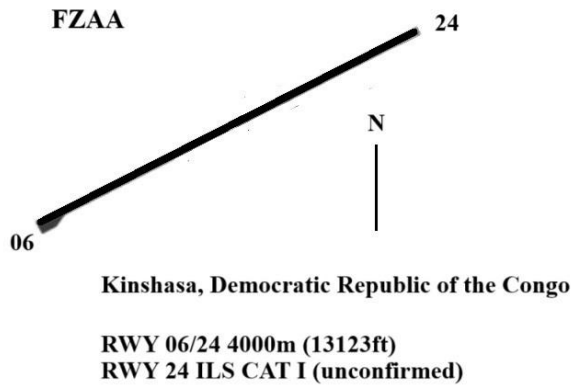
Runway plans and ILS categories for the airports are correct to the best of the author's knowledge. Having said that, there may be some discrepancies. This is relevant for Monreal CYUL airport for which there is low confidence regarding the runway ILS categories. The information was impossible to find and confirm at the Canada Transport Aviation website.

The most important choice of runway direction is the prevailing wind direction. Aircraft landing into the wind have a lower ground speed and shorter roll on the ground. Take off is also shorter into the wind. Strength is also a factor. If the incidence of strong winds is often not aligned to the prevailing direction consideration must be given to the construction of a second runway aligned with the strong wind direction, or reconsider the original runway direction. Wind roses have been provided to illustrate the relevance of the wind velocity at an airport. These are provided in the public domain courtesy of the Iowa State University Iowa Environmental Mesonet (IEM). IEM warns that the archive does contain errors. In general, data from the airports is of good quality and representative of the local surrounding area. Wind direction is relative to true north, speed is in miles per hour (mph).

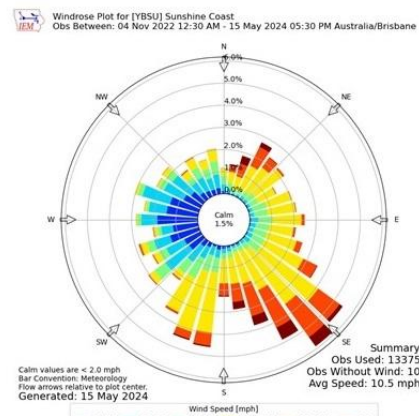
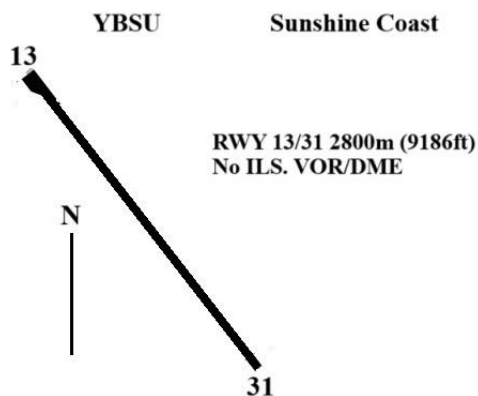
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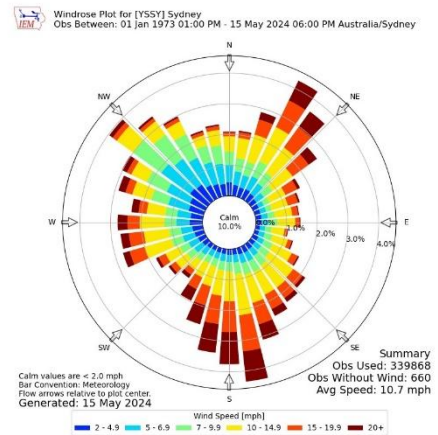
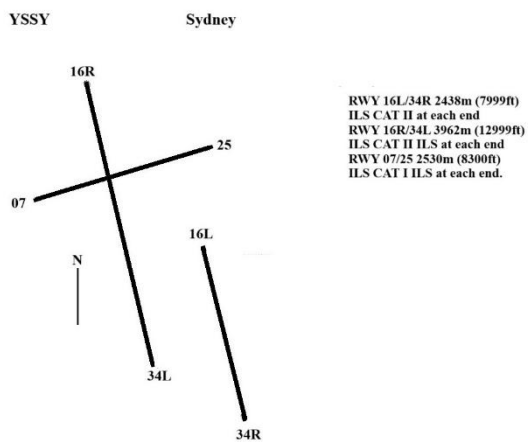
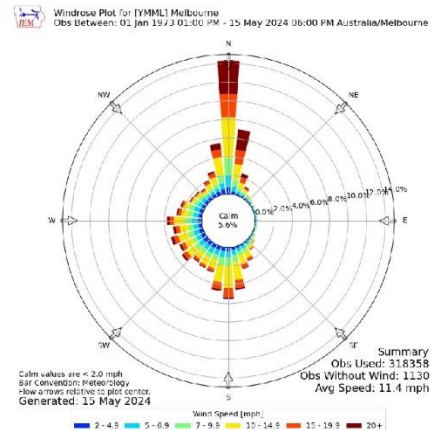
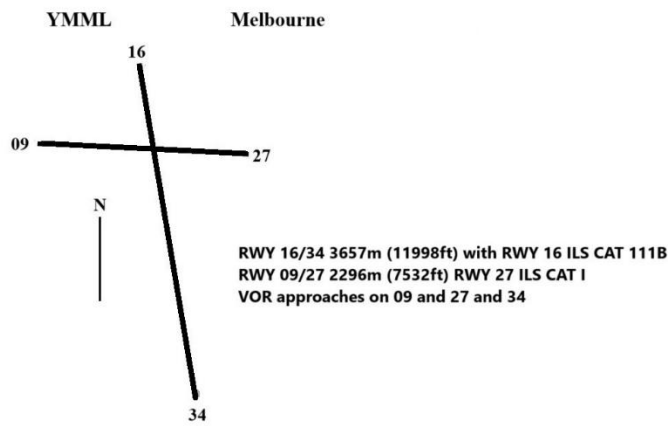
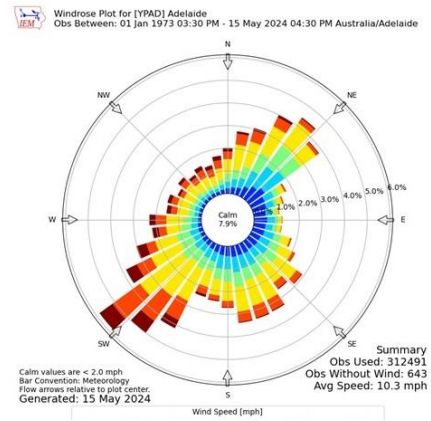
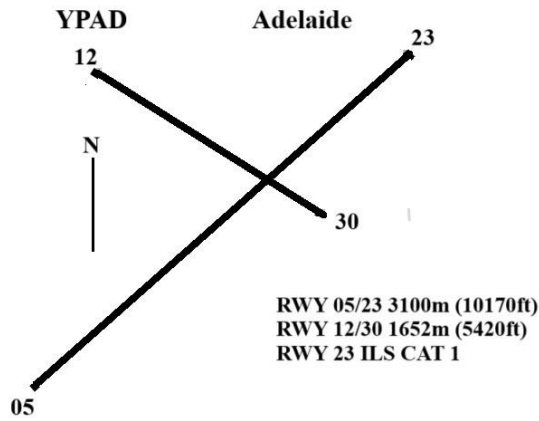




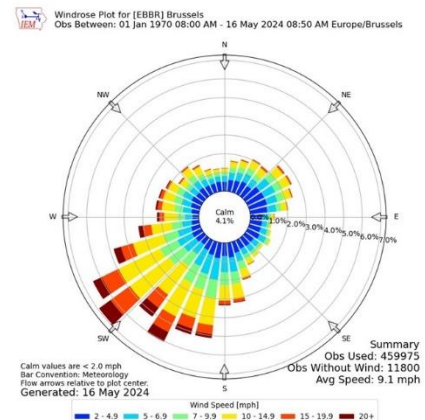
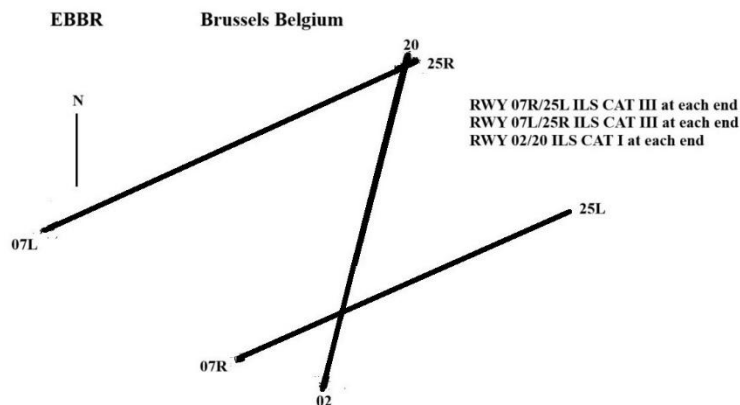


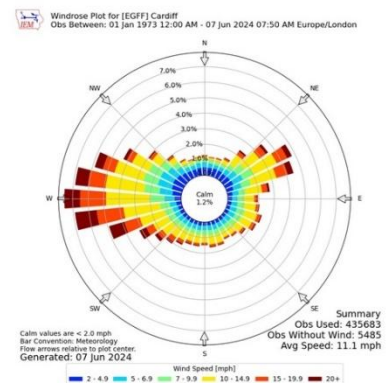
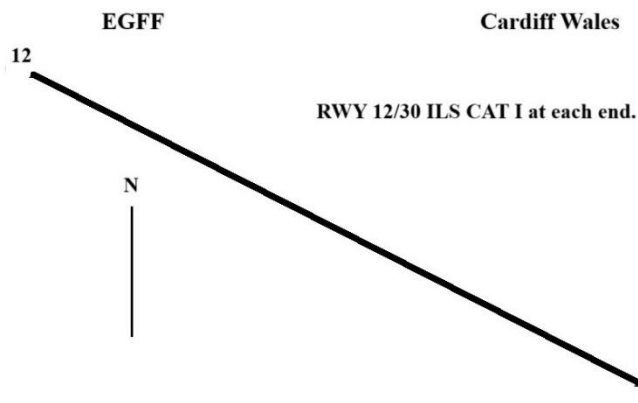
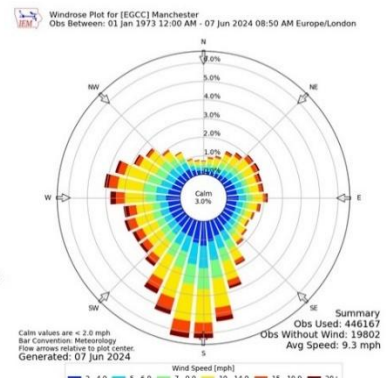
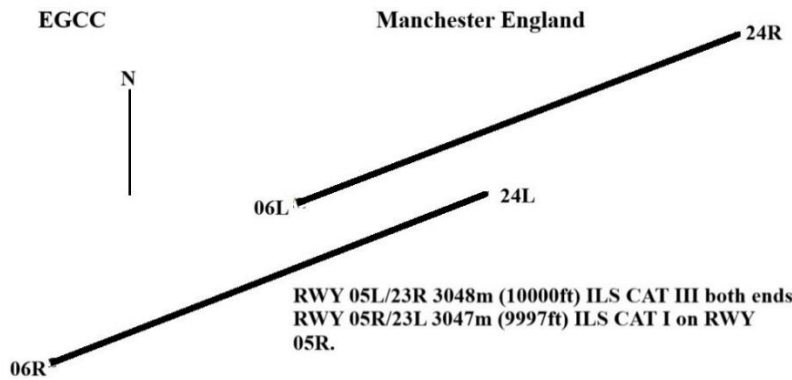
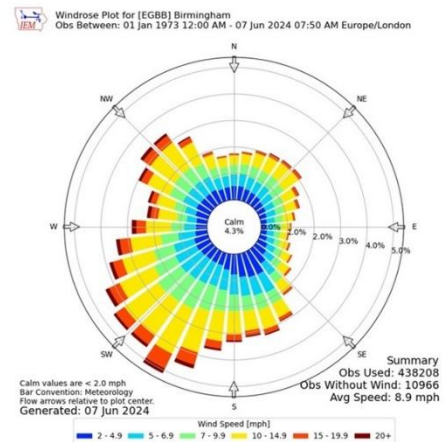
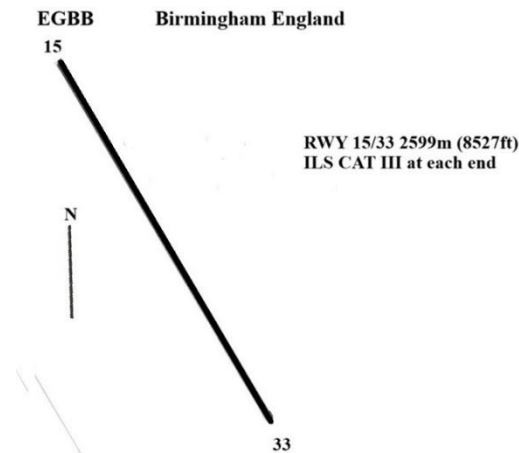
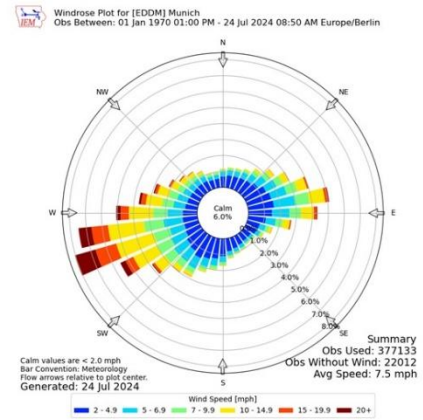
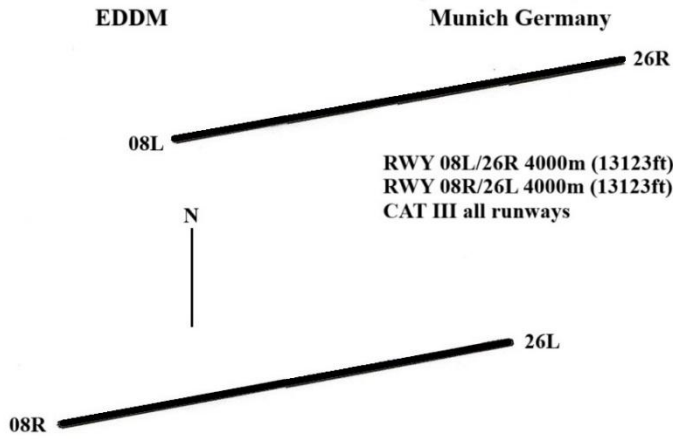
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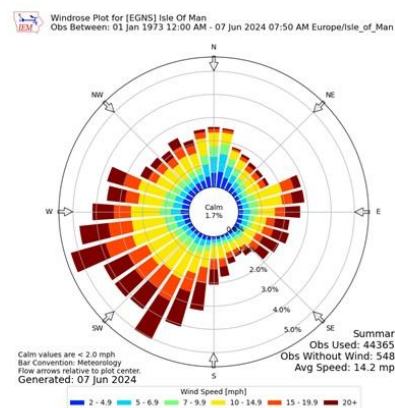
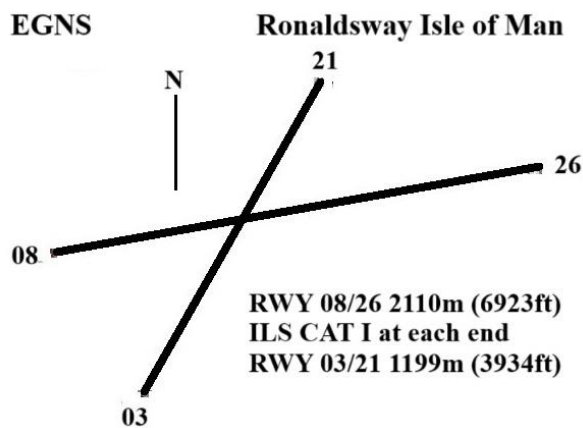
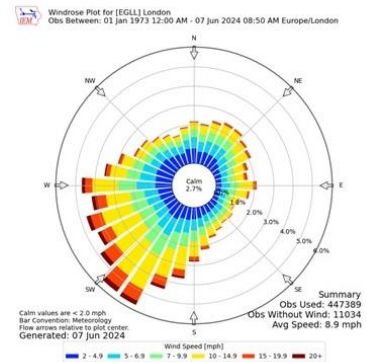
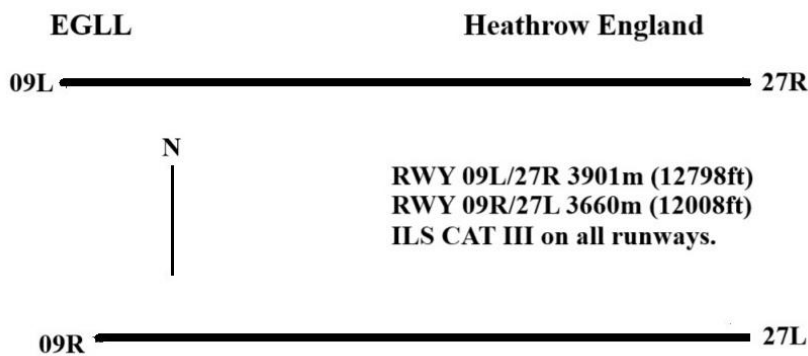
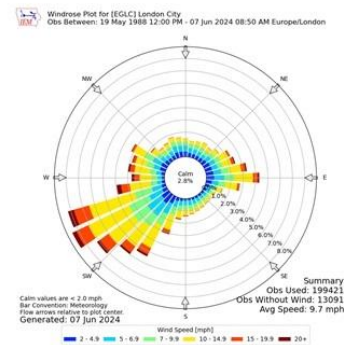
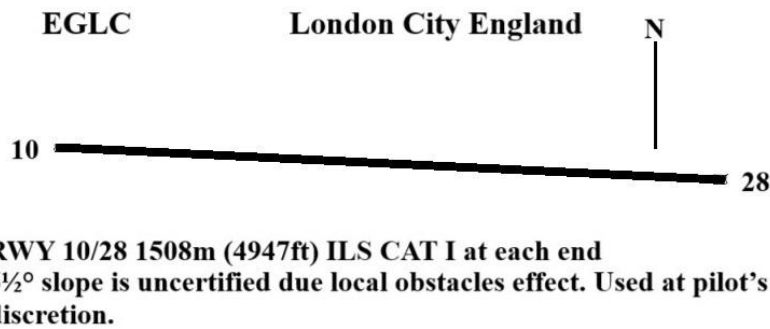
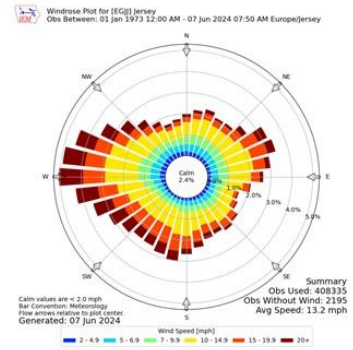
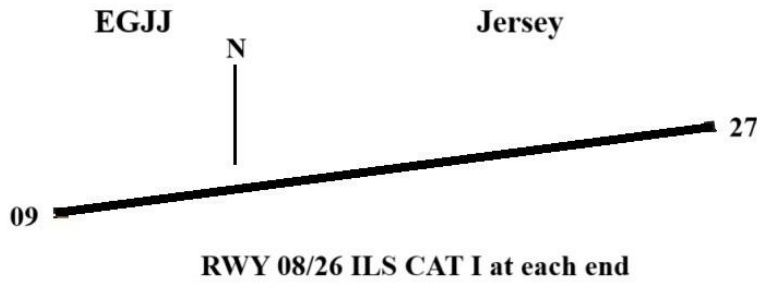


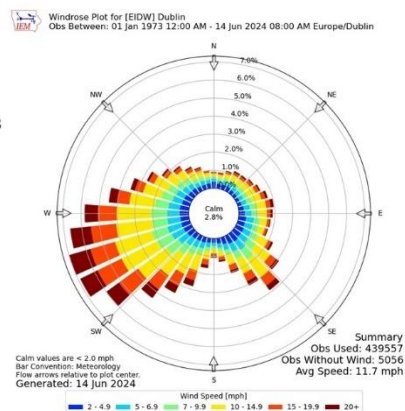
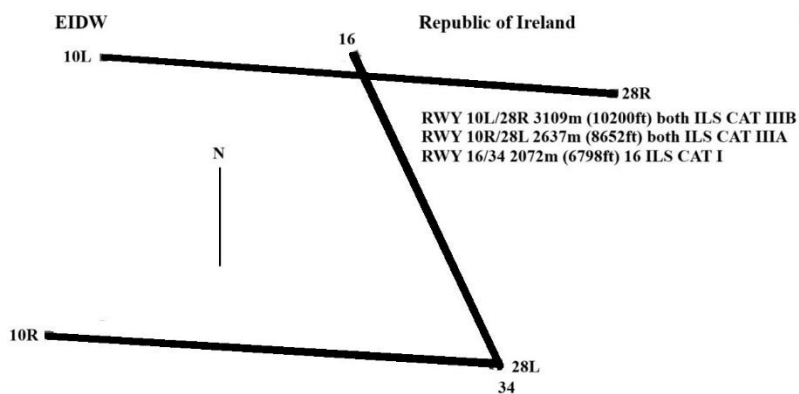
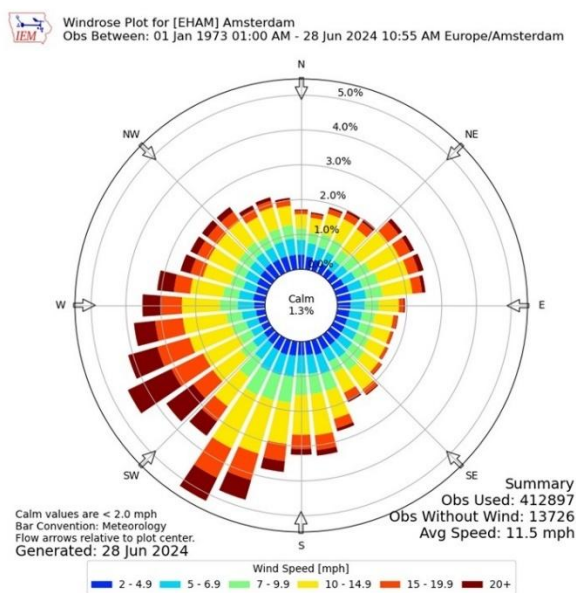
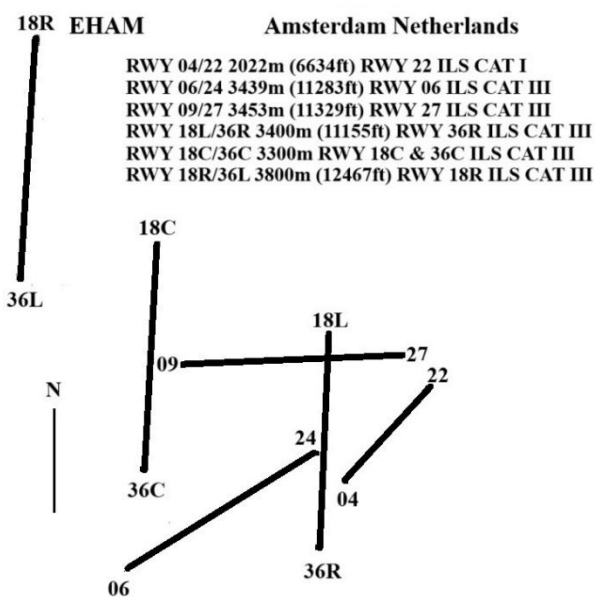
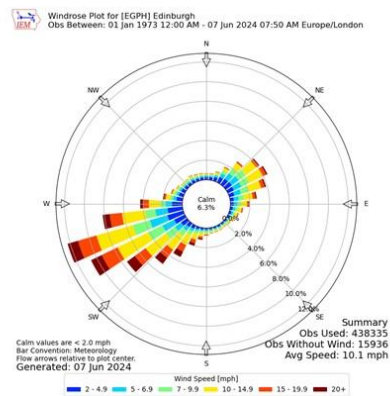
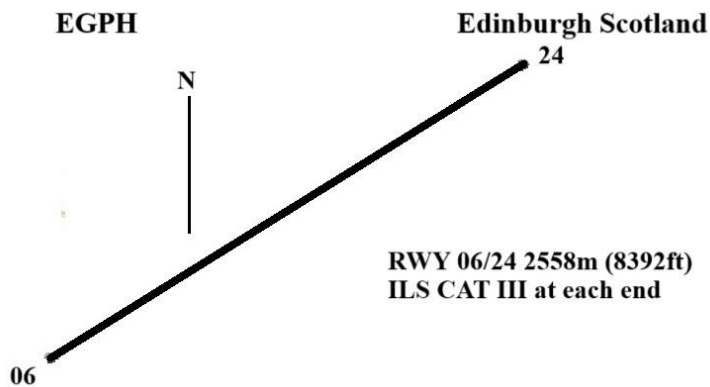


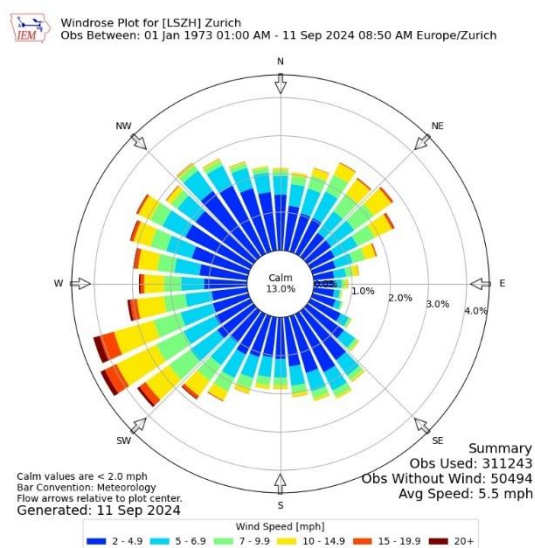
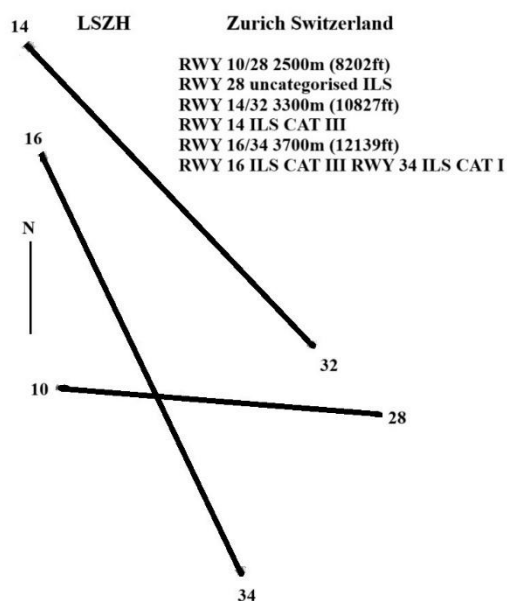
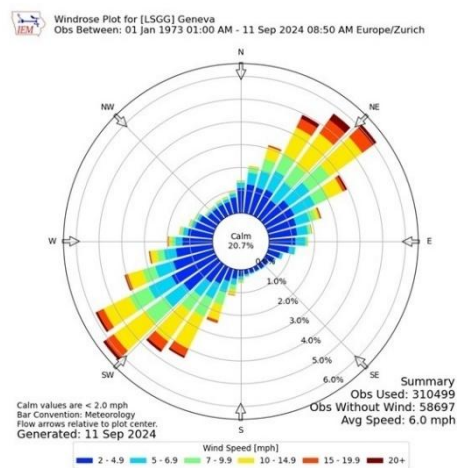
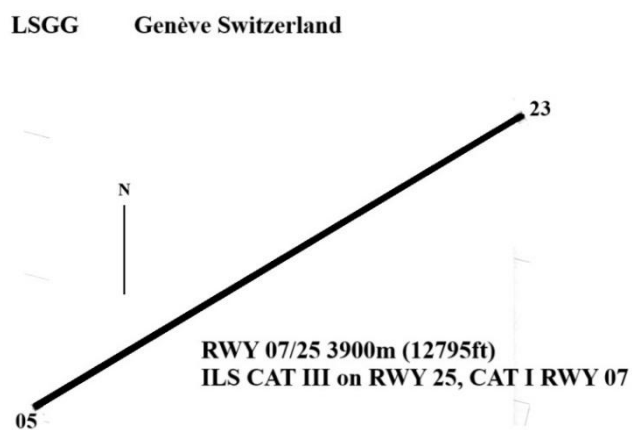
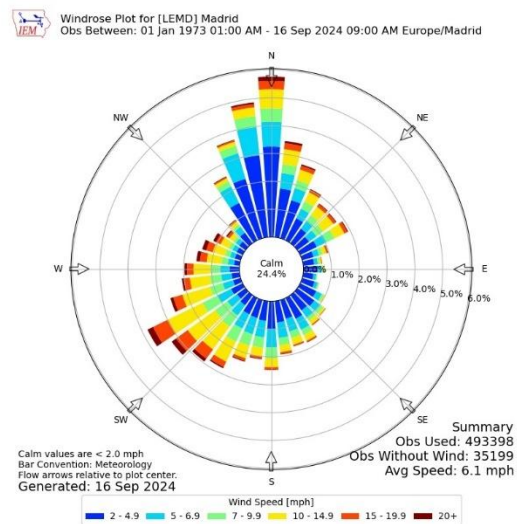
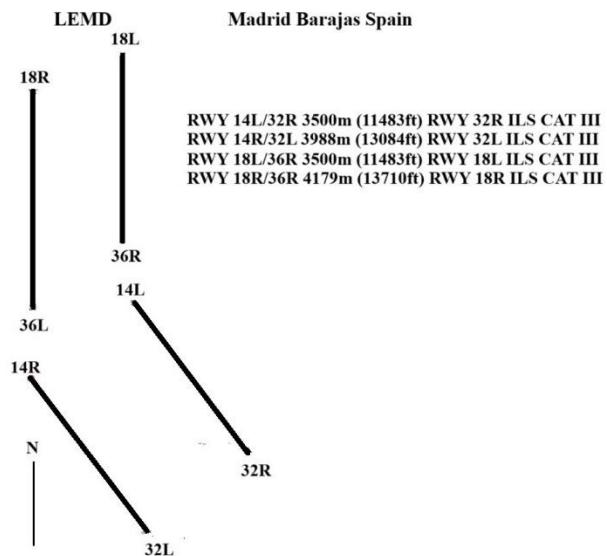
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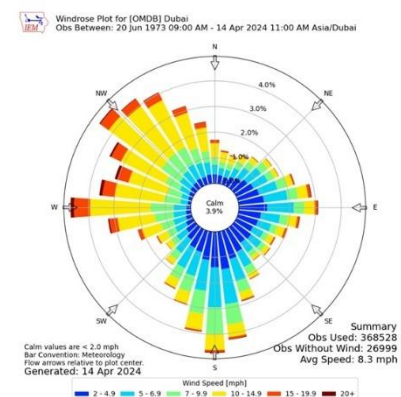
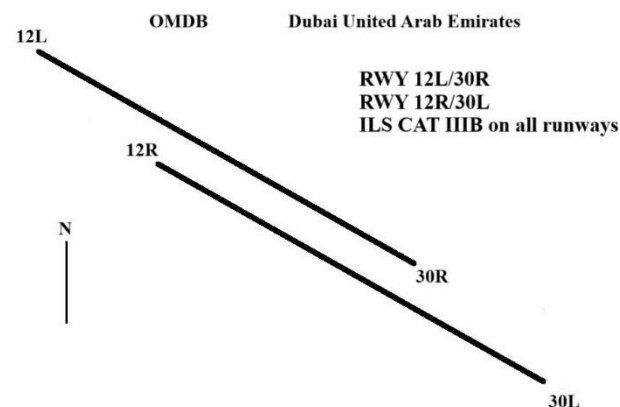
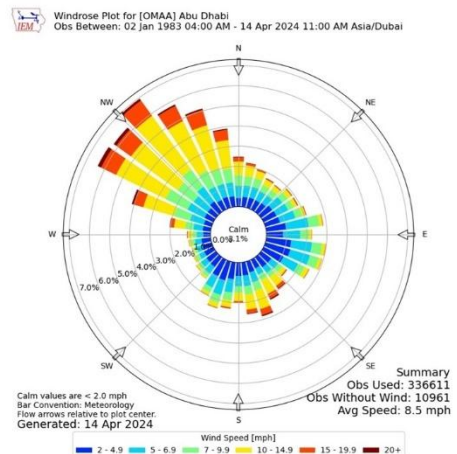
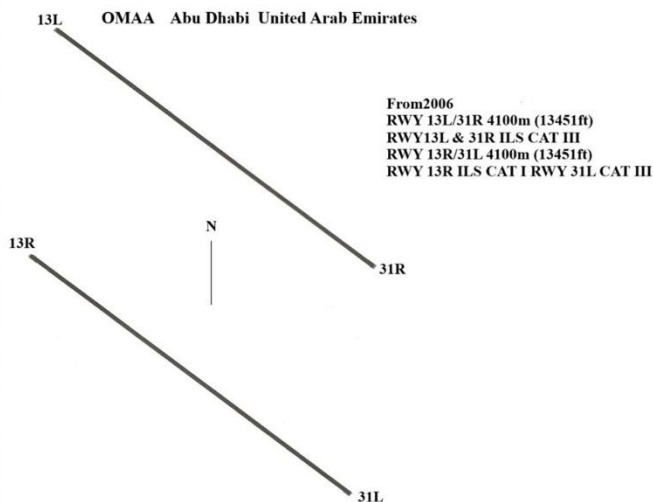
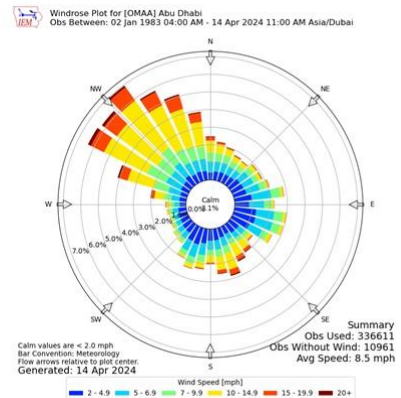
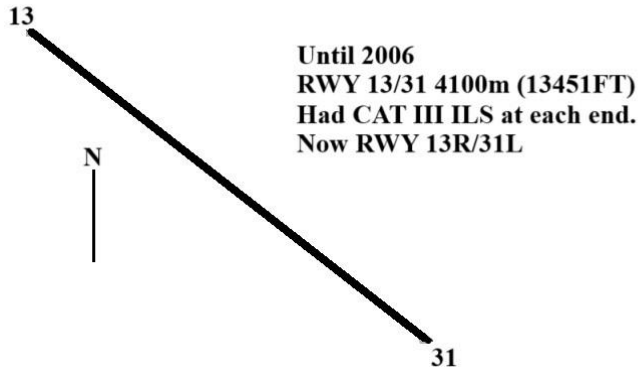






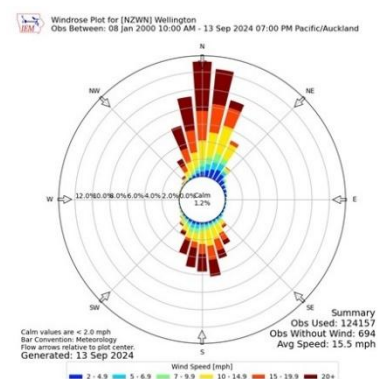
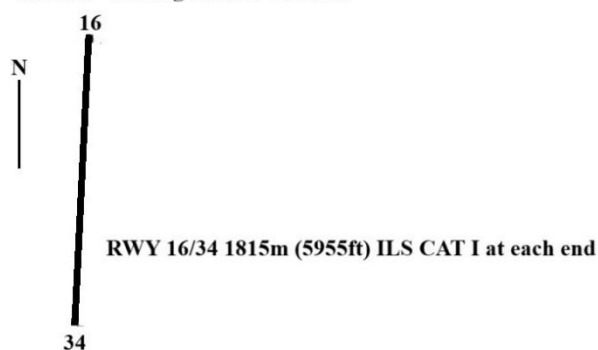
MIDDLE EAST

OMAA Abu Dhabi United Arab Emirates



NEW ZEALAND

NZWN Wellington New Zealand



NORTH AMERICA

