Grupo SATA Virtual
Airline FS ACARS Manual

Grupo SATA Virtual
www.satavirtual.org

Sep 10th 2004

Valid for FS ACARS 4.0.15 and above, until further notice

Pages Index

1. Introduction

FS ACARS is a PIREP and Operations System. This means that in SATA Virtual you will use FS ACARS to file your flight reports, and you may also use it to help the operation of the aircraft and briefing.

In this manual we will explain you how to proceed in order to generate a proper flight report and what will happen next.
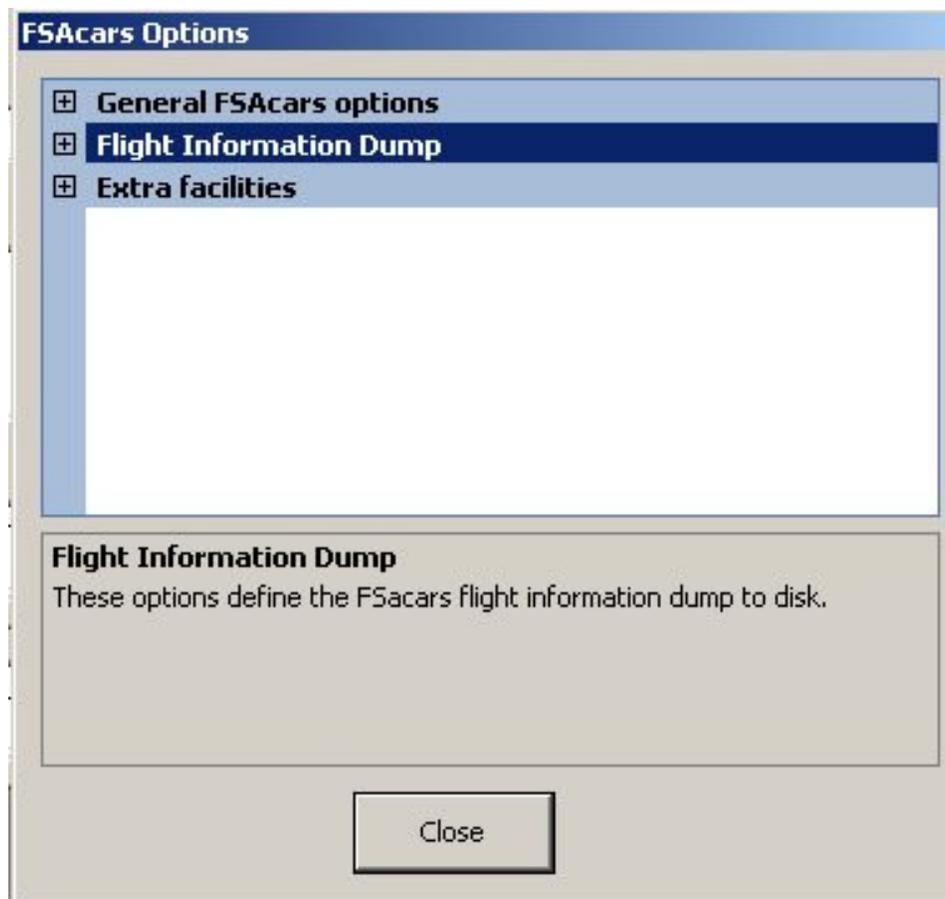
You can get also extra help by reading **FS ACARS general manual**, by contacting your **flight operations** or **FS ACARS support**.

2. Settings

You will have to setup FS ACARS.
First, **download the INI files** and place them in the FS ACARS main directory. Open FS ACARS and select your airline.

Go to Config menu and Options.

Click on the cross before General FS ACARS Options. This will open all the general options. Chose your METAR source according to the network you will be flying. Activate Fuel fill prevent, Use Local Database,

Disable Start Warning, Minimizes to Systray, Plane Position and Status and ACARS online options. Also point where Servinfo is located and where you want to save your logs.

Click now on the minus sign just before General FS ACARS Options. This will minimize this section.

Open the next one, Flight Information Dump, and active all the options within. Close it.

Click on Close to end your configuration.

You will need to do this only once, except your Metars from option, everytime you change network.

3. A Proper Flight

When you have flight simulator ready, with your fuel and payload calculated and on board, it's time to get started.

Go to Flight Plan tab in the main window. Now it's time to fill only the necessary fields.

In **Pilot Number** enter your pilot number, obvious, **without any letters**. In this case you can see filled 451.

Your Flight IATA shall be filled with your **callsign in IATA form**. This is with only 2 letters followed by 4 numbers or letters. **If the total of them is less then 6 enter a zeros after the airline's IATA code**. In this case you can see S40206, which is flight S4206. As this code only has 5 letters and numbers we filled an extra zero after S4.

Chose your aircraft type from the respective drop down menu. Then pick up which aircraft you will be flying. Selcal, if available, will be automatically loaded and the remarks are changed.

Callsign is the flight ICAO callsign as RZO206. See that in this case no zero had to be added. The usual maximum callsign length is 7.

Then place in Online which network will you be using today, or none at all.

Enter the passengers aboard.

Change the XXXX in Remarks section, just after your voice callsign, to your flight number (digits only), as seen above (206).

At this point you are able to **enter the flight data or get it from Servinfo**. If you already have pre-filled your flight plan or already online, just click Servinfo button, with Servinfo opened, and the remaining fields will show up.

Go to Flight/Plane Data tab in the main window. If you have not loaded the necessary fuel, you can do it so in here.

Click Start Log. Be sure to have your **parking brakes set**.

In Flight Log tab, you can see now the initial settings.

When you remove your parking brakes FS ACARS will start to monitor your flight.

You can during your flight to add extra information to your log or get it from an external service.
The Commands button, in Flight Log tab, will allow you to add comments to your log (c «message»), check the aircrafts weight (p) and fuel aboard or just ask for METARs (w «ICAO code»).

ACARS Messages tab shows you the ACARS messages which are being generated and sent to FS ACARS Global Online (http://www.satavirtual.org/fsacars/FSACARS_GRT.php). This page shows all ACARS messages which are being sent by all the pilots around the world using FS ACARS in real time, and if they are flying with an internet connection. If you want to see this page without opening a browser window, go to Information Browser tab and click ACARS RealTime.

Flight/Plane Data tab is just that. You can see a brief of what is going on in your aircraft along with some estimates.

By the time you have **set your parking brakes at destination or alternate** FS ACARS will consider it as a flight done.

Where you had Start LOG now it shows Stop LOG. Enter any final comments you may like using Command button with 'c' command and then **click Stop LOG**.

A new window will pop with a summary of your flight log. If you want to **validate** this flight just click Accept Log. After you have done it, this log will be added to your log file in your hard disk. You can have multiple logs stored in disk before you send them.

When you decide to send your logs to the airline, which **we recommend to do after you have finished each flight**, just **click Send LOG, in Flight Log tab**.

Confirm your pilot number, click OK and wait a while. **Be sure to be connected to the Internet**. If everything succeeds a small window will pop saying 'Log sent'.

What happens now? Your flight log is already in the airline's flight operations desk waiting for review. Your Chief Pilot will review it and approve or not. Only then it will be available in your airline's online log and your total flight time is now updated.

4. Receiving and Sending Messages

FS ACARS 4 allows you to send and receive messages to anyone who is using FS ACARS online (may not be connected to a network) and to ground stations.

To send messages is very simple. Go to Flight Log tab, click in Commands and enter a simple comment with the words SENDTO «Callsign» text. Eg. "c SENDTO PDLOWSP Testing."
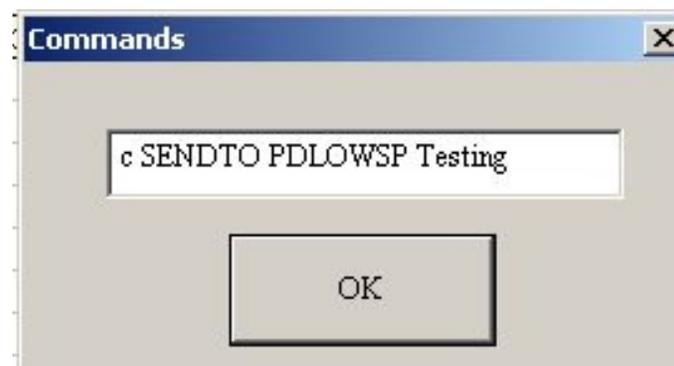
The key words are SENDTO and the callsign.

If you want to message another aircraft, the callsign to use is it's IATA Callsign. In the example above, about a proper flight, we were flying RZO206 with IATA callsign S40206. If anyone wanted to send us a message they would write in the commands "c SENDTO S40206 «text»".

You can send to multiple recipients at the same time. Write SENDTO «Callsign» for as many recipients you want. Using the example above, if someone wanted to send us and, let us suppose, S40129, one single message, they would write "c SENDTO S40206 SENDTO S40129 «text».

You can contact your airline operations, although you'll not be sure if someone is there to read the message and reply. Operations can always receive messages, regardless if are active or not. These messages will be stored until the next time they are open. These are the ground stations, just like in real world. SATA's callsigns for the operations are:
PDLOWSP for SATA Air Açores Flight Operations
LISOWSP for SATA Internacional Flight Operations
It's very simple to identify the origin. They are all in 7 letters format. Let's take for example PDLOWSP. The first three are where the operations are – PDL – Ponta Delgada. The next two are general ones meaning it's the Operations – OW. The last two are the airline's IATA callsign – SP – SATA Air Açores. Note that SATA Internacional's is using SP as the airline identifier. Why? The real world's SATA is using it too.

To receive messages is even simpler. When your FS ACARS receives a message you will hear two tones. Then

go to ACARS Messages tab and check the last (below) messages. If a ground station sent you a message, you will see a Uplink Message, or a Free text Message if sent from another aircraft. Click in the cross before it and take a look at the message.

In this case it is an Uplink Message. The second line, after Aircraft reg: it's the sender – PDLOWSP. Our airline's operations in Ponta Delgada. The last bottom line is the message content. You can see it was sent only to you, in this case – SENDTO S40206. After that is the text they want to tell you – Testing Uplink. It works fine!

If the message was from another aircraft, would appear as Free text Message, and you will see it's IATA callsign after Flight id:, the fourth line.

4. Common errors

When you try to send your log it may succeed or not.
If it fails to send you may get one of these messages.

No Log file for that company/Pilot
This means, either you do not have any flight stored in disk (be advised that after each log is sent your logs will be deleted from your hard disk), or your Log directory is wrong and FS ACARS cannot find the log file.

Any other errors may appear. Most of them generate a HTML file with the error description in your FS ACARS main directory. Just send that error and log file (something like XXXYYY.dat where XXX is the airline ICAO code and YYY your pilot number, located in the Log path you have defined) to the flight operations. We will review what went wrong, and if possible will credit the flight time manually.

5. Company Rules and Procedures

Basic rules are to setup the Start Log box as described above.

You will not be able to pause, accelerate the simulation rate and slew. Crash will be detected and added to the log.

That's it. Enjoy your flight!