International Flight Operations Guide
Flying internationally is more challenging and complex than domestic operations. Since the time of the Wright Brothers, pilots flying over the “High Seas” and crossing international borders have had to cope with procedural differences, international standards that are followed or ignored, language translations and individual country differences.

In a very similar process to a seafaring ship’s captain, pilots and their aircraft, crew, passengers and cargo will be subjected to the laws and requirements of the land they are operating over or into. Regulations, procedures and services vary by region and country. To minimize the impact of these variables and provide safe, secure and uneventful service, flight departments must put considerable effort into advanced planning and developing contingencies. This requires planning, ingenuity and resourcefulness on the part of the pilots, dispatchers and support staff.

Pilots are skeptical by nature and respond well to explanations of the “Why” and “How” behind any new procedure, equipment or regulation. Familiarity with the plans, procedures, and contingencies for non-normal circumstances are an integral part to pilot operability. The goal of this guide is to provide an international pilot with these type of answers and references. The explanations provided are designed to enhance a pilot’s ability to understand and operate proficiently over an oceanic/remote environment and into a foreign country.

This guide is intended as an introduction and overview of international flight operations and the issues surrounding international air travel. Commentary provided by this guide will help pilots, dispatchers and operations personnel to better understand the details and procedures required in the whole of international operations. Ample charts, diagrams, graphics and references are used thought this guide. An interested pilot can use this study guide to open the recommended document, refer to the subjects and pages as indicated in the footnotes then read the source material for themselves.

This guide is for training and reference purposes and is designed for use by pilots of various experience levels, operating business class aircraft in international operations. We take great effort to insure the accuracy and legitimacy of the information presented here. This information has been thoroughly researched and vetted by International Flight Resources, LLC. A list of reference material used appears at the end of this guide for your use.

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Despite our best efforts, some inaccuracies may occur due to the changing and developing nature of international flight operations. We cannot make a full and complete warranty of all the information presented here. By utilizing this training guide, one agrees to abide by the terms and conditions outlined in this notification. For any errors, omissions, or comments please contact us using the information provided below.

Sincerely;

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"A ship in port is safe, but that's not what ships are built for."
Grace Murray Hopper, Rear Admiral USN
U.S. Navy officer and computer scientist
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Earth Reference System

The geometric nature of a sphere is such that any point on it is exactly like any other point. There is neither beginning nor ending. In order that defined points may be described (on the sphere we call Earth), lines of reference and a system of coordinates to locate positions on the earth is necessary.

The Earth rotates on its north-south axis. The points at which this axis of rotation meets the perimeter of the sphere are known as the North Pole and the South Pole. Lines radiating out from these poles divide the sphere into 360 degrees and are known as Meridians of Longitude. The meridian that runs through Greenwich, England is sometimes referred to the Prime Meridian. The numerical designation is actually the zero meridian. Longitude is counted east and west from this meridian through 180°. The Greenwich meridian is the 0° longitude on one side of the earth and, after crossing the poles, it becomes the 180th Meridian... 180° becomes the 180th Meridian... 180° east or west of the 0° “Prime” meridian.

Midway between the North and South poles, perpendicular to the rotational axis, the Equator is defined. Latitude is expressed as degrees either north or south of the Equator. Lines that form circles around the globe, parallel to the Equator are know as Parallels of Latitude. The numerical designation for the Equator is “Zero” degrees. Moving north or south from the Equator increases the numerical designation until at the poles. The north Pole is labeled “90 Degrees North Latitude” and the South Pole is labeled “90 South Latitude”