

NEWS AND VIEWS

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Items to Note!

1. Next COPA 26 Meeting is Tuesday March 10, 2026.
2. The next Pilot Decision Making (PDM) Zoom Workshop is Wednesday March 4, 2026. To join, send an email to cykf.pilotworkshop@gmail.com.

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WELCOME!

Well - good VFR flying days have sure been few and far between this winter. Take 'em when you can get 'em I guess!

GOOD CRM?



PILOT'S TIP OF THE WEEK

Delay Duration on Frequency Change

Subscriber question:

"How long should you wait before checking in with a new station after ATC gave you a new frequency?"



Pilot Workshops Answer:

“Nobody likes to be interrupted in the middle of a conversation, but it does happen — especially on VHF radio frequency in the airplane.

One simple way to mitigate that is to wait for a few seconds after a frequency change, and just listen before checking in with the new controller. That way you know there wasn't a conversation already in progress. As a pilot, you know very well how most radio exchanges are spread over multiple transmissions alternating between the controller and the pilot. Wait until the end of such an exchange, or else it gets harder for everyone involved as now there are multiple incomplete conversation threads going on.

A variation of this is helpful when a controller transmits on multiple ATC frequencies for different sectors. In that case, you will hear the controller talking, but sometimes not the pilot. They are transmitting on a different frequency, but their transmission is still important to the controller. As a courtesy and for efficiency, resist the urge to chime in on frequency just because there's a break. Instead, try to imagine the responses of the pilot you cannot hear. Wait until this conversation (only half of which you hear over the radio) is over.

Given how standardized most of what we say on the radio is, it's amazingly predictable just when the conversation will be over, even if you don't hear of all it.

Now, if you have an emergency on your hands or you need to speak up *now* to avoid an emergency? Do what you have to do. But checking after a frequency change, and many other non-time-critical transmissions can wait a bit.”

Watch this video on how to handle a frequency change from one ATC facility to another from PilotWorkshops [VFR Communications Manual](#).

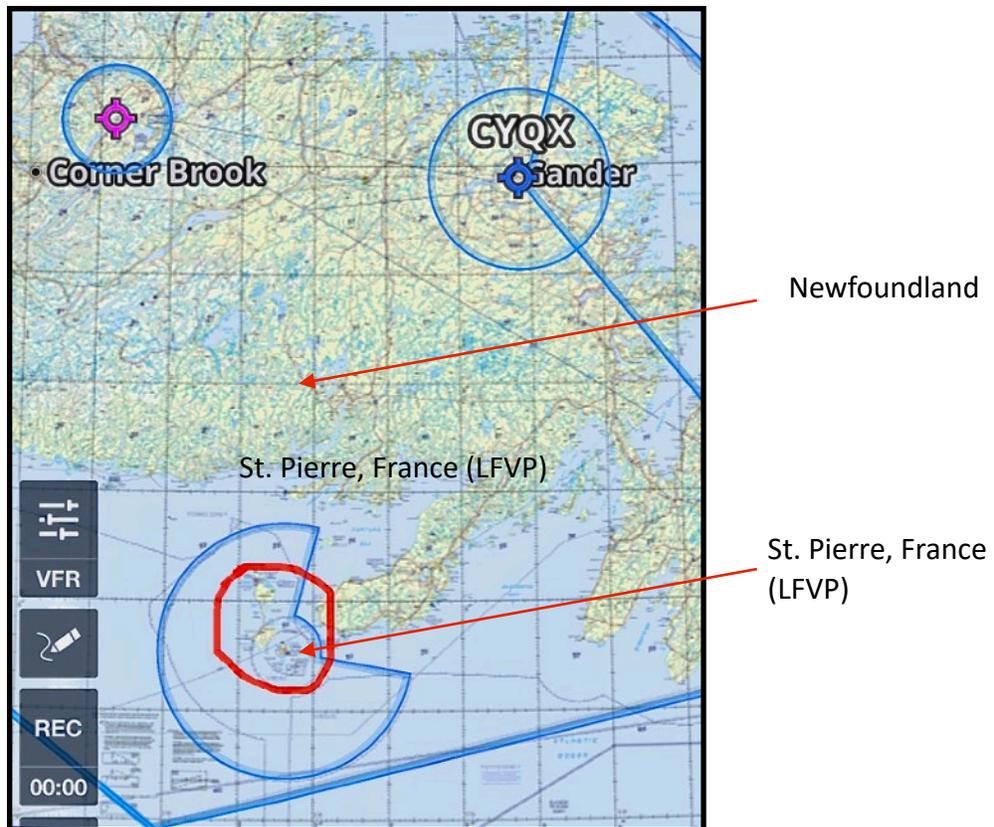
MEMBER'S CORNER

Fly to France this Summer! (Warren Cresswell)

Not interested in flying into the USA just now? Why not consider flying your Cessna 172 to France this Summer instead?!

How is that possible? That 160hp C-172 has only 49 U.S. gallons useable fuel capacity and burns about 8-9 gph cruising at around 5,500'. After considering startup, taxi, takeoff and climb to altitude the aircraft endurance and range is just a hair over 4 hours and about 440nm, still leaving you with 1 hour of fuel in the tanks upon landing.

How do you get to France with that performance? Well, you can do it quite easily and comfortably with your C-172 (or any other similar piston-single) in a five-leg, 1,347 nm, 12.5 hr trip from CYKF to LFVP St. Pierre, France located just 13nm off the Burin Peninsula on the southern coast of Newfoundland!



None of the five flight legs exceeds four hours and three of the recommended legs are under 2.5 hrs. You will land on paved runways at each stop, the shortest of which is almost 4,500'. Each destination airport is serviced by instrument approaches if any guidance is needed, and each traffic area around those airports is either an MF or a Towered scenario. In short, this international flight to France, is very feasible.

What you will find at your destination of St. Pierre & Miquelon ("SPM") is an 8-island archipelago - a self-governing French Overseas Collectivity that has been an uncontested and only remaining French possession in North America since Napoleonic times.

In all respects these islands are French indeed. The official language is French. All the street signs look just as they might in Paris. The police are gendarmes from the Metropole. The culture is definitely and delightfully French, tracing its roots and traditions back over 600 years to Breton, Norman and Basque fishermen.

The cuisine is wonderfully French including the delectable seafood offerings locally available. The currency is the Euro (although CDN\$ are readily accepted). There is rich history here from the original fishermen on the nearby Grand Banks to several hundred years of conflict with Great Britain and even an invasion of SPM as recently as World War II.

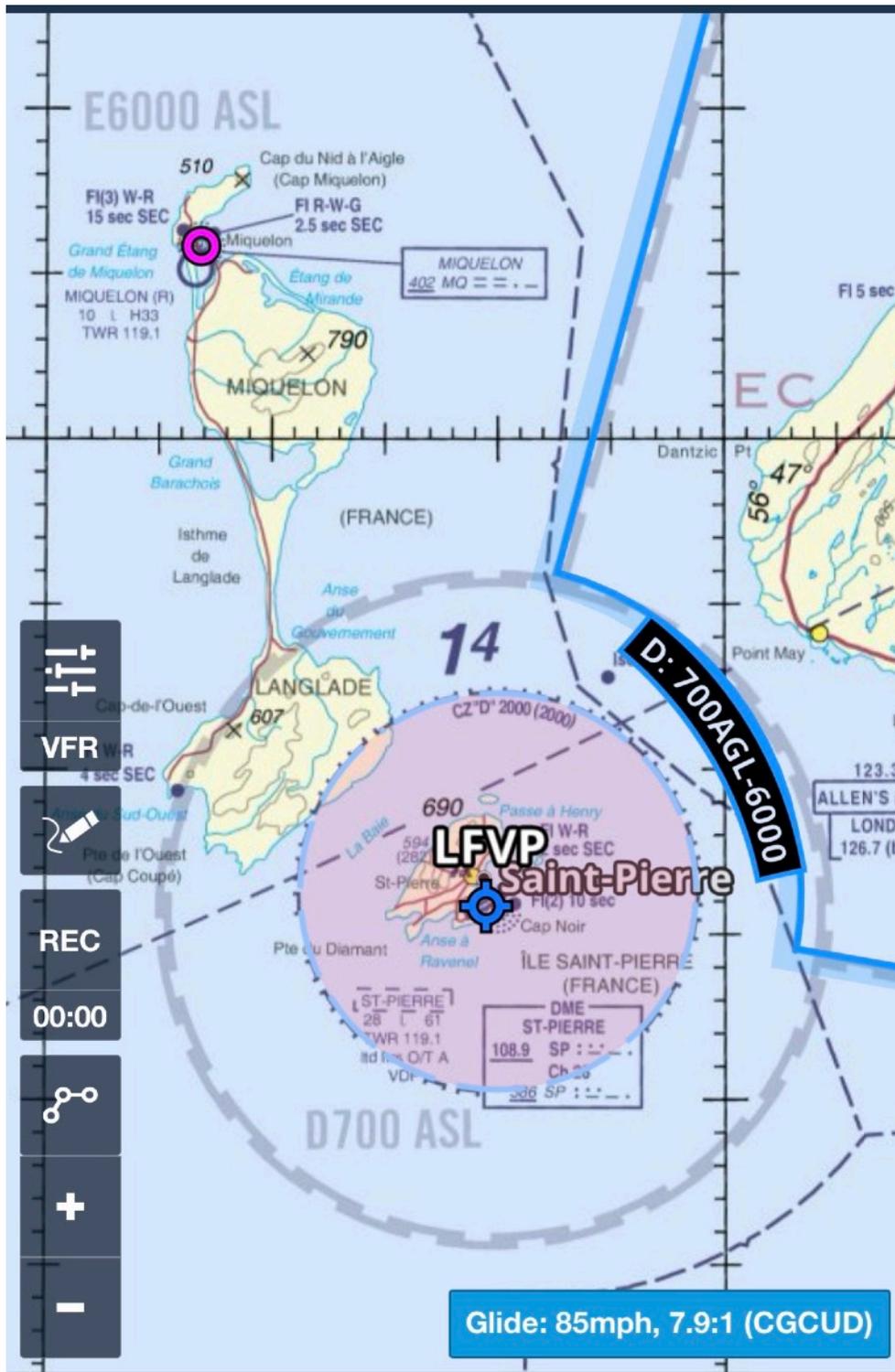
Today, France remains responsible for the defence of SPM. Citizens have French citizenship and suffrage and are governed by locally elected officials but headed by a Prefect (Governor) sent out from the Metropole every 3 years or so.

The government of France heavily subsidizes operations on SPM and supplies a significant portion of the population who are seconded to SPM for multi-year terms before rotating back to mainland France. SPM is supplied from France by ship. The telephone system is connected to France, and the electrical system follows the French 240v system (bring a converter). When you arrive at SPM not only will you feel like you have arrived in France, but you truly will have!

The local time zone is UTC-3 making it a full hour later than the Maritimes and half an hour later than Newfoundland.

The eight islands of the SPM archipelago have a combined landmass of about 94 sq.km and are comprised of mostly granite rock surfaces which are the worn-down peaks of the northern reaches of the Appalachian Mountains. There is little soil on SPM - as a result many burials are entombed above ground. The islands also have very few trees, most of which were cut down long ago for fuel. The topography is therefore somewhat desolate but made more cheerful by the homes, with their unique architecture decorated in vibrant colours.

Of the eight islands in the SPM archipelago, the population resides mostly on two of the islands. St. Pierre is by far the largest with about 5,200 followed by Miquelon with approximately 600 souls.





Surrounded by ocean-water and affected by the always-cool Labrador Current which passes around the archipelago from the eastern side of Newfoundland, the weather at SPM can be challenging. Captain Cook mapped this area in the late 1700's and commented that there were three seasons: July, August and Winter! Fog can be a serious issue on SPM and can sometimes persist for a couple or three weeks at a time. So, great care must be taken when planning your GA flight to SPM. Expect fog to persist in June and early July. August is probably the best bet. Even then, bring some warm clothes as summertime daytime temperatures can be in the 15-16C range. And bring some rain gear. Weather on SPM can be highly changeable ranging from bright sunlight to thick fog and rain.

At time of writing, there are 6 hotels as well as Bed and Breakfasts and Airbnb operating on St. Pierre. There are more than a dozen restaurants and bistros. Locals follow the French pattern of eating late. Restaurants don't begin to start filling up until after 9:00pm. Bakeries on St. Pierre offer great croissants and other tasty treats.



There are interesting things to see, especially on St. Pierre. These include a view of the harbour – once one of the busiest fishing ports in the Western World – a few good museums and archives, and an abandoned fishing village on a small island just offshore from St. Pierre. This fishing village serves as an open-air museum and is easily visited by motorboat transfer. There is a Basque Festival each Summer. It is not hard to spend 2-3 days on St. Pierre. The island of Miquelon, only 22nm away and with its own airport, is much quieter but still worth a short visit if you are so inclined.

IMPORTANT FLIGHT TIPS:

Here are some points to be aware of if you fly your own aircraft to SPM:

It is recommended that your initial landing be at St. Pierre LFVP. This is an excellent airport with a Tower, a long runway and even an ILS if needed. METARs and TAFs are published for LFVP. At one time, jet aircraft from France flew directly to LFVP so you can be assured that the airport standards are excellent. That direct service ended some years ago, but St. Pierre is still serviced by commercial air service provided by Air St. Pierre flying into and out of SPM from St. John's, NL. There is a terminal area surrounding SPM and LFVP and LFVM are both serviced by Towers. In fact, they spell each other off during lunch-breaks!

You will need to be on a flight plan which can be filed with NAV CANADA. LFVP and LFVM are both listed in the CFS. Wx (METAR and TAF) is available for St. Pierre but not Miquelon. The local civil aviation authority needs to be notified at least 48-hours prior to your planned arrival into St. Pierre to obtain a pre-arrival landing permit. The contact numbers for them are:

Telephone: 011 508-41-18-00 and Fax 011-508-41-18-18.

The civil aviation authority should notify SPM Customs & Immigration of your pending arrival. However, it is not a bad idea to confirm this or call Customs directly. Their contact numbers are:

Telephone: 011-508-41-15-55 and Fax: 011-508-41-24-79. Web: sacspm@aviation-civile.gouv.fr. The general information number for Customs is 011-508-41-08-75. Alternatively, email your flight details to Le Service de l'Aviation Civile (sacspm@aviation-civile.gouv.fr) and also to St. Pierre Airport Operations (ops@lfvp.pm) who will arrange to have Customs and Immigration staff available on arrival. You must arrive at LFVP during Tower operating hours. Plan on NOT arriving during the published lunch-hours as you may find everything locked up and no personnel around until that break is over!

Approach charts can be found on the web at: sia.aviation-civile.gouv.fr/vaip.

Canadians arriving do not need a visa. Pilot are required to have either a government photo-id card or a passport. All passengers require a passport. Passports must be valid for a period of at least three months following the planned departure date from SPM.

It is a good idea to arrive with three copies of a General Declaration providing local authorities with assurance of health conditions for all aboard.

Pilots must have onboard all the usual required aircraft documents, licenses, medicals, aircraft registration, airworthiness reports, Journey Log and proof of insurance. As well, you may be asked for a current Radio Station License and possibly your Radio Operator Certificate. (Editor emphasis).

The recommended route provided in the spreadsheet attached includes some overwater portions between Blanc Sablon and the Newfoundland coast and again from the Newfoundland coast to SPM. Plan for and equip for that as you feel appropriate to maximize safety.

An important consideration is that, at the present time, 100LL fuel is not available at SPM. Therefore, pilots need to consider how much fuel they will have remaining upon arrival at SPM and where they can go to refuel for the homebound journey. A spreadsheet outlining this recommended C-172 flight to SPM is attached. You will note that, while it might be possible to get to LFVP in one flight from CYBX Blanc Sablon, Quebec, it is highly recommended to break that flight into two legs with refueling at Deer Lake, NL. This will ensure arrival at LFVP with at least 2.6 hours (plus 1 hour reserve) still in the tanks at the time of departure from LFVP.

Here are a few additional things to note:

Ensure your GPS database includes SPM.

SiriusXM weather will not likely cover this area. Moncton Centre and Gander Centre will have limited weather radar coverage over the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Plan to check some internet weather sources that cover this area for Satellite and other weather information. NAV CANADA briefers should be able to assist. It is a good idea to contact SPM Tower to verify local weather before launching from your point of embarkation to SPM.

Expect the local altimeter setting for LFVM to be given in QNH format and Runway Visual Range (RVR”) will be given in metres not feet. It is a good idea to have conversion formulae or charts ready to handle the math. RVR should not be a factor for VFR pilots.

When departing SPM, permission is required from the Tower prior to engine start. This requirement is typical of countries outside of North America but not something North American pilots normally have to deal with.

In summary, SPM is a very interesting place to visit for a few days, and it is very doable to fly there from CYKF in a light GA aircraft like a C-172. If you are looking for a new place to fly to, and adding a unique entry for your logbook, consider flying to France this Summer!

FLY TO FRANCE THIS SUMMER									
DAY	LEG	FROM	TO	DISTANCE	EET-HRS	DEST.	IAP	100LL	COM
				(NM)		RUNWAY	AVAILABLE		
1	1	CYKF	CYRQ	370	3.4	RWY 05/23	RNAV	YES	MF
			Trois Rivieres			PAVED	NDB		
			Quebec			9006X150			
1	2	CYRQ	CYGV	433	4	RWY 08/26	RNAV	YES	MF
			Havre St. Pierre			PAVED			
			Quebec			4498X100			
2	1	CYGV	CYBX	254	2.4	RWY 05/23	RNAV/LOC	YES	MF
			Lourdes Blanc			PAVED			
			Sablon Quebec			4500x150			
2	2	CYBX	CYDF	135	1.3	RWY 07/25	ILS/RNAV	YES	MF
			Deer Lake, NL			PAVED			
						8005x150			
2	3	CYDF	LFVP	155	1.4	RWY 08/26	ILS/LOC	NO	TML/TWR
			St. Pierre			PAVED	NDB		
			France			6299x148			
TOTAL CYKF-LFVP				1347	12.5				
MEMO:									
			LFVM	22nm from LFVP		Rwy 12/30	NDB	NO	TWR/ADVSY
			Miquelon			paved	RNP not RNAV		
			France			3281x66			

(Coming later this year -
ADS-b Theory and Some
Solutions)