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Introduction

This manual will cover PVA’s ACARS system and how to run and use it efficiently. It will cover each function of this state-of-the-art ACARS system, and how to use each of them correctly. This manual was created due to the high number of questions from new members about the ACARS system and all of its functions. Please read this thoroughly before posting any questions in the forums.

This guide will assume that a pilot has already installed the application on the pilots system. Installation of the application is not covered as it should be self-explanatory. The first section will cover each function/button within ACARS. The next section will run through an example of how to properly operate ACARS during a flight.

ENJOY!
Windows Vista/7 Users

If you are using either Windows Vista or Windows 7 you must set up your ACARS system to run as an administrator. In order to do this you must open up your Windows Explorer and follow this route: C:\Program Files\Phoenix Virtual Airways\PVACARS or C:\Program Files (x86)\Phoenix Virtual Airways\PVACARS for Windows 7 users. **NOTE: These paths only work if you have installed PVACARS into their default locations and did not change the path during installation of the program.** After following the appropriate path you need to **right click** on the PVACARS application (PVA ACARS.exe) and click on the Compatibility tab. Check the **Run this Program as an Administrator** box. ACARS should now open without a problem.
Program Walkthrough

Open up ACARS by clicking on the appropriate icon either on your desktop, or through the main start button and going through all programs. You should then get a screen which looks exactly like the one to the right. This is the main PIREP page and it will display all of your flight data as you progress through one of PVA’s many flights. You will want to first select options which can be found in the upper left hand corner and select Settings. Here you can enter your Pilot ID and Password. **WARNING: If you enter your ID and Password in these boxes it will remember them each time you open up ACARS.** If you do not want ACARS to remember your ID and Password enter your ID and Password into the appropriate boxes found on the main screen. Also in the settings page are many checkable boxes.

**Settings Menu**

**Auto Chat Log**- Log into PVACARS chat automatically each time you log in.

**View Site Errors**- Only select this box if instructed by a staff member

**Load FS Flight**- Has to do with the save option, explained later

**Min to Sys Tray**- This options allows you to choose where PVACARS goes when minimized. If you select the box, ACARS will minimize to the lower right portion.
of you taskbar where the time and date can be found on your system. If unchecked, PVACARS will minimize normally like any other program to the taskbar.

**Map Tracker ON**- Tracks your flight on PVACARS built in Map

**AFK Audible**- When the AFK message becomes active, 3 pings will be heard to warn you that you must hit OK in the AFK message box.

**AFK Message Box**- If checked the message box will be displayed, if unchecked you must click on the purple flashing text at the bottom of PVACARS.

**Pause FS on AFK**- If checked, when AFK become active your Flight Simulator will automatically pause. (This may NOT work in all instances. It is your duty to ensure the you are at the keyboard throughout the flight)

**Search by Flight#**- If checked, you will be able to manually enter your next flight using its unique flight number found on PVA’s search and book flights. If unchecked, you next flight will come from your current bids which you can select from the search and book flights section on PVA’s Webpage.

**FS Message ON**- A message will be displayed within FS letting you know AFK has been activated. Upon landing a message will be displayed informing you of your landing rate.

**Fuel Display**- Select your preferred unit of measurement.

**Timeout Setting**- Only change this number if instructed by a staff member.
Tabs

PIREP- This tab shows you a lot of information. Log in Details, your Flight Simulator Connection through FSUIPC, Pilot information, Your current location, Aircraft information (only displays when you have a flight loaded into ACARS), PIREP Data (Displays info on your current flight, also where you need to enter your planned cruising altitude and your planned route for your flight), and a comments section. **Note:** Only enter a comment when you feel the staff needs to know something about your flight. *Do not just enter Wonderful Flight, Bad Weather, wish my landing rate was lower, etc.* Here you will also find two boxes, Online and Event. If you are flying online via VATSIM or IVAO, check this box. If you are flying a PVA sponsored event, check the event box. You will also find a Distances section which shows you your distance from your departure airport and to your final destination. The PIREP Controls is where you will tell ACARS what to do. **Get Flight info** will get a flight from you current bids, or if you have manually entered a flight number. **Note:** In order to manually enter your flight, simply type in the flight number into the flight number box and then hit **Get Flight Info.** **Clear Data** will clear your loaded flight. Push the **Start Recording Flight** button right before your pushback to tell ACARS to start
recording you’re flight. Push the **Stop Recording Flight** when you have landed at your destination and have the parking brake set. We will go over the **load** and **save** button later. Then either **File PIREP** if you are satisfied with it or **Clear PIREP** it if you are unsatisfied.

**Online**- This tab shows all the current PVA pilots online. It will show you what flight they are flying, their departing airport, their arriving airport, time remaining on their flight, distance remaining on their flight, and their current flight phase (chatting, boarding, pushing back, taxiing to runway, taking off, climbing, cruising, descending, on approach, landing, and landed). You can also talk to other pilots here using the ACARS Chat feature. **Note**: If you do not have the **Auto Chat Log In** checked in the setting menu, you will have to hit the button on the bottom left of the ACARS Chat section. To disconnect hit the button on the bottom right. You will also find two check boxes, one being **Message Alert** and the other **Ignore System**. If **Message Alert** is checked, you will hear a beep every time a new message is displayed on ACARS Chat from either the system or other pilots. **Note**: **This only works when ACARS is minimized**. If the **Ignore System** box is check you will not see all info shown in black such as pilots logging off/on, pilots taking off and pilots who have landed.
**Aircraft Data** - This tab is very important. This tab will show you all of your warning and faults that you have made during a flight. If a box is checked, it means you have made that mistake or performed that action. The boxes with blue text are only important to look at when you are flying a PVA Check-ride for a Type Rating, but still try to keep them unchecked. The boxes with black text are informational, these are ok to have checked, no penalties. The boxes with red text are faults you have made during your flight. If one of these boxes is checked you are most likely going to get a rejected PIREP. Below the Aircraft Warnings is a Sounds box. Here you can choose whether you have an automated co-pilot read out your V1, VR, V2 speeds as well as passing 10000 feet (ascending and descending), and passing transition altitude (set at FL180 and for ascending and descending). Next is the Aircraft Flight Data box. Here you will find your Aircraft Title. **Note:** This shows the specific aircraft you’re using within Flight Simulator. This could be different than the aircraft in the Aircraft Information section under the PIREP tab. Check the aircraft substitution chart to check if you’re flying an eligible aircraft for your flight. It also shows your altitude in Feet and Meters, your vertical speed, bank angle, ground speed, Indicated Air Speed, Land rate (after you landed), True Airspeed, Amount of fuel you started with, and the amount of fuel you ended with. The compass rose will show you your direction of
flight along with your latitude and longitude. The Flaps bar will move down depending on how much flaps you have out. The flight Progress Bar will be full green at the start and move to the left as your flight progresses.

**Schedule**- Here you can bid on flights through ACARS without having to go to the website. Simply select your departing airport (should be your current location unless you are jump-seating at a fee), and when you found a flight hit the **Bid on Flight** button.

**Flight Info**- Here you can get info on US weather (hopefully more areas to come in the future) and airport info. The Airport info will show you real life flights around the specified airport. **Note- Only shows US, Canadian, and European airports.**

**Flight Delays**- Here you simply hit the Load Pages button and it will show you 6 different global regions and show you the major airports in those regions and if there are any real life delays or not.

**Log Book**- Shows you all your flights you have logged with PVA. This page displays Flight #, Aircraft ICAO, Aircraft title, Dep ICAO, Arr ICAO, Distance flow, Planned FL, Actual flight time, Fuel used, Fuel per Mile, Avg Fuel per hour, and date filed.

**PM’s**- Here you can send private messages to any PVA pilot. **Note**- This PM system is different than the PM system on the Forums; they do not transfer from one to the other.

**Map**- If you the Map Tracker box selected in the Setting menu, your flight will be tracked here using Google Maps®.
**Fuel Loading** - Here you can enter the fuel amount into your aircraft through ACARS. Uncheck the **Check to Track Fuel** box and move the sliders to the desired amount of fuel needed on the flight. **Warning: Do not add or take away fuel while in the air with ACARS recording, this will result in a rejected PIREP.**

**Flight Walkthrough**

Here we are going to walk through an entire flight using PVACARS.

First open up ACARS and log in. Open up your Flight Simulator (FS9 or FSX). This flight will be from PANC to PASC (Anchorage, Alaska-Deadhorse, Alaska). It will be using a Boeing 737-400 but will be substituting it for a Boeing 737-900. **Note: This is acceptable because both are in the same type rating category.** You should have a screen that looks similar to the one on the right. Be sure to have FSUIPC installed in order for ACARS to communicate with Flight Simulator. If you do not have it, download it here [http://www.schiratti.com/dowson.html](http://www.schiratti.com/dowson.html). Next load the appropriate settings into FS.

Next set up your aircraft to be ready for pushback. Before pushing back enter your planned cruising altitude. Ex: 30000, 34000, 22000. **Note: Do not enter FL such as FL300, FL340, or FL220.** Also you need to enter your planned route. This flight will be using **ANC4 ANC J115 CQR V436 ARCON.**
When ready for pushback hit the **Start Recording Flight** button. The Flight Log should come alive and the last entry should be **boarding**. You can now pushback.

Take off and start your climb. When passing 10000 feet be sure to turn off your landing lights and you will also be allowed to accelerate past 250 kt.

**AFK**

Once you pass 10000 you are now eligible for an AFK message (AFK-Away from Keyboard). This is to be sure that you are in the cockpit while flying and not taking off, setting the autopilot, leaving for a long duration then returning to land. When one is activated, there are many warning systems. One is a sound warning which beeps three times. **Note:** You must have this option selected in the setting menu. It is titled **AFK Audible**. Another is a message bar that displays at the top of your Flight Simulator. And a third is a message box that will pop up on top of all other screens. All you have to do is hit OK and it will go away and the timer will stop. **Note:** For the message box to come up you must have the option AFK message box selected in the settings menu. If you don’t have the message box come up simply hit the flashing AFK Activated text at the bottom of the ACARS screen. **Warning:** You only have 60 min of total AFK time available. If the total of all AFK check results in a sum of greater than 60 minutes the PIREP will be rejected.
Saving/Loading Flights

A cool feature that is unique to PVACARS is its ability to save your flight and ACARS log to be continued on at a later time or date. It is very simple.

First hit the **Save** button under the PIREP tab in PVACARS. If you are using FS9 it should pause your Flight Simulator automatically. If you are using FSX, I’ve noticed it doesn’t do that. Simply pause your flight **before** hitting the **Save** button. Once you have done that you are now free to close your flight simulator and PVACARS.

There are a couple different ways to load your flight first off open up ACARS, and log in. Then you can open up your flight simulator.

**Note:** *In order for the first option to work you must have Load FS Flight box selected in the settings menu.*

**First Option:** When PVACARS and your FS are open simply start your default flight by hitting the fly now button within your Flight Simulator. Now go to PVACARS and the **Load** button should become available. Select Load and your Flight Simulator should load your flight automatically along with your PIREP log. Un-Pause your flight simulator and hit the **Resume Flight** button.

**Note:** *This option is for those who don’t have the Load FS Flight box selected.*

**Second Option:** Open up ACARS and your Flight Simulator. Hit the **Load** button in ACARS. This should only load your ACARS log. Then go into your FS and load your
flight. It will be saved in FS under the Flight number used in ACARS. Ex: For the flight from PANC PASC it is saved as AS349 within the flight simulator. Now hit Resume flight and unpause your Flight Simulator.

**Finishing Your Flight**

When you have finished your flight and you are parked at the gate with the parking brake set, simply hit the **Stop Recording Flight** button and then hit the **File PIREP** button if you are satisfied with your flight. Remember to keep those landing rates below -1000 or you will get a rejected PIREP.

If you have any questions that were not answered here check the POH (Pilots Operating Manual), and if you still don’t have an answer feel free to post a question in the forums.

**Phoenix Virtual Airways**