

## Company Charges FAQ

From 01/04/2015, a service charge was introduced for all new and existing business users of the AFPEX service ("Commercial Services"), and private pilots continued to enjoy a free-of-charge AFPEX service ("Individual Services").

As from 10/06/2015, NATS introduced an amendment to our charges for this service, whereby the free-of-charge AFPEX service was extended to other small, low volume Airfields, that:

- 1) Only operate for General Aviation  
and
- 2) Average 20 or fewer message transactions per day

All other user will be charged using the published tariff.

Usage will be reviewed annually via historical usage tables and if the average usage is still under the 20 message transactions per day then the free service will continue. If over 20 messages transactions are regularly being used then NATS will start charging the user from the next renewal period.

We anticipate that there will be many questions from our customers regarding the AFPEX service, please see the AFPEX Service Summary and the Company Charges FAQ below for further information.

The following service charges apply to the Commercial Services:

*Connection/Set-up cost:	£650
Account (annual service charge including a single AFTN mailbox):	£1995
Additional AFTN Mailbox:	£200

\* Please note that as from the 1st July the introductory offer to waive the connection charge was due to expire. However in light of the recent clarifications NATS will now will extend that deadline by two weeks to the 15th July 2015.

The Account annual service charge includes:

- A single AFTN Mailbox.
- Up to 3 user accounts as part of the security group (3 logins).
- Unlimited AFTN messaging.

If your business operates more than one security group, each group will be charged an Account annual service charge. To reduce costs, you may consolidate

your AFTN mailboxes to a single Account using a single security group. If you wish to discuss your Account setup further, please contact [flightplanningonline@nats.co.uk](mailto:flightplanningonline@nats.co.uk).

### **Am I able to pay monthly or is it a one off fee?**

The AFPEX annual service charge and any additional AFTN mailboxes are charged annually.

### **How do I pay?**

Payment can be made online at the following website: <http://forms.nats.aero>

### **Does NATS provide an alternative service to AFPEX?**

NATS provides the gateway service within the UK to the Aeronautical Fixed Service (AFS). Rather than using AFPEX to connect to the AFS, you may have a business requirement to connect your systems directly to the NATS AFS gateway. Your system must comply with the latest ICAO documents and will be subject to conformance and interoperability testing by NATS Engineers prior to operational connectivity to the gateway.

If you would like to discuss AFTN or AMHS connectivity in more detail, please contact us.

Other online (internet based) flight planning systems are available but do not provide direct access to the AFTN or exclusive AFTN addresses to their customers.

### **I currently use AFPEX as a backup to my primary AFTN connection. Do I still need to pay?**

If you require the AFPEX service as a backup to your primary AFTN solution, you will need to pay. The AFPEX backup service will be available to you H24 and configured to receive but not send messages. When your primary service fails, you will need to contact the NATS CACC Service Desk to enable your AFPEX account to send messages whilst your primary service is recovered.

**I currently use AFPEX as a backup to my primary AFTN connection. Can I switch to AFPEX permanently?**

In many cases, AFPEX is a more cost effective way of connecting to the AFTN. If AFPEX meets your business requirements, NATS can assist your switch from your physical AFTN connection to the AFPEX service. Please contact us for further information.

**Is there an additional cost of each mailbox I have?**

Yes. Each additional AFTN mailbox costs £200, charged annually.

If you operate multiple mailboxes, CACC is happy to assist you identify where any efficiencies can be made by unifying mailboxes to one account.

**Will Individual AFPEX accounts be charged?**

There are no current plans to charge annually for the Individual Service however the number of messages that can be sent per day will be restricted to 20 transactions per day, per user.

You can apply for an Individual Account if you are a Private Pilot, or a small, other small, low volume Airfields, that:

- 1) Only operate for General Aviation  
and
- 2) Average 20 or fewer message transactions per day

All other user will be charged using the published tariff.

Usage will be reviewed annually via historical usage tables and if the average usage is still under the 20 message transactions per day then the free service will continue. If over 20 messages transactions are regularly being used then NATS will start charging the user from the next renewal period.

**What level of support can I expect to receive?**

AFPEX and our Helpdesk are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Helpdesk operators are happy to assist with any technical questions regarding AFPEX, however we cannot provide flight routing assistance other than ensuring the data is syntactically correct.

**Will there be any enhancements now it is a paid for service?**

We have had some fantastic feedback from our customers, recommending improvements to the AFPEX service over the years. We are always looking to improve how the AFPEX service is delivered and charging for the services will enable us to continue to invest in improving the service for the benefit of all users. Of course, paying customers will be the first to benefit from any of these developments.

**If I am unable to access my account, are there any back ups available?**

AFPEX can be accessed by any PC with an internet connection. Your messages will be safely stored on AFPEX for 30 days. In the event that an emergency message (SS) is received and you are unable to access your account, CACC staff will administer the messaging on your behalf and contact you immediately.

**Why am I now being asked to pay for the service when it has been free for the last few years?**

The AFPEX service has provided free access to the AFTN for businesses since 2007. Following the closure of Flight Briefing Units, the service was introduced to provide access to the AFTN for Private Pilots. AFPEX also provided a short-term solution whilst the Telex protocol was removed from the national infrastructure.

The CAA has confirmed that NATS is not under any licence obligation to provide the AFPEX service free-of-charge. Taking into account that the AFPEX service requires significant investment, we have had to move to a chargeable model for our commercial users. This is the only viable route to secure the ongoing necessary resource and up-to-date technology to deliver a successful AFPEX service to all users.

**Will any additional training be provided?**

If you would like additional training over what is offered within the Guides section of the website, NATS can offer a bespoke training package tailored to your requirements. Please contact us for more details.

**Is the price of the service going to be fixed for a specific length of time or is it likely to increase each year?**

NATS will review the pricing of our AFPEX services annually in line with the rest of the services we provide.

**Finally, who can I raise any questions or concerns to?**

If you have any further questions or concerns, please send them directly to [data.solutions@nats.co.uk](mailto:data.solutions@nats.co.uk)