

## Lobsters – A BEA charter

*(Somewhere in a Biggles book ("Biggles Flies Again"?), there is a reference to the air-freighting of live lobsters, and what can happen if they get loose in flight, including the possibility of the pilot "getting torn to pieces in mid-air by infuriated crustaceans". This is your opportunity to take on a charter which even Biggles wouldn't accept).*

British European Airways, not content with their state monopoly on UK domestic and European scheduled services, also got into charter work. This charter is based on accounts of the first BEA Dakota "lobster charter" from Stornoway, as told in Phil Lo Bao and Iain Hutchison's *"BEAline to the Islands"* (ISBN 0952895842). The aircraft was G-AGYZ *"RMA Sir Charles Kingsford Smith"*, the crew were Geoff Colley (captain), Iain Crosbie (first officer), and Hugh McGinlay (radio operator). The following flight details come from Iain Crosbie's log and his description of the trip.

24 November 1949	Glasgow	dep	1219
	Stornoway	arr	1331
25 November 1949	Stornoway	dep	0547
	Liverpool	arr	0803
	Liverpool	dep	0847
	Ploujean	arr	1050
	Ploujean	dep	1508
	Jersey	arr	1559
26 November 1949	Jersey	dep	0945
	Northolt	arr	1110

Following the initial positional flight, the aircraft was loaded with "about three tons" of live lobsters (say 7000lbs), for a start at "an unearthly hour". Unfortunately the owner (or manager) of the County Hotel didn't call the crew on time, so they got away late (and breakfastless). After a refuelling stop at Liverpool, they continued on to Ploujean. As the only information they had on Ploujean was an airfield symbol on a quarter-inch map, they overflew it before landing, noting on the runway several bomb craters which had been filled in with shingle (some of these had gorse growing in them). After a successful landing, no airfield or customs staff could be found, but the charter agent and the purchaser were present. After checking and unloading the lobsters, the agent and purchaser joined the crew at a local hotel for "a delightful lunch" including "a glass or two" (no 8-hour rule in those days!). Not surprisingly, the crew would have happily stopped overnight at Ploujean, but a spare Dakota engine at BEA's engineering depot on Jersey was needed in London and the weather forecast for Jersey was good. The final leg, with the engine (say 2000lb including packaging and spares), was flown the following morning.

Don't forget the quadrantal rule! (if above 3000ft, aircraft fly at odd thousands of feet on magnetic courses 000-089deg, odd thousands plus 500ft on 090-179, even thousands on 180-269, and even thousands plus 500ft on 270-359).

From – To	<u>Flight Description.</u> "Allocated runways and related information may change when flying online or using Real Weather"				Course (Leg)	Distance (Leg)	ETE(leg) HH+MM
	Dep. Rwy – 5	Init. Hdg - 054	Init. Alt – 6500ft	Apt Elev. – 26ft			
Glasgow ( <b>EGPF</b> ), United Kingdom  To  Stornoway ( <b>EGPO</b> ), United Kingdom	To GLG NDB, 350.0 321deg.....				054deg	5.3nm	00+03
	To CNL NCB, 404.0. Track OB on heading 321deg until CNL NDB received .....				321deg	47.9nm	00+20
	To BFD NDB, 390.0. Turn right on heading 353deg. until BFD NDB received.....				353deg	49.4nm	00+19
	To SAY NDB, 431.0. 30 miles after passing BFD NDB, descend to 2000ft.....				354deg	59.8nm	00+23
	Fly right-hand circuit to runway 36, whilst descending to 1,200ft.....				004deg	4.0nm	00+02
					094deg	1.7nm	00+01
					184deg	8.6nm	00+05
					274deg	2.0nm	00+01
	Land runway 36 (004 deg). Length – 7579ft, width – 151ft, surface – asphalt.....				004deg	4.0nm	00+02
<b>Flight No. 852-01-01</b>	<b>Arrival Airport Elev. – 26ft</b>		<b>Estimated totals for flight&gt;&gt;&gt;</b>			<b>183nm</b>	<b>01+16</b>

OR

From – To	<u>Flight Description.</u> "Allocated runways and related information may change when flying online or using Real Weather"				Course (Leg)	Distance (Leg)	ETE(leg) HH+MM
	Dep. Rwy – 3	Init. Hdg - 016	Init. Alt – 6500ft	Apt Elev. – 66ft			
Glasgow (Renfrew) ( <b>RENF</b> ), United Kingdom  To  Stornoway ( <b>EGPO</b> ), United Kingdom	Fly straight ahead to intercept GLG NDB, 321deg.....				016deg	4.3nm	00+02
	To CNL NCB, 404.0. Track OB from GLG NDB, 350.0, on heading 321deg until CNL NCB received.....				321deg	46.8nm	00+20
	To BFD NDB, 390.0. Turn right on heading 353deg. until BFD NDB received.....				353deg	49.4nm	00+19
	To SAY NDB, 431.0. 30 miles after passing BFD NDB, descend to 2000ft.....				354deg	59.8nm	00+23
	Fly right-hand circuit to runway 36, whilst descending to 1,200ft.....				004deg	4.0nm	00+02
					094deg	1.7nm	00+01
					184deg	8.6nm	00+05
					274deg	2.0nm	00+01
	Land runway 36 (004 deg). Length – 7579ft, width – 151ft, surface – tarmac.....				004deg	4.0nm	00+02
<b>Flight No. 852-01-01</b>	<b>Arrival Airport Elev. – 26ft</b>		<b>Estimated totals for flight&gt;&gt;&gt;</b>			<b>181nm</b>	<b>01+15</b>

	<b>Flight Description.</b> "Allocated runways and related information may change when flying online or using Real Weather"				<b>Course (Leg)</b>	<b>Distance (Leg)</b>	<b>ETE(leg) HH+MM</b>
	<b>Dep. Rwy – 36</b>	<b>Init. Hdg - 004</b>	<b>Init. Alt – 7500ft</b>	<b>Apt Elev. – 26ft</b>			
Stornoway <b>(EGPO),</b> United Kingdom  To  Liverpool <b>(EGGP),</b> United Kingdom	Straight ahead until 500ft agl.....				004deg	2.1nm	00+01
	To Fix 02. Turn right to 094deg and intercept BL NDB 179deg.....				094deg	5.4nm	00+03
	To BFD NCB, 390.0. Track from BL NDB, 289.0, on heading 179deg until at cruise altitude retune ADF to BFD.....				179deg	66.0nm	00+27
	To CNL NDB, 404.0. Turn left to 171deg, and follow the OB (351deg) bearing from BFD. Retune ADF when you lose the signal from BFD.....				171deg	49.4nm	00+19
	To PIK NDB, 355.0. Turn left to 162deg, and follow the OB (342deg) bearing from CNL. Retune ADF when you lose the signal from CNL and continue DR until PIK received.....				162deg	63.7nm	00+24
	To NGY NDB, 399.0. Turn left to 152deg.....				152deg	24.1nm	00+09
	To WL NDB, 385.0. Turn right to 160deg, and follow the OB (340deg) bearing from NGY. Retune ADF when you lose the signal from NGY.....				160deg	70.5nm	00+27
	To WTN NDB, 337.0. Turn left to 154deg and descend to 5500ft.....				154deg	26.7nm	00+10
	To LPL NDB, 349.5. Turn right to 176deg and descend to 2000ft. Tune Nav1 to 111.75.....				176deg	25.1nm	00+10
	Fly a procedural turn to intercept ILS. Slow to 120kts. Descend to 1500ft.....				137deg	4.0nm	00+02
					047deg	2.2nm	00+01
					317deg	1.5nm	00+01
	Land runway 27 (272 deg). Length – 7489ft, width – 151ft, surface – asphalt.....				272deg	7.0nm	00+04
<b>Flight No. 852-01-02</b>	<b>Arrival Airport Elev. – 82ft</b>		<b>Estimated totals for flight&gt;&gt;&gt;</b>			<b>343nm</b>	<b>02+19</b>

From – To	<b>Flight Description.</b> "Allocated runways and related information may change when flying online or using Real Weather"				Course (Leg)	Distance (Leg)	ETE(leg) HH+MM
	Dep. Rwy – 27	Init. Hdg - 272	Init. Alt – 6000ft	Apt Elev. – 82ft			
Liverpool (EGGP), United Kingdom  To  Ploujean (LFRU), France	Straight ahead until 500ft asl.....				272deg	2.0nm	00+01
	To Fix02 (Neston VRP). Fly heading 247deg until HAW NDB is bearing 165deg.				247deg	8.4nm	00+04
	To HAW NDB, 340.0.....				165deg	6.5nm	00+03
	To WPL NDB, 323.0. On station passage turn right to a heading 197deg until NP NCB received.....				197deg	33.5nm	00+14
	To NP NCB, 299.5. On station passage continue OB from WPL NDB on heading 198deg. until PY NDB received.....				198deg	75.2nm	00+30
	To PY NDB, 396.5. On station passage continue OB from NP on heading 206deg. until PY NDB received.....				206deg	62.3nm	00+24
	To MLX NDB, 371.0. On station passage descend to 5500ft. and continue OB from PY on heading 179deg until MLX NDB received. 30mins after station passage, descend to 1,100ft, slow to 120kts, tune Nav1 to 110.50.....				179deg	107.5nm	00+43
	To runway. Turn right to 225deg to intercept ILS. Land runway 23 (226 deg). Length – 5298ft, width – 118ft, surface – tarmac.....				225deg	2.9nm	00+02
<b>Flight No. 852-01-03</b>	<b>Arrival Airport Elev. – 275ft</b>		<b>Estimated totals for flight&gt;&gt;&gt;</b>			<b>298nm</b>	<b>02+02</b>

From – To	<b>Flight Description.</b> "Allocated runways and related information may change when flying online or using Real Weather"				Course (Leg)	Distance (Leg)	ETE(leg) HH+MM
	Dep. Rwy – 23	Init. Hdg - 226	Init. Alt – 5500ft	Apt Elev. – 276ft			
Ploujean (LFRU), France  To  Jersey (EGJJ), United Kingdom	Straight ahead until 500ft agl.....				226deg	2.0nm	00+01
	To Fix02. Turn left to heading 136deg.....				136deg	2.0nm	00+01
	To LN NDB, 345.0. Turn left to heading 070deg.....				070deg	23.8nm	00+11
	To JW NDB, 329.0. Tune NAV1 to 110.30. Start descent to 2000ft when DME reads 21 miles and slow to 120kts.....				061deg	51.8nm	00+22
	To Fix 04. Turn right to 88deg for 2mins 30 secs. Descend to 1500ft.....				088deg	5.0nm	00+02
	Fly right procedural turn to intercept ILS.....				133deg	2.0nm	00+01
					043deg	1.0nm	00+01
	Land runway 27 (268 deg). Length – 5593ft, width – 151ft, surface – asphalt.....				313deg	1.0nm	00+01
					268deg	5.0nm	00+03
<b>Flight No. 852-01-04</b>	<b>Arrival Airport Elev. – 275ft</b>		<b>Estimated totals for flight&gt;&gt;&gt;</b>			<b>94nm</b>	<b>00+42</b>

From – To	<b>Flight Description.</b> "Allocated runways and related information may change when flying online or using Real Weather"				Course (Leg)	Distance (Leg)	ETE(leg) HH+MM
	Dep. Rwy – 27	Init. Hdg - 268	Init. Alt – 7500ft	Apt Elev. – 275ft			
Jersey (EGJJ), United Kingdom  To  London (EGWU), United Kingdom	Straight ahead until 800ft asl. On station passage turn right to heading 008deg. and continue DR until ALD NDB received.....				268deg	2.1nm	00+01
	To ALD NDB, 383.0. ....				008deg	30.3nm	00+14
	To CP NDB, 293.0. Turn right to heading 039deg and climb to 7500. Descend to 7000ft when ATC passes from Brest Center to London Center (10 mins after station passage ALD).....				039deg	62.5nm	00+24
	To WOD NDB, 352.0. Turn left to 022deg and follow the OB (200deg) bearing from CP. Descend to 5000ft.....				022deg	54.9nm	00+22
	To Northolt. Turn right to 075deg and descend to 1600ft. Slow to 120kts. Tune NAV1 to 108.55.....				075deg	19.8nm	00+09
	To Fix 03. Continue on 075deg for 2mins.....				075deg	4.0nm	00+02
	Fly left procedural turn to intercept ILS.....				030deg	2.0nm	00+01
					120deg	1.0nm	00+01
					210deg	1.3nm	00+01
	Land runway 25 (225 deg). Length – 5515ft, width – 150ft, surface – asphalt... ..				255deg	5.1nm	00+03
<b>Flight No. 852-01-05</b>	<b>Arrival Airport Elev. – 124ft</b>		<b>Estimated totals for flight&gt;&gt;&gt;</b>			<b>182nm</b>	<b>01+16</b>