

# Virgin Atlantic & CardioSecur Team Up To Improve Onboard Medical Safety

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By [Molly Russell](#)

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The compact ECG machine developed by CardioSecur will be rolled out across Virgin Atlantic's entire fleet.



Photo: Fasttailwind / Shutterstock

[Virgin Atlantic](#) has unveiled a new partnership with German medical tech firm CardioSecur to bolster its in-flight medical safety equipment.

## Innovating in-flight safety

Announced on Friday, the new partnership will strengthen the [London Heathrow](#)-based carrier's electrocardiogram (ECG) services in-flight to ensure continued customer safety. Virgin Atlantic was the first airline in the world to have a fully ECG-equipped fleet and remains the only UK-based carrier to offer 12 lead ECG in-flight capabilities; however, the airline has outlined its commitments to improving its medical support even further.

From May 19, all flights will be equipped with CardioSecur's mobile ECG system, allowing trained cabin crew members to transmit the machine's readings to a ground-based medical service to ensure affected passengers receive the proper support.

In-flight health incidents remain rare, though cardiovascular events are typically the most common cause of [medical diversions](#). Limited or delayed access to correct treatment can worsen symptoms, with some airlines looking for alternate ways to alleviate issues until the passenger is on the ground.

An ECG, or electrocardiogram, records the heart's electrical signals, allowing for a simple, non-invasive exam of the heart's rhythm to identify potential issues. The CardioSecur system is distinct from the airlines' previous offerings. Weighing just 50 grams, the compact system can be stored easily while providing comprehensive support when required.

Photo: Croatorum | Shutterstock

Corneel Koster, Virgin Atlantic's Chief Customer and Operations Officer, explained,

*“Our work with CardioSecur underpins our continued commitment to customer health, which will always be our top priority. We were proud to be the first airline in the world to have a fully ECG equipped fleet and we’ve continued to remain at the forefront of aviation medicine.”*

*“The upgrade to this new state of the art mobile ECG capability on board of all our aircraft clearly demonstrates further leadership in shaping the future of customer health and I’m proud to be the first UK airline to offer CardioSecur’s new kit.”*

## Supporting customer health

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Virgin Atlantic first installed ECG machines on its fleet in 2003, following in the footsteps of British Midlands International ([BMI](#)), which came to prominence after utilizing an ECG machine on a transatlantic service to save the life of a passenger experiencing a heart attack. Virgin Atlantic quickly expanded to include ECG machines across its entire fleet through the early 2000s.

Photo: Vincenzo Pace | Simple Flying

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All Virgin Atlantic [cabin crew](#) members are required to undertake intensive safety training while attending the airline's flight school to ensure all possible medical emergencies are covered. As reported by The Daily Express in 2020, Virgin Atlantic cabin crew member Otis noted in a live video on the carrier's social media account that safety and emergency procedure training extends from dealing with fainting or cardiovascular events to administering medication and delivering babies. Each aircraft is fully equipped to offer basic first aid for minor injuries, though ECG and advanced medical equipment are available for serious incidents.

What are your thoughts on Virgin Atlantic's new medical partnership? What other ways would you like to see airlines support passengers? Let us know in the comments.

Sources: [The Times](#), [The Daily Express](#)

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## Air France-KLM Eyes New Widebodies For Future Fleet Needs

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By [Steven Walker](#)

Published 13 hours ago

What does the future hold for Air France-KLM's sizeable fleet of Airbus A330s and Boeing 777s?



Photo: Bjoern Wylezich | Shutterstock

[Air France-KLM](#) has revealed plans to retire its older widebody fleet, in favor of more modern, fuel-efficient aircraft. The Franco-Dutch airline group already withdrew the mighty Airbus A380 and Boeing 747 from service following the pandemic, and is now making plans to retire its aging Airbus A330s and Boeing 777s.

The group's CEO, Ben Smith, told Bloomberg of the plans at [IATA's](#) Annual General Meeting this week in Istanbul. Several factors have spurred the drive for a more modern fleet. These range from a growing awareness of sustainability to the need for more fuel-

efficient aircraft to operate routes to Asia, which are now longer than before due to the closure of Russian airspace.

Photo: Air France

Speaking about the extended flight routings, Smith said,

“A plane that is optimized at 15 hours and one that’s optimized at 12 is not necessarily the same. So this, of course, now plays into the evaluation, where a year and a half ago, that would not have been the case.”

## **Air France-KLM's aging aircraft**

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The latest data from [ch-aviation.com](https://ch-aviation.com) shows that Air France's fleet contains 15 [Airbus A330-200s](#) and 18 Boeing 777-200ERs, with an average age of 20 and 23 years old, respectively.

Meanwhile, KLM operates six Airbus A330-200s, five Airbus A330-300s, and 15 [Boeing 777-200ERs](#). These aircraft are slightly younger than their Air France equivalents, with an average age of 17, 11, and 18 years old, respectively.

Photo: Vincenzo Pace | Simple Flying

On the other end of the spectrum, Air France's youngest long-haul aircraft are its Airbus A350-900s, while over at KLM, it is the Boeing 787-10. When it comes to replacing the aging aircraft, it remains to be seen if the airlines will stick with known types already in their fleets, or if they will opt for a different choice. The two carriers have operated both Airbus and Boeing aircraft for many years now, so anything is possible.

Simple Flying is at the IATA Annual General Meeting this week - keep an eye out for more news.

## **TAP Air Portugal takeover still on the cards**

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In addition to revealing Air France-KLM's future fleet plans, Smith also went on to reaffirm the group's [interest in acquiring TAP Air Portugal](#). From its hubs at Lisbon Airport (LIS) and Porto Airport (OPO), the Portuguese flag carrier operates to more than ten destinations across Brazil, in addition to a handful of other long-haul routes throughout the Americas.

Photo: Markus Mainka | Shutterstock

With its significant presence in Brazil, acquiring [TAP Air Portugal](#) would present Air France-KLM with the perfect opportunity to expand its South American network. The move could also turn Air France-KLM into the largest airline group in Europe, ahead of IAG and the Lufthansa Group.

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**What do you think of Air France-KLM's plans to retire its aging Airbus A330s and Boeing 777s? Have you flown on either of the aircraft recently? If so, how would you rate the onboard experience compared to the group's more modern aircraft? Let us know by commenting below.**

Sources: [Bloomberg](#), [ch-aviation.com](#)

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[Air France](#)

**IATA/ICAO Code:**

AF/AFR

**Airline Type:**

Full Service Carrier

**Hub(s):**

Paris Charles De Gaulle Airport

**Year Founded:**

1933

**Alliance:**

SkyTeam

**Airline Group:**

Air France-KLM

**CEO:**

Anne Rigail

**Country:**

France

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Photo: Vincenzo Pace | Simple Flying

KLM

**IATA/ICAO Code:**

KL/KLM

**Airline Type:**

Full Service Carrier

**Hub(s):**

Amsterdam Schiphol Airport

**Year Founded:**

1919

**Alliance:**

SkyTeam

**Airline Group:**

Air France-KLM

**CEO:**

Marjan Rintel

**Country:**

Netherlands

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