

RealTraffic Developer Documentation v 1.0

RealTraffic obtains traffic and weather information for the location desired, either by tracking the flight simulator's location (information which you have to provide), or by using the spotter location. If you use the spotter location, you only need to listen for UDP packets. If you want to integrate it into a simulator application however, you need to provide your location in regular intervals to RealTraffic.

In both cases, RealTraffic will transmit weather and traffic as UDP packets in approximately 10 second intervals, traffic is limited to approximately 100 NM of range around the center of the position provided.

Providing your simulator position to RealTraffic

You need to establish a TCP connection to the host where RealTraffic is running on. By default, this is made to TCP port 10747 (configurable in the Settings pane of the RealTraffic User Interface). Then you need to transmit the following parameters at between 1 - 5 Hz (i.e. 1 – 5 times per second):

- Pitch in radians * 100000
- Bank in radians * 100000
- Heading (or Track) in radians
- Altitude in feet * 1000
- True air speed in meters per second
- Latitude in radians
- Longitude in radians
- All of that preceded by the characters "Qs121="

An example string would look like this:

`"Qs121=6747;289;5.449771266137578;37988724;501908;0.6564195830703577;-2.1443275933742236"`

If your simulator is moving slowly, you need to be careful to inject something useful such as true heading instead of track, as often track calculations can get a bit iffy with limited precision latitude/longitude points.

For a correct formatting example, look at the following Java code, which translates almost as is to C, just use %0.15f for the float formatting rather than %.15f:

Example code for a correctly formatted string in Java:

```
message = String.format(Locale.US, "Qs121=%d;%d;%0.15f;%d;%d;%0.15f;%0.15f",
    (int)(pitch_in_degs * 100000 * d2r), (int)(bank_in_degs * 100000*d2r)*-1,
    track_in_degs * d2r, (int)(altitude_in_m * 3028), TAS_in_mps, latitude * d2r,
    longitude * d2r);
```

Once you are injecting this data correctly, RealTraffic will spring to life and indicate your position in the map display, as well as show any traffic around you.

Reading weather and traffic information

RealTraffic broadcasts all traffic and weather information via UDP. Weather information pertains to the nearest airport, and is mostly of value to plugins who want to position traffic at the correct altitude. ADS-B altitude is always reported in reference to the standard atmospheric pressure of 1013 hPa. Therefore, if local pressure is different from 1013 hPa, you have to correct the altitude of the traffic (approximately 30ft of altitude per hPa of pressure difference). Assuming I remember my barometry correctly from flight school: If the local pressure is 1023 hPa and ground is at sea level, an airplane indicating ADS-B altitude of 10'000ft would in reality be at 10'300ft, while with a local pressure of 1003 hPa the same airplane would be flying at 9'700ft AGL (over the ground).

The weather messages are broadcast as UDP packets once every 10 seconds on port 49004 containing a JSON string with the following format:

```
{"ICAO": "XXXX", "QNH": 1013, "METAR": "XXXX", "NAME": "XXXX", "IATA": "XXXX",  
"DISTNM": 0};
```

The fields should be self-explanatory, in case they're not:

- ICAO is the ICAO code of the nearest airport,
- QNH is the reported pressure in hPa,
- METAR contains the full METAR received,
- NAME shows the airport name (usually long),
- IATA is the IATA code of the airport (YSSY = Sydney in ICAO speak, SYD = Sydney in IATA speak), and lastly,
- DISTNM is the distance to said airport in nautical miles.

The traffic data is broadcast again as UDP packets, and these come in two formats:

- Foreflight (an electronic flight bag app) format which is broadcast on port 49002,
- ATraffic format, broadcast on port 49003

Further to this, the simulator position is re-distributed (for the benefit of other third party apps) as XGPS and XATT messages on the same port as Foreflight messages, 49002.

Foreflight format

In foreflight format, each traffic in your area will be broadcast in a string with the following format:

```
"XTRAFFICPSX,hexid,lat,lon,alt,vs,airborne,hdg,spd,cs,type"
```

where the parameters are:

- Hexid: the hexadecimal ID of the transponder of the aircraft. This is a unique ID, and you can use this ID to track individual aircraft.
- Lat: latitude in degrees
- Lon: longitude in degrees
- Alt: altitude in feet
- Vs: vertical speed in ft/min
- Airborne: 1 or 0
- Hdg: The heading of the aircraft (it's actually the true track, strictly speaking.)
- Spd: The speed of the aircraft in knots
- Cs: the ICAO callsign (Emirates 413 = UAE413 in ICAO speak, = EK413 in IATA speak)
- Type: the ICAO type of the aircraft, e.g. A388 for Airbus 380-800. B789 for Boeing 787-9 etc.

The GPS and Attitude messages are as follows:

"XGPSPSX,lon,lat,alt,track,gsp"

Where the parameters are:

- Lon: Longitude in degrees (remember west = negative)
- Lat: Latitude in degrees (north = positive)
- Alt: Altitude in meters
- Track: True track
- Gsp: Ground speed in meters per second

"XATTPSX,hdg,pitch,roll"

Where the parameters are:

- Hdg: The heading of the aircraft (true heading)
- Pitch: The pitch in degrees, positive = pitch up
- Roll: The roll angle in degrees, positive = right roll

AI Traffic format

AI Traffic format is similar to Foreflight, but has additional parameters (the last 3 parameters, marked in bold below):

"AITFC,hexid,lat,lon,alt,vs,airborne,hdg,spd,cs,type,**tail,from,to**"

For the first 10 parameters see description above, the last three parameters are:

- Tail: The registration number of the aircraft

- From: The origin airport where known (in IATA code)
- To: The destination airport where known (in IATA code)