**The illegal flights of the first lady of Argentina, during the Pandemic lockdown**

**Photo**

Fabiola Yáñez, the first lady of Argentina, violated the [presidential decree, which prohibited inter-provincial travels, during the COVID-19 pandemic quarantine](https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/detalleAviso/primera/227042/20200320). In addition, as she does not hold any position in the National State, she is not allowed to use the presidential air fleet; except in the company of the President of the Nation and if their presence is justified.

Two requests for access to public information were filed, asking for the same information from the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Nation and from Argentinean Air Navigation Company, State-owned company (EANA SE, in Spanish).

The information is based on the cross-checking of data between both answers. In addition, the data were reviewed and corroborated by a source from Casa Militar (an organ of the Presidential Secretariat in charge of presidential custody and logistics, among other tasks), two former pilots of the presidential air fleet and sources from the National Government.

Each aircraft and helicopter must file a flight plan prior to takeoff, which must be approved, in addition to other documents. By law, each airport must record all aircraft and helicopter movements. This information is gathered by EANA SE, which is also in charge of ensuring that the law is complied.

After comparing the flights in both responses, the first conclusion is that the Secretariat of the Presidency of the Nation did not provide complete information by omitting several flights. On the other hand, on the data provided, it lied about the dates of some of the first lady's trips.

In the answer provided by EANA SE, with the information of each leg, it is not clear if the hours are in UTC (Coordinated Universal Time). In that case, three hours would have to be subtracted, since Argentina has a UTC -3 time. We tried to contact the agency in order to clarify this point, but we did not receive a reply. Therefore, the hours were taken as reflected in the document submitted in response.

**First lady flights**

For more details on each flight, place the mouse pointer over the arc.

Since the beginning of the Pandemic, El Palomar Airport is not operational. One day before it was to be allowed to fly again, on December 14, 2020, the national government claimed technical and economic issues to suspend the airport indefinitely. However, most of the first lady's flights to Posadas, Misiones, took off from there.

**Total flighs**

A flight leg in the air industry is a flight from one airport to another under the same flight number, with the same aircraft, and no stops in between. In this case, for example, from Buenos Aires to Posadas is one leg. The return, to Buenos Aires, is another. In other words, a trip and return, direct, non-stop, consists of two legs.

On several occasions, the first lady's trips consisted of 4 legs: the plane took off and landed, but returned to the origin empty. Then, it departed without passengers, picked her up and brought her back. This increased operating costs.

The 35 flights are equivalent to legs. In some cases, a flight consisted of 2 legs and others of 4. The helicopter trips correspond to 4 legs, which made up the trip of the First Lady from Buenos Aires to the province of Chaco.

**Total costs.**

The first lady used the Tango-10 and Tango-11 aircraft, registration numbers T-10 and T-11, respectively. Both are Learjets 60XR, manufactured by Bombardier. [According to various sources](https://compareprivateplanes.com/articles/bombardier-learjet-60xr-ownership-operating-costs), the average operating cost, per hour, is USD 4,250. In the case of the helicopter, he traveled in a Sikorsky S-70, manufactured by the U.S. company Sikorsky Aircraft. This model is the civilian version. The military one is known as Black Hawk. [According to the manufacturer](https://www.aircraftcostcalculator.com/AircraftOperatingCosts/643/Sikorsky+S-70A-C#:~:text=Based%20on%20450%20annual%20owner,down%20to%20%243%2C921.13%20per%20hour.), the operating cost, per hour, is USD 3,921.13. In aviation, flight hours are not fractioned. In such cases, the full hour is computed. For example, if the flight lasted one hour and fifteen minutes, the operating cost is calculated as two hours of flight time.

The first lady violated several laws. First of all, she does not hold any position in the National State. Consequently, she is not allowed to use any plane, or helicopter, of the presidential air fleet; except when accompanying the President of the Nation and her presence is justified. Furthermore, he violated the [decree of necessity and urgency N° 297/20](https://www.boletinoficial.gob.ar/detalleAviso/primera/227042/20200320), dated March 20, 2020, determined that “with the purpose of protecting public health as an inalienable obligation of the national State, it is established for all persons living in the country or being in it, the measure of 'social, preventive and mandatory isolation', for a determined period of time, during which all persons must remain in their usual residences or in the place where they are and abstain from going to their workplaces. It also establishes the prohibition to travel on routes, roads and public spaces, in order to prevent the circulation and contagion of the COVID-19 virus”. As an aggravating factor, he used public funds, which totaled USD 194,364.54. The equivalent of 1,087 [monthly minimum wages for an argentinean worker.](https://www.argentina.gob.ar/noticias/capital-social-se-actualizo-el-monto-del-salario-minimo-vital-y-movil#:~:text=Seg%C3%BAn%20la%20%C3%BAltima%20actualizaci%C3%B3n%2C%20el,capital%20social%20de%20tu%20entidad.)