4.6 Cruise

Objective

To maintain a stable and efficient flight at cruise altitude.

Establishing Cruise

- Aircraft levels off at cruise altitude
- Thrust reduces automatically

Autopilot & Automation

- Autopilot engaged
- Managed speed (Mach mode typically active)

Cruise Speed Management

During cruise, the aircraft should remain in **Managed Speed Mode** under normal conditions.

Standard Procedure

- **Autopilot → ENGAGED**
- **Speed Mode → MANAGED (Mach mode)**

The aircraft automatically optimizes:

- Fuel efficiency
- Speed profile

Exceptions

Selected speed may only be used if:

- **ATC assigns a specific speed**
- Turbulence requires speed adjustment
- Operational considerations demand deviation

Monitoring Duties

Both pilots:

- Monitor flight progress
- Check fuel consumption
- Verify route

Systems Monitoring (PM)

- ECAM parameters normal
- Monitor Mach number and fuel consumption
- Ensure compliance with ATC instructions
- Detect any unexpected automation behavior

Navigation

- Follow programmed route
- Monitor for deviations

ATC Interaction

- Maintain assigned altitude and speed
- Respond to new clearances

Situational Awareness

- Monitor weather
- Anticipate descent planning

Key Principles

- “Let the aircraft manage efficiency – intervene only when necessary.”
- Stay ahead of the aircraft
- Avoid complacency
- Continuously cross-check systems

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