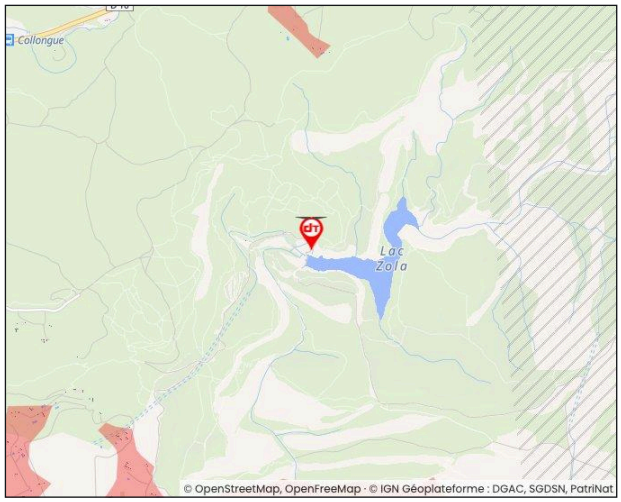
# The Zola Dam

Water · Bouches-du-Rhône

| | |
|---|---|
| **GPS coordinates** | 43.53260, 5.51157 |
| **Elevation** | 243 m |
| **Maximum height** | 120 m max |
| **Access** | On foot < 1,000 m |
| **Nearest aerodrome** | Pays d'Aix Medical Center Heliport<br>5.6 km W · spot 21 m higher |
| **Spot reference** | 308021 |




Spot location and restrictions (Drone-Spot map image)

## Sun (local times, UTC+01:00)

| Day | Dawn | Sunrise | Sunset | Dusk | Day length | Golden hour |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sun 22 Nov** | 07:09 | 07:41 | 17:08 | 17:39 | 9 h 27 | 07:41–08:25 · 16:23–17:08 |
| **Mon 23 Nov** | 07:10 | 07:42 | 17:07 | 17:38 | 9 h 25 | 07:42–08:26 · 16:22–17:07 |
| **Tue 24 Nov** | 07:11 | 07:43 | 17:06 | 17:38 | 9 h 23 | 07:43–08:28 · 16:22–17:06 |

## Nearby aerodromes

| Aerodrome | Type | Distance | Elevation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pays d'Aix Medical Center Heliport | Heliport | 5.6 km W | 222 m |
| Aix - Les Milles Airport | Aerodrome | 12 km W | 112 m |
| Saint Suffren private UL strip | Aerodrome | 20 km NW | 270 m |
| Nord Heliport | Heliport | 21 km SW | 187 m |

## Description

The Zola Dam, named after the initiator of the project, François Zola (the father of the writer and journalist Émile Zola), is located in the commune of Le Tholonet, in the Infernet gorges, downstream of the Bimont Dam and upstream of the La Petite Mer Dam (1475). The Zola Canal supplied water to the city of Aix1, about 7 km away. It was the city's main water source until 1875, the year the first waters of the Verdon Canal arrived. The two canals together supplied the city of Aix until the Canal de Provence came into service starting in the 1960s. Since the mid-1970s, the Zola Canal has been abandoned, while the Zola Dam continues to be maintained by the Société du Canal de Provence. Today, it helps reduce peak flows in the event of floods. It is the very first arch dam of the industrial era. As such, it is a first-rate technical innovation in the field of hydraulic structures. In …

**Scan to open the up-to-date spot page: weather, map and restrictions.**

https://www.drone-spot.tech/en/fiche-spot.aspx?id=308021

Before every flight: check the UAS zones map, NOTAMs and temporary areas, the weather and the Kp index.

# Preparing the flight

## Pre-flight Check-List

- ☐ Area checked: UAS zones, restrictions, protected areas
- ☐ NOTAMs and temporary areas checked
- ☐ Weather: wind, gusts, rain, visibility; Kp index
- ☐ Operator number displayed on the drone
- ☐ Training certificate or licence with me
- ☐ Third-party liability insurance checked
- ☐ Batteries charged: drone, controller, phone
- ☐ Propellers, motors and frame in good condition
- ☐ Memory card inserted and empty
- ☐ Software up to date, compass and IMU calibrated
- ☐ Return to home: home point and return height set
- ☐ Electronic signalling or remote ID active
- ☐ Take-off area clear, people informed and at a distance
- ☐ Observer present for FPV flights

## Key rules of the open category

Recreational flying in France: European open-category rules, applied by the DGAC.

- Maximum height: 120 m above the ground, lower where a restriction requires it.
- Always keep the drone in sight; when flying FPV, an observer keeps it in sight next to you.
- Never fly over crowds and keep the distances of your subcategory (A1, A2 or A3).
- Respect UAS geographical zones: around aerodromes, prohibited or restricted areas, protected areas, sensitive sites.
- Register as an operator if the drone weighs 250 g or more or carries a camera (toys excepted), and display the number on the drone.
- Training: online A1/A3 certificate from 250 g or for a class C1 drone; A2 certificate to fly closer to people with a class C2 drone.
- Always give way to manned aircraft and land if one approaches.
- Respect privacy: no images that identify people without their consent; aerial photography is prohibited in some areas.
- Check your third-party liability insurance.
- In France: registration and training on AlphaTango (DGAC); a drone of 800 g or more must broadcast electronic signalling (or the remote ID of class-marked drones).

*Non-exhaustive summary: rules change. Reference: the DGAC open-category guide and the country's regulations.*

## Useful links

**UAS zones map around the spot :** https://www.drone-spot.tech/en/carte-uas.aspx?lat=43.5326&lon=5.51157
**Drone pilot library :** https://www.drone-spot.tech/en/bibliotheque
**DGAC open-category guide (French) :** https://www.drone-spot.tech/en/bibliotheque/guide-categorie-ouverte
**Registration and training (AlphaTango) :** https://alphatango.aviation-civile.gouv.fr
**NOTAMs and temporary areas (SOFIA Briefing) :** https://sofia-briefing.aviation-civile.gouv.fr

## My flight notes

Information sheet generated by Drone-Spot from community data: it replaces neither official aeronautical information nor the regulations. The remote pilot remains responsible for the flight.