# Timeline of North Atlantic Changes

OPSGROUP Team
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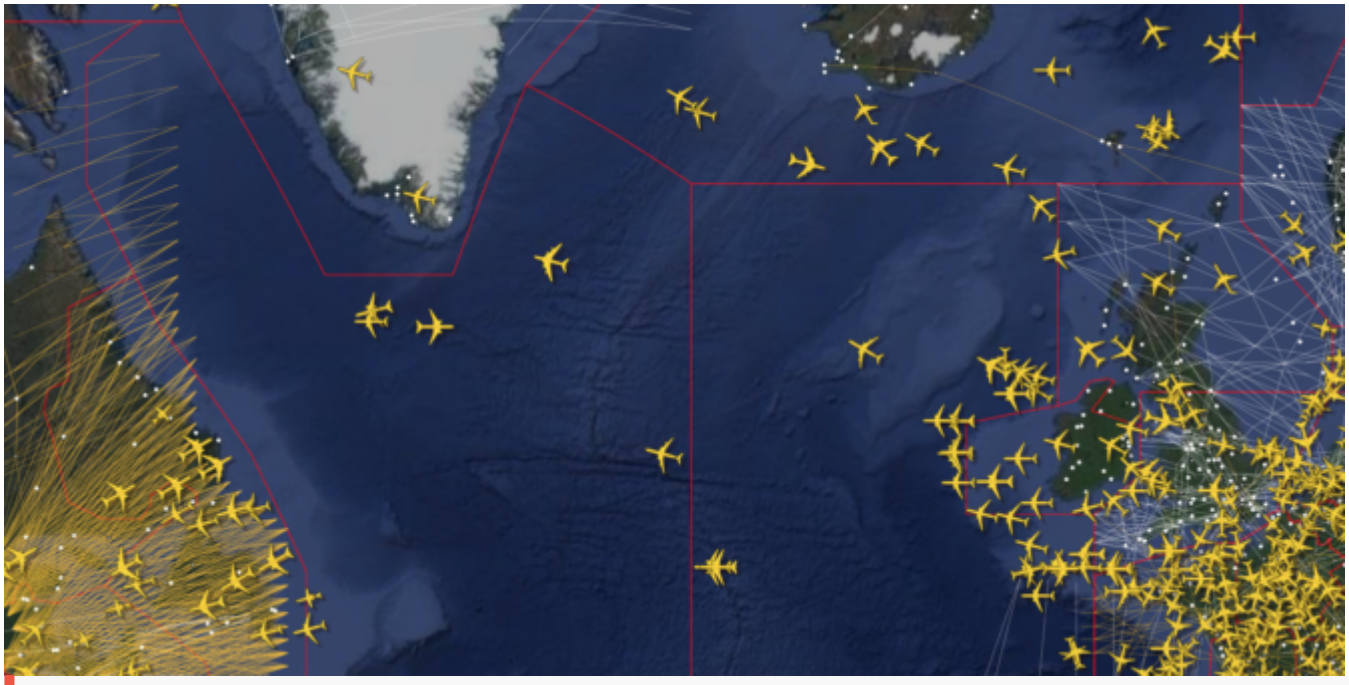

**This page has a timeline of big NAT changes**, for the six Oceanic Area Control Centres (OACC's): EGGX/Shanwick, CZQX/Gander, BIRD/Iceland, ENOB/Bodø, LPPO/Santa Maria, and KZWY/New York Oceanic.

## 2025

- **Sep 2025:** Shanwick's move to **Oceanic Clearance Removal** is now delayed until after summer 2026, following challenges seen during Gander's rollout. More info.
- **July 2025:** ADS-B is now mandatory in the entire BIRD/Reykjavik FIR. More info.
- **June 2025:** The extensively expanded BGGH/Nuuk airport in Greenland is now open, and receiving regular jet traffic. BGSF/Sondrestrom will soon downgrade ATC to AFIS. BGBW/Narsarsuaq will likely close in Spring 2026. More info.
- **May 2025:** Since Canada removed Oceanic Clearances in Dec 2024, things haven't exactly gone smoothly. Crews are confused. Controllers are overloaded. Frequencies are clogged. So from May 5, **Gander will stop sending pre-Oceanic route changes via CPDLC** and switch to VHF voice only. More info.
- **March 2025: Reykjavik OCA updated procedures** with NAT Doc 007. Crews must now send their RCL no earlier than 15 minutes prior to the OEP (previously 20). Squawk 2000 ten minutes after the OEP is now standard everywhere except in Reykjavik CTA and Bermuda radar coverage. More info.
- **March 2025**: Updated NAT Doc 007 published. Main changes: **the Blue Spruce Routes were removed**, new chapters on Space Weather Contingencies and GNSS Interference Events. More info.

- **January 2025:** NAT Ops Bulletin #1/2025 published with procedures for flights affected by GPS jamming or spoofing. Crews should advise ATC early in the RCL message to avoid being excluded from the NAT HLA. More info.

## 2024

- **December 2024: Shanwick postponed its transition to Oceanic Clearance Removal (OCR)**, originally planned for Dec 4, 2024. By this point, Santa Maria and Iceland had already implemented OCR in March 2024, and Bodo and Gander followed in December – leaving Shanwick as the only NAT ANSP still requiring oceanic clearances to westbound flights entering from domestic airspace. More info.
- **March 2024**: Beginning of the process of **Oceanic Clearance Removal (OCR)** for all NAT FIR's. More info.
- **March 2024**: **Comms Failure** Procedures simplified. More info.
- **March 2024**: **Squawk 2000** 10 minutes after OEP is now standard in all NAT FIR's, except Reykjavik. More info.

## 2023

- **Sep 2023:** The US FAA officially **renamed WATRS airspace to WAT.** Existing B050 authorizations will be re-issued within 24 months. More info.
- **Jan 2023:** There were some changes to the boundaries of the **datalink exempt airspace in the northern bit of the North Atlantic.** This used to extend down south to SAVRY, but now only goes as far as EMBOK. So now you need datalink in the NAT oceanic airspace over Greenland controlled by Gander. More info.

## 2022

- **June 2022:** HF data link (ACARS) does not meet the satcom part of the **NAT DLM requirement** – you need Inmarsat or Iridium for that. So if you want to fly in NAT DLM airspace (FL290-410 in the NAT region) "J2" in field 10a of your FPL won't work anymore – you need "J5" for Inmarsat or "J7" for Iridium. More info.
- **March 2022: All NAT Tracks at FL330 and below were abolished.** It means operators will have the flexibility to file random routes at FL330 and below when flying between Europe and North America. Particularly for operators unable to file routes across NAT Tracks with active flight levels, this means much greater flexibility in choosing their own trajectory. More info.

## 2021

- **July 2021:** The "MAX UPLINK DELAY VALUE TO 300 SECONDS" message will now be sent to all aircraft – and each time you logon to a new OACC. More info.

## 2020

- **Jan 2020:** Update on the **Datalink Mandate**. Effective Jan 20, 2020, datalink (CPDLC and

ADS-C) is now required between FL290-410 in the NAT region. There are exempted areas: North of 80N, Surveillance airspace over a section of Greenland and Iceland (where ATC can see you on radar or ADS-B), and New York Oceanic East. Aircraft without datalink can request to climb/descend through datalink mandated airspace, but will only be considered on a tactical basis – most likely you'll get stuck under FL290. More info.

## 2019

- **Micro-SLOP.** ATC don't seem to like the term, but that's basically what it is. Before, you could only SLOP centreline, 1NM or 2NM to the right. But since 2019, all NAT OACCs started allowing offsets right of centreline in tenths of a nautical mile up to a maximum of 2NM. More info.
- **ASEPS.** Reduced longitudinal separation (down to as close as 14NM) has been happening since April 2019 in Gander, Shanwick, and Santa Maria. But from Oct 2019, lateral separation will be reduced to 19NM from the previous PBCS limit of 25NM for compliant aircraft. To be able to get this reduced separation, you'll need ADS-B and to be fully PBCS compliant (i.e. meet the specs of RNP4, RCP240 and RSP180). Read the ICAO Bulletin for more info.
- **OWAFS** Operations Without a Fixed Speed. In other words, you get to decide how fast you fly. It's been happening in the Shanwick, Santa Maria, and New York Oceanic FIRs since Apr 2019. Iceland say they will start doing this some time around Oct-Nov 2019. You get a normal oceanic clearance, with a fixed Mach Number, like you always did. But then somewhere after the Oceanic Entry Point, you may get a CPDLC message saying RESUME NORMAL SPEED. You should reply with WILCO. What that means is: Fly ECON, or a Cost Index with Variable Mach. You can fly within 0.01 up or down of your cleared Mach, but if it varies by 0.02 or more you must advise ATC. Read the ICAO Bulletin and check out our article for more info.
- **PBCS** From March 29th 2019, there may be more than just three daily PBCS tracks. They will continue to be only FL350 to FL390 inclusive and only on the designated tracks during the period the tracks are in effect. There may be days where there are no PBCS tracks, 3 PBCS tracks, 5 PBCS tracks, potentially even all the tracks.
- **Contingency Procedures** From March 29th 2019, new contingency and weather deviation procedures were introduced. For contingencies, you now turn at least 30 degrees and offset by 5 NM. For weather deviations, you now do your 300ft up/down offset when 5 NM away from track. More info.

## 2018

- **PBCS** From March 29th 2018, PBCS is a requirement for the daily mandated PBCS NAT Tracks (right now, that the 3 core tracks each day) between FL350-390. PBCS for the NAT means having both RCP240 (4 minute comms loop) and RSP180 (3 minute position reporting). If you're missing approval for either, then you can fly anywhere other than along the core NAT tracks FL350-390. Read more about PBCS in our article, and check out the NAT Circle of Change for an easier graphical representation.
- **RLAT** From January 4th 2018, Shanwick and Gander increase the number of RLAT tracks – most tracks between FL350-390 will now be RLAT – 25nm separation between them. *RLAT replaced by the term PBCS.*

## 2017

- **SLOP** – Offsetting is now mandatory. Choose 0, 1, or 2nm right of track. We think 1 or 2 is best. Consider the recent A380 story.
- **TCAS 7.1**: From January 1st, 2017, TCAS 7.1 is required throughout the entire NAT region.
- **Cruising Level**: Effective 2017, you no longer need to file an ICAO standard cruising level in NAT airspace.
- **Gross Nav Error**: This is now defined as greater than 10nm. Everywhere else in the world, it's 25nm.
- **Datalink Mandate**: Since Dec 2017, datalink now required throughout the NAT Region from FL350-390. Exempt areas: Tango Routes, airspace north of 80N, Surveillance airspace, Blue Spruce routes, and New York OCA.

## 2016

- **Confirm Assigned Route** Introduced August 2016, you will see this message when you enter NAT airspace with datalink, and you should reply with the planned route in NAT airspace. Designed to catch errors.
- **NAT HLA** The airspace formerly known as MNPS. Changed February 2016. NAT HLA = NAT High Level Airspace. Now includes Bodo Oceanic, and aircraft must be RNP 4 or RNP10. Previous MNPS approvals good through 2020.

## 2015

- **RLAT** Started December 2015, spacing on the NAT Tracks reduced to "Half Track" (30nm) for 3 core tracks. RLAT=Reduced Lateral Separation Minima. *Next phase of this (ie. all NAT Tracks 350-390) was introduced in Dec 2017.*
- **SLOP** Offsetting right of track by 1nm or 2nm became Mandatory.