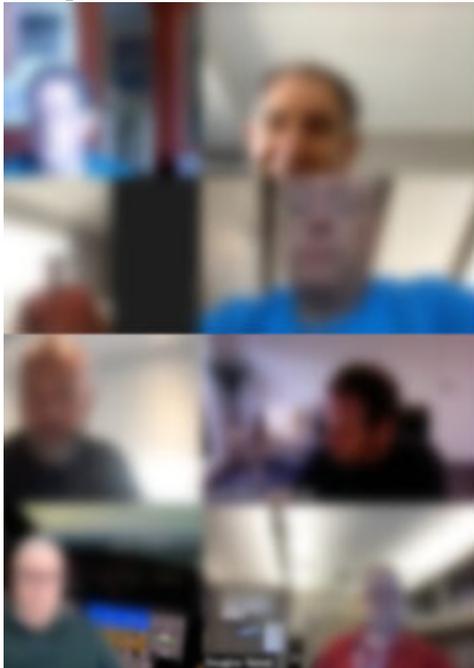


OPSCCHAT Summary 12 April

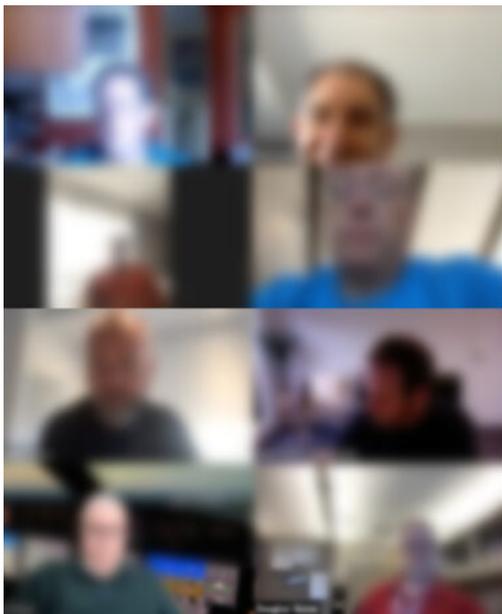
Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



OPSCCHAT

TUESDAY 12 APR 2000Z

**RUSSIA OPS CHANGES
ROCKETS IN THE NOPACS
AIRPORT STAFF SHORTAGES
A QUIZ. WITH PRIZES.**



OPSCCHAT

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**RUSSIA OPS CHANGES
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Hi Members,

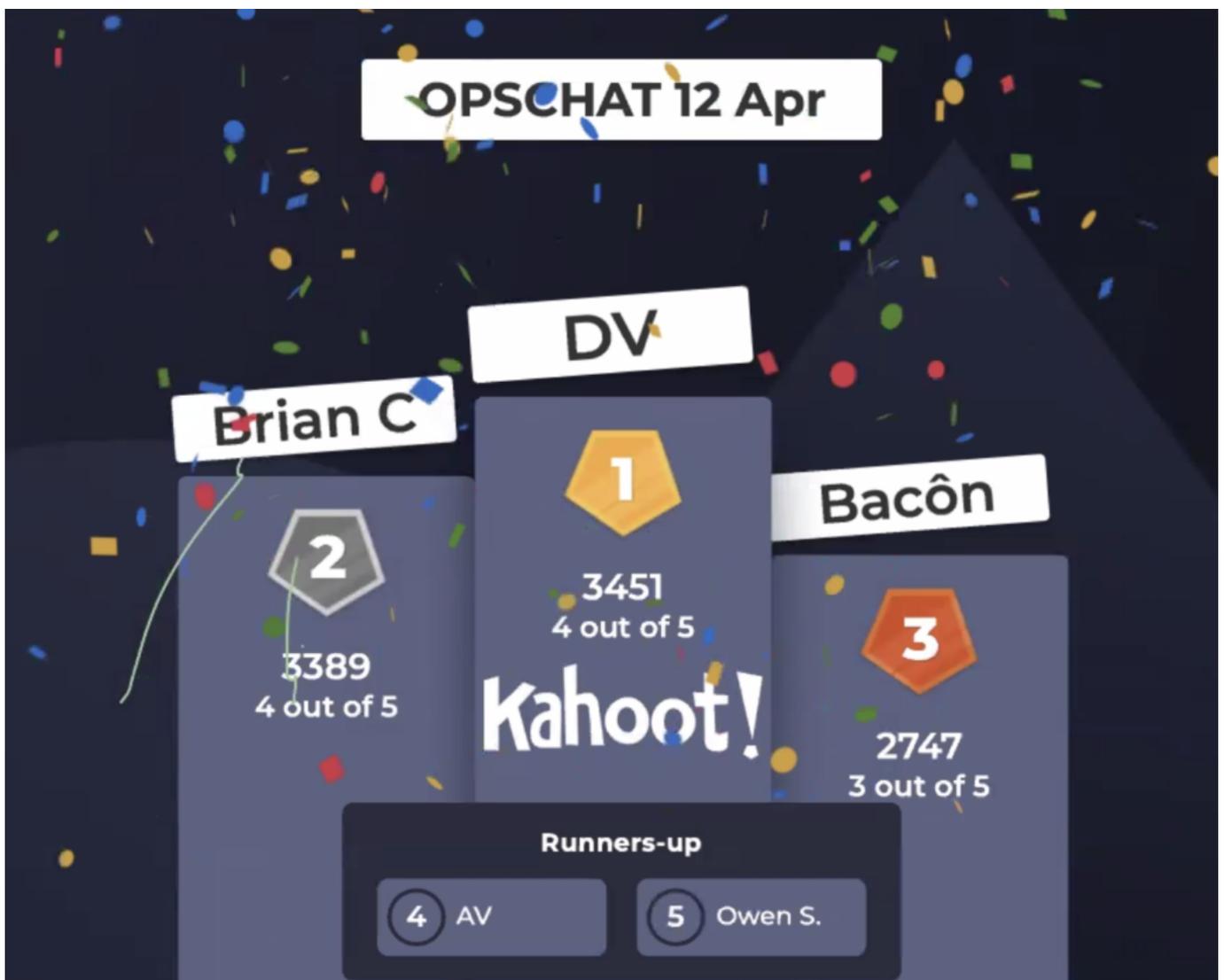
It was another busy OPSCCHAT call this week - with a fun new addition.

You can watch the full replay on your Member's Dashboard.

Here's a quick summary of what we talked about:

- **Russia** - SITA are cancelling their VHF services from April 11. So no more SITA run VHF/VDL or datalink. There was also an air prox event between a civilian airliner and military fighter near the Latvian border - spill over effects from the conflict in Ukraine are still a big issue!

- **Europe** - Strikes and staff shortages. The perfect post-Covid storm. Suddenly the industry isn't quite ready for Easter, so now it's one big mess. UK fuel shortages hopefully resolving by end of the week. GPS jamming, yep still an issue, we've written a handy Opsicle about it you can find here.
- **Japan** - It's opening to rest of world, but not for tourists yet. Crew entry rules are causing confusion. No clear answer on this yet. If anyone has news, please share it with us.
- **USA** - Big closures at KASE/Aspen and KJAC/Jackson Hole. Russian military exercise has been affecting NOPAC routes in the Anchorage FIR. Alphabet Soup - the FAA are changing up their flight planning codes to cover new PBN RNP1 NAV advanced capability stuff. Watch this space for an update on it.
- **And something for fun.** Opschats now have a quiz involved! And there are prizes to be won (good prizes, exciting prizes, prizes worth winning. Well, we think so.) All ops related questions of course.



Congratulations to our first ever winner!

As always, the team is here to help with any operational support, info or questions. You can reach us on news@ops.group, or via the slack channels #flightops and #questions.

To watch the replay of the OPSCCHAT in full: head over to the dashboard. We hold a new one every week on Tuesdays at 2000z, click here to register and join us live. See you next week!

Everyone is talking about Zurich

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



There are a lot of Zurich related posts out there right now because the World Economic Forum is coming around soon, and with it some need to know things about Zurich, which is the main airport closest to where the forum is held.

On top of that, summer is on its way and with it the usual parking restrictions at all the popular tourist spots, which Zurich happens to be one of. So we thought we would take a look at it specifically, and share some info on what options you might have.

If you are operating into the general region during the WEF dates, get book now - some airports are already full!

First up, the Forum.

The World Economic Forum is big. It is the 'World' one after all. You can read about it [here](#).

But what you probably want to know is where it is, and when it is.

- It actually **takes place in Davos** (but LSZH/Zurich gets busy with important people, and their jets, flying in and out)
- It takes place between **May 22nd and May 26th**

So if you want fly in here and park between May 22nd and May 26th then good luck, unless you have an important person onboard, then just make sure you've pre-arranged it. Actually, better make that May 20 to May 29 because some might stay on over the weekend.

Where can you park?

LSZH/Zurich probably isn't an option anymore so check out some the following. But do it fast. Spots are filling quickly and its pretty much on a first come first served basis at this point.

- **LSMD/Dubendorf**
- EDDL/Düsseldorf
- LOWW/Vienna
- **LFSB/Basel**
- **EDNY/Friedrichshafen**
- **LSZR/St.Gallen Altenrhein**
- LSZS/Samedan

Here is some info on the ones you might not have info on.

LSMD/Dubendorf

Respositioning to and from LSZH/Zurich is not possible - there are customs available, and aircraft must operate in an out as their destination and origin.

The airport is only available to WEF related flights during the WEF period. There is also a query over whether fuel is available so confirm with the agent.

- **Some contact info**

If you want to use Dubendorf during the World Economic Forum you are going to have to speak to **TopMotion** as they are the main handlers here: **+41 44 8420 10 60** / aircraft.handling@topmotion.ch

We got some info from them already. You can see their 2022 price list here and take a look at their WEF Air Crew Guide here.

- **Some operational info**

Dubendorf's runway 11/29 is 7726' (2355m) x 40m.

Runway 29 is equipped with **CAT I ILS and RNP** approaches while runway 11 is, well, not, Something to do with the majorly high terrain they put directly by the runway. (OK, maybe the terrain was there first, but it does sit right where what would be the missed approach for 11 would take you).

The terrain is high with and MSA of 5000' to the North, and then **9000', 10400' and 11200' in the south**. It's that terrain that gives the ILS its **4.5° approach angle**, which means you're probably going to need a steep approach approved aircraft and some special training for here, before heading in.

The airport elevation is 1450', and the missed approach (busy because of the terrain as well), has a required gradient of 6%.

LFSB/Basel

A good option... but parking may already be fully booked here.

EDNY/Friedrichshafen

Be aware as this airport is in Germany, **fuel will generally be more expensive** as the taxes are higher here.

- **Some contact info**

Airport Services are your best bet. Try them on **+49 7541 284 388** / info@handling-fdh.de

- **Some operational info**

You have a **7730' (2356m) runway** with an ILS either end. There is a lot of terrain around here though, and the airport elevation is 1368' so watch out.

Open 0500-2100z weekdays, and 0800-1900z on weekends, with overtime available on request. **PPR will be required** for stays of more than 90 minutes.

Parking should be possible, but expect to be repositioned for parking and servicing.

LSZR/St.Gallen Altenrhein

A decent option if you can fit on their shorter than other airports runway.

- **Some contact info**

Get in touch with the airport directly for support. You can find them on **+41 71 858 5165** / c-office@peoples.ch

- **Some operational info**

You've only got **4774' (1455m)** to play with here. There is an **ILS to 10, but it is 4°**, and there is not published approach for 28. All this is because of the terrain in the south with MSAs of 10,200' and 11,400' to look out for as well as an elevation on 1306'.

Back to Zurich.

Zurich always has certain charges and restrictions in place, even when big events like the WEF aren't taking place.

Charges

- Landing charged, based on your weight
- Noise supplement charge, that varies depending on whether you disturb the peace during the day or the night
- An Emission charge based on amount of nitrogen oxide you emit
- Parking charges based on how much you might weigh, and time spent parked there
- Passengers, security and mobility support charges for passengers
- Freight charges

All the details of all the charges are contained in their Big Document on Charges Regulation. Which you can read here (although this only runs until 1 April and they don't seem to updated it yet.)

Anything else?

Yeah, slots. You need 'em. Best sorting it via your handling agent.

Permits (in general)

Landing permits are not required for private GA/BA flights to Switzerland. You'll only need a landing permit if you're operating a charter flight on an aircraft not registered in the EU. For that, email the authorities direct at: trafficrights@bazl.admin.ch

Operational Stuff

Zurich is a relatively challenging Cat B airport. We made a little briefing on it here to help.

Tell us...

If you know of other options, let us know and we will share the info - team@ops.group

The New EASA Fuel Policy: Does it affect you?

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



So EASA have changed their fuel rules and the 'Decision' they have published ain't an easy thing to read. Here is what we think it says, in plainer English, to help you work out what it all means for you.

We are no pros on fuel planning through so this is more of a heads-up that things are a-changing. For the

full regulations you will need to dive in yourself and try to fathom it out, but hopefully this gives some info on bits to really look out for.

First of all, in EASA's own words...

...What the change is all about?

They also say:

"According to the scenarios analysed in the NPA 2016-06 (A), the maximum fuel reduction would be in the order of magnitude of 1 million tonnes per year for the EU MSs' operators on the basis of the flights in 2015. This would translate in a potential estimated annual saving of 3 million tonnes of CO2 (based on the assumption of 1 tonne of fuel producing 3 tonnes of CO2).

According NPA 2016-06 (A), this would mean a potential saving estimate of 0.29 kg per minute in a short-haul flight, and of 2.31 kg per minute on a long-haul flight. This potential saving would represent approximately 1% of European flight emissions."

Give it to me in plain English.

- It will **improve fuel efficiency**.
- It will be **nicer for the environment**.
- It will apply from **October 30 2022**.
- The big change in fuel policy applies to **Commercial Air Transport (CAT) operators** (but there are a lot of changes for other folk in there too)

If you want to jump straight in and read it all yourself, then here is the link.

What's changed then?

Remember the old Fuel Policy that we all know and love?

The one where you have to carry taxi fuel, trip fuel, fuel to get to your alternate, contingency fuel (and some additional bits in there about whether that needs to be 5% or 5 mins at 1500', or 3% or if you can use STATCON...) plus your final reserve and any extra you might want...

Well, that is out and in its place are three new fuel schemes -

- the Individual.
- the Basic.
- the Basic, with variations.

So the old fuel policy is chopped and there are three new schemes instead.

Here's the deal with them. The first thing to know is that the individual and the basic + variations are both **voluntary**, meaning you'll need to meet a **bunch of criteria** to opt for them. The basic is what you'll be on if the other two don't apply.

Oh, and should have said it earlier, but this only applies if you're an EASA operator.

Any idea which fuel scheme to read up on?

If you're not a CAT Operator (now that header picture makes sense, right?) then the Individual Fuel Scheme (and all the many, many pages of info referring to that) probably won't apply to you. That's not to say it isn't useful to read and know about anyway.

If you know you **don't have particularly enhanced fuel monitoring capabilities** then the basic scheme is the one for you, and this is not really different from the current fuel policy as we know it. There are however a lot of small changes which you will need to know about.

EASA say

"The transition from the current rules to the basic fuel scheme requires little additional effort from the perspective of an air operator. The other two schemes are voluntary and will take more resources to implement as they require enhanced monitoring capabilities from the airlines."

So let's look at the schemes.

1. The Individual Fuel Scheme.

This applies to **big operators with big fuel monitoring systems** in place which let them say *"I know how much fuel I need all the time because I fly there a lot, monitor it and know about all the possible changes and risks and all that stuff that might affect it!"*

So EASA are all *"well, if you meet all our criteria then we're gonna trust that you do know better, and can take just what you need and that'll be better for you and the environment."*

OK, there might be a bit more to it than that, but in a nutshell if you're a big operator and think this might apply then dig in and read all the new blue and see if you can opt for this scheme.

If you know this doesn't apply, then read on.

2. The Basic Scheme.

Ah now this is more familiar. It is **basically our old Fuel Policy made simple**. 5% for your contingency. Done.

Here's the actual contingency bit for reference:

For contingency fuel, calculate for unforeseen factors either: whichever is the higher; (1) 5 % of the planned trip fuel or, in the event of in-flight re-planning, 5 % of the trip fuel for the remainder of the flight; or (2) an amount to fly for 5 minutes at holding speed at 1 500 ft (450 m) above the destination aerodrome in standard conditions,

This is not voluntary. The other two are, and if you don't go for either of them then this is the policy you'll need to apply.

3. The Basic with variations.

From what we can see, those variations really apply to the contingency and whether you can reduce to 3% or use STATCON, which is based on whether you have some sort of monitoring program in place, amongst other things.

Seems like a lot of blue just for that?

There is a lot because **the two voluntary schemes have a lot of points attached** to them which you

need to know about if you're planning on applying for one of those schemes.

Aside from the big policy changes, there are some **changes and clarifications to definitions** and what have you which are worth a read.

Do you need to read the Explanatory Note?

Not unless you really want an **in-depth explanation as to why they need the new AMC and GM** (acceptable means of compliance and guidance material) on fuel/energy planning, and a whole long list of references.

You can read it here if you do want to.

Annex I

This is the changes to the definitions annex. It is fairly short (they've removed acronyms) and made a few definition changes.

You can read it here, but you're better off reading the full definitions annex here if it's definitions you're after.

Here's one we found interesting:

- **Relevant safety information that might affect the safety of the flight: unforeseen hazards**

They've published **a nice list here of stuff to think about** (which you were probably were anyway but just incase) it means stuff like unexpected ATC delays, met conditions which weren't forecast, sudden obstructions on the runway, failure of some bit of the airplane that means you suddenly need a lot more runway. Sudden acts of nature that you didn't expect...

The other Annexes

We jumped straight in to **Annex IV** because it is the Commercial Air Operators annex, and they did say at the start that most of the changes apply to this. If you are not a CAT Operator then take a browse through the annex that does apply.

This contains all the info on the new schemes and the changes, criteria for opting for them etc. so this is what you need to read!

Some other bits worth looking out for.

- **Alternate Planning:** We aren't here to get into the nitty-gritty of the changes but someone very helpful and with more knowledge on it that us said that this *"basically rewrites everything we learned"* about flight planning. One of the big rewrites is on the Alternate Planning.
 - The old 'step-down' method of alternate planning doesn't apply anymore. Instead it must be looked at individually each time.
 - Wind gusts also need to be considered.
 - Take a look at the tables (here's the one for the basic + variations scheme) to get a better idea.

There are also some nicely updated or reclarified definitions throughout so even if the new optional schemes don't apply to you, its good opportunity to remind yourself about certain meanings which apply to any fuel policy, even non-EASA ones.

- **Appropriate Meteorological information:** There is a whole lot of blue here and they seem to have updated the definition on what this means and where you can get this weather from. Basically you can reproduce information from a reliable "weather man" source so long as you are just changing the layout, not the content.
 - Reliable means it as some sort of quality assurance in terms of accuracy and integrity.
 - You can also use supplementary weather info - like some nice colourful charts.
- **Verifying weather conditions for adequate aerodromes:** You have two choices, and the requirement for RFFS seems to have been removed from the adequate definition:
 - **Adequate** This means an aerodrome that you can fly to and use because its runway characteristics and anything else relevant meets your performance requirements. You don't have to consider weather conditions to decide if an aerodrome is adequate.
 - **Weather permissible** You do need to consider the weather to determine if an adequate aerodrome is weather permissible for your planning purposes.
- **Minimum Fuel:** This is worth a read, and because we think it is worth a read, we've recreated it here for you so you can just read that without everything else around it, if you so wish.

Is there a good way to read this?

It is a fairly unreadable document. The amount of blue and red makes it quite hard to work out what applies to you and what doesn't. We suggest **finding a way to separate the scheme that applies to you from the rest**, and then read through the definitions and sections along side your current fuel policy to identify what has specifically changed.

Still totally confused?

We are too if we're being totally honest. There are some big changes going on here and working out which fuel scheme applies to you is just step on.

EASA are holding a Webinar on this later in the year (Currently planned for July 7). You can register for it here.

If you're not already on it then it might be worth signing up to the EASA community network because they post updates, and folk have discussions on all things EASA on here so you might find more answers here.

There are some bits we were confused on so if you spot any errors or issues in this, please let us know at team@ops.group

Space. The Final Frontier.

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



We've mentioned space before because the goings on up there do impact the goings on down here. From space debris falling down, to TFRs around launch zones, to the impact of radiation on flight crew...

This post though is here to help you with Space Weather, or rather, how to monitor it and plan for it in your flight plans.

Space weather and what it does.

What we are talking about are **things like geomagnetic storms and solar flares**. The stuff that causes pretty Northern Lights shows, but which also causes less pretty impacts on our HF comms and our satellite navigation systems.

In general, the effects of space weather on earthbound stuff is **limited to the higher latitudes** and particularly the polar routes. For a **whole load of information** on this have our read of this post we put out a while back. For more **info on radiation** risk, check this one out.

Flight planning.

This post is a simple '*where to look for info*' post so you can include (if you don't already) some of this info into your planning process, and into the information you provide your pilots.

First up, **Alerts**.

We check the NOAA site daily (the Space Weather Prediction Center part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). When we see little yellow or little orange bits at the top we pop out an alert to let you know the sun might be sending something our way.

When its something more serious **they tend to write up a proper little alert** themselves on this.

This is just a forecast though. The R, S and G scales provide a prediction on the level of HF Radio Blackout likelihood (R), Solar radiation probability (S) and Geomagnetic storm impact (G) which would also impact

your satellite navigation systems.

If you see an alert you might want to go check an official aviation source.

Official aviation sources.

Not that we're saying NOAA isn't official, but it does just provide a sort of heads up. For your flight planning you are probably going to want some **more specific information to put into your flight plan** - an actual advisory (rather than our little alerts).

One place to look is somewhere the Finnish Met Institute who put out aviation advisories on space weather. These advisories look something like this -

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology publish similar ones and even have a nice little map you can look at to see the regional risk of space weather nastiness.

If you are **USA based** then your go to centre is the Space Weather Prediction Center (under NOAA) and you can find official advisories on there.

What to do next.

There are various things to think about:

- If you are regularly fly at high latitudes then you need to be **monitoring their cumulative radiation** exposure levels
- If the radiation levels on a particular day are over a certain amount you might want to **think about a re-route** at a lower latitude (it is rare they are significant)
- If the **HF blackout probability** is much more than minor (10 minutes max) or the geomagnetic storm levels are likely to cause significant satellite navigation issues then the same applies - you might want to consider re-routes
- For any probability, **alerting the flight crew** to potential HF blackouts and ensuring they know the procedures for loss of HF comms if routing over HF comm dependant areas is probably a good idea
- **Include the forecast** in the flights plans just as you would non-space weather forecasts.

We hope that helps, but if you want more...

ICAO put out a fairly handy presentation on this a while ago which you can find here, and they published another on Space Weather Center provisions which you can read here.

The full ICAO SARPS on Space Weather are in the' **ICAO Annex 3 - Meteorological Service for International Air Navigation and ICAO Doc 10100 - Manual on Space Weather Information in Support of International Air Navigation.**'

There is also a draft of their original Manual on Space Weather available here (if you want the current published version you'll have to pay for it).

The ECA (European Cockpit Association) published this which is filled with useful advice.

You might also want to take a read of this and sign up to your local Space Weather center to receive the SWX advisories if you haven't already.

Say Goodbye to a runway for 45 days

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



OMDB/Dubai International airport (the main one in Dubai) is closing a runway again. But that's not all. Another UAE based airport is also closing. And it is Ramadan.

So what will all this mean for operations into there?

The Dubai Runway Closure

This happens every few years. The last one was in 2019 where they shut the Southerly runway for 45 days to fix it up. Not it is the turn of the **Northerly runway again - 12L/30R.**

The closure is from **May 9 to June 22**, and it does mean a pretty big reduction in capacity at what is the busiest airport in the world in terms of international passenger numbers.

But...

The Dubai runways are actually too close together for proper simultaneous ops meaning the closure of one does not mean a halving of capacity. On top of that, the biggest operators into the airport are all planning some reduction in their flights during this period, or are sending a portion of their flights over to **OMDW/Dubai Al Maktoum** which is just down the road (20 miles or so).

So...

So if you operate in during peak times (the worst is between **7-11pm UTC**) then take some extra fuel for holding delays. You also **can't file OMDB as an alternate** during peak times (and that's during normal ops, so definitely don't try it during the closure period).

The other airport out in the UAE closure

OMAD/AI Bateen is a small but quite busy executive airport near OMAA/Abu Dhabi, which **just caters for private jet ops**. This airport will be completely closing from **May 11 to July 20**.

So what options do you have?

- **OMAA/Abu Dhabi International** is the main airport for the UAE. They generally prefer not to be used as an alternate for Dubai bound flights since they are very busy.
- **OMSJ/Sharjah International** is the next door neighbour to OMDB/Dubai (around 20km north and you fly past it on some Dubai arrivals). **Runway 12/30 is 13,320 ft** long with an ILS either end. Watch out if OMDB is getting foggy though because OMSJ won't be far behind given it is also close to the sea, and it will fill up fast with diversions if it isn't.
- **OMDW/Dubai World** is the **slightly smaller international Dubai airport** just next door. Mainly used for cargo flights, it offers a good alternate to OMDB. There is limited parking and fuel trucks though so if you divert here on a day a lot are diverting then expect long delays. **Runway 12/30 has CAT 3 ILS** both ends and is 14,764 ft long
- **OMRK/Ras Al Khaimah** is a decent airport to **consider as an alternate** with an ILS on 34, an RNAV on 16 and 12,336 ft of tarmac between the two ends. Watch out for terrain here though.
- **OMAL/AI Ain** has a 13,140 ft runway with ILS/RNAV approaches. Another UAE **option for an alternate**.
- **OMFJ/Fujairah** can be a good alternate (especially when the weather gets foggy as it is on the Eastern side of the peninsular and less susceptible).
- **OOMS/Muscat** is slightly further afield in neighbouring **Oman**, but included here because its often used as an alternate. 08L/26R is currently the only operational runway. It offers an ILS either end and 13,123 ft. Muscat is a decent fuel and tech stop if routing from the Far East.

Some other info on the UAE.

The UAE only became the UAE fairly recently. Before that it was seven separate emirates and a big port in Jebel Ali which the Brits took an interest in. When they got their independence from Britain, the emirates joined up, led by Abu Dhabi. Dubai is the **most westernized of the all emirates**.

During Ramadan, be cautious about eating and drinking in public, but beyond that there is not huge difference for foreign visitors visiting Dubai and Abu Dhabi, just remain respectful of their culture and customs. Sharjah is much stricter.

Conditions across the UAE (like all the Middle East) can be challenging:

- Extreme summer temperatures leading to brake temperature issues, hot fuel etc.
- Dubai can see some nasty lingering fog during the more humid months
- Cloud seeding is common and often leads to large storms building up. When it rains everywhere (including airport aprons) tend to flood.

Other challenges?

- Holding for Dubai can bring you close to the Iranian border
- Departures can enter Iran quickly so ensure you call the ADIZ early if routing that way.
- Watch out for the Burj Khalifa - World's tallest building. It is near the airport.
- Conflict is common across the whole Middle East region. Monitor Safeairspace for the full lowdown on risk in the region.

For more operational info on Dubai, the UAE, and the Middle East in general - check out our earlier post [here](#).

Libya Airspace Update March 2022

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



We haven't mentioned Libya in a while. Our last in-depth look was back in 2019, which is several years and a whole lot of Covid ago. So, what is the current situation and does it look likely that the country will be safe to overfly anytime soon?

Any alerts to know about?

In the first half of 2021, the Libya situation did change somewhat, with signs that security and stability in the country might be improving.

In June 2021, a 'fragile' ceasefire appeared to be holding, despite increased military activity on the western border with Algeria. The ceasefire came after a UN led agreement was put in place and was implemented in April 2021.

Egypt and Libya saw **a resumption of passenger flights**, along with Malta from April 2021. However, there are very limited international operations, the majority being domestic within the country.

What's been happening recently?

The security situation has reportedly deteriorated through the start of 2022, with intermittent fighting and armed clashes occurring regularly between rival militia groups. These groups are backed by competing geopolitical parties and the overall situation is **very volatile and complicated**.

In fact, the UN led elections at the start of 2022 and a new Prime Minister was brought in with the hope of unifying the country, but sadly this does not, so far, seem to have resolved what is described as an *"intensifying political crisis"*.

The fighting has led to **significant damage to infrastructure**, particularly to power supplies across the country, and to road systems. Disruption and security concerns on the ground are common. Civil unrest including protests and strikes occur relatively frequently.

Islamic State militants do conduct operations in the country, although these are primarily restricted to the southern regions. **Attacks on high profile locations**, including international airports, remain likely.

The FAA Prohibition.

The US **extended their airspace warning** in 2021, updating their **SFAR 112** to run until at least March 2023.

You can read all about it in depth here, but the general summary is **don't overfly HLLL/Tripoli FIR except for altitudes at or above FL300 "outside of Libyan territorial airspace"** (the international bit over the southern Mediterranean sea).

Check out Safeairspace for other state warnings and prohibitions as we update this regularly.



Airport Options.

HLLT/Tripoli airport remains closed following significant damage to many of the airport facilities.

HLLM/Mitiga is the main international airport. A major attack in May 2020 resulted in damage to parked aircraft, terminal and runway. Jet fuel tanks were also set on fire. The airport was also closed in January 2020 due to a rocket attack. Prior to this, airstrikes in the area made it critically high risk and dangerous.

HLMS/Misrata and HLLB/Benghazi are also operational for international flights.

HLMS/Misrata has a single runway 11,155' with VOR DME approach only.

HLLB/Benghazi is a much better equipped airport offering minor airframe and engine maintenance facilities, two 11,811' (3600m) runways with an ILS to 33L, and VOR DME or LCTR approaches to the other runways. However, Al-Qaeda linked militants are reportedly active in this general area.

HLLS/Sabha also has an 11,811' runway with ILS to 13 and VOR DME to 31.

HLGT/Ghat has an 11,811' runway but no precision approach and is relatively lacking in maintenance and support facilities.

The Airspace.

Entering the airspace without prior contact may result in aircraft being "**engaged by air defense systems**". This message was passed to Malta ATC in April 2020.

Militia stated in 2020 that certain areas around major cities were **no-fly zones**, and there was a very real risk they could attempt to shoot down any aircraft which attempted to fly to HLLM/Mitiga airport in particular.

The northern airspace borders the Mediterranean sea and Maltese airspace, and caution should be taken if routing over this region to not **accidentally detour into Libyan airspace.**

Aircraft operating east/west particularly from Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, or Egypt and further east, can **fly through Maltese airspace** and this does not pose a significant detour to avoid Libyan airspace. **Suitable alternate airports** are available along these routes.

What Libya says.

We occasionally get contacted by **Libyan ATC** to update us on the situation from their perspective, because often what is said (and assessed) via media reports does not match what those in a country experience.

Their most recent feedback (early 2022) was this:

- International airlines are operating into HLLM/Mitiga and HLMS/Misrata without (apparent) incident
- There are passenger flights from Tunisia operating 3 times a week, and several cargo flights per week
- Overflying east/west is considered safe, north/safe requires some more information for a full assessment
- VHF ATC services over international waters are reliable

What Malta says (because they're right next door).

- The situation has improved over the last few months but there is not much transparency as to the real state of affairs in terms of ATM/CNS provision in the HLLL/FIR.
- Libyan airspace is entirely procedural and there must be huge swathes of airspace where the service provision is either limited or unreliable especially in the domain of air-ground communications. We do not know the status of the international / national aerodromes in Libya as their AIP does not seem to be updated regularly (understating it here).
- We are also aware of military activity over the high-seas which is either operating as OAT or not in control with Tripoli ACC / Benghazi ACC including RPAs. We are not aware how RPAs are being integrated in the airspace, if at all. GPS jamming could also be an issue.
- The issue of 5A-registered aircraft which are banned from EU airspace has not been resolved and we still have a lot of restrictions from EU States including Malta banning all flights departing from HL aerodromes from entering EU national airspace due to security issues.
- So whilst the military / conflict situation might have improved on the ground there is not much evidence to support the claim that all is safe and sound.

This was sent in **December 2021, prior to the UN-led elections**. The continued instability following these elections is what led us to pop this update out now.

Our risk assessment.

Libya remains volatile. Safety and security on the ground is not good, and there is a **significant risk to aircraft overflying due to the conflict and weapons available to militia groups**. Despite feedback from local ATC, and reports that some operators do overfly the country, we continue to advise against it.

It remains a Level 1: Do Not Fly region on Safeairspace.

Have you operated in or over?

Share your feedback with us at news@ops.group, or file a report of a recent trip on our Airport Spy page.



Got some intel?

Are you an Airport Spy?

You go to unusual places and see curious things. Your turboprop friends envy you. Now, it's time to give back.

For your next trip, pack a notebook, and file your Spy Report below. You'll get a weekly ops briefing in return.

[File your report](#) >

Russian CAA website taken offline

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



On March 29, the entire Russian Civil Aviation Authority website went offline. Hackers are saying they managed it, Russian media is saying it is down to restructuring.

Either way the website currently isn't available, so if you need to get in touch it will have to be via good old fashioned postal service or AFTN.

What's offline?

www.favt.ru currently isn't responding. This is the **'Rosaviatsia' Federal Agency for Air Transport** site which manages civil aviation across Russia.

www.scaa.ru also doesn't respond.

AvHerald reported that the site has been hacked, and all backup data also erased.

What does this mean?

With few external operators flying in and out of Russia it might not mean much right now. However, if you are trying to fly in or contact them then this may pose issues for you until they get their site back up and running.

Things like **permissions and permits** will undoubtedly take longer to get hold of.

Whether there will be any further indirect impact on other aviation related service within Russia is not yet clear.

The Contact Info.

Contact via post of AFTN are your best bets, but you can try calling as well. It isn't clear if email will be available.

Telephone: +7 499 231 5237

Email: aviapermit.scaa.ru / rusavia@scaa.ru / permit@matfmc.ru

AFTN: UUUKYAYX / UUUUKZXTD

SITA: MOWYAYA / MOWICYA

Address: 125993, GSP-47, Moscow, Leningrad Prospekt, 37, building 2

Any local agent contacts?

Aerotrans may be able to assist: +7 495 755 9422 / handling@CPDU.ru

Alternatively you may do best to contact local agents at your airport of operation directly as it may be easier for them to coordinate for you.

Ukraine Relief Missions

Opsgroup Team

12 April, 2022



If you are an operator who is looking to offer relief aid services as part of the Ukraine conflict, read on.

We have compiled a list of handy contacts, general ops information, and other bits which we hope might help. If you are looking for other support or info then let us know at team@ops.group

If you need support with trip planning you also might want to get in touch with Universal Weather because their Universal Trip Support department are waiving all fees on trip-feasibility assessments, research, and consultation services, as well as ground-handling setup charges for any humanitarian missions.

POLAND

Poland borders the Ukraine, however it also borders Belarus, and caution should be taken if operating into the eastern regions of Polish airspace along the border because of **high levels of military traffic** operating in this area.

Permits

Permits are not required for private flights but you do need to **make a declaration in advance**. Private flight also counts as less than 20 seats. Other flights need to make their landing and overflight permit application 3 days in advance.

The Polish Air Navigation Services Agency can be contacted via email at planning.dept@pansa.pl and at trafficrights@ulc.gov.pl, or by telephone on +48 22 520 7309

EPRZ/Rzeszów

The closest airport to the Ukrainian border, where most relief efforts will be focused, is EPRZ/Rzeszów-Jasionka airport (pronounced "jejov"... kinda).

Here is some data on the airport:

- 10,499' / 3200m x 45m Runway 09/27
- CAT II ILS 27 / RNP or VOR 09
- Restricted H24 operating hours
- RFF 8 (RFF 9 on request)
- PCN 82/R/A/W/T
- Jet A1 available
- Customs available without restriction
- Unknown if any maintenance or other support facilities
- Closest airports for alternates:
 - **EPKK/Kraków** Large international airport 2550m/8366'
 - **EPKT/Katowice** Large international airport 2799m/9183'
 - **EPWA/Warsaw** Major international airport 3690m/12106'
 - **EPLL/Lodz** Medium airport 2445m/8022'

Here is some "heads up" operational info:

- Elevation 693'
- Highest MSA 3400' and a few close in obstacles
- Runway 27 has a significantly displaced threshold
- A lot of VFR traffic operates in the area (on nice weather days) so be cautious. There are dedicated VFR light aircraft runways at the airport as well

- Do not mistake the highway or the runway at EPRJ
- There is no radar vectoring possible due to the high amount of VFR traffic, so expect to follow procedures including procedure turns, and exercise caution with your tracking
- There are speed and altitude restrictions on SIDs and STARs to be aware of.

Some contact info for you:

- Airport contacts:
 - Airport +48 17 852 00 81
 - Admin +48 17 717 86 11
 - Email rzeszairport@rzeszowairport.pl
- The Airport Handling agent can assist with basic ground handling, landing charges and pax and crew transport.
 - Telephone: +48 17 717 86 39 / +48 17 852 00 81
 - Email: ops@rzeszowairport.pl
 - Website: <http://www.rzeszowairport.pl>
- There are several Handling and Support agents who operate through Poland and neighbouring countries who might be well placed to assist:
 - Excel Handling
 - +48 22 650 3394
 - polandops@excel-handling.com

EPLB/Lublin

EPLB is about mid-way between EPRZ and EPLL/EPWA, and is far less busy but also well equipped to handle larger aircraft.

Here is some data on the airport:

- 8268' / 2520m x 45m Runway 07/25
- CAT II ILS 25 / RNP 97
- Operating hours are only 0400-0100, but extendable with 48 hours notice
- RFF 7
- PCN 50F/B/X
- Jet A1 available
- Customs available without restriction

- Unknown if any maintenance or other support facilities
- Closest airports for alternates:
 - **See above**

Here is some “heads up” operational info:

- Elevation 636’
- No terrain to worry about, but a close in obstacle end of runway 25 - MAPP has early turn to avoid
- Limited taxiways - backtrack required if landing runway 07
- Big temporary restricted area nearby may impact arrivals and departures when active
- No radar

Some contact info for you:

- Airport contacts:
 - Airport +48 81 458 14 44
 - Admin +48 81 458 14 00
 - Email info@portlotniczy.lublin.pl
- The Airport Handling agent can assist with basic ground handling, landing charges and pax and crew transport.
 - Telephone: +48 81 458 13 31 / +48 81 458 13 32
 - Email: dm@airport.lublin.pl
 - Website: <http://www.airport.lublin.pl>
- There are several Handling and Support agents who operate through Poland and neighbouring countries who might be well placed to assist:
 - Excel Handling
 - +48 22 650 3394
 - polandops@excel-handling.com

EPWA/Warsaw

We received a great report from an OPSGROUP member who operated a flight with humanitarian aid to EPWA/Warsaw on March 20.

Airport Spy Find airport ... Go

Warsaw, Poland INTL EPWA
 ★★★★★ Rated 4 from 14 reviews
 Large International Airport | Longest Rwy: 3,690 m / 12,103 ft (15/33) | Elev: 362 Top 100

Reviews 14 Alerts 1 Articles 1 Documents 1

Ukraine aid flight to Warsaw
 Reviewed March 22, 2022
 Aircraft: Falcon 8X | Flight type: Private | ID:

We arrived Warsaw in the evening on March 20, 2022. Came in from the Northwest, originally assigned the BIMPA 6N arrival, but shortly after joining the arrival, we were given direct to WA411 for the ILS Y RWY 11. Exited the runway on N1 to M3. Assigned parking spot 41 on Apron 5B. Handler was Executive Aviation Service arranged through Universal. Fueling was delayed because

Permits
 Poland
 PRIVATE COMMERCIAL
 Overfly Land Overfly Land

Closest Airports
 EPLL Lodz, Poland ★★★★★ 2
 64 nm, 2445m/8022ft Medium
 UMBB Brest, Belarus
 95 nm, 2620m/8596ft Medium

Here is a copy of their report:

We arrived Warsaw in the evening on March 20, 2022. Came in from the Northwest, originally assigned the BIMPA 6N arrival, but shortly after joining the arrival, we were given direct to WA411 for the ILS Y RWY 11. Exited the runway on N1 to M3. Assigned parking spot 41 on Apron 5B.

Handler was Executive Aviation Service arranged through Universal. Fueling was delayed because local handler did not have a copy of the World Fuel release. Lav service was prompt.

Crew took the opportunity to bring in some items for Ukrainian refugees. Crew sent a message to Universal to ask the local handler for drop off information.

The following website was provided:

<https://en.um.warszawa.pl/-/what-and-where-can-you-bring-for-refugees>

This is a Municipal organization which has over 18 drop off locations. The government locations are looking for mostly food, baby products, hygiene products, and first aid products. The crew had mostly brought in clothing items, new socks, new underwear, hard candy, hygiene products, and small children's toys.

These products were not a good match for the requests at the government donation sites.

The crew asked the Handler for another donation center contact that would welcome

the clothing. The following contact was provided:
https://www.tpu.org.pl/en/chcesz_pomoc.html
email sekretariat@tpu.org.pl or by telephone: +48 691-41-41-59.

This donation center is run by professionals who have other careers and are helping with relief. The site says they are only open on Tuesdays. We happened to be in Warsaw on a Tuesday, so it worked perfectly for us. We took an Uber from the Westin (downtown Warsaw) to the donation center. 20 minute drive. \$5 US via Uber.

If you have operated to the region recently, please get in touch so we can share the info with everyone else looking to do similar trips. You can email us at news@ops.group, or file a report of a recent trip on our **Airport Spy** page here.

ROMANIA

Some relief efforts are also being arranged through Romania which borders the Ukraine to the south, as well as Moldova.

International flights may be best operating into LROP/Bucharest, LRCL/Cluj Napoca, LRIA/Iasi, LRTR/Timisoara international airports and then fly internally to LRSV/Suceava which is a domestic airport and not an airport of entry, lying close to the border.

Permits

Permits are not required for private or tech-stop flights, but you still need that advance notification. Commercial flights need at least 2 days notice for permits, and these are required for landing only, not overflights.

The Romanian CAA can be contacted via email at overflight@caa.ro and at dgav@mt.ro, or by telephone on +40 21 319 6209 / +40 21 208 1500

Here is some data on the LRSV/Suceava:

- 8071' / 2460m x 45m Runway 16/34
- CAT II ILS 34 / VOR 16
- The airport control tower is H24, but Admin operates limited hours confirm with handling agent
- RFF 7
- PCN 110/F/C/W/T
- Jet A1 available
- Customs available without restriction
- Unknown if any maintenance or other support facilities
- Closest airports for alternates:
 - **LRIA/Iasi** Medium airport 1780m/5840'
 - **LRCL/Cluj-napoca** Medium airport 1850m/6070'

- **LRSB/Sibiu** Medium airport 2000m//6562'
- **LROP/Bucharest** Large international airport 3500m/11483'

Here is some “heads up” operational info:

- Elevation 1375'
- Highest MSA 5500' with terrain in the southwest
- Runway 34 has displaced threshold
- Limited taxi and apron space
- Backtrack on runway required
- VOR oscillations due terrain are likely
- Very low platform altitude and short final approach
- Higher than usual SID climb gradients due close in structures

Some contact info for you:

- Airport Contacts:
 - Admin +40 230 529 999
 - Operations +40 747 095 716
 - Email: office@aeroportsuceava.ro / briefing@aeroportsuceava.ro
- The Airport Handling agent can assist with basic ground handling, landing charges and pax and crew transport.
 - Telephone: +40 230 529 999
 - Email: briefing@aeroportsuceava.ro
 - Website: <http://www.aeroportsuceava.ro>
- There is a large Handling and Support agent who operates through Romania and neighbouring countries who might be well placed to assist:
 - Euro Jet Interncontinental
 - +420 2 3334 3362
 - ops@eurojet-service.com

How to help

The two agencies we'd encourage people to go check out are Airlink and DirectRelief - these two have already flown in shipments of aid and have more scheduled this month. So those are good places to go

find out exactly what's needed, and how to help.

IFALPA and the European Cockpit Association have also put out a letter for members of the aviation community wanting to **help support the pilot community in Ukraine**. They suggest you reach out to local organizations to help, or donate to larger ones such as Red Cross who are on the ground there. You can read the letter [here](#).

If you need assistance with anything to help prepare for humanitarian flights, please get in touch.

What do we need?

- **Feedback on your operation** if you have carried out a humanitarian mission recently.
- **Any local contacts** you have who can assist others.
- **Any other relevant information** and advice which we can share to other members.

You can email us at news@ops.group, or file a report of a recent trip on our **Airport Spy** page here: ops.group/blog/spyreport



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Chinese maritime drills might impact flights

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



China has been carrying out a lot of military exercises over the South China Sea of late. Most of these are maritime, but that doesn't mean they won't have some impact on aviation as well.

So here is a look at what is going on and where to watch out for...

The Exclusion Zones.

When China carry out their military drills **they establish exclusion zones.** These definitely apply to maritime traffic, but it is a lot less clear whether they apply to civilian aviation traffic as well. Some of them also lie in **particularly close proximity to the airspace of International airports.**

So best know about them just in case.

The Current Activity (that we know about).

- **Number 1**

The latest one is taking place in the **northern region of the South China Sea**, and will run through to at least 18:00z on April 9. The no-go zone is about 90km or so in size, southwest of Sanya which means traffic in and out of **ZJSY/Sanya Phoenix International** may be disrupted.

There could also be an increase in helicopter traffic, so keep an eye on that TCAS and remember your contingency procedures for Sanya Oceanic, and China in general.

- **Number 2 & 3**

Drills were planned in two areas - one in the **Bohai Sea, and one in the Beibu Gulf** (northern South China Sea). These were due to run through March 27, but have been extended to April 10.

ZYTL/Dalian Zhoushuizi International airport and **ZGBH/Beihai Fucheng** airport maybe impacted by the exclusion zones.

- **Number 4**

This one was announced quite late, and will take place in the **South China Sea, off the coast of Shantou**, Guangdong Province, through March 26. As with all the others, it isn't clear what the impact to flights will be beyond possible disruption if flying into **ZGOW/Shantou Waisha** Airport, and a likely increase in helicopter traffic.

China in general...

China have a huge number of **unmapped military bases**. In fact their entire airspace is basically one giant military zone. This means you might often find yourself **descended early** if heading in, **kept very low** when heading out, or given **big detours** which seem to make no sense.

All of this means a much higher fuel burn (which can be very hard to plan for!)

We wrote some stuff on China Ops a while back so take a look her for more info, but this is the bit to really think about:

While the **ZJSA/Sanya FIR** includes an oceanic portion in the South China Sea (a "marginal sea" that is part of the Western Pacific Ocean (marginal meaning: *would just be the ocean only a bunch of islands and archipelagoes sort of divide it off a bit*), the don't apply standard ICAO Oceanic contingencies in it.

Instead, you'll be expected to turn **90 degrees** right or left, **offset by 25nm** and then climb or descend 500ft. China are pretty strict on deviations and detours. They even use different sized airways in some spots. So **check their AIP and China specific Rules and Regs** before a flight to make sure you get it right.

Middle by Middle East

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



A lot of people lump 'The Middle East' together into one singular region of "Middle Eastyness", but actually each country is very different, particularly during Ramadan. Each has diverse cultures and rich histories,

very different political interests, and of course their own unique operational and environmental challenges that pilots should know a bit about before heading in.

So, here is your 'In the Middle of the Middle' guide to the 'Middle East' (or at least the parts of it you're likely to need to know about.)

Starting with the 'Need to Know'

The UAE

The UAE only became the UAE fairly recently. Before that it was seven separate emirates and a big port in Jebel Ali which the Brits took an interest in. When they got their independence from Britain, the emirates joined up, led by Abu Dhabi. Dubai is the **most westernized of the all emirates**, and each pretty much has its own international airport.

- **OMAA/Abu Dhabi International** is the capital airport for the UAE. They generally prefer not to be used as an alternate for Dubai bound flights since they are vert busy.
- **OMDB/Dubai International** is the main Dubai airport, and the busiest airport by passenger numbers in the world. You have two parallel runways 12/30 left and right with CAT III approaches.
- **OMSJ/Sharjah International** is the next door neighbour to OMDB/Dubai (around 20km north and you fly past it on some Dubai arrivals). **Runway 12/30 is 13,320 ft** long with an ILS either end. Watch out if OMDB is getting foggy though because OMSJ won't be far behind given it is also close to the sea, and it will fill up fast with diversions if it isn't.
- **OMDW/Dubai World** is the **slightly smaller international Dubai airport** just next door. Mainly used for cargo flights, it offers a good alternate to OMDB. There is limited parking and fuel trucks though so if you divert here on a day a lot are diverting then expect long delays. **Runway 12/30 has CAT 3 ILS** both ends and is 14,764 ft long
- **OMRK/Ras Al Khaimah** is a decent airport to **consider as an alternate** with an ILS on 34, an RNAV on 16 and 12,336 ft of tarmac between the two ends. Watch out for terrain here though.
- **OMAL/Al Ain** has a 13,140 ft runway with ILS/RNAV approaches. Another UAE **option for an alternate**.
- **OMAD/Al Bateen** is a small but quite busy executive airport near OMAA/Abu Dhabi, which **just caters for private jet ops**. This airport will be completely closing from **May 11 to July 20**.

We put together a little regional brief on this with some handy contacts for you.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Middle East.

They are a major world economy, the third biggest producer of oil (behind the USA and Russia) and the largest exporter. It is also at the heart of the Islamic religion and you need to bear their customs and laws in mind if heading in there. **Women are expected to dress modestly and cover their heads**, and alcohol, swearing, gambling etc is forbidden. This will be much more strictly enforced during Ramadan.

- **OEJN/Jeddah** - long taxis possible. Keep an eye on those brake temperatures. This airport can accommodate the most number of aircraft in the world so... it's big! There are no less than three runway 16/34s here. The longest is 13,123 ft and all of them have an ILS approach. Jeddah has recently been targeted by drone attacks and the southern Jeddah FIR (close to Yemen border) should be avoided).
- **OERK/Riyadh** - high elevation airport with steeper than normal GS on some approaches. You have two runways to chose from, although they tend to stick to one for takeoff and one for landing. 15R/33L is the longer of the two, offering 13,797 ft (a whole 2 ft more than 15L/33R)
- **OEDF/Damman** - Often keep you high or use track shortening. 34L/16 R and 34R/16L are both 13,123 ft long with an ILS approach.

Because of the ongoing conflicts with neighbors, Saudi have a procedure called ESCAT (used to be called SCATANA) which is basically an emergency procedure when the airspace is under threat. If they announce it, be prepared to follow whatever instructions given - probably either to leave the airspace, or to land where they tell you.

- Consider what your alternative routing options or alternates will be in advance. **ESCAT** has been activated more frequently of late, and this may mean long holding at the boundary of their airspace.
- **Egypt** is available to the west, but **Israel** may not accept you if you haven't advised them in advance. The process for landing and overflying Israel is still quite lengthy and dependant on where you come from, are registered, who you carry etc.
- **Jordan** is available, but **Syria** is a no go country, and landing in **Iraq** is less advisable.
- **Yemen** to the south is a no fly area.

Full info on ESCAT is found in their AIP. We wrote a bit about the Yemen conflict threat here.

Oman

Oman is a funny shaped country with a bit above the UAE and most of it below, bordering Yemen. They generally aren't too political and get on with everyone.

- **OOMS/Muscat** is the main airport. 08L/26R is currently the only operational runway. It offers an ILS either end and 13,123 ft. **Muscat is a decent fuel and tech stop** if routing from the Far East.

Iran

US operators are not allowed to overfly Iran, and there are overflight warnings associated with the country. If you do overfly and need to divert in the country, be aware that if you are coming from other countries, or have some nationalities onboard, this might cause some problems for you on the ground.

If you operate in with female crew, expect them to be asked to cover their heads leaving the airplane at some airports. There are also potential issues with lack of female security staff and crew have reported female pilots being asked to let their male co-pilot carry out walk-arounds to avoid difficulties with male security staff escorting a female.

The main airport OIIE/Tehran is a pretty decent one to go into though, although it is in the middle of

some high terrain.

- **OIMM/Mashad** - Another high altitude, high terrain airport with two decent length parallel runways (longest being 12,861 ft). Only 31R has an ILS approach (VOR DME on the rest) and you can likely expect a procedural to the ILS. Watch out on the GA because there is a large Holy Shrine which you are not allowed to fly over below 6000'
- **OISS/Shiraz** - Right in the middle of a load of terrain. Not easy approaches to fly. The longest runway here is 14,200 ft and only 29L has an ILS. The GA on this is another one to watch - a lot of turns to keep you away from high ground.
- **OITT/Tabriz** - Ok, all airport in Iran have high terrain around them. Tabriz is no exception. A little easier since it is only on three sides. Like the others, it has two decent length runways, but limited taxiways. There is an ILS approach onto 30 L and R but if you want to land onto either runway 12 you will need to circle...
- **Most smaller airports are not always well maintained.** A quick Notam search shows up no less than 16 holes in poor runway 30 at OIIP/Payam Interational, and OIII/Tehran International (the other one), OIBB/Bushehr, OIHH/Hamadan, OINZ, OITL, OIMS... also come up

Jet Business Solutions, based in the UAE, can assist with support and handling in Iran - ops@jbs.aero

Qatar

- **OTHH/Doha Hamad** is the main airport here. Doha is one of the most modern airports in the world and fantastic for passengers. The longest runway is a whopping **15,912 ft** and there is a CATIII approach onto all four. The airport and ground operations here tend to be very efficient.

It is nice to operate into because it is built out on its own little bit of land. The city is quite futuristic looking and its a nice view on approach. There is high terrain close by so watch out for GPWS warnings if you mess up your tracking or speeds. The buildings also lead to wind shear and turbulence on approach.

While fairly westernised like Dubai, Qatari customs and laws can be stricter and should be carefully observed during Ramadan.

Kuwait

- **OKBK/Kuwait** - pretty restricted airspace close into the airport so be careful if deviating. Get those calls for weather in early. This is another big airport with long but efficient taxis. Kuwait is more prone to big sand storms than some of the other areas. The **longest runway is 11,483 ft** and there is a CATII approach onto all four. Watch out if you're operating on the 15s though - the taxi can be long and brake temperatures can heat up fast.

Bahrain

- **OBBI/Bahrain** - This airport gets a lot of thermal activity in the summer to watch out for turbulence on short finals. The runways 30L and R have been known to confuse folk in the past as well. 30R is the long one in case you're not sure (13,305 ft vs 8,301 ft so the difference should be quite obvious).

Iraq

- **US operators are permitted** to overfly the ORBB/Baghdad FIR above FL320, but landing there would be unadvisable due to conflict, security and safety concerns.
- **ORER/Erbil, ORBI/Baghdad, ORMM/Basra, ORNI/Al Najaf** international airports are all fairly well equipped.

Safeairspace

Conflict is common across the region. Currently several countries are no fly areas, with cautions applied to others. Visit Safeairspace for full information on the current status.

- Syria is a no fly country
- Yemen is a no fly country
- The southern Jeddah FIR (Saudi Arabia) and OEJN/Jeddah airport have cautions due attacks from Yemen
- Iraq can be overflown, but with certain restrictions
- Iran is off limits to US operators
- Israel has political tensions with neighbouring countries. Overflying and landing is possible but requires pre-planning
- Lebanon has some risk due to proximity to other conflict nations.

Why fly to the Middle East?

It is very central and provides a connection between the west and the Far East and Asia. **The main airports offer good tech and fuel stop options.**

It is also an interesting region. There is great golf in Dubai, World Heritage sites in Saudi and Iran. And then of course there are the Finance and Oil Industries so corporate companies might find themselves flying business folk over. So, if you are ever operating in make the most of the layover, there are some cool sites to see and interesting things to see and do.

And ending with some 'Good to Know'.

Some history of the region if you want to read some more. And a little mention is necessary because conflicts and Safeairspace aside, actually the political goings-on of the region are fairly important to our airplane goings-on.

For example, until the end of 2020 **Israel was out of bounds**. You could not fly across it if you were routing from a big old bunch of places. It was BIG news at the end of 2020 when the likes of **Saudi Arabia and the UAE rebuilt their relationship with Israel** and agreed to flights between the nations. Neighbors followed suit, and Jordan now also allow flights passing over Israel to utilize their airspace. Being able to fly across Israel **significantly shortens the flight time for aircraft** routing from the Middle East and Europe.

A second big political/ aviation newsworthy event was the ending of the Qatar blockade by Saudi, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain. Obviously, this primarily helped Doha bound flights, but for all operators in the region it means **easier airspace and radio work**, and the opportunity to once again **use OTHH/Doha as an**

alternate.

The politics of Iran and Iraq mean if you are routing through one airspace, you probably should not divert into the other. Iran is the bigger worry here because they have an **ADIZ and need you to check in prior to entering** their airspace. One of the main southbound routes through **Iraq (UM688)** brings you close to the Tehran FIR border, and if you meet a big thunderstorm along the way and deviate in the wrong direction, you might just find yourself accidentally edging over the border. The same goes for routing along the **M677 in Kuwait**. If you are heading to Dubai, the **VUTEB hold** sits close to the border and again, weather can push you close to the FIR boundary.

The tensions with Iran and much of the rest of the Middle East are constantly simmering. One big no-no on your routings here is to refer to the Arabian Gulf as the Persian Gulf. At least to the wrong controller.

Danger Club is Back!

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



At the end of 2021, we ran 6 Danger Club meetings. The idea behind them? To start a new conversation on safety **danger**.

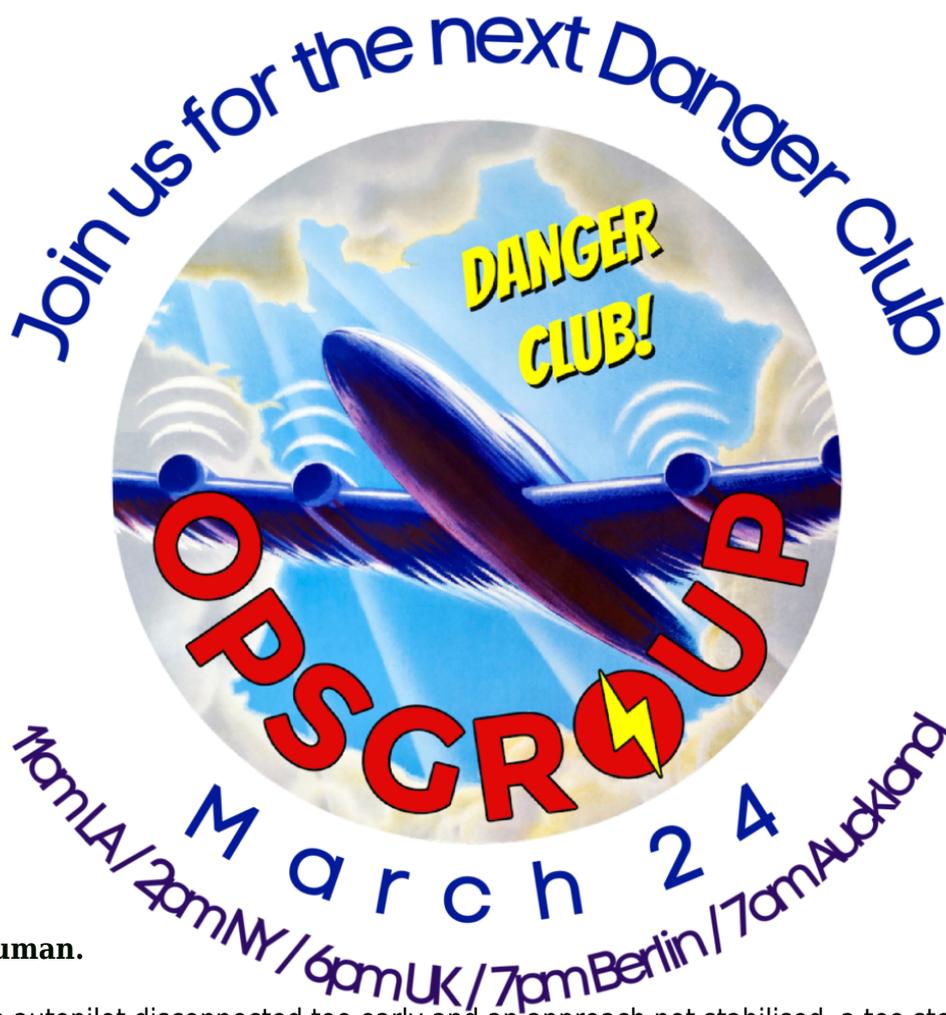
We wanted to get people **talking about the humans in human factors** - to bring the discussion back to our own operations, to share insights and experiences, **to learn what we can be doing better**.

Because we are all just fallible humans figuring out where our faults may lie.

The Story so Far

We don't want to talk about all the usual cases - The Tenerife disasters, the Kegworths. They were huge learning opportunities, but even after learning from them (at nearly every CRM session), **incidents are still happening, and we want to ask why?**

So we took a look at less known incidents and accidents, ones where the stuff that happened is stuff that could happen to any of us.



Nothing technical, just

human.

An autopilot disconnected too early and an approach not stabilised, a too steep cockpit gradient, or that day flying with your buddy where it is way too casual... Times where one small error became two, and then became three, and suddenly wasn't so small because the crew just didn't 'get their head back in the game'.

Now We're Bringing it Back.

After a bit of delay due to many goings on at the start of 2022, we are now bringing Danger Club back. Our first meeting of 2022 will take place at **1800 UTC on Thursday March 24th**, and wherever you are in the world, come join us!

11am LA, 2pm New York, 6pm UK, 7pm Berlin, 10pm Dubai, 7am (Wednesday) New Zealand...

What are we going to talk about?

We want to stick with the 'theme' of looking at **non-fatal incidents and accidents**, and talking about the 'What Ifs' that could potentially happen to us.

The first one is an interesting one because the main question we thought as we read to the end was simply "How?"

“How did it get that far?”

How did a crew of a 737 end up having to carry out 7 approaches before finally managing to land? **Was there a point during their decision making process where this could have been avoided?** What was running through their heads as this progressed, and more importantly how can we all avoid making the same mistakes?

So put it in your diary!

March 24th, 2022 at 1800 UTC

Danger Club #7: Thursday, Mar 24: 1400 ET / 1800 UTC

11am LA, 2pm New York, 6pm UK, 7pm Berlin, 10pm Dubai, 7am (Wednesday) New Zealand...

Incident: Jet Always B737: Lucky Number Seven

And if you've not been to one before?

Just come along and take part. We are all students in this and we all ask is you switch your camera on during the session, but how much you input is entirely up to you.

**Chris
Shieff**

**Mark
Zee**

**Bec
Lougheed**

**Approach
Number**

SEVEN

|||||

Decision Making

Leadership

Teamwork

Communication

Knowledge

Workload Management

Situational Awareness

'A nerve-jangling thriller with a gut wrenching climax'

In movie theatres MARCH 24

11am LA, 2pm New York, 6pm London, 7pm Berlin, 7am Auckland

Where has Nigeria's fuel gone?

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



There have been growing reports of jet fuel shortages across Nigeria, and since mid-February several domestic airlines have been slowly but surely cancelling flights because of it.

So, what is the situation and what can you expect if you are operating to Nigeria?

From disruptions to cancellations.

Since December, **jet fuel prices have almost doubled**, and this has seen several of the smaller domestic airlines begin to reduce the frequency of some of their internal flights as they try to manage rising costs.

Lately the situation has grown more serious with some airlines stating they have only 3 days of fuel left, and national flag carrier Air Peace also seeing international flights being cancelled.

The fuel scarcity isn't just at smaller, domestic airports. **It is a nationwide problem**, and it seems to be worsening.

Rising costs.

Fuel prices have risen from 190 naira a litre at the end of 2021, to **670 naira (\$1.61) a litre** in March 2022.

Domestic airlines require around 200 Naira a litre for their operations to remain viable.

So where has all the fuel gone?

Nigeria is Africa's **largest crude oil producer**, but they don't refine it themselves, instead importing almost 90% of motor and jet fuel.

It all began back in February when a batch of **100 million litres of imported gasoline was rejected** because it contained unacceptable levels of methanol. This led to a rise in general fuel prices, which led to a spiralling situation of high costs, leading to less available cash, leading to less dollars for buying in more fuel...

The government is not looking like it will extend subsidies to the aviation industry, and so the supply companies just don't have the cash to bring more fuel in, **despite demand**.

What about international flights?

The main problem is that no-one is really clear on **just how scarce jet fuel is**. So if you're flying in and expecting some for your departure, you might be in for a nasty surprise. Whilst confirming at your destination might be possible, in the event of unplanned diversions it may be more of an issue.

But you can check the Notams? Right?

No, of course not. That would be helpful, but so far there don't seem to be any, at least for the major airports that we checked.

We did ask several handling agents who help arrange fuel at the bigger airports, and they advised that there is indeed a problem and that they **cannot currently guarantee fuel**. This was confirmed for **DNMM/Lagos and DNAA/Abuja**.

Can you tanker?

Tankering is an option dependent on your range and uplift capacity. A better option might be a **fuel tech stop** though.

However, security across this region of Africa is somewhat patchy, so the **airports available** to you for fuel stops may be limited. Here are some suggestions (direct fuel contacts only):

- **DGAA/Accra, Ghana**
 - Vivo Energy are one of the main fuel suppliers in Ghana: +233 30 2664 636
 - AEG Fuel are also a large supplier: +1 305 913 5253 / dispatch@aegfuels.com

- **DIAP/Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire**
 - Corlay are the primary local fuel supplier: +225 2 121 1515

- **GOOY/Dakar, Senegal (west coast)**
 - AIBD are the main local FBO here: +221 77 569 35 57

- **DRRN/Niamey, Niger**
 - Air Total supply fuel at Niamey: +33 1 47 44 45 46
 - AEG are also a supplier

- **GVAC/Sal Island, Cape Verde**
 - OMNI are the main local FBO: +238 241 26 00 / caboverde@omnihandling.com
 - **GUCY/Conakry, Republic of Guinea**
 - Try AEG Fuel: +1 305 913 5253 / dispatch@aegfuels.com
 - Total might also be able to help +224 628 68 68 92 / mathias.nathan@total.com
 - **FKKD/Douala, Cameroon**
 - Check in with Airport Admin: +237 2 33 42 87 62
 - Corlay Cameroun are one of the local fuel suppliers: +237 33 42 30 28
-

Sanctions-hit Mali bans flights from neighbouring countries

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



Update March 10:

ECOWAS (14 of Mali's neighbour countries) has extended their sanctions against Mali, and in response, Mali's land and air borders are still closed to traffic routing direct from an airport in ECOWAS to Mali. Although international flights can operate into Mali, and overfly ECOWAS and Mali, permits for Mali are problematic as must be approved by the military and then the CAA. Mali is relatively high risk due to

internal conflict and instability.

Story from Jan 20:

Mali underwent a military coup in 2020, and authorities have reneged on an agreement to hold elections in February 2022, delaying them instead to December 2025.

The result is a series of escalating sanctions from Mali's neighbouring countries which are now impacting aviation in Mali.

What measures have been taken?

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) – a 15 state regional bloc – have condemned the Malian authority's actions as an act of *"taking the Malian people hostage."*

The result is the suspension of Mali's membership in ECOWAS and sanctions including the freezing of assets and suspension of non-essential financial transactions. Fuel supplies are still being permitted via regional borders at this time.

Neighbouring countries have **closed both road and air borders with Mali**. These closures are so far limited to preventing Mali registered aircraft movements and trade.

Then on Jan 10, **Mali closed its own borders in protest**. Several airlines have since cancelled flights, citing "security risks", but have not provided further detail.

There is no indication international flights overflying Mali airspace are impacted, and **GABS/Bamako airport remains open** for flights to/from non-ECOWAS countries.

What might these risks be?

Security and safety in the capital, Bamako, is a high cause for concern and authorities warn against **all but essential travel** here.

Large scale protests which may escalate to armed conflict are likely in Bamako as political volatility increases. **Heightened security and transport disruptions** are likely. Safety may be impacted if protests and riots become violent.

What risk warnings are currently in place?

Current warnings in place relate only to the ongoing threat from terrorist and militant activity. We wrote this piece in 2017 which discusses various risks including that posed by ground weapons. These risks remain and full details can also be found on the Safeairspace page.

Several countries have warnings in place advising **caution if overflying or operating in Mali airspace below FL260** due to 'ongoing fighting and extremist/militant activity'. Militants often target UN or Malian forces bases, however these are often based in close proximity to Malian civil airports and so attacks might indiscriminately impact civilian operations as well.

GABS/Bamako operations

Bamako International airport is a relatively important one due its position on the continent. It is a **major alternate for western and southwestern coast airports** such as GOOY/Dakar, Senegal. The interior of Africa provides few diversion options so Bamako also serves as a good en-route option.

The Risk to Aviation

The current airspace risk remains the same. The risk to safety and security on the ground may be deteriorating as political and civil conflict escalates, and armed protests and riots occur. Sanctions against the country by the region will likely also lead to more volatility.

Contact information if operating to Mali

Permits are required for any flight looking to overfly or to land in Mali. These can be obtained from the aviation authority ANAC - +223 20 20 55 24 / +223 20 20 29 05 / survol@anac-mali.org

For more info on what services are available at GABS/Bamako airport, get in touch with local FBO Aurora Aviation: +971 4 523 5888 / ops@aurora-aviation.aero

Russia Reroutes: Alaskan Airport Options

Opsgroup Team

12 April, 2022



With Russian airports and airspace now off limits for many operators, what airports across Alaska (and also Asia) are available, suitable, and useable for things like ETOPS alternates, fuel stops, and tech stops?

To be honest, very few! Once you cross into the Bering Sea you are extremely limited in the westerly direction, and probably looking at a far more southerly route initially because of the awkward “extra chunk” of Russia that sticks out the bottom.

Why is Russia off limits?

As part of a range of political sanctions imposed on Russia, several countries have now banned Russian aircraft and operators from their airspace - The European Union along with some non-EU countries, the US and Canada. In response, Russia has banned aircraft and operators of many of these countries from Russian airspace.

The exception, at present, is the US - Russia has still not officially banned US aircraft/operators from its airspace. However, some local agents are saying that they are not able to provide Russian landing and overflight permits to US registered aircraft/operators, and we've had similar reports from some locally based OPSGROUP members. **Major US carriers are already avoiding Russian airspace, which is sensible action to follow given the uncertainty.**

This is affecting a lot of operators at present, who are now having to route around Russian airspace.

The Alaskan Options

A report on a recent routing from Anchorage to India considered the following airports as possible options.

- **PASY/Eareckson Air Station**

- 10,004' / 3050m x 45m
- ILS 28 / RNAV 10
- Fuel and maintenance support unknown
- More an emergency option than a fuel or tech stop option
- Talk to them on +1 907-552-3443 / +1 907-392-3361
- ARFF Cat 7
- PCN 132/F/A/W/T

- **PADK/Adak**

- 7790' / 2374m x 60m
- ILS 23 only
- Some pretty mean terrain around and windshear warnings
- Fuel available, maintenance support unknown
- Talk to them on +1 907-269-0751 / +1 907-592-8026
- ARFF Cat 01
- PCN 49/R/B/X/T

- **PACD/Cold Bay**

- 10,179' / 3102m x 45m
- ILS 15 / RNAV 33
- High terrain to the south
- Gets some serious fog!
- Fuel available, efficient services here
- Talk to them on +1 907-532-5000 / +1 907-465-1788
- ARFF Cat 06

- PCN unknown
- **PAVD/Valdez** (if routing from further east and you don't fancy Anchorage)
 - 6500' / 1981m x 45m
 - There are no straight in approaches of 05/23 because there is some serious mountainous terrain here. You need to have trained for this spot before you try it!
 - Talk to them on +1 907-451-5217 / +1 907-835-5658
 - Fuel and minor maintenance
 - ARFF Cat 01
 - PCN 54/F/B/X/T

The major international airports of Alaska lie further east and aren't so useful range-wise if routing westbound.

PANC/Anchorage to PADK/Adak is approximately 3:15 hours flying time, or 1900km. PASY/Eareckson Air Station lies further east.

The Asia Options

With Russian airspace now off limits for many operators, aircraft attempting to route westbound from the US (via Alaska) are most likely going to have to take a more southeasterly route initially, bringing them over Japan before routing further into Asia. Past Japan, another southern dogleg (albeit it smaller) is needed to **avoid North Korean airspace** as well.

The following airport has been recommended by other operators:

- **RJCC/New Chitose (Sapporo)**
 - Multiple runways 9843' / 3000m x 60m
 - ILS CAT II/III available
 - Major international airport with all the facilities
 - RFF Cat 9
 - Talk to any of the many agent and handler options

The direct distance between PADK/Adak and RJCC/New Chitose is approximately 3,300km

For the pilots and planners

Range, suitability and availability are all going to be a bit of a problem with routes heading this direction. Considerations on **weather** conditions are probably one of the major things to think about. Your only real option if you need fuel or tech support is Adak airport and then onto Sapporo, depending on aircraft range.

There are **limited options available** to you if you have an emergency. Plan, prepare and monitor.

A brief little refresher on the datalink mandate in Europe, because some of the temporary exemptions have now ended.

What actually happened?

The EU had a datalink mandate which came into force from February 2020. It applied to all aircraft operating **above FL285 throughout Europe**.

But, there were exemptions. Two sets in fact – one of a fairly permanent sort, and another that was only temporary. **It is the temporary exemptions which have now ended.**

When did this happen?

5th February 2022. And no, they haven't extended it.

What were the exemptions?

There are two articles (you can read all this 'officially' here if you would like).

Basically, if you fit under Article 1 then you can get a **permanent exemption**. If you fit under Article 2 then you probably had (but don't have anymore) the **temporary exemption**.

Article 1 covers all aircraft listed in Annex I, and any in Annex II whose **first certificate of Airworthiness was issued prior to Feb 5 2020**. Article 2 is any aircraft listed in Annex II with an airworthiness certificate issued on or after Feb 5th 2020, and any aircraft specified in Annex III.

Give it to me straight!

Ok, ok, here are the aircraft which are permanently exempt, and those which had the temporary exemption until 5 Feb 2022 to do the avionics retrofit...

Aircraft permanently exempt:

- Aircraft in Annex I
- Aircraft in Annex II with a CofA issued before 5 Feb 2020

Aircraft which had up to 5 Feb 2022 to do the avionics retrofit:

- Aircraft in Annex II with a CofA issued after 5 Feb 2020
- Aircraft in Annex III

There are a lot of aircraft listed in these annexes, but Annex II in particular contains a fair few Bizav aircraft, so we've whacked that in below for you to see. We mentioned how GA/BA aircraft might be exempted here, before.

So does this affect you?

See above. It depends on those criteria.

Basically, most BizAv aircraft probably do meet the requirements of **Article 3(3)(d)** as well, which covers aircraft with a certified maximum seating capacity of 19 passengers or less and a **maximum certified**

take-off mass of 45 359 Kg (100 000 lbs) or less and with a first individual certificate of airworthiness issued before 5 February 2020. **If they do, they are exempted permanently.**

This is all really a “reminder” of what’s already happened because if you don’t already know about this, it’s too late now anyway!

Tell us more about the mandate.

Actually, rather than do that, just head here to read what we’ve written before. This covers all the info you (hopefully) need on white list logons and all that jazz.

The entire consolidated version of Commission Regulation (EC) No 29/2009 is available here for your perusal, while the EC Implementing Decision 2019/2012 is here if needed.

The FAQs

EASA have published some (fairly) useful **FAQs** on all things datalink and CPDLC which you can read here on their ‘Airspace Usage requirements – DLS/CPDLC’ page.

One we see a lot, is do you have to register on the ‘White List’. The answer is **no, it’s not a regulatory requirement.**

One final exemption.

If your equipment is **temporarily inoperative** you can still continue to operate within the applicable airspace if your MEL allows, and if you tell them about it in your flight plan. You do this with a **“Z” in item 10 and the indicator “DAT/CPDLCX” in item 18** of your flight plan.

A final final one – you are also exempt if it is a **delivery flight.**

What EASA said when we asked for clarification.

Basically what we’ve put above, but to make it extra clear, here is a quote from their response –

“The EC Implementing Decision 2019/2012 in Article 2 refers to the 5 February 2022 date. Depending on the specific aircraft type/model and the first CofA date, the aircraft were either exempted or only temporarily exempted until 5 February 2022. There is no extension to this date and no change to this Decision since it has been adopted.

*On the other hand, it should be noted that most business aircraft may meet the requirements of Article 3(3)(d) of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 29/2009 referring to aircraft which have a certified maximum seating capacity of 19 passengers or less and a maximum certified take-off mass of 45 359 Kg (100 000 lbs) or less and with a first individual certificate of airworthiness issued before 5 February 2020. **If this is the case, the operator’s aircraft is exempted.**”*

So if you were exempted under the earlier Article you are still exempted. If you weren’t but fulfil the criteria in Annex I of the new article then you are permanently exempted. If you fall in the list in the new Annex of only exempted until Feb 5th, then you are no longer exempted.

Any other questions?

You can read SIB 03 2020 here. If you have any other questions, you can **ask EASA directly** on atm@easa.europa.eu. We asked them some things a while ago and they took a week or two to respond but were super helpful when they did.

What's Happening at O'Hare?

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



If you're familiar with KORD/Chicago O'Hare Airport then you probably know that there are a lot of runways there. 8 if you're just counting strips of tarmac, 16 to be really specific.

You might also know that it has had some works done on its runways recently, so here is a look at *what's happened*, *what's coming next* and most importantly, *what to expect* if you're thinking of heading in there.

The One that got Built

Runway 9C/27C opened on November 5th, 2020.

This is the last runway to be built as part of their modernisation program, and there is a very handy video on how it is being used, which you can check out here on the FAA's main 'Great Lakes (AGL) O'Hare Modernization Program (OMP) page.

The One that got Extended

Runway 9R/27L has been extended, and it re-opened for operations on December 2, 2021.

Which runway can you expect?

Arrival operations on 9R/27R are currently limited, and will remain so through at least the first half of 2022 while they get their ILS system fully setup and tested.

So, right now, they have the following operations planned for their daytime ops, which it might be worth familiarising yourself with if you're heading in, just so you know what to plan for.

When its a Westerly Flow:

Landing: 27R, 27C, 28C

Departing: 22L, 27L, 28R

When its a Easterly Flow:

Landing: They only use 3 runways at a time, but have multiple combinations:

9L, 10C, 10R (the top choice)

9C, 10C, 10R (the other top choice)

9L, 9C, 10C

9L, 9C, 10R

Departing: 9R, 10L

Some non-operational (but interesting) facts:

The O'Hare 21 plan is hoping to create the *"most efficient and accessible gateway in the world."* A good plan given the airport hit a (pre-pandemic) record in 2019, with around 84.6 million passengers travelling through.

There are **193 gates available**, which sounds a lot, but bear in mind the majority of these are already leased by the big hub carriers. Which leads us to the next point...

Let's talk about the other options

KORD/O'Hare is a massive hub airport utilised by the major carriers. It is busy. The airspace is busy. To be honest, you probably don't fly in here unless you have a good reason to, like being a scheduled commercial carrier, if you like really busy complex airspace and taxiing.

The 'Chicago Square Mile' is the arguably the busiest bit of airspace in the world of arrivals and departures, but luckily there are some other airports in the area which you might want to look into, namely KMDW/Midway and KGYG/Gary.

KMDW/Midway

The smaller, but by no means small KMDW/Midway airport is right next door. They have 43 gates and are **far more equipped for catering to General Aviation folk.**

The airport has **4 runways** laid out in a big cross (and one tiny fifth runway). One of the big threats here is the fact they cross and you need to keep a good look and listen out for traffic and avoiding runway hotspot incursions.

The **longest runway is 6522 foot** (1988m), and they have ILS CAT I available on three runways, and RNAV on pretty much everything else.

KGYG/Gary

And then there is Gary.

KGYG/Gary is also an **International airport** and a great one for corporate and "weekend" flyers heading to Chicago. It has an **8,859 foot runway** and is a *'full service'* airport. There are major airframe and engine maintenance facilities available, and ILS approach for runway 30, or RNAV for the others.

Gary is also **one of the newest CBP facilities** in northwest Indiana and the Chicago metropolitan region.

You will need to give them 24 hours notice, and can call them on **773-948-6330**. Customs is also limited to a total of 20 people per aircraft (that's crew and passengers).

Send us your spies

Send us your Airport Spy reports for all these airports so we can share the gotchas, the things to know, contacts to contact and anything else useful.



Got some intel?

Are you an Airport Spy?

You go to unusual places and see curious things. Your turboprop friends envy you. Now, it's time to give back.

For your next trip, pack a notebook, and file your Spy Report below. You'll get a weekly ops briefing in return.

[File your report](#) >

Russian Incursions into UK Airspace

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



Russia have sent four TU-95 "Bear" bomber aircraft towards UK airspace two days in a row, resulting in "Quick Reaction Alert" missions by RAF Typhoon fighters to intercept and prevent any incursions.

They were of course escorted away without further incident, but these are not a one-off occurrences. Aside from the obvious posturing, do these events pose any actual threat or hazard to civilian operations?

What is a Quick Reaction Alert?

Countries sometimes like to send aircraft *towards* airspace they should not head towards. They generally do so without contact with ATC, and without squawks. These aren't "aggressive" incursions but more **tests of NATO response times**.

When "unidentified" aircraft are spotted, the RAF scrambles fighters, usually from **EGQS/RAF Lossiemouth** and often back up by a taker from Brize Norton to go tell 'em off and to "preserve the security of Alliance airspace".

QRAs are not uncommon, and with mounting tensions in eastern Europe the frequency of these seems to be increasing.

Which areas of the UK are affected?

The Russian aircraft **do not actually enter UK sovereign airspace** - that's the bit above the country which **extends 12nm** out across their territorial waters. They do incur on airspace that falls under the 'UK area of interest' though - areas controlled by the UK ATC - particularly the **EGGX/Shanwick and EGPX/Scottish FIRs**.

The airspace where these incursions take place are **not generally utilised much by civilian traffic**, but is of security and political interest because it is the airspace between countries such as Russia and the UK.

When else has it happened?

At the same time as the first UK incursion in Feb 2022, Russian aircraft had also breached the **airspace of Estonia**, where a large number of British troops are currently based.

A similar incursion took place last November when Russia sent two TU-160 bombers towards the UK. There have been **several hundred such events** into UK and Irish airspace over the decades where tensions with Russia have been heightened.

In March 2021, NATO saw a **peak of incursions**, at one point aircraft scrambled 10 times in a 6 hour period across several regions including the **UK, Norwegian coast and over the Black Sea**.

The US Air Force suggested over 60 intercepts took place in 2020, with many more monitored but not intercepted, around the **Alaskan ADIZ region**.

A threat to safety, or just Putin on a show?

There appears to be no intent from the Russian side to do anything more than provoke a reaction, and to test the reaction from NATO defences.

The threats and risks to civilian aircraft are therefore more along the following lines (with some mitigation strategies to help):

- **Unidentified aircraft** in international airspace -
 - The aircraft are not on ATC frequencies and do not squawk
 - They do generally remain over areas with limited civilian traffic
 - Monitor TCAS carefully

- Follow ATC instructions closely to avoid conflict with UK military QRA traffic.

- **Sudden activation** of military zones –
 - Temporary danger areas and prohibited areas should be checked via notams
 - Avoid accidental detours due weather or other reasons into these.

- **Failure to check in with ATC** may be treated with more seriousness due current tensions –
 - Maintain a good listening watch on frequency and on 121.5
 - Ensure you are familiar with Loss of Comms and Interception procedures
 - We wrote about Interceptions here, but consult the AIP for countries you are operating in.

What are the “laws” on flying into other airspace?

“Cujus est solum ejus est usque ad coelum et ad inferos”

Which means, for aviation purposes, that *“Airspace is now generally accepted as an appurtenance of the subjacent territory and shares the latter’s legal status”*.

Which has a lot of tongue twisting words and basically means *“the air over your land and up to space is yours.”*

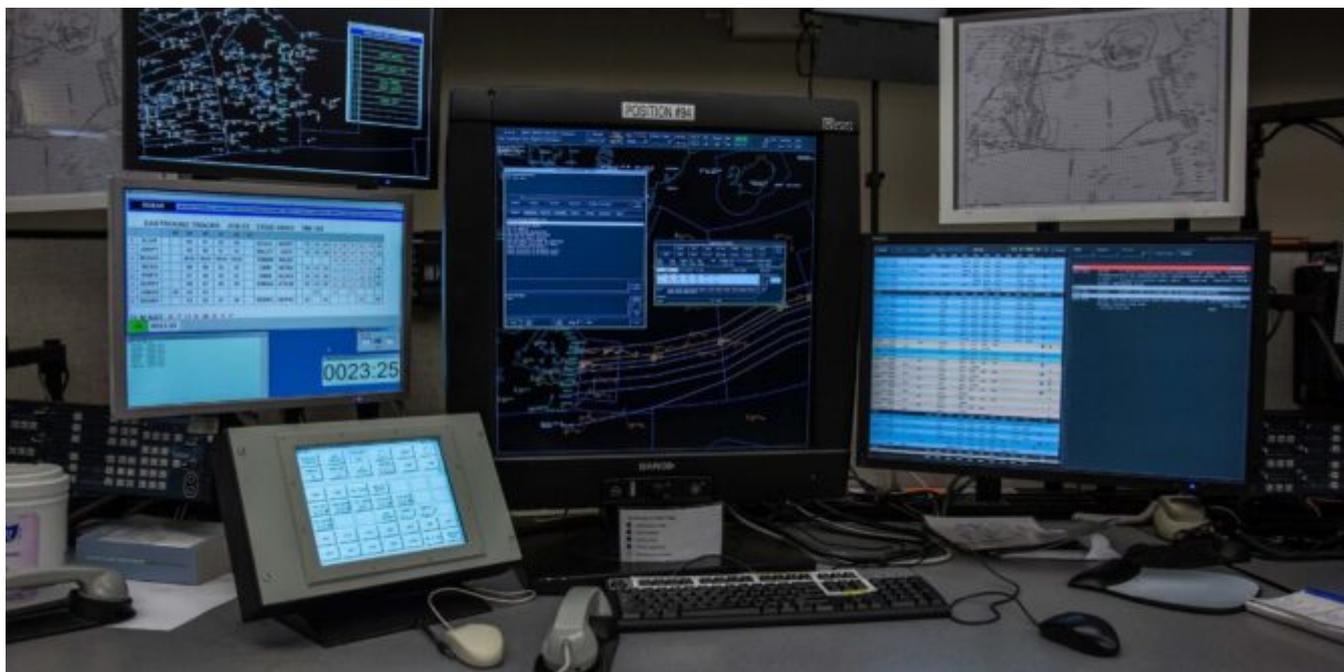
This is written in the **1944 Chicago Convention**, with the 1958 Geneva Convention going into a bit more detail about what that means. The Chicago Convention also contains the **5 ‘Freedoms of the Air’** which apply to scheduled air service and what have you.

All this is a little less applicable to military aircraft though for obvious reasons.

Fly a military aircraft into Sovereign Airspace and that is going to be seen as an **act of aggression**. Fly it into airspace controlled by, but not sovereign to a country, and it might not quite be an act of aggression but it is definitely a **breach of procedures** – in this case, because they failed to adhere to ATC and squawk regulations amongst other things.

No more NAT tracks at FL330 and below

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



Big news from the NAT. From March 1, 2022, FL330 and below will no longer be part of the NAT Organised Track Structure (OTS).

What does this mean?

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 OTS tracks with active flight levels, this means much greater flexibility in choosing their own trajectory.

Why is this helpful?

NATS quoted a study which suggested every extra minute over the ocean equates to about £51, or \$70. It might not be the most radical change, but it is a step towards further improving the efficiency for operators, and ultimately to **reducing fuel burn**.

Why now?

It comes down to the **introduction of ADS-B**. This allows controllers to receive updates every 7-8 seconds instead of every 840 seconds (14 minutes).

What about the rest of the tracks?

This change forms part of **NATS 2030 NAT vision**, and more improvements can be expected. Unfortunately, it isn't a direct result of their NAT tracks NIL experiment and abolishment of all the OTS isn't on the cards anytime soon.

However, studies from the 'OTS Nil' trial are being reviewed and there are plans to simulate further OTS Nil on busier traffic days to see if viable, useful, doable...



What do you need?

If you want to fly at FL330 or below (down to FL285) then remember **you are still in the NAT HLA**, just not on the OTS, so the same HF, long range nav and comms requirements apply, as do datalink mandates.

Anything else?

Unfortunately no, that's the news for now. Any questions on this feel free to direct them to us at team@ops.group

If you want to read the "official" NATS notice then you can do so here. We don't yet have a reference for the official NAT Docs.

The 2022 Big Events Calendar

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



We are barely into 2022 but there are already a bunch of events showing on the calendar which you might want to have a think about, because some events equal more traffic and more traffic means more restrictions in terms of slots and parking, while other “events” mean stricter security and possible safety measures...

So, from **major sporting events** to **general elections**, **airshows** to **other stuff** – here is your Major 2022 Events Calendar, with the *What, Where, When and Why* we think it could impact your international flight ops.

February

WHAT: 2022 Winter Olympics

WHERE: Beijing, China

WHEN: 4-20 February

WHY: The majority of events will take place in and around Beijing, but there are a few airports to think about.

Unless you are a scheduled passenger flight, maybe avoid these as there will be significant parking restrictions:

- ZBAA/Beijing Capital
- ZBAD/Beijing Daxing

Plan for more restrictions including parking, and higher traffic levels at:

- ZBNY/Beijing Nanyuan
- ZBZJ/Zhangjiakou

Keep an eye out for Notams advising of restrictions of traffic flow procedures at the major airports. We’ve

also written a 'Top Tips on China Ops' post with some more info on navigating the Chinese airspace, rules and regulations, which you can read [here](#).



WHAT: Super Bowl LVI

WHERE: Los Angeles, California

WHEN: 13 February

WHY: This is a big event. So big (in terms of the impact on flight ops) that we gave it its own post. In short, a lot of the big airports will be too busy to handle you unless you've made reservations. The smaller airports will also likely have traffic flow procedures in place, and you can expect disruptions throughout the surrounding airspace.



WHAT: Singapore Airshow

WHERE: Changi, Singapore

WHEN: 15-18 February

WHY: WSSS/Changi airport is going to be *busy busy busy* with airshow aircraft. In fact, they will be limiting traffic in and out from the 10th Feb. We've done a whole post on this for you which you can read [here](#).



March

WHAT: South Korean Presidential Election

WHERE: South Korea

WHEN: 9 March

WHY: This is major election, or rather the outcome will have a potentially major impact on the democracy and economy of South Korea, which means protests, heightened security and ground transport disruptions are possible in major cities.

Most importantly, government services may well be unavailable on the day of the election, so **plan those permit applications** in advance.

Korea Airport Services (KAS) are a good agent to use. You can get hold of them on kbas@kbas.com / +82 32 744 3443

WHAT: Hong Kong Chief Executive Election

WHERE: Hong Kong

WHEN: 27 March

WHY: A relatively major political event, but this year marks the 25th anniversary of the Handover to China from British Rule. Hong Kong has seen several years of protests and riots against growing Chinese (mainland) government regulations. Protests, heightened security and ground transport disruptions are likely in major public areas.

Government services may well be unavailable on the day of the election, so **plan permit applications** in advance.

Hong Kong Business Aviation Centre are one agent to use if needed. Available at hkbac@hkbac.com / +852 2949 9000



April

WHAT: French Presidential Election

WHERE: France

WHEN: 10 April – 24 April

WHY: The French election this year could be quite a big deal because, well, every other time it has been, leading to a lot of protests, some riots and of course **strikes**. Keep an eye on the situation in France and stay in touch with your handling agent to check services and security if operating in during these dates.

May

WHAT: The Cannes Film Festival

WHERE: Cannes, France

WHEN: 17 – 28 May

WHY: It is a big film festival which sees a lot of people from all over the world flying in, and a lot of jets trying to park up. **LFMN/Nice Côte d'Azur** is the closest “big” airport and parking restrictions will be, well, restrictive, so expect to do drop and goes if operating here during this period.



WHAT: Monaco F1 Grand Prix

WHERE: Monaco

WHEN: 26 -29 May

WHY: The F1 moves all round the world, but this is the one that causes aviation ops the most hassle because of limited slots and parking at nearby airports. The most convenient is **LFMN/Nice Côte d'Azur** and this will take some early planning if you want to use it. Try **Aviapartner Executive** on +33 4 93 21 37 37 / executive.nce@aviapartner.aero

WHAT: UEFA Champions League Final

WHERE: St Petersburg, Russia

WHEN: 28 May

WHY: A big football event which is likely to bring slot and parking restrictions to ULLI/St Petersburg Pulkovo airport in the days leading up to and after the event. Don't plan on using nearby ULSS/Rzevka as a backup, it isn't clear if its actually operational or still being used as a car dealership...

A-Group at ULLI will have all the info on slots and parking if you want to plan in advance +7 812 677 76 45 / ledops@a-group.aero



WHAT: French Open

WHERE: Paris, France

WHEN: 22 May - 5 June

WHY: It is a big sporting event that folk like to attend. Parking and slots at LFPG/Paris Charles De Gaulle might prove hard to come by. LFPO/Paris Orly is the smaller, quieter next door neighbour. You also have **LFPB/Le Bourget** airport nearby which is the “business aviation” airport and LFOB/Beauvais airport which predominantly serves domestic flights.

LFPB/Le Bourget have confirmed they don't have slot restrictions during this time and parking shouldn't be a problem, but get planning early just in case.

There are several FBOs at Le Bourget:

- Advanced Air Support International +33 1 48 35 89 64 / handling@advancedairsupport.com
- AstonSky +33 1 84 87 03 00 / lfpb@astonsky.com
- Dassault Falcon Service +33 1 49 34 20 28 / handling@dassault-falcon.com
- ExecuJet Paris +33 1 48 35 97 97 / fbo.lfpb@execujet.com
- Jetex +33 1 74 37 25 22 / fbo-lbg@jetex.com
- Signature Flight Support +33 1 49 92 75 81 / lbgt1@signatureflight.fr
- Universal Aviation France +33 1 48 35 96 38



June/July

WHAT: US Open (the Golf)

WHERE: Boston USA

WHEN: 16 - 19 June

WHY: Mainly added so you don't confuse it with the tennis. This is a major golfing event that takes place up near Boston. There are a fair few airports in this area serving business aviation and private flights.

- KBOS/Boston Logan International (the main international airport in the area)
- KBED/Bedford
- KEWB/New Bedford
- A few regional and municipal ones... you know what, go check this page because they list them all with contact info as well.

WHAT: Wimbledon

WHERE: London, UK

WHEN: 27 June - 10 July

WHY: Another big sporting event. The major London airports - EGLL/London Heathrow, EGKK/London Gatwick and EGSS/London Stansted can be hard at the best of times to get a slot into, and this summer they have raised the "use it or lose it" requirement for the scheduled airlines.

So you might do better to look into the smaller airports. If you have the approval/training to land then EGLC/London City is right in the city! **EGKB/Biggin Hill** is a smaller airport south of London, but is very convenient for the city (and a lot closer than the big international airports).

You also have **EGTK/Oxford Kidlington** (London Oxford Airport) and **EGLF/Farnborough** airport which are both convenient for London and cater for predominantly business aviation.



WHAT: 2022 Commonwealth Games

WHERE: Birmingham, UK

WHEN: 28 July - 8 August

WHY: The next big summer sporting event. EGBB/Birmingham airport is going to see some heavy traffic loads during this period, and there isn't a huge amount of extra parking available here.

Thankfully, the UK is small and the big cities are well connected. EGTK/Oxford Kidlington is only 1 hour 30 down the road and might a better option if you want to park up for a few days. You can contact the FBO on ops@londonoxfordairport.com / +44 1865 290 600

August

WHAT: US Open (the Tennis)

WHERE: New York, USA

WHEN: 29 August - 11 September

WHY: Another big tennis tournament, and one that takes place in New York. You have a bunch of options for airports here, we ain't going to list them all.

One we will mention though is **KHTO/East Hampton** because this public airport is going private. It will close temporarily in February, and when it reopens it will have stricter limits on traffic numbers and prior permission will be required.

Later in the year...



WHAT: 2022 FIFA World Cup

WHERE: Qatar

WHEN: 12 November - 18 December

WHY: Big football event being held in a very small country... which luckily has two very large international airports, and is used to catering for private and business aviation.

- OTBD/Doha International
- OTHH/Hamad International

You can expect some parking and traffic restrictions during this period. **Keep an eye on Notams** nearer the time.

Qatar has had some political tensions with neighbouring countries. These are now resolved and the blockade on their airspace and traffic ended in 2021. The region is relatively volatile though. If operating in, check out Safeairspace for details on some of the other warnings and risk levels for the region.

Qatar is also planning on changing the airspace structure, which probably won't take place in 2022, but keep an eye out just in case.

That's all folks.

We will update as we continue to hear or spot more events that might affect you. Email us at team@ops.group if you have queries or think of any we haven't covered.

Top Tips on China Ops

Opsgroup Team

12 April, 2022



Where you can fly

China has a bunch of flight restrictions beyond the Covid related ones. You will need **overflight and landing permits** for anywhere in China.

They get grumpy if you make a lot of changes to your flight planning. Particularly **avoid last minute changes**. Avoid diverting to an airport that is not a planned alternate, unless an absolute emergency.

China only allow certain airways for usage by non Chinese registered aircraft. These mostly run north-south. It is often recommended to offset 1-5nm due congestion, but this is **only allowed by ATC**. Don't apply SLOP without confirming with ATC first. Any other airway requires you to have a Chinese navigator onboard, and you generally won't find these published in your Jeppesen or LIDO manuals. The same goes for some smaller domestic airfields.

There are **multiple restricted areas across the country**. Some of them are not always obvious... which means you will rarely get "Direct To..." clearances, and may often find your levels are restricted or you are given seemingly random re-routes. Fuel planning is critical, as is accurate route tracking.

How they do it.

China do it in meters. You should have procedures in place for this. If you are in RVSM airspace you might notice the 'feet' levels are all +100'. This is because the Chinese meter levels only provide 300m (900') separation, and RVSM requires 1000' minimum separation.

Flights departing China and heading east often report being **'held down' at sub-optimal flight levels**. Shanghai seems to be one of the worst spots for this, due to a corridor south of Korean and Japanese airspace.

What about parking?

ZBAA/Beijing has had **stricter parking restrictions in place since 2015**. If you are GA, you are limited to 24 hours. ZBTJ/Tianjin is a good and relatively nearby alternate for parking – it is also an airport of entry, and has less parking restrictions but be warned, it also has much less in terms of facilities and is not available H24.

ZBSJ/Shijiazhuang is another option, as is ZBHH/Hohhot.

What about maintenance?

If routing in the general region, **VHHH/Hong Kong and VMMC/Macau** are probably easier options for finding maintenance support, or **WSSS/Singapore**.

Of course, if you can't make it to these airports then ZBAA/Beijing, ZGGG/Guangzhou, ZSAM/Xiamen and ZPSD/Shanghai do have some big maintenance facilities available, but most other airports might struggle to help corporate aircraft.

Parts and support are usually sent in from Hong Kong or Singapore. Having contacts in place and a "plan" are probably a good call to avoid big delays though.

Anything else?

Different airports and regions have **different customs** within the airport, and outside. In Beijing you will find most social media and many websites blocked, including google. Some VPNs will enable use. Shanghai tends to be much less strict and Hong Kong is fine.

Russia-Ukraine Conflict Timeline

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



The tensions between Russia and the Ukraine continue to rise, and questions over whether Russia will mobilise troops into the Ukraine is raising concerns for the safety of the region and its airspace.

For a full background to the situation, you can read this post.

Here is a timeline of the current situation and risk warnings, with latest updates on any changes as they occur.

Timeline - Airspace Risk

Jan 26 2022 - ****Latest Update****

- Belarus and Russia advise they will holding **joint exercise** through to February 20. These will take place near the southern border with the Ukraine. The drills will involve **tests of the air defense systems** which use advanced anti-aircraft weaponry, able to reach all levels of civilian utilised airspace.

January 2022

- Russia warned of “*the most unpredictable and grave consequences for European security*” in relation to plans for the Ukraine to join NATO which is further **destabilising** the situation.
- NATO has increased **air forces in Eastern Europe** in case intervention is required.
- Warnings and prohibitions remain in place for the **airspace along the border between Russia and Ukraine**.

December 2021

- The FAA published updated information on **overflight risks near the border**, particularly in the URRV/Rostov FIR near the UKDV/Dnipro FIR boundary. This is the region where MH17 was shot down in 2017.

November 2021

- **Russia increased military activity** along their border with the Ukraine, and based significant numbers of troops around URRP/Platov International Airport in Rostov-On-Don Oblast.
- The Ukraine hold drills of their **airborne units in the Kyiv** region, in response to increased Russian activity.

October 2021

- **The FAA extended their ban** on US operators overflying the eastern part of the UKDV/Dnipro FIR. This is in force until October 2023.

April 2021

- Russia established several **large danger areas** throughout the UKFZ/Simferopol FIR airspace over the Crimea, increasing tensions between Russia and the Ukraine. ICAO does not recognise Russia's jurisdiction over this airspace.
- Increasing reports of **GPS jamming** along the border and in east Ukraine suggestion heightened surveillance. Increasing military presence was reported.
- The FAA and Canada published updated airspace warnings. Canada recommended operators avoid the **UKFV/Simferopol** and the **UKDV/Dnipro FIR**.

Within the Ukraine

January 2022

- **Cyberattacks** caused disruption to government and public services, and are likely to continue.
- Several countries including the UK and Canada have now **advised their nationals to leave**, and advise against all but essential travel.
- Provinces located in the eastern and northern regions of Ukraine, including capital Kyiv and Odessa are on **elevated travel alert**, with significant concerns about safety and security on the ground.

December 2021

- **Protests in major cities**, particularly Kyiv, occurred as civil unrest increases. The **security situation** in major cities is worsening.

Here's something we had Hima-layan around

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



Flying over the Himalayas can be tough. It's a challenging place and there are a lot of things to think about. Big things - like the big mountains under you. Chilly things that can send shivers down your spine - like the chilly weather. Or things that might just trip you up - like converting meters to feet.

So we decided to make a handy guide for you, filled with things to think about if you are heading over the Himalayas for the first time, *or for the first time in a long time.*

What is the Purpa-se of the guide?

To provide some handy info to help you on your way. It is just a guide though. **Don't use it** to replace your company ops manuals, AIPs or anything else. **Do use it** to refresh yourself on stuff you might want to know about before you go.

(And if you don't get the Purpa pun then check out page 5.)

We also wrote a related post a while ago.

We called it 'The Hills have Ice' which we found amusing. This guide expands on some of the things we put in there.

What will you find inside?

Things to think about like what your safe altitudes might be, how to plan for a depressurisation, what airports are available or weather to watch out for...

We also threw in some contacts, calculations, cold weather considerations, airspace info, comms advice and a couple more witty puns for good measure.

It won't help you move mountains...

But maybe it will help you move over them more smoothly.

Download the Guide

Opsgroup members can **download the guide as a PDF** direct from the dashboard here, or click on the image:



The Procedures The Risks The Route The Airports
 The Contacts The Challenges The Countries The Options

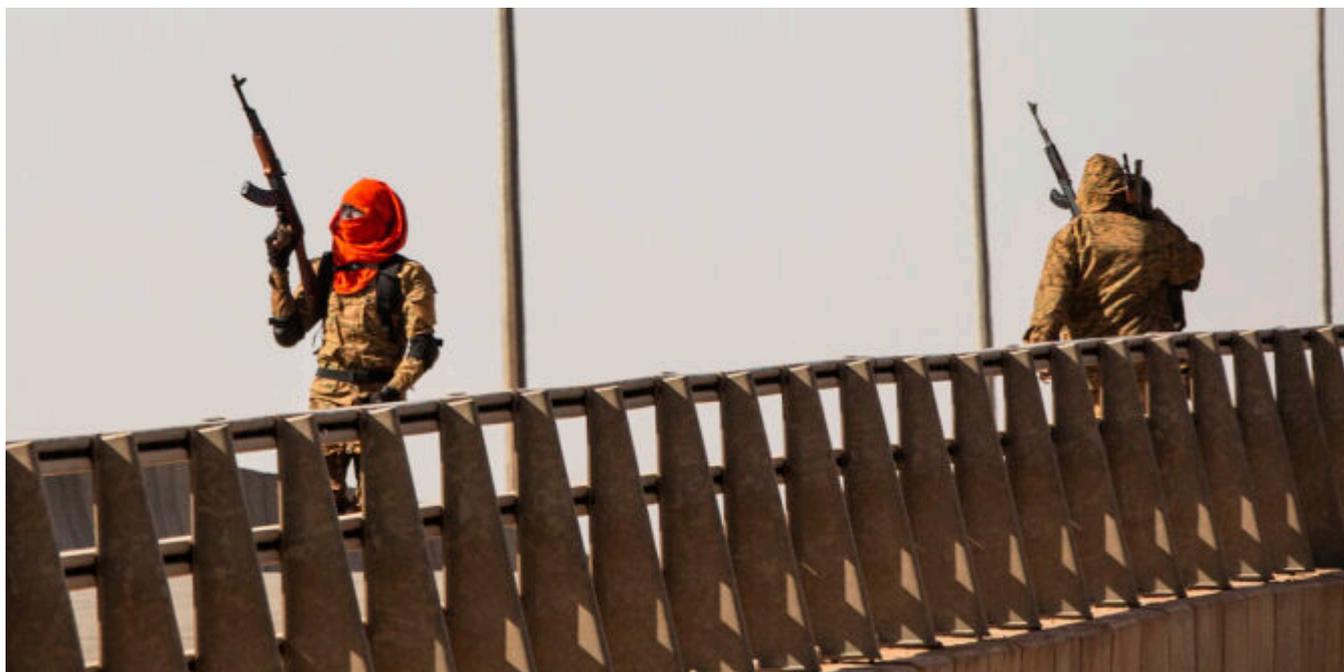
AND THEY ARE REALLY BIG WHICH MAKES IT CHALLENGING IF YOU NEED TO DESCEND...	SAFE ALTITUDES, DEPRESSURISATION / DRIFT DOWN STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES.
WHILE WE'RE TALKING DESCENDING (OR CLIMBING), CHINA USE METERS NOT FEET	WE MADE YOU A NICE TABLE TO HELP WITH THAT.
SO WE KNOW ABOUT CHINA USING METERS? WHAT ELSE DO WE NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE REGION THOUGH?	INFO ON THE COUNTRIES AND THE ROUTES, AIRSPACE AND GENERAL PROCEDURES.
BUT WHAT'S WHERE? THERE AREN'T MANY AIRPORTS OUT THERE, AND THEY ARE HIDDEN IN THE HILLS.	INFO ON THE DIVERSION OPTIONS AVAILABLE, FACILITIES, CONTACTS, CAPABILITIES...
REMEMBER WE SAID THEY ARE REALLY BIG? WELL BIG ROCK GETS IN THE WAY OF RADIO...	SO WE PUT IN SOME STUFF ON COMMS PROCEDURES.
AND WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER? ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES OF ALL...	WHICH IS WHY WE'VE ADDED SOME WEATHER GUIDANCE TO HELP KEEP YOU SAFE.

If you want to become a member of Opsgroup, [click here](#).

Our little disclaimer: This really is just to provide some handy insights into what you might want to study up on more. Your operator will have their own procedures, official calculations etc and this is not to replace them, more to remind you that you might want to take another look at them.

Burkina Faso: Military Coup in Ouagadougou

Opsgroup Team
 12 April, 2022



On January 24, news broke that an attempted coup was underway by military rebels in Burkina Faso's capital, Ouagadougou. The president has since been detained.

Here is a look at the ongoing situation and the potential impact on international flight operations.

What is happening there?

The Western African region is an area of significant unrest and one we highlighted to watch throughout 2022 for potential conflicts.

Burkina Faso itself has been volatile since it gained its independence in 1960, and **several coups have been attempted** over the decades. It has also been struggling with increased levels of Islamist Insurgency given its proximity to Mali.

Tensions have been escalating for some time, and on January 22 there were reports of **anti-government protests** in the capital, Ouagadougou. Gunfire was reported near DFFD/Ouagadougou airport, and **several military bases were attacked**. There were fears an armed coup was underway.

Then on January 24, the president was reportedly detained by soldiers. It's not clear yet if the entire military is involved, or just a smaller faction.

What is the impact so far on international ops?

Security

The US Embassy advise that scheduled flights have been suspended at **DFFD/Ouagadougou** until the security situation stabilises. The airport itself appears to still be open, and on January 25 the government confirmed the **air borders were open**, but land borders remained closed.

The primary risk to aviation is **security on the ground**. As things could change quickly, it should be considered dangerous to stop here at this time. There are reports that non-essential embassy staff have been asked to leave. The ability of embassies in Burkina Faso to help foreigners should be considered limited.

This may create problems for flight planning as DFFD is often used for en-route and destination alternates for aircraft transiting Africa. It is considered to have better infrastructure and support available.

GABS/Bamako in Mali is another option, but things are volatile there as well. So extra thought may need to be put into crew security in the event of diversions.

Consider **DGAA/Accra** airport in Ghana as a safer option. The security situation there is more stable than neighbouring countries, and the airport has good and reliable facilities. We recommend Apogee as your agent - you can contact them at fly@apogee.aero, or +971 4 295 40 41.

Overflights

Burkina Faso is not responsible for its en-route airspace. It is found within the **DRRR/Niamey FIR**, and controlled from neighbouring Niger. Therefore overflights are not likely to be affected by the events in Ouagadougou. Check Safeairspace warnings for Mali and impact on flights through the Niamey FIR.

The Mali Situation

There was also a **coup in Mali this month** and civil unrest is ongoing. It was condemned by other countries in the region and has led to sanctions against Mali. The US Department of State maintain its highest level of travel warning for Mali, which should also be considered a dangerous option.

The Overall Risk Assessment

The impact on aviation safety is generally low. However stops in Burkina Faso should be avoided until the situation stabilises. The risk is ground based - the security of crew and passengers cannot be guaranteed at this time. However airports and communication infrastructure remain up and running at time of writing.

NAT Doc 007 Changes 2022

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



It has happened again. **They have made amendments to NAT Doc 007.** We took a look and the first thing we noticed is **a lot of red text!**

Thankfully, on reading it, we have determined there are not really any *actual changes* (i.e. nothing that you probably don't already know about). It is more a great rewording to incorporate things you already know about in a tidier and more coherent way.

So here is a summary of the changes, and here is a link in case you do want to take a look for yourself.
Version 2022-1 is applicable from Jan 2022.

The Very Simple Summary

MNPS is out

They have removed all historical references to it.

OWAFS is in

Well, it was already but now we have some definitions and a few additional paragraphs on it.

OWAFS (in case you don't know) means '**Operations Without an Assigned Fixed Speed**' and it means that the requirement to issue a fixed Mach in the NAT has been removed. If you are told to 'Resume Normal Speed' this means you can fly at your chosen cost index speed. Just let ATC know if it is a big change (**M.02 or more**).

The Chapter by Chapter Review

Chapter 1

MNPS references have been removed, as have the old MNPS performance specs. Now it is all PBN. They have also taken out the old bits about trials and implementation because MNPS evolution to NAT HLA and PBN has happened.

Chapter 2

They have amended the examples of NAT Track Messages. No great difference.

Chapter 3

5.1.12 is the new paragraph on OWAFS and it says this:

"With the implementation of OWAFS, flight crews can expect ATC to issue the clearance RESUME NORMAL SPEED when traffic permits after oceanic entry. This clearance allows the flight crew to select a cost index (ECON) speed instead of a fixed Mach number with the condition that ATC must be advised if the speed changes by plus or minus Mach .02 or more from the last assigned Mach number."

Chapter 6

There are some subtle word changes here. The one to know is under **6.1.22** (and throughout the chapter). When using HF, SATVOICE or CPDLC flight crew **SHALL** maintain a **continuous air-ground communication**.

'Shall' not 'should'. It also used to just say 'listening' instead of that continuous air-ground bit.

Chapter 7

This whole chapter is about 'Application of Mach Number Technique'. So more OWAFS info.

In summary – You should receive a ‘RESUME NORMAL SPEED’ clearance after oceanic entry. If it doesn’t come through automatically then request normal speed.

ATC will still occasionally use mach number technique to maintain longitudinal spacing so if they give you an assigned mach number, stick to it. But if you get that “resume normal speed” clearance then you can fly at your cost index (ECON) speed and just let ATC know if it is more than a M0.02 difference.

Chapter 10

Another ‘should’ to ‘shall’ change.

If you are on **T9 route** then you **shall** change your squawk to 2000 10 minutes after passing BEGAS or LASNO. If you are on **T290** then you **shall** change it 10 minutes after ADVAT or GELPO

A permanent military area also looks like it has been removed.

That’s all we saw.

If you spot any changes we have missed please share them with us at news@ops.group

Further reading

To see a full version of this new NAT Doc 007, with all the changes incorporated, go [here](#).

The last time they updated it was back in July 2020, which you can read about [here](#).

Has The Yemen Conflict Reached The UAE?

Opsgroup Team
12 April, 2022



On January 17, bomb laden drones reportedly struck oil tankers and a construction site in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

The impact sites were close to **OMAA/Abu Dhabi International Airport**.

Around the same time, Al-Houthi rebels claimed the group would be launching an attack “*deep in the UAE*”. While this attack in itself caused no disruption at the airport, it does highlight some serious concerns for safety in UAE airspace, and the wider impact of the conflict and volatility across the Middle East region in general.

What are the concerns?

The precise technical capabilities of the Yemeni rebel forces are not entirely known. In general their drone attacks have **primarily targeted Saudi airports OEAB/Abha and OEGN/Jazan** which lie close to the Yemen border. The capability and intent to send weapons through Saudi Arabia and to target the UAE is an escalation on what they have previously carried out.

Drone attacks in Saudi Arabia are a fairly common and persistent threat, however, Saudi Air Defence systems manage to intercept the vast majority before damage occurs. How these drones avoided detection is a concern.

What is the situation in Yemen?

Yemen has been an **active conflict zone since 2014**, with Saudi Arabia leading a coalition of countries from North Africa and West Asia against the rebel forces. OYSN/Sana’a airport has been impacted by multiple airstrikes throughout 2017 and 2018, and continues to be **targeted in response** to attacks such as this one, along with other regions of Yemen with known rebel activity.

Yemen **airspace is prohibited** by most major authorities. Saudi Arabian airspace has cautions for the **southern Jeddah FIR** bordering Yemen.

What is the general situation in the region?

While missile and drone attacks in Saudi territory have **intensified recently**, attacks against the UAE by the Al-Houthi group have never been confirmed until now.

OEJD/Jeddah lies almost 400 km north along the western coast and has seen some attempted attacks by drones throughout 2021, as well as attempted **missile attacks**.

OERK/Riyadh which lies in central Saudi Arabia has seen a number of attempts as well, however, Al-Houthi rebels denied they were responsible for a recent attempt in Riyadh. This took place in January 2021 and Saudi Air Defences destroyed the drone before any damage occurred. **It was attributed to an Iraqi militant group**.

Does this change the risk level for UAE airspace?

The rebels have suggested they will continue to target the UAE, however, they are targeting ‘sensitive sites’ on the ground such as oil refineries. There is no apparent intent to target aircraft or civilian airports. Unfortunately, such sites tend to be located along the coast and are in **proximity to busy airspace and major airports**.

Can we mitigate any of the risk?

The UAE have significant military defense capabilities as well. If you are operating into the region, **be aware of increased military helicopter traffic**. Maintain a good listening watch on frequency, and on 121.5.

The UAE do not use special procedures (like the Saudi ESCAT ones) but are **proactive in closing their**

airspace if drones are identified within it – be aware of what your **route options and alternate options** are in case this occurs.

Keep an eye on Safeairspace for further updates or changes to the risk rating.