

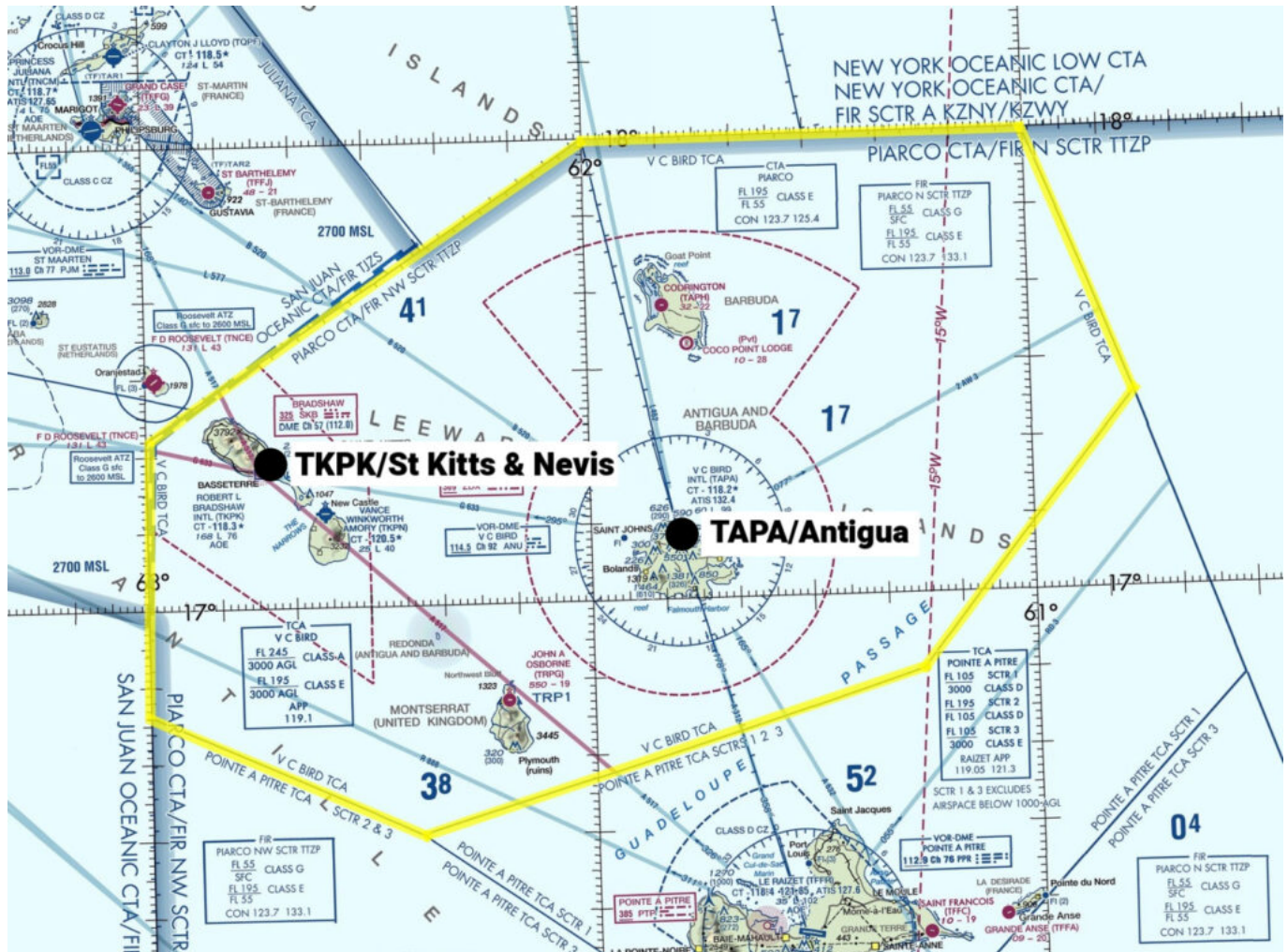
Secret Overflight Requirements in Antigua

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



There's a secret Antigua overflight requirement that's been going on for a while but is still catching some people out.

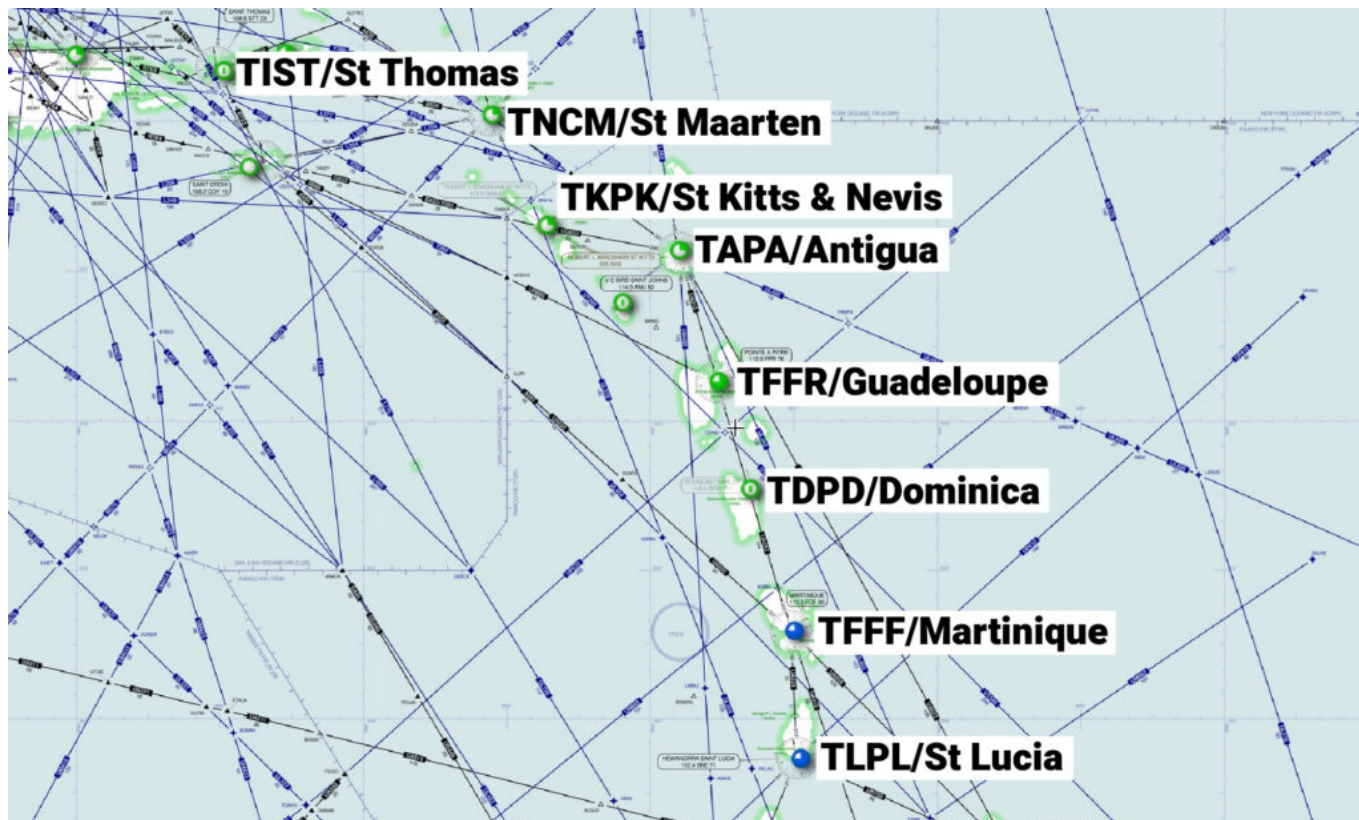
If you enter the Antigua TMA/TCA (the airspace around Antigua up to FL245), you'll need to apply for a "cross-border permit". Without it, they won't let you enter the airspace!



Area in yellow is the Antigua TMA/TCA.

If you're headed to TAPA/Antigua airport itself, you don't have to do this - you just get billed when you land. **You only need it for any flight through this airspace below FL245.**

So this is going to **mainly affect flights to TKPK/St Kitts & Nevis airport, as well as low-level flights between islands in the region** - the likes of St Maarten and the Virgin Islands in the northwest, down through Guadeloupe, Dominica, Martinique, and St Lucia in the southeast.



As one OPSGROUP member reported – “Inbound to TKPK we were asked for the Antigua airspace permit. Apparently this is new so we did not have it and got a reroute of about a 100NM, it almost caused low fuel situation. Be aware!”

Basse Terre, Saint Kitts and Nevis

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Rated 2 from 1 reviews

Medium International Airport | Longest Rwy: 2,317 m / 7,600 ft (07/25) | Elev: 170

INTL TKPK Less visited

Reviews 1 Alerts 0 Articles 1 Documents 0

“ Antigua Airspace Approval to land in St.Kitts

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Reviewed January 29, 2023
Aircraft: G500 | Flight type: Private | ID: 9009577

Add your review of TKPK

Permits
Saint Kitts and Nevis

PRIVATE COMMERCIAL

Overfly Land Overfly Land

Closest Airports

TNCM St. Maarten, Netherlands Antilles ★★★★★ 13
49 nm, 2349m/7707ft Large

TAPA Antigua, Antigua and Barbuda ★★★★★ 6
54 nm, 2744m/9003ft Medium

You have to apply online at the vcbirdats.com site **at least 6 hours prior to the flight.**

Fees depend on aircraft MTOW, as a long-since deleted TAPA Notam explains:

Up to 5,000 pounds - 25 USD
 5,001 to 10,000 pounds - 35 USD
 10,001 to 15,000 pounds - 45 USD
 15,001 to 25,000 pounds - 55 USD
 25,001 to 50,000 pounds - 65 USD
 50,001 to 100,000 pounds - 80 USD
 100,001 to 200,000 pounds - 95 USD
 200,001 to 300,000 pounds - 110 USD

300,001 and over - 125 USD

On the vcbirdats.com site, you will need to register an account. If you're not an airline, you won't have an IATA code, so just use "00" as the code making the account. You will then you'll be presented with a screen that looks like this:

New Cross Border Request

Company Details

E-Mail

Date of Flight: dd/mm/yyyy

Estimated Off-Block Time: --:--

Flight Plan

Aircraft Identification (Field 7 from the FPL)

ICAO Departure Airport Code

Route (Field 15 from the FPL)

Aircraft Registration

Type of Aircraft

ICAO Destination Airport Code

WTC: Choose one

Flight Rules: Choose one

Estimated Elapsed Time: HHMM

Type of Flight: Choose one

Maximum Takeoff Weight (lb)

☐ I'm not a robot

Flight Details

Type of Flight

☒ Single Flight

☐ Repetitive Flight

Submit

One intrepid Opsgroup member who tried this out said that after they submitted all the info for the cross-border permit it was **issued instantly via email**. Just make sure that on the permit it says the callsign or tail number so ATC joins the two when approaching the airspace.

It's worth noting that this cross-border permit is **not actually an overflight permit** – it's basically just the fees you have to pay in advance for Nav and ATC. In this neck of the woods, *real* overflight permits are not required. For landings, only scheduled and charter flights require landing permits. For these, contact paula.fredrick-hunteab.gov.ag for Antigua, and foreigna@sisterisles.kn for St Kitts & Nevis. (Unless you know some better email addresses than these – in which case, let us know!)

And if you've been to the region recently, **please file an Airport Spy report** so we can share the info with everyone else in the group!



Got some intel?

Are you an Airport Spy?

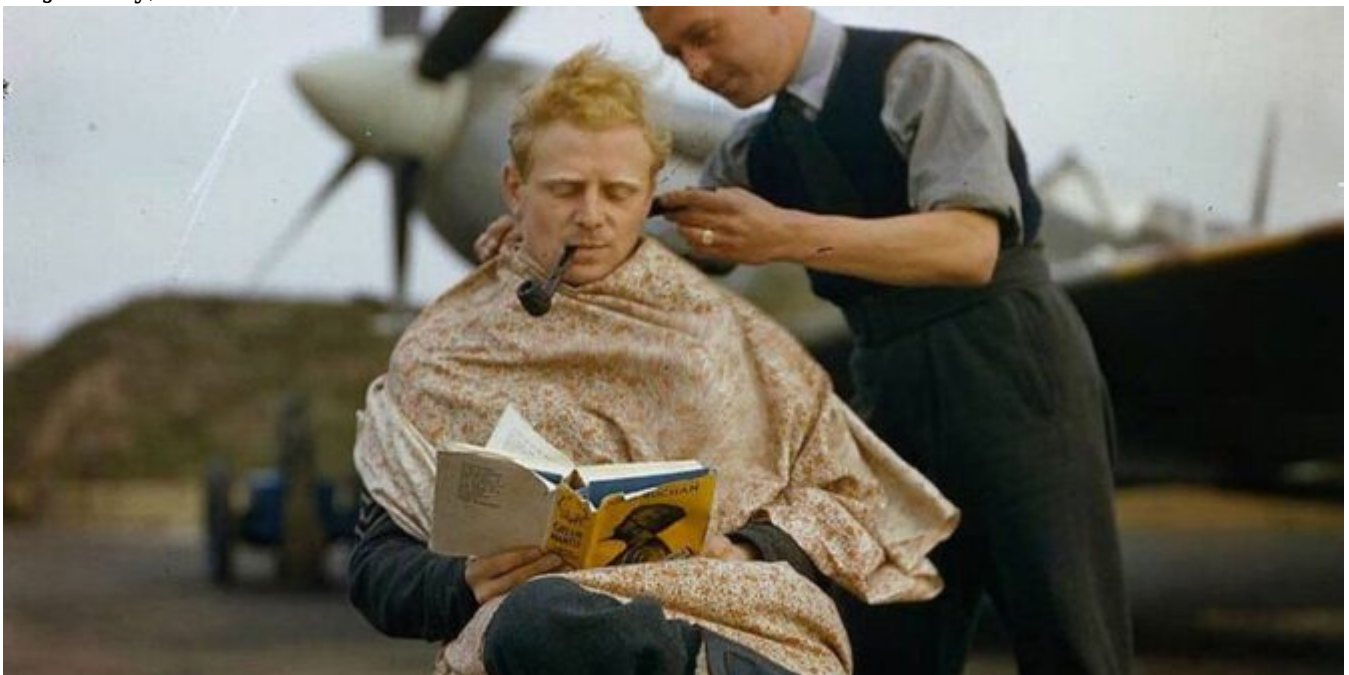
You go to unusual places and see curious things. Your turboprop friends envy you. Now, it's time to give back.

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](#) 

US Airport Fact Sheets (CBP)

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Did you know there are such things as **US Customs & Border Protection Airport General Aviation Fact Sheets**?





These are 1-page documents written by US CBP about select airports in the US, and they tell pilots pretty much all the important stuff they'd need to know about customs procedures at each one:

- **Opening Hours**
- **Contact Info**
- **Permission To Land Procedures**

- Some blurb on what to expect for the Inspection Process

What do they look like?

This:

 U.S. Customs and Border Protection		General Aviation Airport Fact Sheet Teterboro Airport (KTEB)	
Teterboro Airport		111 Industrial Avenue, Teterboro, NJ 07608	
Regular Office Hours 7 days per week, 0700-2400 Eastern Time (ET)	Contact Information (201) 288-8799 Main Line—Hangar 1 (201) 393-6936 Secondary Line ktebgaops@cbp.dhs.gov 		
Hours of Service for Entrance and Clearance Inspection services for the entrance/arrival of aircraft at Teterboro Airport are available 7 days per week, 0730-2315 in accordance with the port's permission to land procedures. Commercial aircraft operators departing the U.S. must obtain an outbound clearance by contacting CBP directly.	Permission to Land Procedures  Teterboro Airport (KTEB) is designated as a "landing rights airport" [19 CFR 122.1(f);19 CFR 122.14]. Pilots must secure permission to land by contacting CBP at least 2 hours prior to departure from foreign. Permission to land is granted with a tolerance of (+/-) 30 minutes. If your ETA deviates outside those parameters, you must contact CBP to resecure permission to land.		
Inspection Process  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aircraft arriving at Hangar 1 should park on the CBP ramp. Aircraft arriving at Jet Aviation should park in the designated space in front of the CBP office. The airport control tower can direct you in if needed. All crew and passengers will be processed inside the FIS. Be prepared to present passports, visas, pilot's license, medical certificate, aircraft registration, and user fee decal (if appropriate). Regulated waste/garbage will be collected by airport personnel from the aircraft crew. Hangar 1: passengers must reboard aircraft at the conclusion of their inspection and taxi to their FBO. Jet Aviation: passengers can depart direct from the FIS at the conclusion of their inspection. 			
Special Procedures/Miscellaneous <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teterboro Airport is designated to process passenger flights only, no cargo can be processed. Aircraft operator must request CBP FIS preference at the time of the landing rights request; North Side (Hangar 1) or South Side (Jet Aviation). Advise CBP if transporting live animals, weapons, hunting trophies, or commercial imports. For FBO information call (201) 288-1775. 			
NOTE: For further detailed information regarding national GA processing standards and procedures, please refer to the CBP Private Aircraft Arrival Information document or contact GASupport@cbp.dhs.gov			

7/21/2021

Got any more I can download?

As of Jan 2024, the NBAA is now hosting **more than 300 of these Factsheets** in a centralized database.

Adirondack Regional Airport	KSLK	New York	12/20/2022
Akron-Canton Airport	KCAK	Ohio	4/19/2022
Albany International Airport	KALB	New York	6/30/2021
Albuquerque International Sunport	KABQ	New Mexico	6/30/2021
Anacortes Airport	K74S	Washington	5/22/2023
Antonio B. Won Pat International Airport	PGUM	Guam	11/9/2023
Appleton International Airport	KATW	Wisconsin	9/12/2021
Atlantic City International Airport	KACY	New Jersey	12/15/2022
Austin Bergstrom International Airport	KAUS	Texas	9/5/2023

NBAA members can download them [here](#).

If you're not an NBAA member, we still have a few knocking about from 2023 which you can download for free [here](#):

KBFI/Boeing Field, WA
 KBGR/Bangor, ME
 KDAL/Dallas Love Field, TX
 KELP/El Paso, TX
 KFLL/Fort Lauderdale, FL
 KFXE/Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport, FL
 KHOU/Houston, TX
 KHPN/White Plains, NY
 KIAD/Washington Dulles, VA
 KLAX/Los Angeles, CA
 KMIA/Miami, FL
 KOPF/Opa-locka Executive, FL
 KPBI/Palm Beach, FL
 KTEB/Teterboro, NJ
 KTMB/Miami Executive, FL
 KTUS/Tucson, AZ
 TJIG/Fernando Luis Ribas Dominicci, San Juan
 TJSJ/Luis Munoz Marin, San Juan
 KRIC/Richmond, VA
 KPDX/Portland, OR
 KCLT/Charlotte, NC
 KMEM/Memphis, TN
 KSUS/St Louis, MO
 KPTK/Oakland County, MI
 KFAR/Fargo, ND
 KAFW/Fort Worth, TX
 KABQ/Albuquerque, NM
 KMCO/Orlando, FL
 KAUS/Austin, TX
 KSJC/San Jose, CA

KMSY/New Orleans, LA

CBP update these Fact Sheets fairly regularly, so if you're heading somewhere and want the most up-to-date version, contact CBP at that specific airport and ask for the latest copy. **It's also nice to speak to them in person!** Tell them about your planned flight, and they'll tell you what you need to know.

You can email CBP at the address shown in the Fact Sheet, or else contact them at GASupport@cbp.dhs.gov

Slots required at all Paris airports until mid-Feb

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



France is slowly rolling out a new ATC system called 4-Flight, and from **Jan 9 to Feb 14** there's a live trial happening which is going to cause **delays at all four airports in the Paris area**: LFPB/Le Bourget, LFPG/De Gaulle, LFPO/Orly and LFOB/Beauvais.

During this period, the operational capacity for the entire airspace will be reduced by 30%. The real-world result of all this is that LFPG and LFPO will have fewer slots available, and **LFPB and LFOB will require slots** (normally they don't).

For GA/BA flights headed to any of these airports, you should request slots via your handling agent, and you need to make sure you add the slot ID number to your flight plan, in a very specific format:



RMK/ASL directly followed by the 14-character authorization number, the first 4 of which are the ICAO code for the aerodrome for which the slot has been issued :
RMK/ASL (14 CHARACTER AIRPORT SLOT ID).

Example :

RMK/ASLLFPBA123456789 (arrival) or **RMK/ASLLFPBD123456789** (departure)
for Paris-Le Bourget.

There may also be **some impact to overflights** through the Paris ACC – especially at weekends when it's busy with ski flights heading south to the Alps.

Check AIC 19/23 for more info.

 Service de l'Information Aéronautique D.S.A.	 AIC FRANCE A 19/23 Publication date : DEC 28
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SUBJECT : LIVE TRIAL OF THE NEW ATM SYSTEM 4-FLIGHT : TEMPORARY CAPACITY REDUCTIONS FOR PARIS ACC AND AERODROME COORDINATION FOR PARIS-CHARLES DE GAULLE (LFPQ), PARIS-ORLY (LFPQ), PARIS-LE BOURGET (LFPB) AND BEAUVAIS-TILLY (LFOB) FROM 9th JANUARY TO 14th FEBRUARY 2024

1 CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVE

4-FLIGHT is the major CSNA modernization project for the operational systems deployed in the en-route centres. In the context of 4-FLIGHT commissioning in Paris ACC (LFFF), live trials are organized to :

- detect, as early as possible potential systems issues that could arise during implementation ;
- support the operational staff in gaining expertise in using the new system ;
- confirm and enhance finalizing adjustments ;
- consolidate working methods.

An extended phase of live trial for Paris ACC will be held from January 9th to February 14th, 2024, paving the way for final implementation, scheduled for November 8th, 2024.
This extended phase follows a sequence of short live trials with targeted objectives that were held in 2023.

2 RISK MITIGATION MEASURES

Operational capacities of the ACC must be adjusted to maintain flight safety and minimize disruption to operations. During the extended live trial period, the declared operational capacity for the entire airspace will be reduced by 30 %. That reduction will be supported by an ATFCM (Air Traffic Flow and Capacity Management) plan and a flight program reduction plan.

The ATFCM plan is composed of specific network RAD measures enforced during the duration of the live trial.

The flight program reduction plan is based on a temporary reduction of published airport coordination slots for LFPQ and LFPQ, and on the enforcement of airport coordination slots for LFOB and LFPB pursuant to Council Regulation (EEC) NR 95/93 of 18 January 1993 on common rules for the allocation of slots at Community airports, as last amended.

3 IMPACTS ON TRAFFIC REGULARITY

Most of the traffic managed by Paris ACC lands in any one of the Paris area aerodromes. Any capacity restrictions on arrival flows in will therefore impact the operations of airlines operating and aerodrome stakeholders from those aerodromes, namely LFPQ, LFPQ, LFPB, and LFOB.

Despite the flow management measures, traffic delays are expected that could impact punctuality and, in general, operations of any airline flying through Paris ACC, even those not landing in Paris. Special attention shall be given to the weekend ski season flows.

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03A

Ops to Mexico? Prepare to get ramp checked!

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Authorities have announced a **ramp check program** will be in place from now until mid-Jan 2024.

They had a similar surge in ramp checks last year during the same period – the official line then was that this was instituted to **ward off cabotage**.

Make sure you have **all the required docs on board** – big fines apply for anyone missing anything important. Local agents advise these checks are taking **up to 40 mins to complete**.



Ramp Check Reports

We've had a few recent reports from OPSGROUP members who have been ramp checked at airports in

Mexico:

MMZO/Manzanillo (Jan 2024)

Part 91 trip, Falcon. The Mexican ramp check/arrival was a bit more detailed than we've previously experienced. We frequent this airport and the customs/immigration officers opened every available panel, bag onboard, AND wanted us to open the avionics nose cone which was odd. We explained screwdrivers and a ladder were required – and they didn't make us open it. An important note: we were repositioning empty into the airport and leaving with Pax that the handler is quite familiar with (in a good way).

Airport Permit /paperwork was issued without problems, but every potential crew member will need to be listed on the aircraft's paperwork. Handler suggested operators should submit all possible names to prevent delays to their future ops. We requested the permit 48 hrs prior to landing and it came through just a few hours before we headed down there. Short notice trips will be unlikely. Permit good for 6 months, at this airport only.

MMTP/Tapachula (Oct 2023)

Part 91 customs stop, the whole process took exactly one hour from Block in to Block out. G600 with 15 pax and three crew.

- Upon arrival, the military and drug sniffing dogs were plane-side waiting for all the bags to come off(including crew bags).*
- They were snapping photos nonstop.*
- They did not want us to take our trash bags out. We just double bagged and left them in the lav.*
- Myself, our FA, along with our pax and handler walked about 100 yards to the customs building, in a light drizzle.*
- Bags got x-rayed and we waited while there was some back and forth between the customs agents. They stamped docs and permits which took a good 30-40 minutes.*
- Walked back out to the jet and departed with no issues.*

MMTO/Toluca (Aug 2023)

Part 91 operator came in from the Caribbean on our way to Toluca. The ramp and customs personnel were there waiting for us and marshalled us to an area of the GA ramp. 30 yards or so from a covered entrance to the terminal. We were able to Leave the APU running with a crew member onboard. Passengers and crew were escorted into the terminal to clear. They did an exterior sweep and came on board the aircraft. I do believe all bags came off and went through security in a private area. I don't recall any specific questions but the whole process took probably 25-30 minutes.

Been to Mexico recently? How did it go? Please file a quick report here!



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](#) 

What docs to carry onboard?

Here's the list of everything you should carry on board for trips to Mexico in case you get ramp checked:

- 1) Airworthiness Certificate**
- 2) Registration Certificate**
- 3) Worldwide and/or Mexican Insurance stating Private use when flying Far Part 91 and Charter use when flying Far Part 135. When flying Far Part 135, it is mandatory to have both insurances: worldwide and Mexican.**
- 4) Pilot's licenses: both sides and stating aircraft type rating.**
- 5) Pilot's medical certificates: valid document according to crew role (Pilot in Command or Second in Command), type of flight and according to pilot's age.**
- 6) If holding Multiple Entry Authorization (MEA), this document and its corresponding payment receipt, must be on board.**
- 7) For Charter operations, the following additional documents are required:**
 - a. Valid Air Operator Certificate (AOC):** Copies are accepted considering this document might include many tail numbers (fleet). Payment receipt should also be included.
 - b. FAA OST 4507 FORM** copies are accepted considering this document might include many tail numbers. Alternatively, the appropriate exemption document, Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity is also accepted.
 - c. If holding a Mexican Indefinite Blanket Permit (IBP), this should be accompanied by the Mexican AOC, and the Yearly Verification (including payment receipt) for it to be considered valid. Copies are accepted considering this document might have many tail numbers.**
- 8) The logbook (maintenance logbook) stating the most recent information about maintenance performed on the aircraft.**
- 9) The authorization to operate as a mobile radio aeronautic station; (Aircraft radio station license/authorization).**
- 10) The Flight Manual.**
- 11) Noise Certificate.**
- 12) The Minimum Equipment List (MEL) when the type certificate indicates it.**
- 13) Mexican AIP (for Private flights, a Jeppesen Airway Manual has been sufficient in the past for this. Charter operators, however, are required to carry a copy of the Mexican AIP – you will need to subscribe to the AIP through AFAC and carry electronic copies onboard).**
- 14) The preflight checklist.**
- 15) If full or partial (inbound/outbound Mexico) route involves overflying the ocean, then a life raft and/or life jackets are required to be on board, according to the type of aircraft. Please note this is also a usual requirement, but Mexican CAA will also be double checking for this.**
- 16) Weight and Balance Manifest.**

17) First Aid Kit.

18) Jeppesen Manuals, (at least electronic format).

19) If operating Far Part 91 – Private flights, it is required to present a document stating the purpose of the flight, to include the name of the lead passenger and to declare its connection with the aircraft (owner, employees, etc). If accompanied, letter must declare the relationship of the passengers with the lead passenger (family, friends, employees, etc). This will prove there is no commercial purpose under any circumstance. To present this letter, having it notarized is not necessary.

Private flights watch out!

Private flights to Mexico on aircraft that are used for both private and charter flights should watch out – the authorities in Mexico will likely require further proof that you are, in fact, a private flight. So if the aircraft is not registered in the name of the pilot or one of the pax, the best thing to do is prepare a notarized letter identifying the legal owner of the aircraft and that the owner is authorizing the crew and pax to be on board. **The letter should also clarify that the flight is a private, non-commercial flight.**

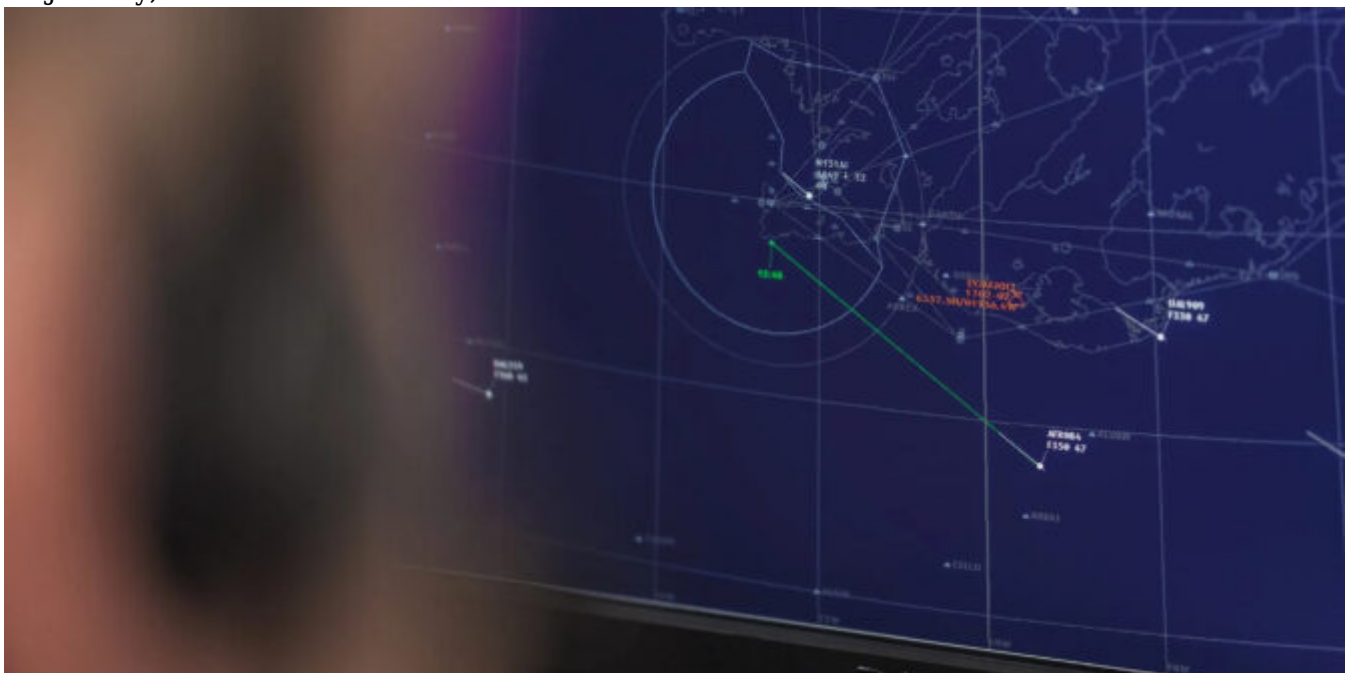
Further Reading

For a look at some of the **long-standing challenges affecting General Aviation ops to Mexico**, as well as some of the more recent issues which maybe haven't been widely reported yet, check out our article.

Iceland ATC strikes at Keflavik

David Mumford

16 January, 2024



Update 19 Dec 1230z - The ATC strike at BIKF/Keflavik on Dec 20 has been cancelled due to a

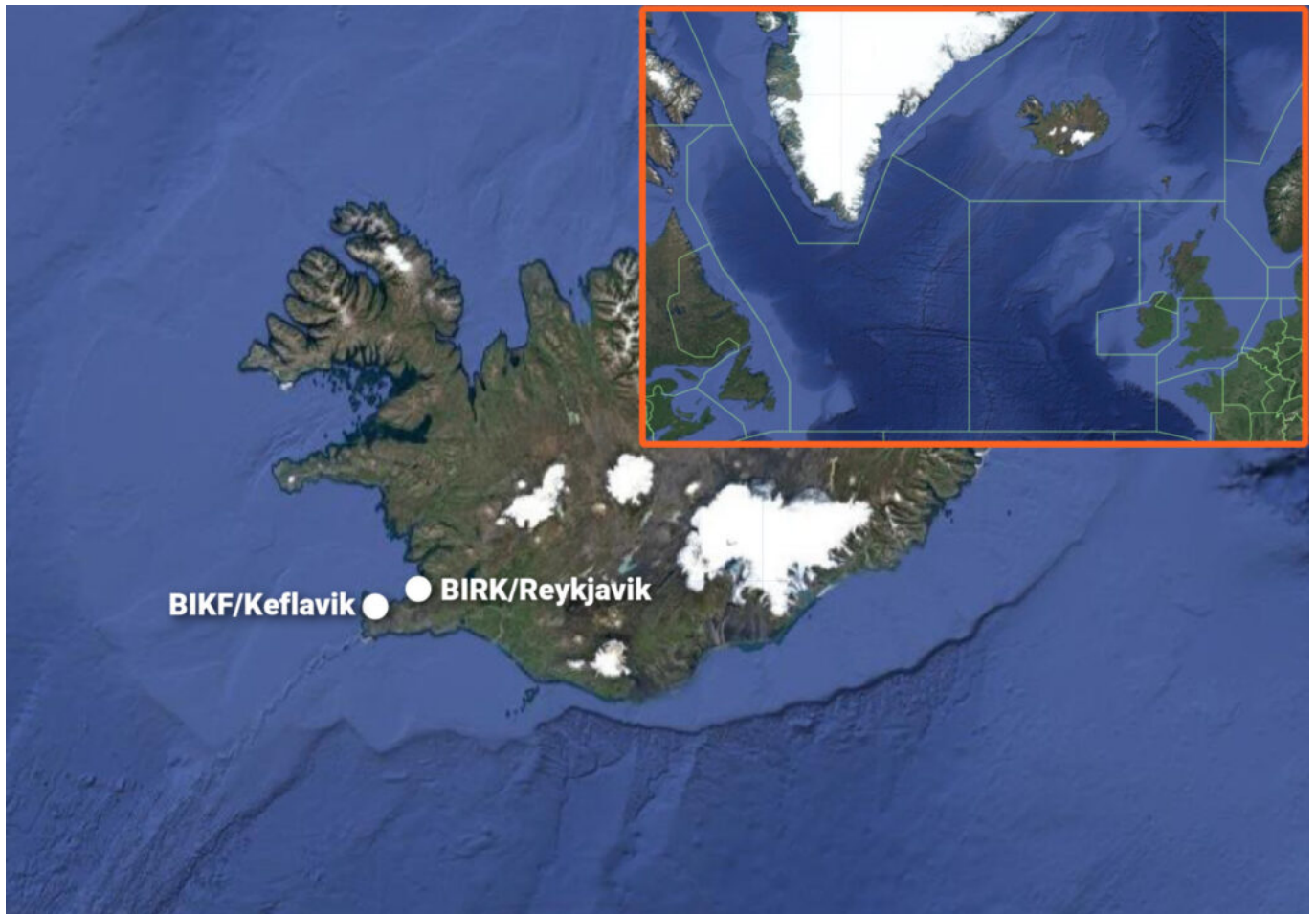
volcanic eruption on the Reykjanes Peninsula.

An Icelandic ATC strike took place on Dec 12, 14, and 18, with another planned for Dec 20 (now cancelled).

The Dec 12/14 strikes affected both BIKF/Keflavik and BIRK/Reykjavik. But the Dec 18/20 strikes were only planned at BIKF/Keflavik - no flights were allowed to operate in or out from 04-10z/

BIKF A0802/23 - DUE TO INDUSTRIAL ACTION KEFLAVIK CTR IS CLOSED.
BIKF TWR SERVICES IS LIMITED TO AMBULANCE FLIGHTS, EMERGENCY FLIGHTS
AND FLIGHTS ON BEHALF OF THE ICELANDIC COAST GUARD.
18 DEC 04:00 2023 UNTIL 18 DEC 10:00 2023.
CREATED: 15 DEC 13:40 2023

The Notams said that emergency flights were exempt. We confirmed with Isavia that **all diversions were accepted**, including emergency, and that carrying **BIKF as an alternate (including ETOPS)** was OK.



The strikes have gone quite smoothly so far, with minimal disruption to flights. Negotiations between controllers and employers are ongoing... □

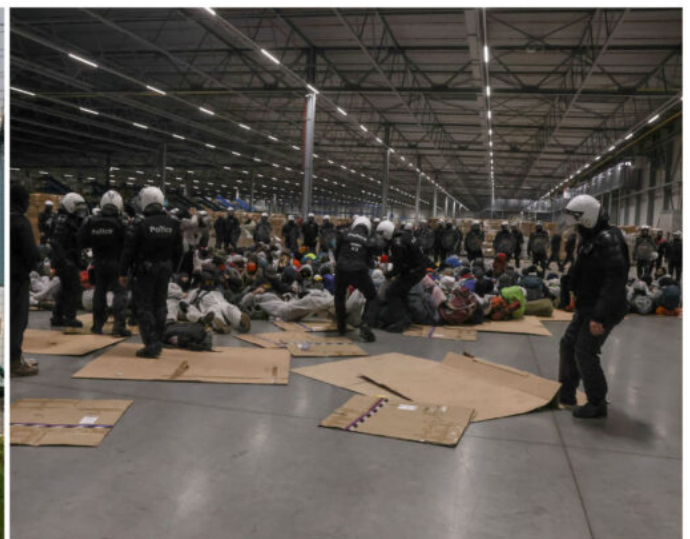
A Brief History of Anti-Aviation Protests at Airports in Europe

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



As expected, anti-aviation protestors targeted a couple of airports in Belgium this weekend.

- At **EBAW/Antwerp**, they tried to disrupt private jets by gathering at the aircraft parking area, but were stopped by police.
- And at **EBLG/Liege**, they tried to block a warehouse next to the airport to stop cargo planes from being unloaded and to stop trucks from leaving the site.



Recent protests like this at other airports in Europe have become increasingly aggressive, with protestors causing **damage to aircraft** and **disrupting airport ops** for several hours.

Their focus is:

1. **Stopping aviation entirely** (they don't like aircraft in general)
2. **Cargo ops** (too many unnecessary plastic items from China)
3. **Business Aviation** (which they call 'Luxury Flights').

When protests like these are planned, **a drop-and-go is a good option** if you must operate – longer-parked aircraft are often the target. If you absolutely have to operate to one of the airports threatened by protests, make sure you **park well away from the perimeter fences** – or ideally **park in a hangar** if one is available.

A Brief History of Anti-Aviation Protests at Airports in Europe

Here's a look at some of the most notable incidents over the past few years.

LEIB/Ibiza Airport, Spain (July 2023):

Protestors vandalised an Embraer Phenom 300E at Ibiza Airport, causing damage to the aircraft.

EDXW/Sylt Airport, Germany (June 2023):

Protesters covered a Cessna Citation Mustang in paint, resulting in the aircraft being declared a write-off due to extensive damage.



LFMD/Cannes-Mandelieu Airport, France (May 2023):

Protestors used a remote-controlled car to block a private jet, releasing smoke as a decoy. The incident caused disruption and highlighted a failure in airport perimeter security but didn't result in significant damage to the aircraft.



LSGG/Geneva Airport, EBACE, Switzerland (May 2023):

Protesters breached security controls, causing damage to at least one displayed aircraft, leading to disruptions in airport ops, and flight diversions (not to mention increased fuel consumption due to the airport closure).

EHEH/Eindhoven, Netherlands (March 2023):

Protestors cut a hole in the perimeter fence, entered airside and blocked the area where private jets park. They did not enter the runway. More than 100 were subsequently arrested.

Coordinated campaign across 13 countries, COP27 (November 2022):

Multiple protests occurred during the COP27 climate-change conference, with security managing to keep most protesters outside the FBOs. The protests caused disruptions but didn't lead to significant damage to the airports or aircraft. Protests took place outside several airport terminals at airports including Berlin, Milan, Stockholm, Trondheim, and London-area airports Farnborough and Luton.



EHAM/Amsterdam Schiphol Airport, Netherlands (November 2022):

Protesters breached the airport's fence, blocking private jets. Several individuals faced prosecution, but only a few were charged despite causing considerable damage to aircraft.

EGLC/London City Airport, UK (October 2019):

A sole protestor aimed to disrupt flights by climbing on top of a British Airways aircraft. Only two flights were cancelled, and the airport said they remained fully operational throughout the day.



EGKK/Gatwick Airport, UK (Dec 2018):

Gatwick Airport experienced a significant disruption due to drone sightings near the airfield. The airport was forced to close its runway for around 24hrs, leading to extensive flight cancellations and delays affecting tens of thousands of passengers over several days.

For an excellent write-up on these recent protests, including the industry's response, legal complexities, security measures, and the global impact on business aviation, [click here](#).

The Annual Shanghai Airports Meltdown

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Key Points

- **Shanghai's ZSSS/Hongqiao and ZSPD/Pudong airports are effectively off-limits to bizav flights at the start of November, unless you're heading to the China International Import Expo event.**
- **Operators will need to consider nearby airports instead: ZSWX/Wuxi, ZSHC/Hangzhou, ZSNJ/Nanjing and ZSNB/Ningbo.**

You won't find it on the Notams, but there are some restrictions coming up in November at Shanghai's ZSSS/Hongqiao and ZSPD/Pudong airports which effectively ban most business/private flights.

It's the same meltdown every year in Shanghai. It's all to do with the annual China International Import Expo event (CIIE) – which this year will be held from Nov 5-10.

Here are the restrictions at the main airports to watch out for this year:

ZSSS/Hongqiao

From Nov 2-8, no business/private flights allowed, including those flights participating in CIIE.

ZSPD/Pudong

From Nov 2-13, the airport will only accept participating CIIE business/private flights. Quick turns (if not participating in CIIE) are not allowed.

It's also worth noting these two extra restrictions at ZSPD which apply year-round:

- Take-off and landing is prohibited between 07-09 local time (23-01z).
- Business/private flights are not allowed to have two peak hour slots between 09-22 local time (01-14z). So you can land during that period, but then you have to wait until 22 local time before you can depart!

Where else to go?

For non-CIIE flights wanting to go to Shanghai during this period, the alternative options may be limited, as parking will fill-up quickly at nearby airports **ZSWX/Wuxi**, **ZSHC/Hangzhou**, **ZSNJ/Nanjing** and **ZSNB/Ningbo**.



Here's the lowdown on those four airports:

ZSWX/Wuxi

Operating hours? H24. But bizjets can only go here between 0700-2300 local time (and Customs are only open from 0830-2300). Outside those hours, you need permission from the airport authority.

Does it have an FBO? Yes, but only for domestic flights.

Driving time to Shanghai? 2hrs (130km)

Other restrictions? You need permission from the military to operate here. Overnight parking is generally not allowed (and there's no hangar for bizjets).

ZSHC/Hangzhou

Operating hours? H24.

Does it have an FBO? Yes, but only for domestic flights.

Driving time to Shanghai? 2hrs 30mins (180km)

Other restrictions? They don't issue arrival/departure slots to business/private flights between 0700-0859 local time. We also heard from one handler that there is a 72hr parking limit in place at the moment.

ZSNJ/Nanjing

Operating hours? H24.

Does it have an FBO? Yes.

Driving time to Shanghai? 3hrs 30mins (300km)

Other restrictions? They don't issue arrival/departure slots to business/private flights between 0700-0859 local time.

ZSNB/Ningbo

Operating hours? H24.

Does it have an FBO? Yes, but for domestic flights only.

Driving time to Shanghai? 3hrs (220km) – providing you take the road over the Hangzhou Bay Bridge

Know a secret airport somewhere near Shanghai where bizav flights can operate to during this period? Let us know!

US: New Rules For Outbound Private Flights

David Mumford

16 January, 2024



Key Points

- **US CBP have made some changes to APIS procedures for private flights departing from the US.**
- **You now need a new APIS for any pax changes, or ETD change of more than 60mins.**
- **CBP will also reportedly be increasing spot checks and in-person clearances.**

Departing the US

CBP are tightening up the rules private flights departing the US. In a nutshell, the new rule is this:

If you have any pax changes, tail number change, or departure time changes of more than 60 minutes, you now have to file a new APIS - and this needs to be done no later than 60 minutes prior to departure.

These changes are reflected in the new text operators receive when they file their APIS:

United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is in receipt of your APIS manifest transmission.

Based upon the APIS manifest information transmitted, private aircraft departure clearance is approved for:

- . the travelers identified within this manifest,
- . the conveyance details provided,
- . with a tolerance of +/- 60 minutes from the departure time manifested in your APIS transmission, but
- . not within 60 minutes of transmission.

You must present yourself for inspection before departure if contacted by CBP.

Unless otherwise exempted, this permission to depart applies only to private aircraft departures. (Permission to depart for commercial aircraft must be requested by the aircraft commander or agent to the director of the port of entry nearest the final departure airport.)

Previously secured permission to depart (clearance) applies only to the previously submitted APIS manifest details. Changes in manifested details such as tail number changes and traveler additions or substitutions require updated or amended APIS transmissions and a direct (re)confirmation of CBP approval and permission to depart.

For departure time changes greater than 60 minutes, operators must re-transmit an APIS manifest no later than 60 minutes prior to departure and call the local CBP port associated with your departure to cancel the original flight clearance request, and, in cases where time is a limiting factor, to request manual departure clearance for the amended flight.

This receipt message and approval for U.S. departure clearance is based on the manifest information submitted and does not confirm that the submitted manifest information is correct, valid, accurate, and/or complete, or that the manifest was submitted within specified timeline requirements. The submission of manifests within 60 minutes of departure or the submission of incorrect, invalid, inaccurate and/or incomplete manifest data may be subject to penalty or other appropriate enforcement action. This email was sent from a notification-only address that cannot accept incoming email.

So if you do have to file a new APIS, it must be filed **at least 60 mins prior to departure**. The new procedure says that if you're pushed for time you can request **"manual departure clearance."** This basically means a phone call to CBP at your departure airport to request permission to depart - and it's always a good idea to get the name, initials or badge number of the officer you speak to, just in case the early departure is questioned.

Unsolved SOLVED Mysteries!

Thanks to our friends at the NBAA IOC we now have answers to some of the big questions operators had regarding these changes.

1. Just before departure, another pax gets added to the flight. What do we do?

File a new APIS with all the pax info. Remember, your ETD needs to be at least 60mins from the time you file the new APIS, as per the new rules. If you want to leave early, you need to call CBP and ask for manual departure clearance.

2. What if you're departing overnight or early in the morning when the CBP office is closed, and you have no one to call for manual clearance?

If you can't call CBP because the office is closed, you just have to wait 60mins to depart. There's no out-of-

hours fall-back option here. So watch out when planning departures when CBP will be closed! And let your pax know in advance that any last-minute changes are going to cause delays!

3. If one of our pax shows up with a different passport than the one we filed on APIS, must we submit a new one?

Yes. And then, same as above, you have to wait 60mins to depart, or else try calling for manual clearance.

4. If we file with 5 pax but only 4 show up, do we have to file a new APIS?

At the moment, the simple answer is no. This may change in the future though.

5. If our flight cancels altogether, must we call CBP to tell them so?

Yes. If you can't do this because they are closed, call them in the morning.

6. Can anyone make calls to CBP? (to ask for manual clearance, etc)

Yes. PIC, SIC, handler, or trip support provider are all fine.

7. What if we push back on time but get an ATC delay or something, and have to sit around on the taxiway waiting to depart. If it looks like our departure will fall outside of the 60 minute window, must we file a new APIS and then potentially have to wait another hour?

Ooh, trickiest of trickies! This is a slightly grey area. CBP define your "departure" as being the time you are wheels-up. After you push-back, if you get delayed before you actually depart – there's no clear cut answer to when you have to depart by. You just have to be able to show that whatever you do is "reasonable and responsible". CBP will only pursue penalty action if you fail to do this. If you do end up departing after the 60 mins due to delays, make a proactive call to CBP afterwards to explain why. Give them the answer before they ask the question!

Spot checks!

CBP will be increasing random departure inspections on aircraft departing from the US. The name of the game is simple: **always update departure times with CBP!**

If they arrive and you've departed already, you could be subject to **penalty action**.

Many of the recent penalty actions are falling into the following categories

Thanks to Rick Gardner of CST Flight Services for providing this info:

- **Not obtaining Permission To Land.** When returning to the US, once you have filed APIS and received the receipt email from DHS, you need to contact CBP at the port of entry and obtain permission to land. This is spelled out in the text of the receipt email from CBP. I always urge pilots to carefully read the receipt email to make sure the airports, dates and numbers of crew and passengers match what you think you transmitted. Yes, pilots are being penalized for failing to do this.
- **Missing Manifest.** Some pilots are just failing to file APIS. CBP becomes aware through a variety of different methods so this is not a matter to take lightly.
- **Missing people.** The people who were submitted on the manifest are missing and people not on the manifest are on board.
- **Arriving or departing outside the +/- 60-minute tolerance** as specified on Airport Fact Sheets or on the Departure receipt email from DHS. In the past pilots did not pay a lot of attention to complying with the times they submitted on departure manifests. CBP has their own ways of detecting non-compliance including the fact that they do randomly conduct departure inspections. If you depart from the US outside of that tolerance, you can be subject

to penalty action.

What should you do if you become subject to penalty action?

- **Don't ignore it.** If you get a notification from CBP that a penalty action has been initiated, address it quickly, it's not going to go away. Penalties can be initiated via a number of different channels within CBP, but the notification will come from CBP General Aviation Headquarters.
- **Own up.** By notifying you of a pending penalty action, CBP wants to give you the opportunity to give your side of the story. Explain what you did and why you did it. If you made a mistake, identify what caused the mistake to occur. As PIC you are solely responsible and CBP will not look favorably on attempts to shirk that responsibility by blaming others or by omitting facts. Be honest, tell them what happened, how it happened and why it happened.
- **Corrective action!** If you did something wrong, tell CBP what you are doing to ensure that this mistake does not happen again. Outline an action plan on how you are changing your procedures to ensure that you achieve compliance going forward.

Doing this does not guarantee that CBP will withhold the penalty action, CBP handles penalty actions on a case-by-case basis. However, **a very significant percentage of penalty actions are resolved** during the initial interaction with CBP headquarters. CBP's expectation of pilots is that we demonstrate that we are trying to act reasonably and responsibly. CBP is looking for compliance, not finding blame.

Professional pilots have a lot on the line because if we receive a penalty, not only can there be a sizeable fine but we also **lose our Border Overflight Exemption privileges** for any operator we are flying with. In addition, we can **lose our Global Entry** as well. If sharing this knowledge from our industry collaboration and ongoing operations keeps just one pilot from getting into trouble, then it is worth it.

More info

For more info on on private flights to the US, check this article.

Private Flights to the US

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Update Sep 29:

- There are some changes to APIS procedures for private flights departing from the US.
- If you change any pax details or the ETD by more than 60mins, you now have to cancel the old APIS and file a new one - and the new one needs to be filed at least 60mins before departure.
- Also, CBP will reportedly be increasing spot checks and in-person clearances.

Article from March 2023:

*This article is from Rick Gardner of CST Flight Services. We asked if he could talk to us about **Private flights to the US** - not the standard stuff, but some of the real **tips and gotchas** that international pilots might want to know about.*

Private flights to the US... **you probably know the basics already:** maybe get a TSA Waiver, file your APIS, contact CBP to get your Permission to Land, and if you're coming from the south make sure you land at one of the Designated Airports (or else get a Border Overflight Exemption).

But after many years of working with US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to collaborate on General Aviation issues - here's a bit of a deeper dive into some of **the most common topics and gotchas that private aircraft operators to the US should be aware of...**

Arriving from the South

CBP differentiates between aircraft arriving from places "south" of the US versus other countries. Basically, every country in the Western Hemisphere, with the exception of Canada and Bermuda, is considered "south"!

When arriving from one of these countries "south" of the US **we must make our first landing at a CBP "Designated" airport closest to our point of border or coastline crossing** - unless we have obtained a Border Overflight Exemption (BOE). (More on BOEs in a moment.)

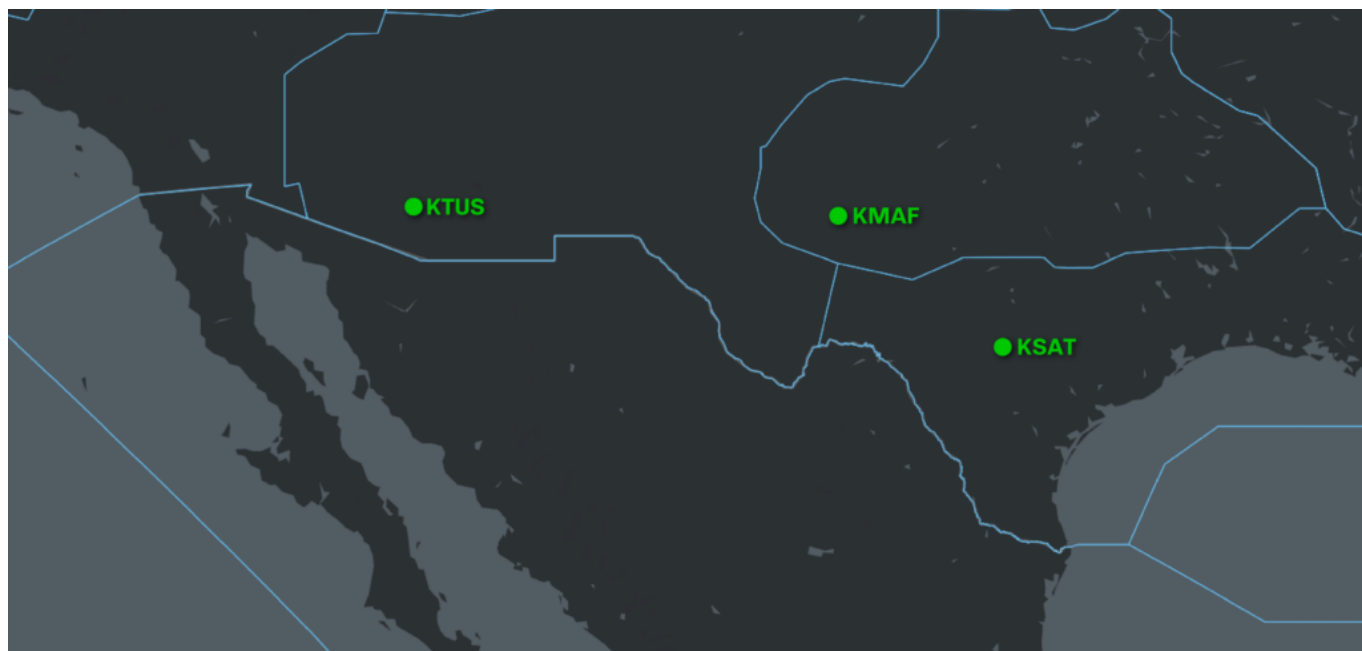
There is a specific list of 32 "Designated" southern airports of entry in the regulations (actually, there are

only 31, because KNEW/New Orleans Lakefront is not longer a Designated airport), and that not all CBP airports in Florida or along the Gulf of Mexico coastline nor the US-Mexico border are “Designated” airports. Again, we must make our first landing at the Designated Airport closest to where we cross the US-Mexico border or the US coastline.

However, there are a few exceptions:

KTUS/Tucson, KSAT/San Antonio, KMAF/Midland

While these airports are Designated Airports, you cannot get to them without overflying another Designated airport. Nonetheless, if you are granted Permission to Land, you may use these airports as your closest airport to the border.



KMTH/Marathon

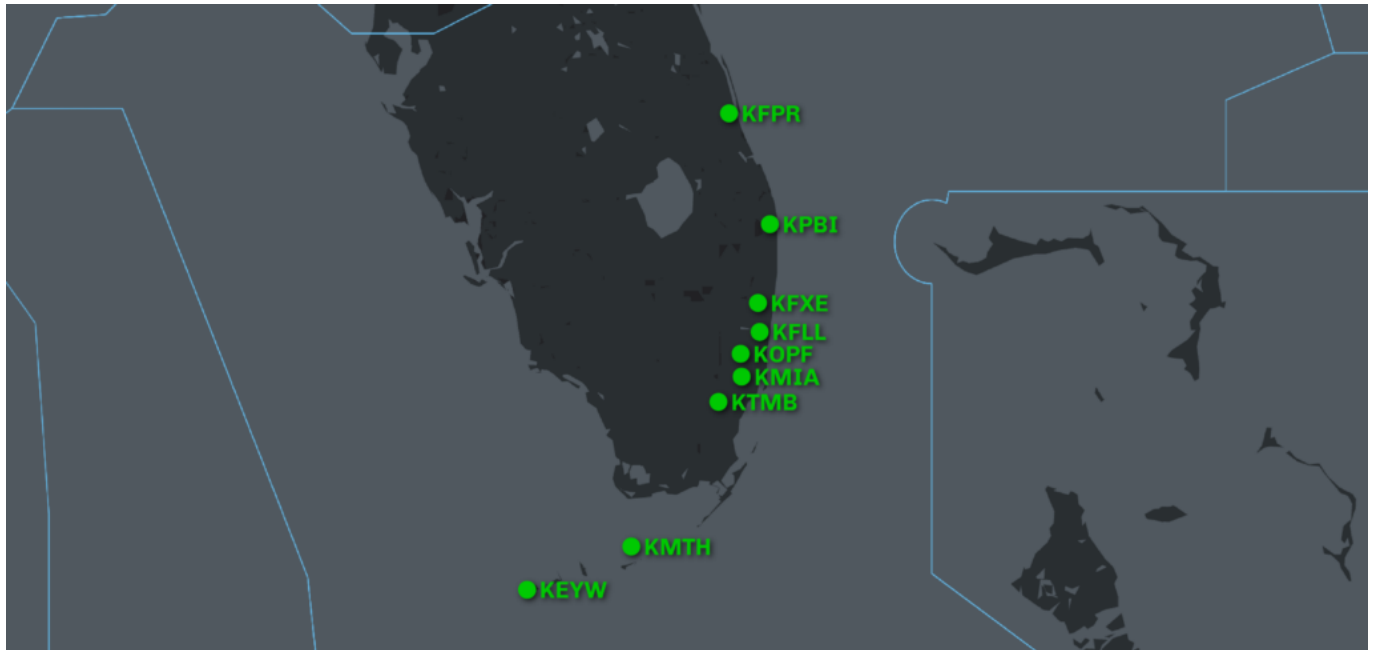
While not on the list of Designated Airports, KMTH/Marathon is a CBP port and can be used in lieu of a Designated Airport. Be sure to contact CBP at the airport to obtain Permission to Land. (More on Permission to Land in a moment.)

Miami Field Office Airports

So we’re talking about 8 airports here: KEYW/Key West, KTMB/Miami Executive, KMIA/Miami International, KOPF/Opa Locka, KFXE/Fort Lauderdale Executive, KFLL/Fort Lauderdale International, KPBI/Palm Beach, KFPR/Fort Pierce.

The CBP Miami Field Office (MFO) has established that “Flights which are required to land at a nearest designated airport to the border or coastline crossing point **may proceed directly to any of the eight designated airports... without an overflight exemption**, even if the airport of intended landing is not the one closest to the US coastline crossing point.”

So, if you were returning to the US from Cancun, Mexico, you could overfly Key West and continue up the east Florida coastline all the way to Fort Pierce and you would be in compliance. **What you cannot do when returning from The Bahamas is to overfly any of these MFO airports and land in KTPA/Tampa** even though Tampa is one of the 32 Designated airports!



Border Overflight Exemptions (BOE)

One way to avoid having to deal with Designated Airports is to obtain a BOE from CBP.

How it works

One of the great things that CBP Headquarters has accomplished is to get rid of the old Forms 442 and 442A and to **centralize the BOE approval process**. In addition, they have eliminated the previous requirements of having to list all aircraft, foreign ports, crew and passengers that would be authorized under the BOE. Today, all you have to do is **identify the operator to whom the BOE will be issued** and any aircraft, crew, passengers and foreign ports are all systematically vetted through APIS when the manifest is transmitted.

Per CBP regulations, BOE's can take **up to 30 days to process**, so don't waste time. For more information regarding the application process, contact GAsupport@cbp.dhs.gov.

Gotchas

A BOE holder has to ensure that the Operator specified in the APIS manifest **MUST** be the Operator to whom the BOE was issued. In addition, to legally use a BOE, the flight must be **under IFR, fly above 12,500 feet and not make any intermediate stops**.

A BOE is obtained by demonstrating **a history of compliance**. If you are subject to an enforcement action, the pilot can lose their BOE privileges for 6 months and repeated violations can result in the Operator losing their BOE privilege also.

Advanced Passenger Information System (APIS)

Since Nov 2008, operators of private flights have been required to file a DEPARTURE APIS manifest using the Electronic Advanced Passenger Information System (eAPIS) portal when departing the US for a foreign country, and an ARRIVAL APIS manifest when returning to the US from a foreign country.

Electronic Advance Passenger Information System

CUSTOMS & BORDER PROTECTION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY



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Welcome

The Electronic Advance Passenger Information System, or eAPIS, allows you to enter or upload passenger and crew manifests online. Reports are also available through eAPIS for Customs and Border Protection approved individuals.

Enrolled Users

Log In

To begin using this service, please enter your sender ID and password and select **Log In**.

Sender ID:

Password

Log In >

Need help logging in?

Select the link above to access enrollment, login, and account activation help information.

Reset your password

Forgot or need to reset your password? Select the link above to create a new password and re-activate your account.

New eAPIS Users

Enroll

If you are a new user, you will need to Enroll.

Enroll >

How it works

DEPARTURE and ARRIVAL APIS manifests must be filed and authorization from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) must be received **no later than 1 hour prior to departure** from the US or foreign country. This DHS authorization comes in the form of a receipt email which contains a summary of the date, time, departure and arrival airports.

As there is no limitation on how early an APIS manifest may be submitted, I recommend that you submit it as soon as possible once your itinerary and crew/passenger information is established. CBP always advises, "Transmitting for next week is fine if your plans have firmed up but next Christmas is too far away." Leaving things to the last minute just invites Murphy's law.

You should never be asked to provide Personally Identifiable Information (PII) such as DOB, passport number, SSN, etc. via FAX or email. If you do get such a request, ask for the supervisor, contact CBP headquarters or contact us at +1 786 206 6147.

Gotchas

Double check that the information in the DHS receipt email is accurate! **Failing to get the receipt email from DHS means you have not received authorization to depart so you definitely should not depart.** Sometimes failing to receive a DHS receipt email may be due to issues with the CBP systems or typos in your email address. Check your SPAM folder to make sure that the email was not sent there. If you share the eAPIS account you are using with someone else, check to see if they changed the email address and ask them to forward the authorization to you. **One last resort is to contact CBP** at the port and ask if they can determine if the authorization was issued, write down the officer's name or initials (they might only be willing to give you their badge number) in the event that there is ever a question about whether you received authorization.

The rules also require that if you add/remove/substitute crew and/or passengers or if you make a change to the travel calendar date in either a DEPARTURE or ARRIVAL manifest then you **must resubmit a new**

manifest to CBP. Any authorizations related to the originally submitted manifest are no longer valid and you must wait for a new authorization from DHS. Changes to departure time, arrival time or arrival location may be made by phone.

Another gotcha is failing to make sure that the **passenger names on the filed APIS exactly match the names on the passports.**

Arriving in the US

In addition to submitting an ARRIVAL APIS manifest and getting the receipt email from DHS, the regulations specifically require us to also **contact CBP at the arrival airport and obtain Permission to Land** (sometimes referred to as, "Landing Rights").

Recent changes to how it works!

Historically, different CBP ports have implemented varied procedures for requesting and granting Permission to Land, however that is now becoming more standardized through the efforts of CBP headquarters.

One significant change is that CBP will no longer grant Permission to Land unless you have **successfully submitted your APIS ARRIVAL manifest first.** When you are granted Permission to Land by CBP at the arrival port, you should receive an email from CBP (in addition to the one sent by DHS) confirming that Permission to Land has been granted and any specific instructions that CBP may have. If you are denied Permission to Land, you will also receive an email from the port confirming that Permission to Land was denied.

Failing to receive the email confirming Permission to Land is an indication that either the port has **not yet adopted the new procedure** or that Permission to Land was **not properly issued** by the CBP officer who responded to your request and a follow up request would be advisable. Be prepared to prove who gave you permission to land – the receipt email from DHS alone does not grant you Permission to Land.

Check those attachments!

The email granting Permission to Land will have several attachments. The first attachment is called **"CBP Private Aircraft Arrival Information"** which contains an overview of what the operator of a private aircraft is expected to do in order to comply with CBP regulations.

In addition, you may also find attached a **"General Aviation Airport Fact Sheet"** which contains detailed information on what you need to know about the CBP requirements for the specific airport you are landing at. Not only do these two documents clarify what is expected of you, they serve as proof to a CBP officer that you have followed procedures correctly.

Lastly, there is a third document called **"Tip of the month"** which is a review of important topics that pilots should be aware of and this document is updated monthly. Of the 392 airports where CBP is present, approximately 250 have published Airport Fact Sheets.

Changes to your schedule

The Permission to Land email messages grant permission based on what you have transmitted in APIS and also include **port-specific time tolerances**; a +/- time allowance based on port operations. If you need to ARRIVE in the US at a time significantly different from that submitted in your ARRIVAL manifest, you need to contact CBP to re-secure Permission to Land for your new arrival time. Many aircraft land at Designated Airports and CBP must ensure that they have the space and manpower to receive and process inbound aircraft.

When you arrive

When arriving in the US, CBP procedures may vary slightly, depending on where you land.

CBP at many airports expect you to keep the door closed until authorized to open it by the CBP Officer. At KTEB/Teterboro, for example, if you deplane before authorized you will be subject to a hefty fine. CBP officers at some airports may not come out to meet the aircraft and may wait inside the building until the crew/PAX come inside. Other airports may have signs with instructions – follow them.

In all cases, especially where health and safety concerns present or exist, CBP always emphasizes to exercise reasonable and responsible judgement. If your aircraft Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) exhaust is 8 feet or higher above the ground, you do not have to power it down. However, CBP can require you to shut down the APU, though, in cases of enforcement actions.

Departing the US

You do not need to depart the US from an airport where CBP is present – **you can depart from any airport in the US.**

How it works

In your APIS DEPARTURE manifest you should **enter the airport code of the nearest CBP airport** to the departure site and then in the “Actual Departure Location Description” field, describe the actual place from which the aircraft will depart. This is an optional field which should be used only when the location of actual departure differs from the airport listed in the “CBP Airport” field. The “City” field should be the actual city from which the aircraft is departing.

When you submit an APIS DEPARTURE manifest to CBP and you receive DHS authorization to depart, the authorization is based on the information that you have submitted, including the departure time.

Spot checks!

On occasion, CBP conducts random departure inspections on aircraft departing from the US (it has happened to me) and officers will be dispatched to your departure airport location. If they arrive and you have departed before the time you specified or if you are nowhere to be found and then depart after the time specified, you could be subject to enforcement action. **Always update departure times with CBP!**

Canceling or postponing a flight

You are required to advise CBP if you are going to cancel your flight or postpone it to another date (which will require that you file a new manifest). This is important because CBP plans their workload and staffing based on manifests that they can see in the system.

How it works

Under CBP's updated procedures, when you cancel an APIS manifest, you will also receive an email confirming that your APIS manifest has been canceled. **If you transmitted multiple APIS manifests for the same date, the CBP port may cancel the unnecessary manifests which can trigger an email saying that the “APIS was cancelled”.** Remember that each submitted APIS manifest has a unique eAPIS number as does the DHS receipt email and CBP cancellation email so you can match them. If you are ever in doubt, you should contact the port to confirm.

Transporting currency

Another important point is that you must always report if you are taking into, or out of, a country **more than \$10,000 USD**. It is not illegal to transport more than that amount, but failing to report it is illegal.

The nitty gritty

When you transport, attempt to transport, or cause to be transported (including by mail or other means) currency or other “monetary instruments” in an aggregate amount exceeding \$10,000 or its foreign equivalent) at one time from the US to any foreign country, or into the US from any foreign country, **you must file a report with US Customs and Border Protection.** This report is called the Report of

International Transportation of Currency or Monetary Instruments, FinCEN Form 105. This form can be obtained at all U.S. ports of entry and departure or on the Web at FinCEN Form 105 (Rev. 7-2003).

Alternatively, the report can be filed electronically, an eCMIR, at this website. Travelers will be able to enter information into an eCMIR up to three days prior to travel, creating a provisional document on the CBP.gov website. Foreign countries will also have their own documents and procedures. Failing to report can result in seizure of the monetary instruments, fines, or worse.

CBP officer says it's OK

One topic that comes up repeatedly is that a CBP officer "Buddy" says its OK to land without a BOE or approves some other deviation from the rules.

Don't do it!

CBP headquarters has made it very clear that no CBP officer has the authority to override US law. Doing so could get both you and the officer into trouble. **Don't succumb to the temptation of listening to what you want to hear versus what you need to know!** Enforcement actions can cost you money, ruin your reputation with CBP and cause you to lose BOE privileges.

Visa Waiver / ESTA

Part of the joy of having a private aircraft is to share the experience with family and friends...

Visa Waiver gotcha

If any of those are citizens of Visa Waiver countries and they do not have a US Visa, then **they cannot fly into the US on a private aircraft unless you are a signatory carrier** or under some very isolated and specific circumstances. Contact CBP before you attempt to do so to avoid unpleasant surprises. If there is any chance that you may transport citizens from Visa Waiver countries, submit your request to become a signatory carrier now, while there is time.

PIC Responsibility

Yep, you know this already. **As PIC you are ultimately responsible for compliance with all the regs.** In the case of CBP, the PIC is responsible for ensuring that valid passports are brought aboard the aircraft that match the APIS manifest information submitted to CBP and that authorizations to depart are properly received.

Getting it wrong

If you ever do face an enforcement action, **best to just be honest.** CBP is not out to get us, what they want is compliance and have repeatedly demonstrated a willingness to work with General Aviation to achieve it. Work with them and they will work with you. This is not a guarantee that CBP will not take enforcement action, those determinations are made on a case-by-case basis and much depends on the nature and circumstances of the violation as well as the way you handle it. **Violations are usually the result of either an oversight or wilful intent** – you don't want to give CBP the reason to believe that you are part of the latter if that isn't the case!

Illegal Charters

Unless you have a burning desire to find out more about both the US and foreign legal systems, **do not misrepresent yourself** as a private aircraft flight when in fact you are operating as a commercial aircraft operator!

Understanding the Regs

CBP defines a "commercial aircraft" as "any aircraft transporting passengers and/or cargo for some payment or other consideration, including money or services rendered" as per 19 CFR 122.1 (d). Note that

CBP's definition of private and commercial are different from those used by the FAA.

Some US pilots believe that US regs apply to them when flying internationally, but 14 CFR 91.703 (a) (2) clearly states that they must abide by the laws of the foreign countries where they operate. Many of these countries also have much more basic definitions of commercial and non-commercial operations.

Bottom line – **don't try to walk a fine line with Part 91 definitions** as this could land you in hot water with the CBP as well as with the civil aviation authorities of foreign countries.

Puerto Rico and US Virgin Islands

Time for some bulletpoints, all *nicely* colour-coded...

- Flights between the continental **US** and **Puerto Rico** are considered domestic flights as long as the flight is conducted under IFR, the flight is above 12,500 feet and there are no intermediate stops.
- Flights from **Puerto Rico** to the **US** require a US Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspection in **Puerto Rico** prior to departure.
- Flights from the **US** and **Puerto Rico** to the **US Virgin Islands** are considered domestic flights BUT flights from the **US Virgin Islands** to the **US** and **Puerto Rico** are treated as international flights.
- When departing the **US Virgin Islands** to the **US**, always go through the pre-clearance process with CBP in the **US Virgin Islands** before departing. APIS must be transmitted as an ARRIVAL into the **US**.

Other Gotchas!

Check those pesky passports again

The PIC should verify that the doc that were used for the submission of the APIS manifest are on board the aircraft. **This can maybe be a bit awkward, but it is the PIC's reputation with CBP** and a possible enforcement action and loss of BOE privileges that are at stake. Some of the more common issues that arise are:

- Missing passport, the passenger forgot to bring it
- Bringing a different passport from the one use in the APIS manifest, passenger has 2 passports
- Bringing spouse's or child's passport by mistake
- Bringing a passport card instead of a passport, passport cards are not valid for use on an aircraft

Remember, an APIS manifest needs to contain verified and accurate information, the PIC must validate that what they have submitted is correct. CBP has told us repeatedly that **transmitting bad data is always grounds for enforcement action.**

Guns

Another common gotcha is trying to reenter the US with firearms after a hunting trip. You should present firearms to CBP along with CBP Form 4457 before leaving the US.

Diamonds are a girl's CBP officer's best friend

Same as above! Any high value item such as camera/video equipment, jewelery, etc need to be declared

to CBP before leaving the US.

Q&A

1. General Aviation Airport Fact Sheets. These sound interesting! Are these fact sheets located anywhere on the CBP website? Or elsewhere on the internet?

CST Flight Services has all the CBP Fact Sheets. If you email us we can send you the latest for the airport you need: customersvc@cstflightservices.com. We plan to have a self-serve web page up and running shortly, where you can access the files 24/7.

2. Can operators start the BOE process before 45 days? Just to ensure they have this before it expires and they have to stop somewhere that's inconvenient?

You can try but it will almost certainly be rejected. CBP does not want any renewal requests that are more than 30-45 days out with 45 days being the upper limit.

3. When arriving in the US, do all your FPL alternates also need to be airports with CBP on site? What would happen if you had to divert somewhere else?

Safety of flight always comes first, however you can expect some tough questions like "why didn't you select a planned alternate where CBP is present?"

If the diversion is a true emergency (smoke in the cockpit, engine failure, medical emergency), I think CBP would work with you. An emergency due poor flight planning such pushing the aircraft's range or something similar may not go so well.

In the 20 years of working with CBP headquarters the mantra has been "reasonable and responsible." If you can demonstrate that your actions were reasonable and responsible then you should be OK, if you cannot, then it probably will not be OK!

4. The same question, but for a flight arriving from the south, without a BOE. Can they only list Designated Airports as their FPL alternates?

Same answer as above. The reality is that with the exception of KILM/Wilmington, the Designated Airports are along the US-Mexico border, Gulf of Mexico shoreline and South Florida. There are a plethora of possible alternates that are Designated Airports, so you may have a hard time explaining why you didn't choose one of those.

Anything we missed?

If you have questions about any of the above, or if you think there's something we missed, let us know!

About the author:

Rick Gardner of CST Flight Services, a company which provides a wide range of international trip support services for both owner-pilots and professional pilots. Rick is also the representative for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) in Mexico, Central America, The Bahamas and the Caribbean as well as a Bahamas Flying Ambassador, member of The Bahamas Civil Aviation Council and has participated on aviation committees of other foreign countries.

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Are you someone with knowledge to share?

Know something worth knowing about something? Want to write about it? Let OPSGROUP know! Maybe we can work together and write an article on it.

Niger Military Coup: Airspace Reopens

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Update: 25 Sep 2023

Updated Notam for overflights – the airspace of Niger remains open at all levels for international flights following a coup back in July. However it now **excludes French-registered aircraft, or those chartered by French interests** due to a political dispute. DRRR Notam A1168/23 refers.

Update: 4 Sep 2023

Niger's airspace officially **reopened** for the first time since early August, following a military coup in July. The **Niamey FIR is now available at all levels** – as long as your transponder stays on. Security on the ground is still a problem. The US continues to advise against all travel there.

Major airlines flying between Europe and West Africa have resumed overflying the DRRR/Niamey FIR.

Timeline of closures:

- **4 Sep: Airspace reopens**
- **7 Aug - 4 Sep: Airspace closed.**
- **31 July - 7 Aug: Airspace reopened.**
- **26 July - 31 July: Airspace closed.**

Background

Niger's airspace and airports were closed to all flights on July 26, following a **military coup**.

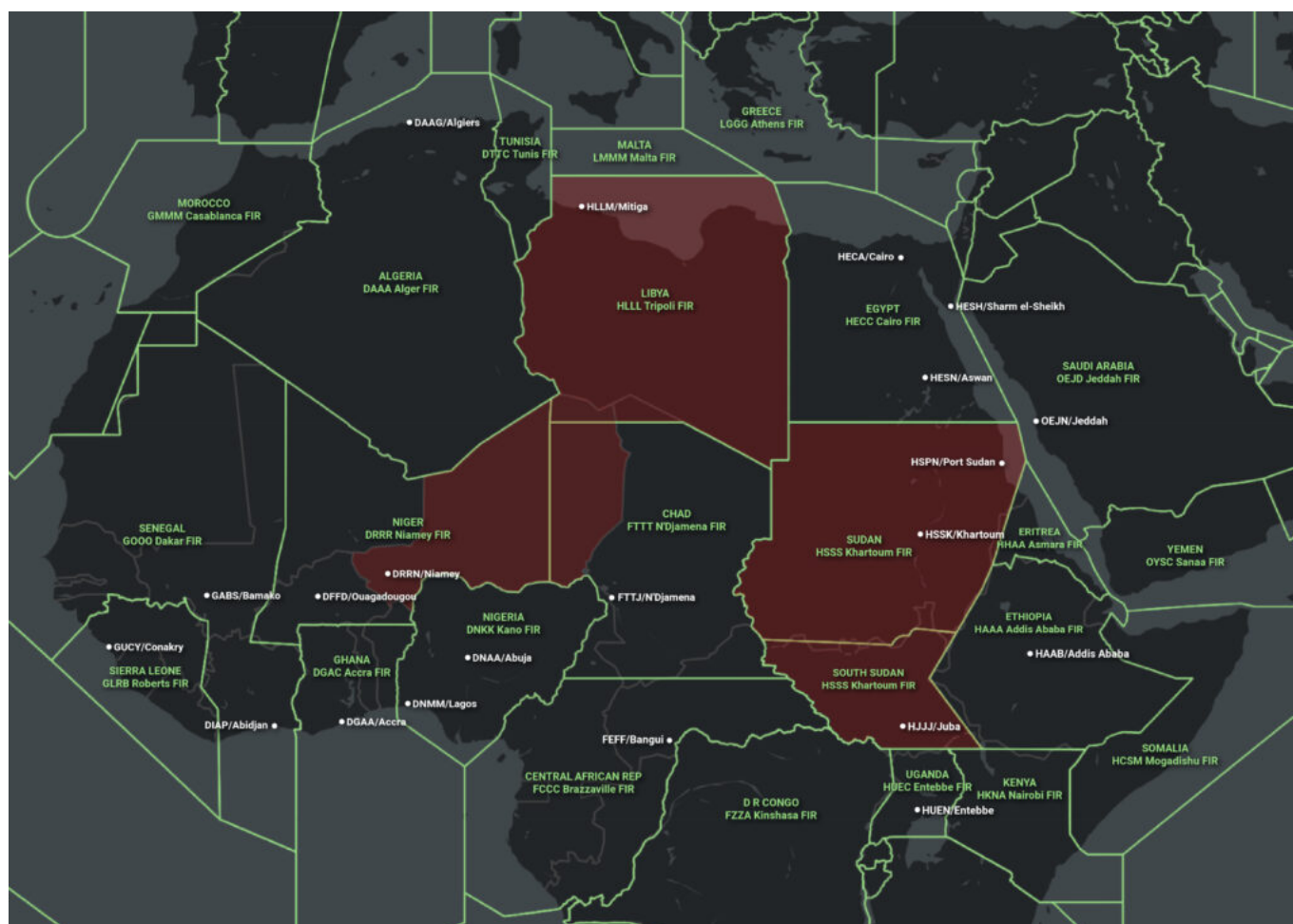
Troops announced a coup on national TV after **detaining the president**. They said they had dissolved the constitution, suspended all institutions and **closed the nation's land and air borders**. Soon after the announcement, the several Notams appeared advising that the airspace over Niger was closed, along with all airports in the country.

Niger straddles two FIRs - DRRR/Niamey (controlled by Niger) and FTTJ/N'Djamena (controlled by Chad). **But it was just the territory of Niger itself that was closed, not the whole DRRR/Niamey FIR:**

This closure made African routings quite challenging - a region already plagued with various airspace closures and risk warnings:

- **Sudan:** Airspace remains closed to all civilian flights following a military coup in April 2023. More info.
- **South Sudan:** Air navigation services remain suspended above FL245 following the coup in Sudan. More info.
- **Libya:** Flight ban for US and UK operators (several other countries have warnings in place) due to risks associated with the civil war that has been ongoing since 2014. More info.

The map below shows the issue:



Flights from Europe to West Africa and beyond had to route around Niger, via Mali and Burkina Faso in the western part of the DRRR/Niamey FIR, or via the GOOO/Dakar FIR (*British Airways DNAA-EGLL in the map below*).

Flights between West Africa and the Middle East also had this extra dogleg around Niger if electing

to fly the northerly route across Africa (*Qatar DNMM-OTBH*) or else chose the southerly route avoiding Sudan and Yemen (*Emirates DGAA-OMDB*).

And yep, there were still the likes of Egyptair **overflying Libyan airspace** on some flights!



We will update this article with further info as we get it. If you have anything to share, please let us know.

Armenia-Azerbaijan Airspace Update

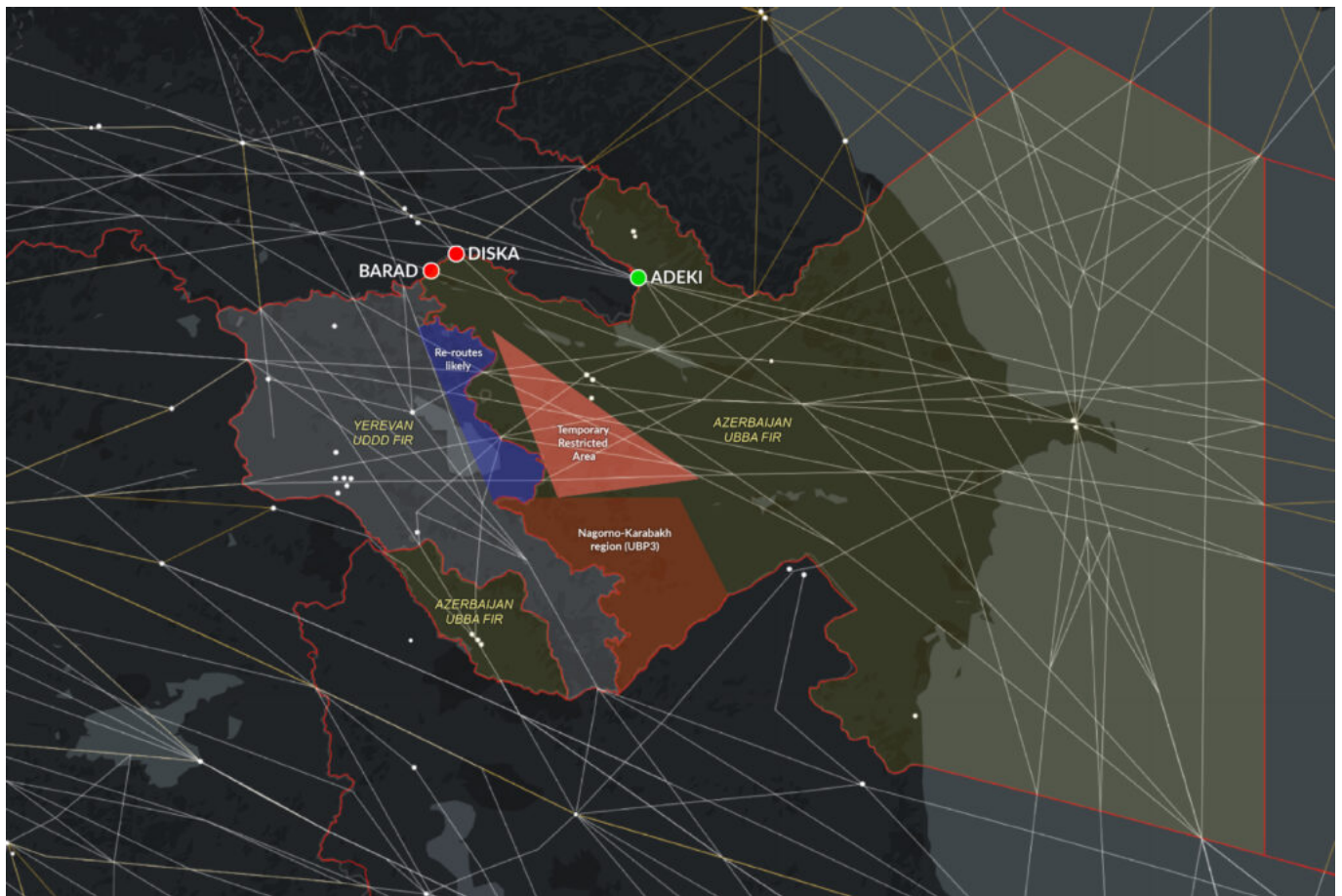
David Mumford
16 January, 2024

Update: Sep 2022

- In September 2022 there were renewed border clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia – the worst flare-up in hostilities since the war ended in 2020.
- The waypoints along the border between the two countries (VETEN, PEMAN, ELSIV, MATAL) were temporarily closed on Sep 13, but reopened the next day, after Russia brokered a ceasefire to end the fighting.

Update: Oct 2020

At the peak of the conflict in late October 2020, the airspace picture looked like this:



Here's what happened at that time:

Azerbaijan

- Azerbaijan established a Temporary Restricted Area along the border with Armenia, which meant that all East-West airways between the two countries were effectively closed.
- They also issued a Notam advising caution across the UBBA/Baku FIR due to the spillover of the conflict, with the specific warning of the threat posed by long-range missiles which they claimed Armenia had been using to target locations throughout Azerbaijan.

Armenia

- Armenia never closed any parts of its airspace. Instead, they issued a Notam advising

operators to expect tactical rerouting and short notice closures in the airspace along the border, and recommended they carry additional fuel.

Germany

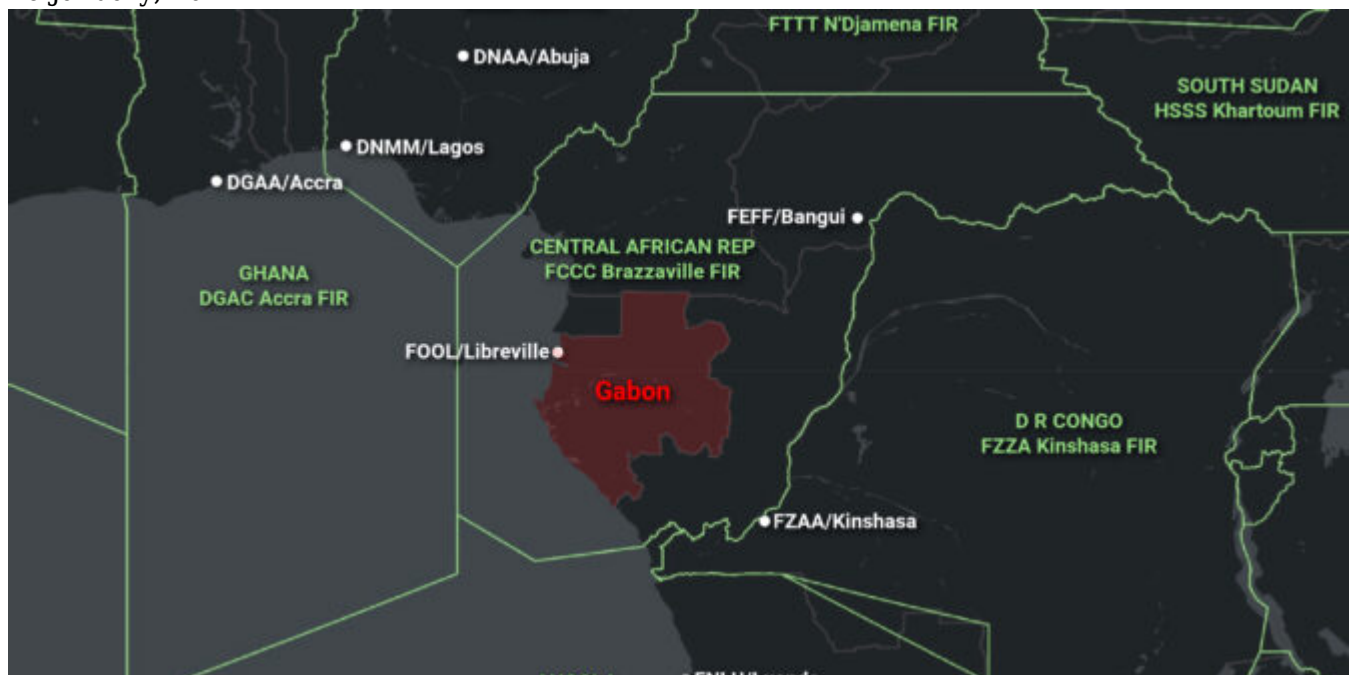
- Germany issued airspace warnings for both Armenia and Azerbaijan. It did not advise that overflights be restricted to a certain altitude, but instead warned of a “potential risk to aviation... from military operation including anti aviation weaponry.”

France

- The airspace warnings issued by France were a bit different. Essentially, they said that operators should not overfly the border region except on certain airways in the far north of the UBBA/Baku FIR at FL340 or above.

Gabon Military Coup: Airspace Reopens

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Update: 4 Sep 2023

Air borders in Gabon have reportedly been reopened following last week's coup. The UK FCO have posted an update here. From a security standpoint, not much has changed though – the situation is still volatile, and scheduled carriers continue to avoid landing at FOOL/Libreville. Military action by neighbouring countries is still a possibility at short notice.

Original Story: 31 Aug 2023

- There was a military coup in Gabon on Aug 30. The military group dissolved institutions, cancelled the Aug 26 election results, and closed the country's borders until further notice.
- Heavy gunfire was heard in the capital, Libreville, during the coup attempt, but the situation was calm in the capital and across the country as of Aug 31.
- Notams were vague, but several sources reported that Gabon's airspace was closed, along with all airports in the country.

Airport and Airspace Info

Notams were published for Gabon under the FCCC/Brazzaville FIR code, advising that the country's air, sea and land **borders are closed**:

```
FCCCYNYX
(A0913/23 NOTAMR A0907/23
Q)FCCC/QXXXX/IV/NB0/E/000/999/0043N01655E 999
A)FCCC B)2023-08-30 16:10:00 C)2023-09-02 23:59:00 EST
E)FOLLOWING THE CURRENT EVENTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF GABON, THE AIR, LAND
AND SEA BORDERS ARE CLOSED FROM THIS DAY ON THROUGHOUT THE NATIONAL
TERRITORY)
```

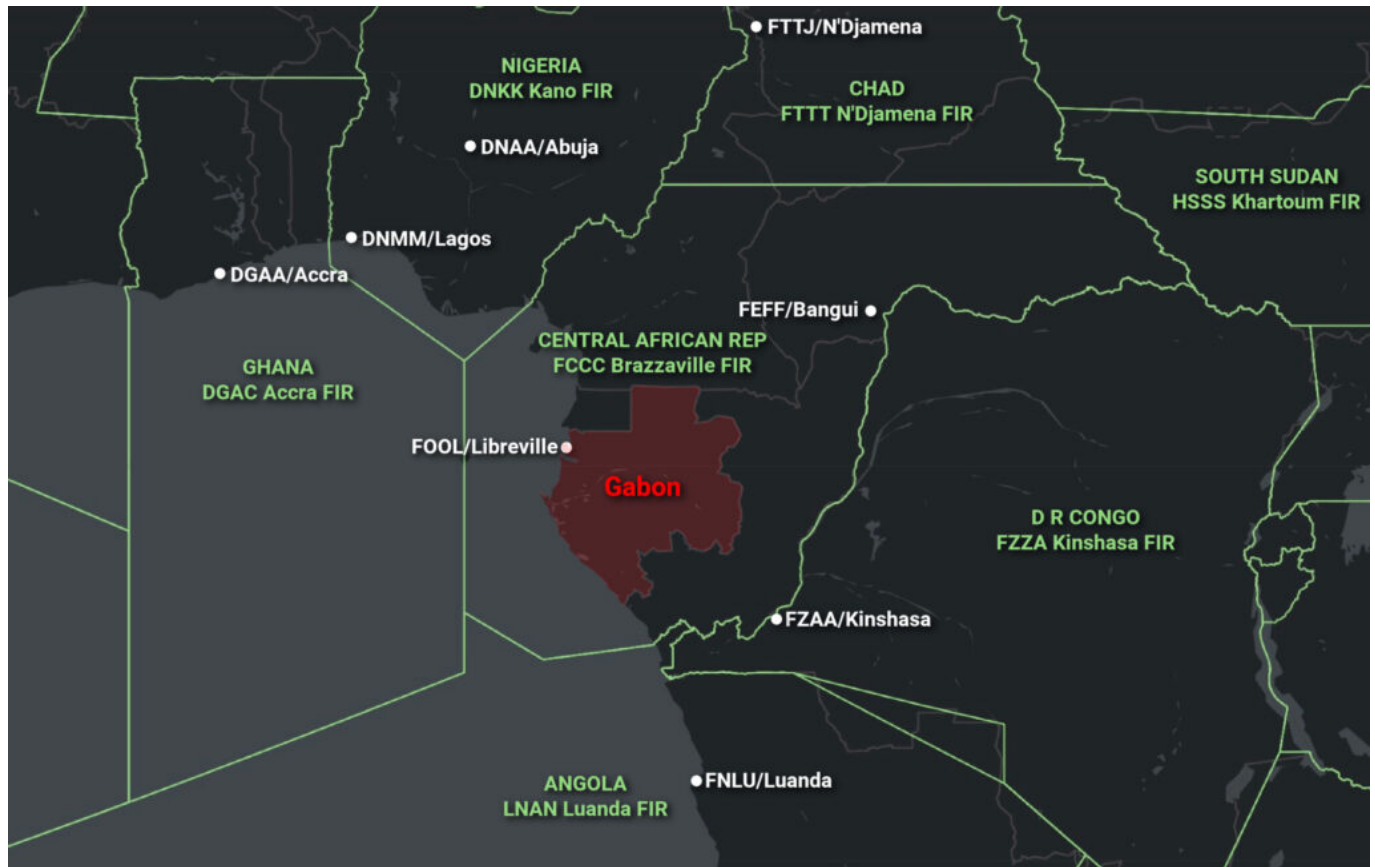
These Notams might not show up on conventional Notam search engines (the FAA one, for example, does not show them), so you have to use the ASECNA Notam search instead:

<https://ais.asecna.aero/fr/ntm/notam.php>

It wasn't 100% clear from the Notam if the airspace was closed for overflights, but several sources including Royal Air Maroc and the Netherlands Government said that the **airspace was closed**.

Where are we talking about?

Gabon sits in the middle of the FCCC/Brazzaville FIR:



Overflights of the FCCC/Brazzaville FIR outside of Gabon were not affected.

For overflights of Gabon itself, **most operators avoided the airspace**. In the ASECNA AIP, there is a Contingency Plan for routes through the Libreville UTA, although this didn't seem to be activated at any stage.

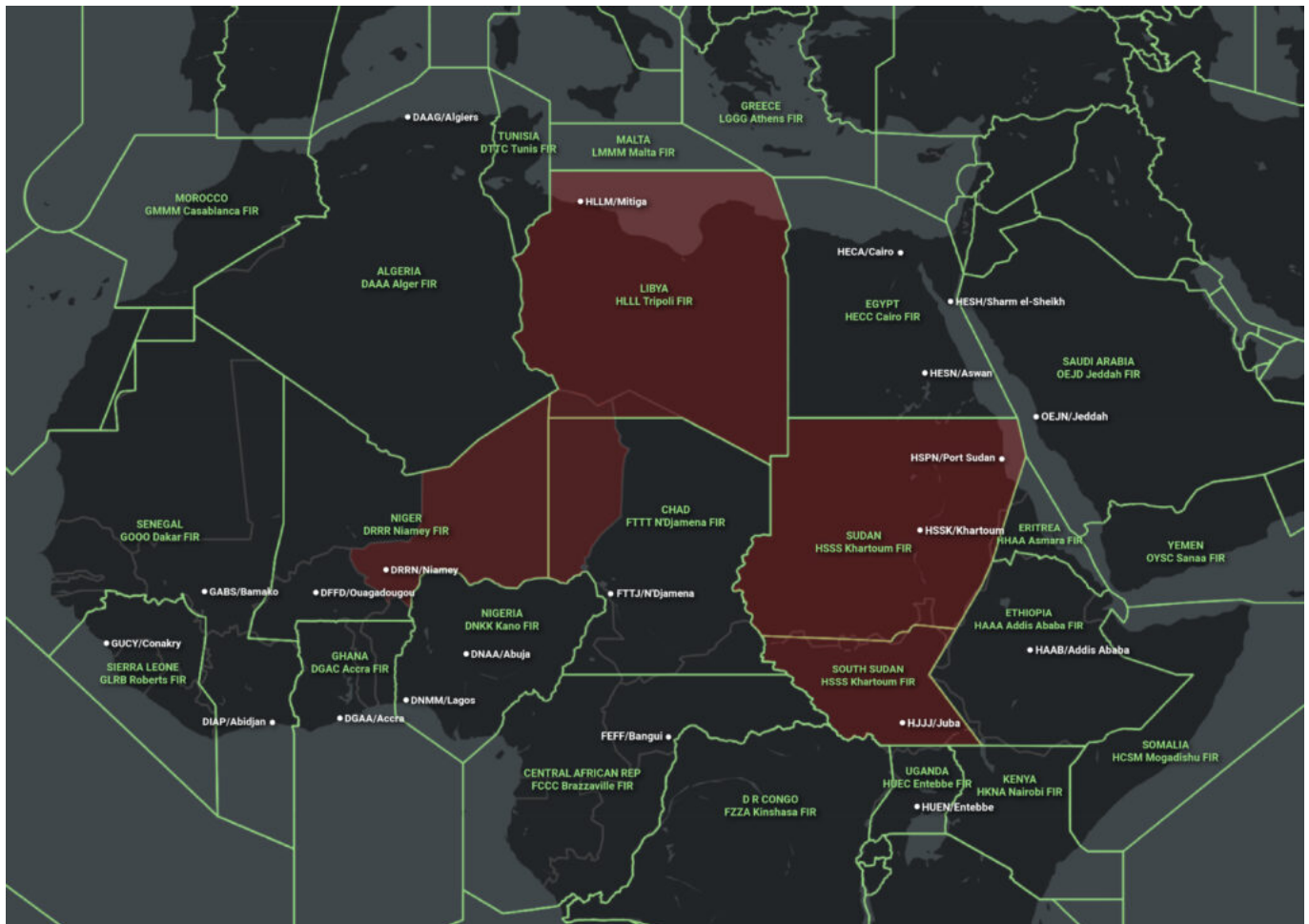
Here's what that looks like:

- (UG856) BIPIV/MOVOD FL290, FL390 SOUTH-EAST BOUND
- (UG856) BIPIV/MOVID FL300, FL400 NORTH-WEST BOUND
- (UG861) MOVOD / ARASI FL340, FL360 NORTH-WEST BOUND
- (UG861) MOVOD / ARASI FL330, FL350, FL370 SOUTH-EAST BOUND
- (UB737) IPOVO / USMOL FL280, FL320 SOUTH-WEST BOUND
- (UB737) IPOVO / USMOL FL270, FL310 NORTH-EAST BOUND

Note that with the ongoing closure of airspace in Niger and Sudan, plus the airspace risk in Libya, this has already created challenges for traffic routing through Central Africa:

- **Niger:** Airspace remains closed to all civilian flights following a military coup in Aug 2023. More info.
- **Sudan:** Airspace remains closed to all civilian flights following a military coup in April 2023. More info.
- **South Sudan:** Air navigation services remain suspended above FL245 following the coup in Sudan. More info.

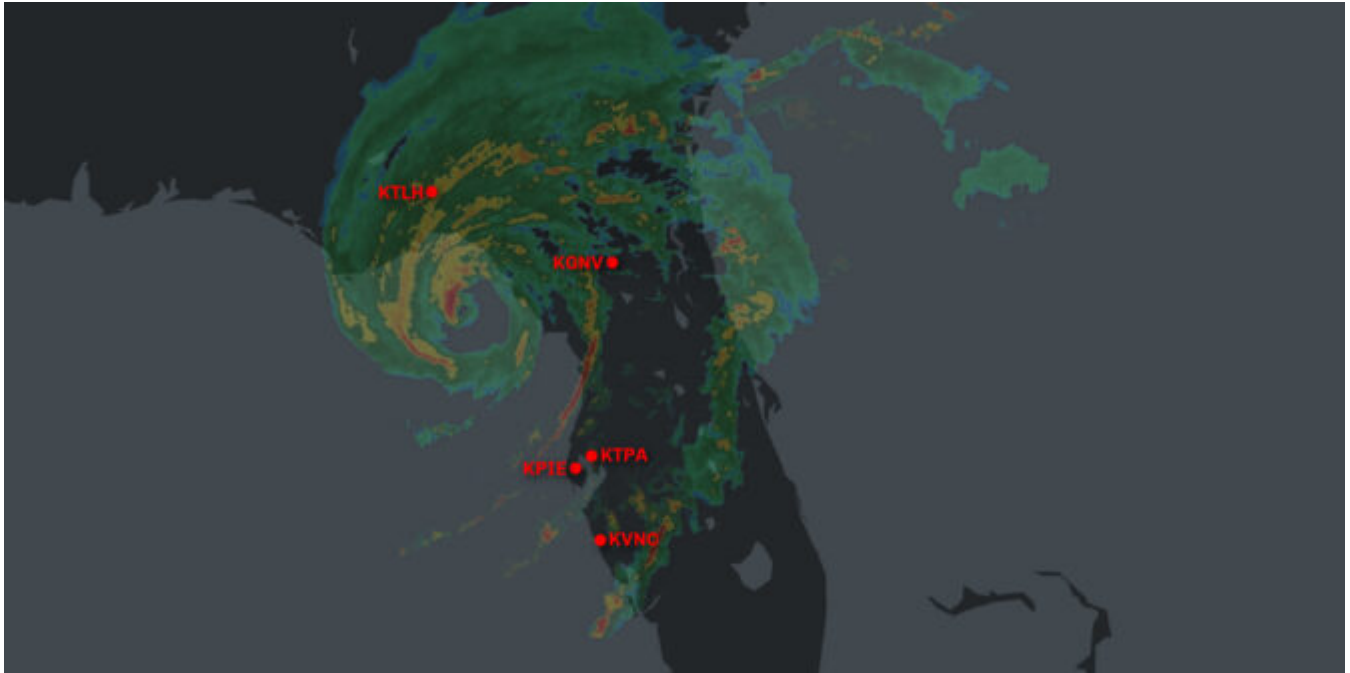
- **Libya:** Flight ban for US and UK operators (several other countries have warnings in place) due to risks associated with the civil war that has been ongoing since 2014. More info.



We're continuing to monitor the situation closely. If you have any updates to share, please contact us at news@ops.group.

Hurricane Idalia: Florida Airport Closures - 1200z Aug 30

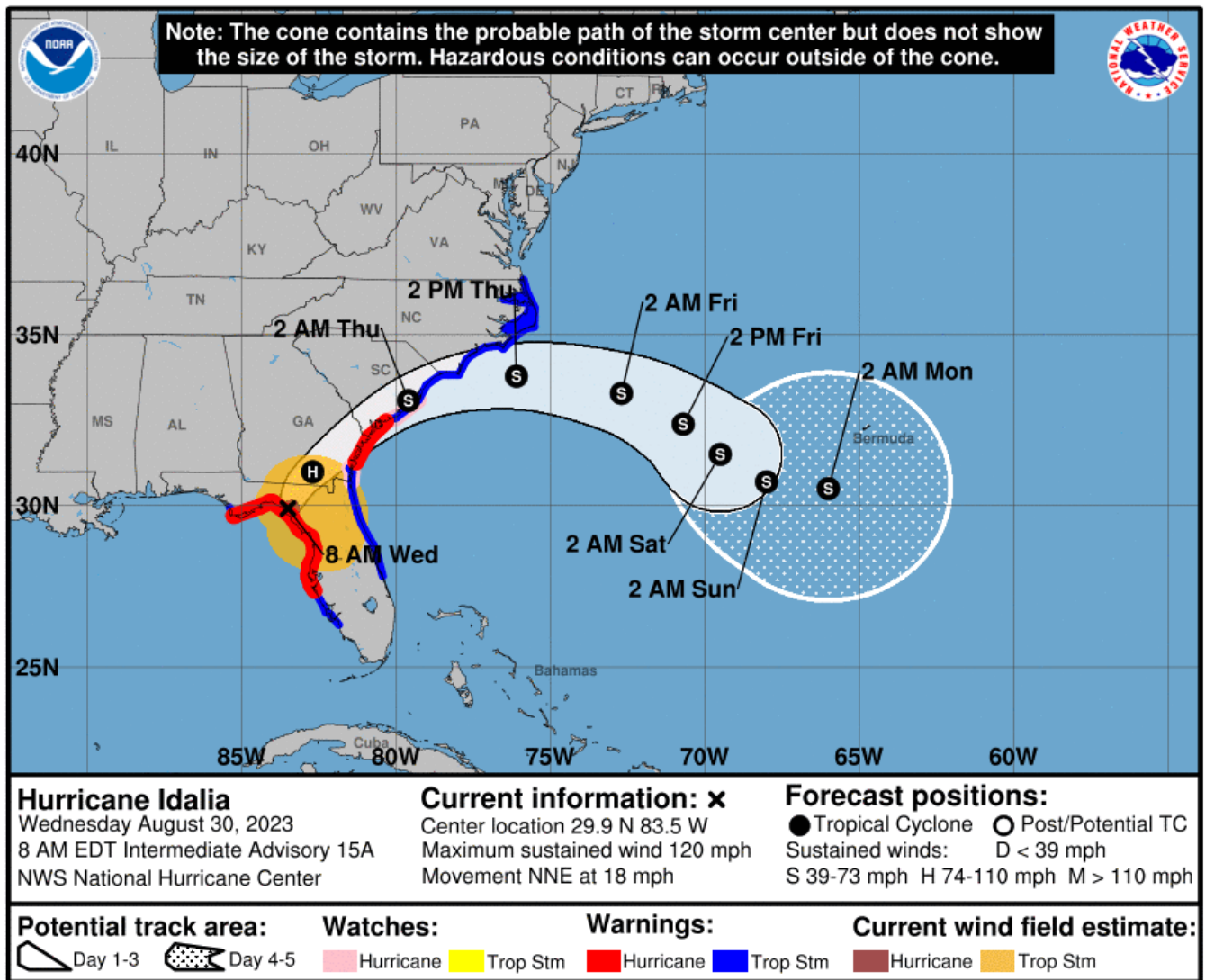
David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Key Points

- The forecast for Hurricane Idalia has been upgraded. It is now expected to be a Category 4 hurricane when it makes **landfall over Florida's northern panhandle on Wednesday morning.**
- **Several airports are closed:** KTPA/Tampa, KPIE/St Pete-Clearwater, KVNC/Venice, KTLH/Tallahassee, and KGNV/Gainesville. Expect closures to be announced at other airports in the region too.
- Hurricane warnings have been issued for the majority of the state's Gulf Coast.

National Hurricane Center's Advisory, issued 1200z Aug 30:



At 800 AM EDT (1200 UTC), the eye of Hurricane Idalia was located by Tallahassee radar near latitude 29.9 North, longitude 83.5 West. Idalia is moving toward the north-northeast near 18 mph (30 km/h). A north-northeastward motion is expected through the morning, with Idalia's center forecast to move into southern Georgia later today. Idalia is forecast to turn toward the northeast and east-northeast, moving near or along the coasts of Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina late today and Thursday.

Maximum sustained winds are estimated near 120 mph (195 km/h) with higher gusts. Idalia is a category 3 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale. Although Idalia will weaken further now that the center is inland, it is likely to still be a hurricane while moving across southern Georgia, and near the coast of Georgia or southern South Carolina late today. Idalia is forecast to be a tropical storm while moving near the coasts of northeastern South Carolina and North Carolina tonight and on Thursday.

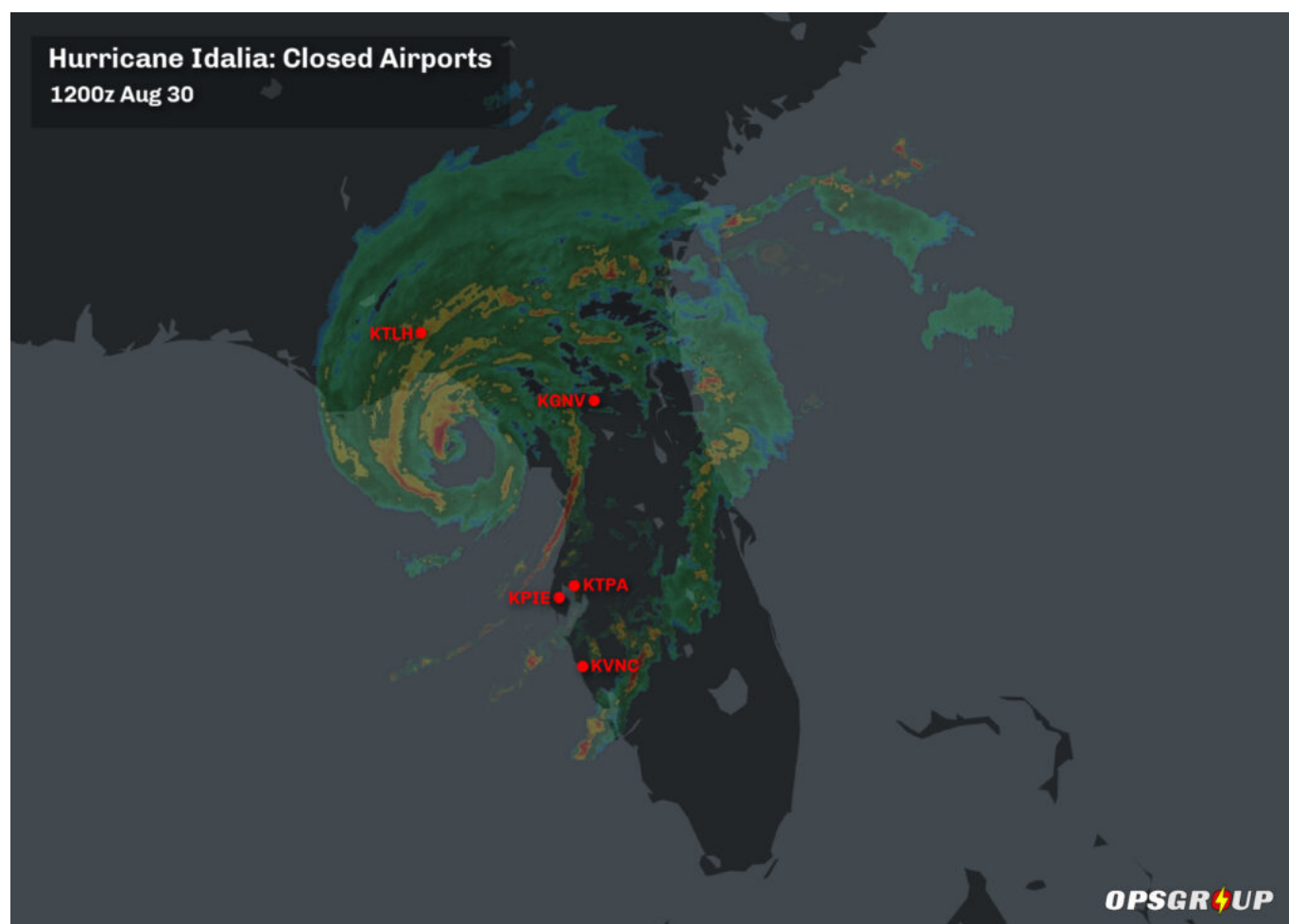
Hurricane-force winds extend outward up to 25 miles (35 km) from the center and tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 175 miles (280 km).

The minimum central pressure is 950 mb (28.05 inches) based on aircraft data.

Water levels along the coast of the Florida Big Bend continue to rise rapidly. A NOAA National Ocean Service tide gauge at Cedar Key, Florida, recently reported a water level of 6.2 feet above mean higher high water, which is an approximation of inundation in that area.

Airport Closures

Several airports across the region will close for the passage of the storm. Here are the ones we know about as of 1200z on Aug 30:



And here are the Notams that carry the announcements of the closures:

KTPA/Tampa

08/255 - AD AP CLSD EXC EMERG ACFT AND MIL OPS AND LIFE FLT. 30 AUG 12:10 2023 UNTIL 30 AUG 21:00 2023. CREATED: 30 AUG 12:10 2023

KPIE/St Pete-Clearwater

(A0740/23) - AD AP CLSD. 29 AUG 19:00 2023 UNTIL 30 AUG 19:00 2023. CREATED: 28 AUG 17:27 2023

KVNC/Venice

08/354 - AD AP CLSD. 30 AUG 11:57 2023 UNTIL 30 AUG 18:00 2023. CREATED: 30 AUG 11:57 2023

KGNV/Gainesville

(A0547/23) - AD AP CLSD EXC EMERG ACFT AND LIFE FLT AND MIL OPS AND SKED ACFT 1HR PPR 352-262-6691. 30 AUG 10:45 2023 UNTIL 31 AUG 02:30 2023. CREATED: 29 AUG 21:03 2023

KTLH/Tallahassee

(A0665/23) - AD AP CLSD EXC EMERG ACFT AND SAR AND MIL OPS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CARGO 1HR PPR 850-891-7830. 30 AUG 03:00 2023 UNTIL 31 AUG 08:00 2023. CREATED: 29 AUG 16:24 2023

More info

- **Cyclocane** have a tracker page for the hurricane here, which includes tracking map and source info from the National Hurricane Center.
- **The FAA** have a page on airport closures here. They have activated telcons for Idalia at 1230Z and 2200z each day - you can find dial in deets on the NASS website.
- **The NBAA** have a page on the hurricane here, which includes airport closures, equipment shutdowns, and route info.

If you have any additional info to add, please email us at news@ops.group

Aug 2023: Who wants to overfly Afghanistan?

David Mumford
16 January, 2024

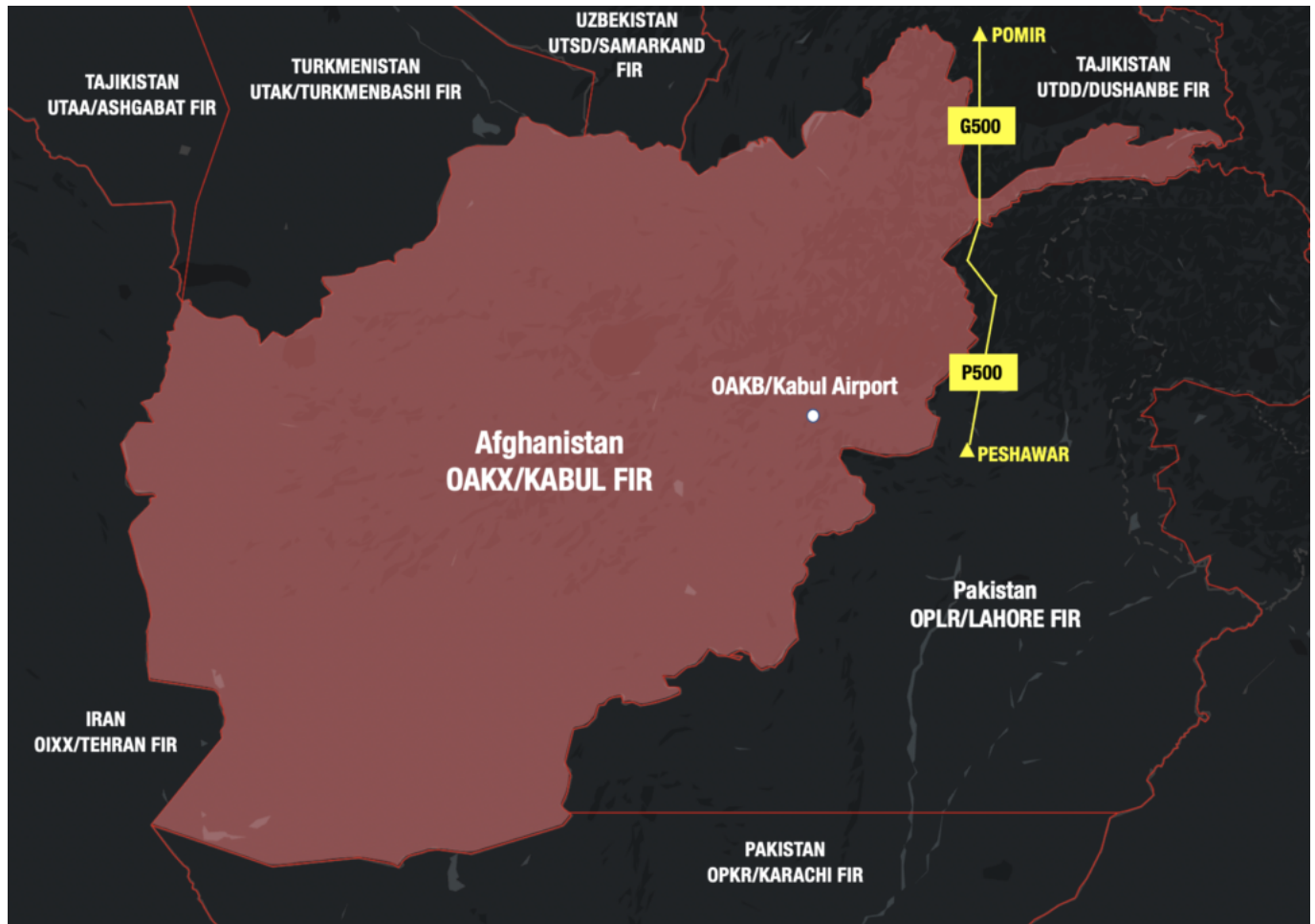


No one! There's **no ATC service** across the entire country, there's a seemingly endless list of surface-to-air weaponry they **might start shooting at you** if you fly too low, and **if you have to divert** then good luck with the Taliban.

US operators can now overfly Afghanistan

The US FAA has just published a new SFAR for Afghanistan which amends its airspace warning for the country. **US operators are now permitted to overfly the OAKX/Kabul FIR at FL320 and above.**

Previously, flights were only allowed on **airways P500/G500** in the east of the country. This made more sense from an airspace-risk point of view, as flights on these routes transit Afghan airspace only very briefly.



But now, if you're a US operator, you're no longer limited to those two airways – you can fly where you like across that big red blob as long as it's at FL320 or above.

The US are not the only ones who have eased their airspace warning in this way. **EASA** also recommend FL320 or above, and **Germany** say FL330 or above. All the other countries who regularly issue airspace warnings – **France, UK, Italy, and Canada** – say that overflights should only be on those P500/G500 airways.

Why the change?

To understand the rationale behind the FAA's easing of the airspace warning, the place to head is the *"Discussion of the Final Rule"* section in the SFAR.

Here's a summary:

- Essentially, the FAA think **the only risk at the higher flight levels is the lack of ATC.**
- After the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, ICAO made contact with Afghanistan's CAA.

Together with neighbouring ANSPs and IATA, they published a **Contingency Plan for the resumption of overflights of the OAKX/Kabul FIR.**

- With this specific risk diminished, the FAA now allows US operators to overfly Afghanistan at FL320 and above.
- **The FAA still considers altitudes below FL320 hazardous for flights** due to ongoing security risks from Taliban and ISIS. They cite the possibility of access to various weapons by terrorist groups, including MANPADS. Cross-border attacks into Pakistan by VEOs pose additional risks below FL320.

How do the Contingency Procedures work?

You can find these on the Afghanistan CAA homepage, or by clicking below:

This Contingency Plan is activated by Notam, and applies when the **Kabul FIR is unattended - which has been the case for some time now.**

In a nutshell it relies on adjacent FIRs coordinating with one another, and with aircraft to make sure they **follow assigned routes and assigned levels** while transiting Afghan airspace to reduce collision risk.

They are effectively broken down into two sections - lower airspace (FL160 - FL290) and upper airspace (FL300 - 510).

Lower Airspace

We're not really interested in this, because we don't want to fly at these lower levels! But anyway, here's how it works:

- OAKB/Kabul, OAMS/Mazar-e-Sharif and OAHK/Herat airports will all provide surveillance services in their terminal areas.
- When outside them, you must follow a published low-level route. When descending or climbing, remain right of track unless you're below MSA on an IFR procedure. You'll also need to make TIBA broadcasts on 125.2.

Upper Airspace

OK, the bit we're interested in!

The Contingency Plan mentions all the available routes, and the Notams make it clear what levels are available:

OAKX G0306/23 - ALL OVER FLIGHTS SHALL USE THE FOLLOWING
LATERALLY DE-CONFLICTED HIGH ROUTES (HIGH SECTOR) STARTING
AT FL360-FL510 EXCEPT ON M875/L509 ROUTES SHALL USE
FL310-FL510 AND P500 SHALL USE FL300-510
TRANSMISSION SHALL TAKE PLACE EVERY 5 MINUTES ON TIBA
FREQ 125.2MHZ FOR THE TEMPORARY PURPOSE ONLY.)

1. FIRUZ-P500-MOTM0 (FL300-FL510)
2. AMDAR-M875-TAPIS-L509-LAJAK (FL310-FL510)
3. LEMOD-N644-DOBAT (FL360-FL510)
4. RANAH-L750-BIROS (FL360-FL510)

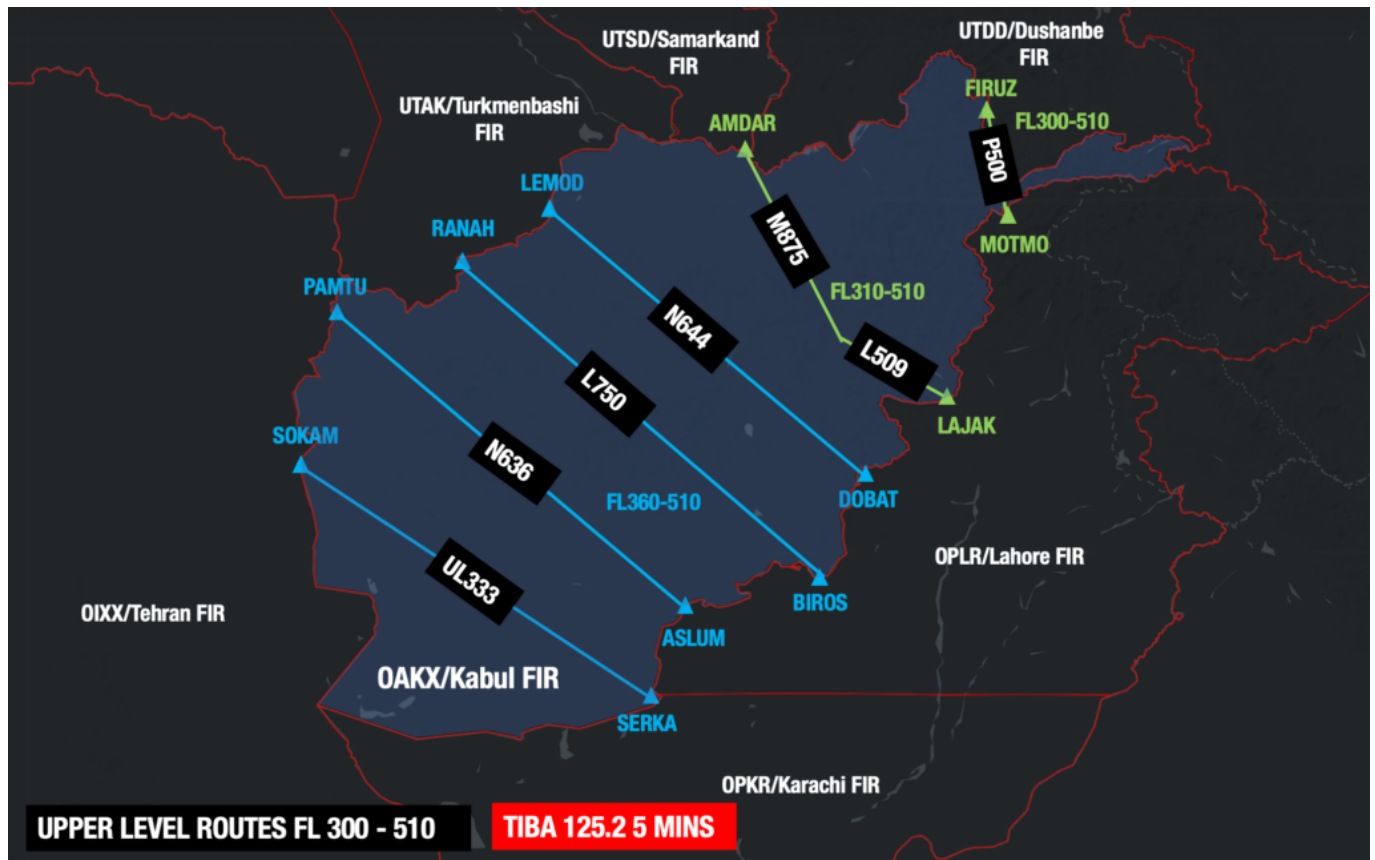
5. PAMTU-P628-ASLUM(FL360-FL510)

6. SOKAM-UL333-SERKA(FL360-FL510) .

10 JUL 06:50 2023 UNTIL 05 OCT 23:59 2023 ESTIMATED.

CREATED: 10 JUL 11:34 2023

So here's what that looks like:



- These are **bi-directional routes**, and only available between certain levels (as per the map above!).
- **Try and avoid using FL300.** It is sometimes reserved for military traffic as advised by Notam.
- **On entry to the Afghan airspace:** adjacent FIRs will apply in-trail spacing of 15 mins on each route at each level. The routes provide at least 50nm lateral spacing. As per usual, westbound traffic should be at an even level, and eastbound at an odd one.
- **While inside the Class G airspace:** TIBA procedures will apply at all times on 125.2. Expect to contact the next FIR at least 10 minutes before the boundary on VHF.
- The good news is that the 'up-stream' FIR will also coordinate with the 'downstream' FIR to let them know you are coming.

Other Gotchas

- Despite being Class G, **flight plans must still follow the rules** found in Afghanistan's AIP. This includes the requirement for RNAV10 or better, and the submission of your plan to the Kabul FIR via AFTN.
- **Priority will be given to 'long haul' international flights in the higher levels.** Regional

and domestic operators needs to remain in lower airspace.

What are most operators doing?

Avoiding Afghanistan! Just like they did before.

- Most major international airlines still appear to be **avoiding Afghanistan's airspace for overflights**, although some are **still using airways P500/G500** in the east of the country like they did before.
- Most traffic continues to **route south** via Pakistan/Iran, or even further south via the UAE and Arabian Sea.
- There are **risk warnings** to consider for the airspace on this southerly routing too. Several countries have warnings in place for **Iran's airspace** (the OIIX/Tehran FIR), including a total flight ban by the US. The southern part of **Saudi Arabia's airspace** (the OEJD/Jeddah FIR) carries risk as well, although there have been no reported drone strikes from Yemen in the past year.
- **To the north of Afghanistan:** the options for overflights are fairly limited – via Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, avoiding Russia – potentially useful if operating from **Europe to the Far East** (China, Hong Kong, Japan, etc.)

Should I overfly Afghanistan?

Despite there being contingency routes now in place, and despite the easing of the airspace warning by the FAA, there are still **several risks here:** lack of ATC, and serious safety and security risks at both the lower flight levels and on the ground.

If you have an **engine failure or depressurization**, will you be able to stay above FL320 all the way across the FIR? If you had to **divert to an airport in Afghanistan**, how confident would you be that you would be able to get out again in one piece?

For more info, check Safeairspace.net – our Conflict Zone & Risk Database.



NAT Changes Coming Soon!

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



It's been quiet for a while on the North Atlantic, but that's set to change soon, with the release of a new version of the NAT Doc 007.

Wait, what new version of the NAT Doc 007??

It's just a **draft** for now, due for release in **March 2024**.

It was published following the meeting of the North Atlantic Systems Planning Group (NAT SPG) back in June – the folks who meet each year to work out what needs changing in this document, amongst other things. So this draft contains the changes they discussed at that meeting.

To read the **draft NAT Doc**, [click here](#).

If you want to read the entire report from that meeting, [click here](#) (lots of other stuff in there, but the draft NAT Doc starts on page 58!).

What is changing?

Right, the important bit!

First up, there will be **no more Oceanic Clearances** – a big change to anyone used to saying “*Cleared to Kennedy via Track Alpha, FL360, Mach 0.80*”. The new NAT Doc 007 will also have a **new Comms Failure** procedure... completely rewritten.

These are the biggest changes to NAT procedures in years, and **we're looking for some volunteers** to help go through the new NAT Doc – for this, and more, **join the new #atlantic channel on Slack** – open to all members.



This is one of a bunch of **new channels** we're working on at the moment, so keep an eye out for more **"LOCAL"** channels coming ... we already have #newzealand, #singapore, #italy. These local channels are a new idea – somewhere for people based there to connect, and to help/welcome visiting crews. Opsgroup members can get involved here!

Where can I find the current NAT Doc?

Head over here. This is our article from **Jan 2023 - the last time the NAT Doc was updated**. It contains the downloadable PDF of the current NAT Doc, as well as a chapter-by-chapter summary of everything that was updated at the time.

And for a timeline of **all the big changes on the North Atlantic** stretching back to the dawn of time (actually, 2015, but basically the same thing), click here.

Header image from ATC History.

New Datalink Mandate in France

David Mumford
16 January, 2024

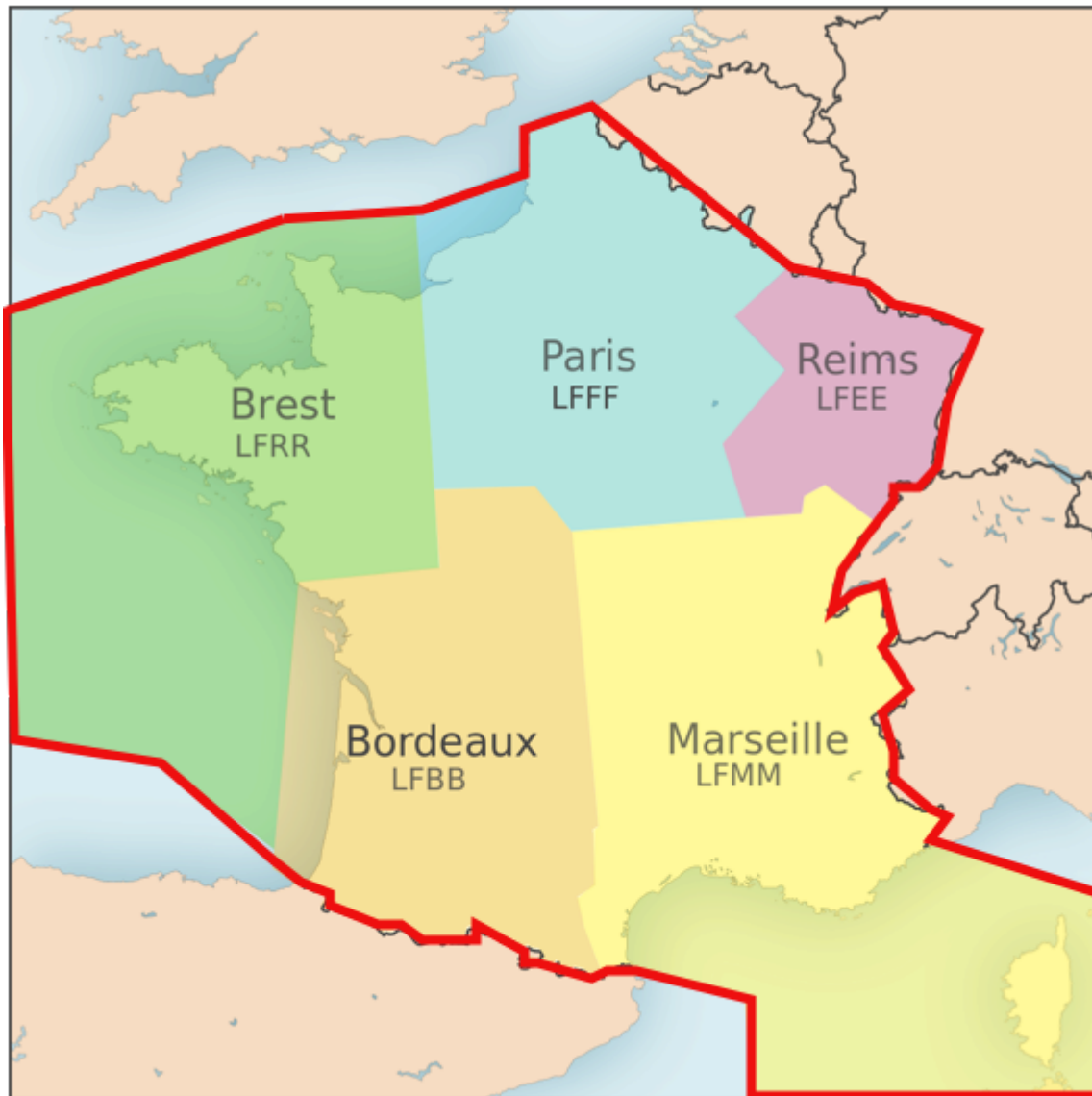


Effective July 13, if you're flying in **France above FL195 and you have ATN CPDLC - you must use it!**

Following the recommendation of the Eurocontrol Operational Focus Group (OFG), France is the first European country to **mandate CPDLC logon** in their airspace after Karlsruhe UAC (EDUU), Maastricht UAC (EDYY), and Cyprus (LCCC). The OFG recommendation is the result of the review of several incidents by ATCOs from 22 ANSPs.

What do you mean by "France"?

Anywhere in the LFFF, LFEE, LFMM, LFBB, or LFRR FIRs.



Where have they announced this?

In AIC 10/23.

The AIC says the mandate only applies if you're "capable and eligible". What does that mean?

You're capable and eligible if **all** of the following three things apply:

- You have ATN CPDLC
- Your equipment is not broken
- The crew is trained on how to use datalink

If you don't tick all three boxes, you can still fly above FL195 in France - **they won't restrict you.** They're just saying that **you must logon if you can.**

What if I only have FANS datalink?

This new rule in France only applies to aircraft with ATN CPDLC - those with FANS 1/A (or with no datalink at all) will **continue to supported by conventional VHF**. Dual-stack aircraft should be reconfigured to

logon via ATN

Do I have to register my aircraft on the Logon List?

No. You don't have to sign up to the Logon List to use CPDLC in France. France doesn't use the Logon List yet. The only places where you need to be on this list is for flights in **Switzerland, Germany, and Maastricht-UAC controlled airspace** (i.e. the upper airspace above FL245 over Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg). **France plans to join from 2026.**

Is this new rule in France the same thing as the European Datalink Mandate?

No. The European Datalink mandate is for CPDLC **equipage** for flights **above FL285** throughout Europe. This new French mandate applies not on the carriage but on the **logon** for **flights above FL195**.

Another important distinction – **none of the European Datalink exemptions apply** for aircraft which are equipped with CPDLC, as this new French rule has nothing to do with the Datalink mandate! (i.e. the exemptions we detail here do not apply, such as aircraft with 19 seats or less and a MTOW less than 100,000 lbs).

Where else in Europe do I have to logon to CPDLC?

Provided you've got ATN CPDLC, here are the places in Europe where **logon is mandatory**:

- **Maastricht UAC** (EDYY) and **Karlsruhe UAC** (EDUU) above FL285 (source: Eurocontrol)
- **Cyprus** (LCCC FIR) above FL285 (source: AIP GEN 3.4.5)
- **France** (LFFF, LFEE, LFMM, LFBB, LFRR FIRs) above FL195 (source: AIC 10/23)

Know of anywhere else that should be in this list? Let us know.

And for everything you need to know about the **European Datalink Mandate** and how it affects your flight, check our article.

SSR Code Change in the NAT!

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



The NAT Region is changing the “last assigned code” SSR transponder procedures. Since the dawn of time, everywhere on the NAT, this domestic code had to be retained for 30 minutes after entering NAT airspace. But now the UK has changed it to 10 minutes for the entire EGGX/Shanwick FIR, and we expect all the other NAT FIRs will soon be updating their rules to say the same. This new 10-minute rule will then become the standard across the NAT Region, and will be published in the next version of the NAT Doc 007 due out in October 2023.

For several decades, unless directed otherwise by ATC, pilots flying in the MNPS airspace, now known as the NAT, were required to maintain the transponder in Mode A/C with continuous Code 2000 operation, except for the **last assigned code, which had to be retained for a period of 30 minutes** after entering the NAT airspace or leaving a radar surveillance service area.

The rationale for changing from the last assigned code to Code 2000 after 30 minutes was based on the recognition of the **original domestic code** by subsequent national radar services upon exit from the oceanic airspace.

It was crucial to make this change before exiting, in line with the terms of ICAO Doc 4444: “Except for aircraft in a state of emergency, or during communication failure or unlawful interference situations, and unless otherwise agreed by regional air navigation agreement or between a transferring and an accepting ATC unit, the transferring unit shall assign Code A2000 to a controlled flight prior to transfer of communications.”

Thus, due to the limited time spent in the NAT HLA, when flying on **Tango 9, Tango 290, or Tango 213**, the change from the last assigned domestic code to Code 2000 should occur within a maximum of **10 minutes** after passing BEGAS, ADVAT, or BERUX when Northbound, and LASNO, GELPO, or TAMEL when Southbound

For the same reason, aircraft with a routing sequence **Reykjavik-Shanwick-Scottish (BIRD-EGGX-EGPX)** shall change the last assigned code to Mode A 2000 **on transfer from Reykjavik** and no later than **10 minutes** after entering Shanwick airspace.

It should also be noted that Reykjavik ACC provides radar control service in the southeastern part of its area, and therefore, transponder codes issued by Reykjavik ACC must be retained throughout the

Reykjavik OCA until advised otherwise by ATC.

Furthermore, although outside the NAT HLA, it is also necessary to retain the last assigned code in **New York West ATS airspace**. Similarly, aircraft transiting **Bermuda RADAR airspace** should remain on the last assigned code until clear of that airspace, then squawk 2000.

In all other cases, Code 2000 would be displayed **30 minutes** after entry into the NAT airspace.

So what has changed?

In its AIRAC 2023-06-15 edition, the UK AIP ended the 30-minute code retention rule in order to standardize a change to Code 2000 after **10 minutes** of entering the NAT airspace.

The UK AIP now states:

“Unless otherwise directed by ATC, aircraft equipped with SSR transponders in the NAT region shall operate transponders continuously on Mode A Code 2000 regardless of the direction of flight, except that the last assigned code shall normally be retained for a maximum period of 10 minutes after entry into NAT airspace.”

This change **eliminates the exceptions for Tango routes**.

Why didn't I hear about this?

The change was buried deep within the UK AIP without any publicity or modification of specific NAT documents – notably the famed NAT Doc 007.

The North Atlantic Document 007 is regularly updated through the ongoing efforts of the **North Atlantic Special Planning Group (NAT SPG)**. While it does not establish regulations (which fall under the Regional Supplementary Procedures DOC 7030 and FIR-specific AIPs), it is widely regarded as the primary resource for operational guidance in the North Atlantic. So it was surprising to learn that it had not been updated following the recent change in the Shanwick FIR, despite the ongoing work of the NAT SPG.

One could have expected that a change to a long-established practice (even if understandable for the purpose of standardizing a rule and eliminating exceptions) would have been anticipated and coordinated to avoid introducing a new exception distinguishing one FIR from the others.

But after verifying with NAT specialists at Shanwick, it appears that they have been talking about it with all the other FIRs – and **everyone has agreed to change the rule to 10 minutes**. This change will be published in the next version of the NAT Doc 007 (expected Oct 2023), and all other FIRs will be updating their AIPs in due course. It's apparently part of a push to **harmonize NAT Region procedures** where possible.

The delayed implementation of Oceanic Clearance Removal (OCR) resulted in a delay in the publication of the NAT Doc 007, as it required **significant changes to support OCR**. While the 10-minute change has been universally accepted by all Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs), the lag between documentation and ANSPs is solely due to the delayed updates of Doc 007 being published.

So tell me again, what has changed?

- In the **entire NAT airspace under Shanwick's jurisdiction**, unless instructed otherwise by ATC, the last assigned transponder code must be retained for **10 minutes**, followed by displaying Code 2000.
- When arriving eastbound from **BIRD/Reykjavik to EGGX/Shanwick enroute to EGPM/Scottish**, Code 2000 should be displayed **upon transfer from Reykjavik to**

Shanwick and no later than **10 minutes** after entering Shanwick airspace.

- In the **other NAT FIRs** (CZQX/Gander, KZWY/New York, LPPO/Santa Maria, BIRD/Reykjavik, ENOB/Bodo), the **30-minute** rule still applies... until it changes!

The Curious Case of the Bonus French ATC Strike

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Update 29 Jun 1130z: *The bonus French ATC strike is underway. Remember, this only affects secondary and GA airports – not the big hubs or overflights. Eurocontrol report that worst affected airports today, with high delays, are as follows: LFOB/Beauvais, LFPB/Paris Le Bourget, LFPM/Paris Villaroche, LFOP/Rouen, and LFST/Strasbourg. And poor old LFRB/Brest is essentially closed until tonight. The strike ends June 30 at 04z.*

There's an ATC strike planned in France from the **evening of June 28 to the early morning of June 30.**

But this is a strange one, because **major airports and enroute ACCs are not on strike – so overflights will not be affected.**

It's only **secondary and general aviation airports** that are striking – around 60 airports in total.

Notable ones that are popular bizav stops include:

- **LFLB/Paris Le Bourget**
- **LFLB/Chambery**

- LFOB/Beauvais
- LFLY/Lyon Bron
- LFLP/Annecy
- LFKJ/Ajaccio
- LFKB/Bastia

You can check LFFF Notam F1038 for a full list of airports affected.

LFOB/Beauvais north of Paris is cutting flights by 50 percent, but there are no similar restrictions at any other airports so far...

What happened to the mass ATC strike in France?

This upcoming strike isn't the same thing as the **endless French ATC** strike that's been happening these past few months. That one affected major airports and the enroute ACCs (i.e. overflights), along with various different French overseas territories.

That mass strike was part of nationwide strike action and protests over pension reforms which have been trundling on since mid-Jan. The last day of mass ATC strike action was on **June 6**. Unions met on June 13 to discuss what they might do next, but they haven't made any announcement on the outcome of those talks yet.

If and when they do schedule further action, ATC will probably get involved again and we'll see more of the mass ATC strikes like before. If that happens, you'll need to read this for guidance on what to do.



Other strikes in Europe to watch out for

Spain:

ATC strikes are set to continue at **sixteen airports through to the end of July**. These may lead to delays and other disruption, to coincide with the busy summer season, but the impact of these strikes has only been minor so far. The airports impacted are: LECO, LEAL, LECH, GCHI, GCFV, LEIB, LEJR, GCRR, GCLA, LEDA, LEMI, LELL, LEZL, LEVC, LEVX, LECU.

Italy:

There's a **nationwide 24hr ATC strike planned on July 15** (postponed from June 4). There's no Notam for this yet, and so details are slim, but we know that overflights won't be impacted, and there will likely be two time windows when flights to airports in Italy will be guaranteed: 7-10 and 18-21 local time. A few days beforehand, expect to see a Notam get published with more info.

Sweden:

Security staff are planning to strike at several major airports – on **July 3** at ESGG/Gothenburg-Landvetter and ESSB/Stockholm Bromma, and on **July 5-6** at ESSA/Stockholm Arlanda. There are various other dates potentially planned beyond these initial ones, but they're hoping to negotiate a deal to avert more strikes.

LSGG/Geneva:

There might be a **ground staff strike on June 29**. Unless an agreement is reached, workers plan to strike from 12pm that day. If it goes ahead, the union has said that all flights would be grounded – possibly a bit of an ambitious claim, but there would still likely be significant disruption.

EGLL/Heathrow:

Finally, some good news! **The upcoming strikes by security staff have been called off!** More than 2,000 staff were due to strike for 31 days this summer, affecting Terminals 3 and 5. But they've accepted a pay deal now, so the strike has been cancelled.

Come fly around China as much as you like!

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Local agents in China have confirmed that authorities have **dropped the 6 sector limit on foreign private/bizav flights**.

Until now, aircraft were limited to 6 flights in China – international arrival, 4 internal flights, and international departure. But from June 20 all sector limits have been removed, **so you can now fly as many domestic sectors in China as you want.**

Here's a beautiful graphic we made to illustrate the change:

True to form, the authorities in China haven't officially published this change anywhere. We heard about it from an OPSGROUP member (thanks! please tell us more things!), and double-checked it with a few local agents in China who confirmed the change.

Which local agents?

Three of them, all said the same thing. You can contact them here:

Pandaviation: ops@pandaviation.com

Mainland GroundExpress: ops@mgel.aero

Universal: Chinaoperations@universalaviation.aero

Why has this changed happened?

It's all part of China's big re-opening post-Covid, and aimed at getting traffic levels back up again. **China fully reopened to tourists in March 2023, after three years of border restrictions.** For pax, quarantine was dropped in Jan, and PCR tests were replaced with rapid antigen tests at the end of April. For crew, you no longer need a Covid test at all – you just need a C type visa and to fill out the online health dec form to generate a QR code which you show on arrival.

What about cabotage?

Not really an issue here – foreign reg private/bizav flights can pick up and drop off different pax on domestic flights without issue.

China treats private and charter flights as the same thing. The only difference comes when you have **more than 29 seats** onboard. In this case, the CAAC will treat you as **non-scheduled commercial flight**, which means things get more tricky – additional permit requirements including providing a charter agreement, AOC and other aircraft docs.

All interesting in theory. But what are ops to China really like?

We don't know. But we know someone who does – **YOU!** – fine upstanding members of OPSGROUP!

We've had several reports recently from OPSGROUP members who have flown to China. Head over to **Airport Spy** on your dashboard to read the reports!

“Excellent in All Regards; Just Expect Long Departure Process Thru Commercial Terminal (for crew)”

★★★★★

Reviewed June 26, 2023

Aircraft: FA7X | Flight type: Private | ID: 9005956

Arrived ZGGG from ZSHC via zig zag flight plan route, no short cuts, and assigned 5 mile offset right of track. Landed RWY 25R, exited A7. Follow me thru T1, B1, HP1, to spot YT09 (unbelievably, no pushback required and no APU restrictions). Met by Henry with Asia Trip Support (ATS) for excellent services and English. Ramp crew immediately began to tie-down the aircraft with straps and in-ground anchors. Pax whisked away to local transportation, and crew transferred from ramp to front side of FBO and awaiting van for 35 minute ride to the Marriott Guangzhou Tianhe (we never saw the inside of the FBO). Hotel is a downtown highrise amongst others, adjacent to very large mall, and has excellent executive lounge. Henry met us in lobby next morning to assist with luggage & escorted to van and to commercial terminal. Crew must process thru the expansive and modern commercial terminal. Expect a lot of walking & waiting in line. It takes about an hour to complete the passport checks and another 15 minutes to get to the aircraft. Pax, however, processed quickly thru the VIP Terminal. Initiate your own engine start and taxi to HP3, & then contact Ground Control for further clearance. Taxied to RWY 19 for departure (900 meters seems to be the standard initial departure altitude as set by ATC on the SIDs). Slots are forgiving if pax are a little late. ATC English very good on the field and enroute to RJTT (just expect the usual low altitudes and offset right of track in China). Advisable to add 20 minute taxi bias in and 20 minutes out for all large Chinese airports.

“Great Handling with ATS, Difficult ATC Pronunciation”

★★★★★

Reviewed June 26, 2023

Aircraft: FA7X | Flight type: Private | ID: 9005956

Arrived ZSHC (pronounced Haang-Joe) from ZSSS Hongqiao (pronounced Hong-Chow) just to visit for a few hours. Sam with Asia Trip Support (ATS) had already positioned from Shanghai to meet us. Given mostly vectors and “follow the OKT81A”, not descend via. Had to ask twice for descent. Landed via ILS DME Z 25 with LONG taxi & then Follow Me at D7 to APRON 9 spot D927 (pushback required even though there are miles of space for taxi out). Since we were there for only a few hours, pax were met by handler and driven to join local transportation. Crew stayed onboard in commercial ramp with APU (while local security guard stood at the door entire time). Received a lav service since the toilet water in ZSSS was brackish and malodorous. The toilet water in ZSHC was much better. Upon departure, ATC was rather difficult to understand pronunciation of SID and taxi instructions. Upon reaching D3, could not understand further taxi instructions & waited approx 5 mins. Queried Ground Control several times with no reply, and then Follow Me showed up to escort us all the way around airport from Q, J, B (cancel Follow Me at B3) to RWY 7. Overall, excellent handling, difficult ATC communication, and heavy air pollution on your nose and throat.

“Superior Handling and Better Option than ZSPD”

★★★★★


Reviewed June 26, 2023

Aircraft: FA7X | Flight type: Private | ID: 9005956

Due to construction at ZSPD, we received special permit to use ZSSS. While enroute from PANC, CPDLC worked well with PAZA and then PAZN. At NAVLD intersection, monitor Anchorage 119.1 and contact SFO Radio on HF. Handed off to RJJJ and HF contact with Fukuoka. Requested Cruise Climb from FL400 to FL430, and RJJJ replied “Unable / Cruise Climb not allowed in Fukuoka FIR.” Requested FL430 due to Wx / Mod Turbulence and then it was immediately granted. Next message to contact Tokyo Control 133.6 and then 132.73 for Incheon Control. At LAMEN intersection, given descent to 6000 meters. Once in China FIR, given PUD72A for RWY 36R and descents to 2700m, 2100m, 1800m, etc. Excellent English enroute. Follow Me car to K6 spot 517 (pushback required in all spots / no APU limitations). Met by whole team with Asia Trip Support (ATS) and Customs Officer who boarded aircraft, checked pax passports, and collected crew passports. Received services very quickly, no walking on ramp to FBO, so short transfer required. Entered CIQ lanes inside FBO for photo & then passports returned to crew. Shirley with ATS met us inside their beautiful lobby to offer beverages and dinner invite for the following evening. One hour from arrival & services to being enroute to JW Town. Shirley met us next evening in hotel lobby to escort us to a wonderful expense hotel in the town.

Read more at:

AIRPORT SPY



We want your reports!

If you've been to China (or anywhere else, for that matter) and can share some info on how the trip went, let us know. Or even better, skip the middle man and file an Airport Spy report!



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](#) >

More info on China ops

- For all your questions on ops to/between/over/avoiding **China and Taiwan**, check here.
- For some general **top tips on ops to China**, check here.
- Want to know what the deal is with **crew visas** in China? Check here.
- Make sure you know about the **hidden permit costs** of operating to China here.
- Read about the latest goings on in the **South China Sea** here.
- OPSGROUP members can download a **Himalayan Routing Guide** here.

ADS-B Mandates in 2023

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Certain exemptions to the ADS-B mandate in Europe ended on June 7th, 2023, which means that **most aircraft flying in Europe now need to have ADS-B.**

Essentially, you were exempt until 7th June if your CofA was from between 1995-2020, **and** you had a retrofit plan in place, **and** you never benefitted from any EU funding for the retrofit.

Now, you're only exempt if your CofA is from before 1995, **or** you're doing a maintenance or delivery flight, **or** you'll be ceasing ops within EU airspace before Oct 2025.

There's a whole bunch of EU docs out there containing these rules, but the main one to check is 1207/2011.

Other ADS-B mandates around the world

Here's a map of all the current ADS-B mandates we know about, in a lovely green tint, mostly pointing in the right direction of where the airspace they refer to are!

Other ADS-B mandates coming soon

Fiji

July 13th 2023 - ADS-B will be required for all flights in the Fiji domestic sector of the NFFF/Nadi FIR. (You already need it in the New Caledonia sector, i.e. the bit around NWWW/Noumea airport). Ref: AIC 03/23

Canada

August 10th 2023 - ADS-B will be required for all flights in Class A airspace (at or above FL180), then in Class B airspace from May 16th 2024, then everywhere else from some time in 2026. Ref: NavCanada

Any more we missed? Let us know!

Mexico General Aviation Challenges: Old and New

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



This article is from Rick Gardner of CST Flight Services. We asked if he could talk to us about some of the long-standing challenges affecting General Aviation ops to Mexico, as well as some of the more recent issues which maybe haven't been widely reported.

Mexico has been a popular destination for General Aviation pilots and aircraft owners for many years and for good reason. Mexico is a country rich in culture, a diverse geography, incredible cuisine, a fascinating history and a warm and welcoming people. The fact that it sits right on the US border makes it easy to reach by most GA aircraft.

However, there are some **long-standing issues affecting GA aircraft arrivals in Mexico** which many veteran travelers may be familiar with that continue to exist.

Customs

Under Mexican Customs law, only a pilot who can prove that they are the owner of the aircraft they are flying is allowed to bring anything into Mexico other than basic clothes and personal effects. Sporting equipment, electronic equipment other than a laptop or an ipad and anything else that you might want to have with you is **not allowed entry and can be taxed or confiscated.**

Even though the law allows the owner-pilot to have passenger privileges in this regard, **many customs agents are unaware of this allowance** and frequently deny them this privilege.

If the Mexican Customs agents do not have access to a working x-ray machine to scan bags when arriving or departing the country, then customs agents may **open all bags of crew and passengers for manual inspection.** This means that any personal contents inside your bags may become public knowledge very quickly to all those present in the customs arrival area.

Immigration

Mexican Immigration officers are usually very courteous and professional although sometimes they misapply article 14A of the Mexican Tax code which assesses an approximately **\$100 USD fee on GA aircraft if they arrive outside of “normal” operating hours** or on weekends and/or holidays. The Mexican Tax code specifically states that this fee is NOT to be applied to private flights, yet immigration officers at certain airports **apply this fee to all aircraft arrivals** regardless of the type of flight or the hours of operation.

Another caveat of Mexican Immigration law is that pilots do not pay certain immigration taxes unless they remain in the country for more than 1 week. This sometimes catches pilots by surprise when immigration officers tell them that they have **overstayed their time and are charged an additional fee**. This is not a fine but simply the same charge that passengers have to pay.



Permits

When you enter Mexico in a private aircraft, you must obtain an **Entry Permit** for the aircraft. There are two types of Entry Permits: a Single Entry Permit (SEP) and a Multiple Entry Permit (MEP).

A SEP is valid for 180 days or until the aircraft departs the country, whichever comes first. A MEP is valid for the calendar year and an aircraft can enter Mexico as many times as the operator wishes during the year without paying for a new Entry Permit, provided that the aircraft does not remain in the country continuously for more than 180 days at a time.

A MEP specifies the crew that brought the aircraft into the country when the permit was issued and **use of the aircraft by a different crew can invalidate the MEP**.

Be aware that neither a Single Entry nor Multiple Entry Permit is valid unless it is accompanied by the original receipt for payment of that permit. If you have a Mexican Multiple Entry Permit (MEP) and you plan

to enter Mexico towards the end of the calendar year, or if you plan to spend New Years in Mexico, you should obtain a SEP when you enter. **The MEP expires on December 31st** and if you have an AOG incident or if you decide at the last minute to remain in Mexico for the New Year, you could face a tricky situation.



Pilot Docs

Another issue that pops up at certain airports is where AFAC officials require that **the pilot's Medical Certificate Class matches their Airman Certificate** and not the privileges being exercised.

For example, a pilot with an Airline Transport Pilot Certificate may be required to have a 1st Class Medical Certificate even though they are flying their own personal Cessna 182. Trying to explain to some AFAC officials how a 1st Class Medical Certificate can become a 2nd Class and then a 3rd Class per 14 CFR 61.23 becomes even more entertaining.

Ramp Checks

Ramp Checks have always been an issue in Mexico and that has not changed. Always be prepared to have valid aircraft and crew documents ready along with the appropriate Entry Permit.

Insurance policies of private aircraft, issued in their country of registry, are valid in Mexico if they include Mexico in the territory coverage and the liability insurance minimum is at least \$ 300,000 USD.

For Charter aircraft, it is a completely different story. Operators of aircraft that are used for both private and charter use need to be extremely careful that if the aircraft is being flown privately into Mexico and an insurance policy (Non-Mexican or Mexican) is presented to the Mexican AFAC that indicates that the policy is for COMMERCIAL purposes, then **the entire operation could be considered as commercial** and the operator will have to present additional proof that the operation is actually private. Otherwise, the operator could be detained, fined, etc. for not having the appropriate permits for charter operations in Mexico.

While not required by regulation, we strongly recommend that if the aircraft is not registered in the name of the pilot or one of the passengers, that you **prepare a notarized letter** identifying the legal owner of the aircraft and that the owner is authorizing the crew to fly the aircraft and the passengers to be aboard

the aircraft on an international flight to Mexico. The letter should also clarify that the flight is a **private, non-commercial flight**. This letter can serve to defuse any misconceptions that a private flight may be a charter flight or that the aircraft may be stolen. Sometimes, this letter can help to **avoid the \$100 fee mentioned above** that is erroneously charged by Mexican Immigration by proving that the flight is private. Sometimes.....



SENEAM airspace and overtime

This is a topic worthy of its own article. Mexican airspace fee calculation and payment is a topic that will confuse and frustrate even the most seasoned international operator. Suffice it to say that if you flew through the Mexican FIR, even if it was due to a vector by US ATC at the border, and you neither landed nor departed from a Mexican airport on that flight, **you owe Mexico airspace fees.**

If you depart, or arrive, at the beginning, or at the end, of an airport's normal operating hours, you may incur **SENEAM overtime fees** which cannot be paid at the airport. Furthermore, if you requested an extension to the airport's normal operating hours for an early or late operation, the SENEAM overtime fees **cannot be paid along with the airport fees.**

SENEAM overtime fees, like Mexican airspace fees, are **paid through a separate process via a Mexican bank.** Contact us for instructions on how you can inquire directly with SENEAM if airspace or overtime fees are owed.



Safety

The elephant in the room. While theft of aircraft in Mexico has not been an issue for many years, personal safety has gained a lot more attention since 4 US Citizens were kidnapped in the border town of Matamoros leaving 2 of them dead.

For a crime to occur, you need a victim and the right environment. **Avoid being a victim - don't draw attention to yourself** by wearing expensive clothes, jewelry, personal effects and/or by bragging about your success and/or wealth. Don't create the environment. Avoid going "off of the beaten path", don't interact with strangers no matter how innocuous they might appear, avoid using the same taxi driver unless you really know who they are. Avoid border towns.

Another issue pertains to using **app services like Uber**. While Uber is a legally protected service in Cancun, there have been major conflicts between the taxi drivers in Cancun and Uber drivers. These conflicts have spiraled into violent encounters between taxi drivers, Uber drivers and passengers. Until the authorities get a handle on this simmering problem, be very careful with what ground transportation service you use while in Cancun.

Planning for the worse is usually the mantra of pilots. We recommend **fueling on arrival** in a foreign country and leaving enough fuel on board to at least get back to the US border or to another country known to be a safe haven.

We also recommend having **2 satellite based communications devices**, one for the crew and one for the passengers. While sat phones are ideal, they are also terribly expensive. However, devices like the Garmin InReach bring satellite connectivity to a more reasonable level using text messaging. If you are dependent on cellphone or landline technology, you are exposed to getting cut off from the rest of the world and from each other if there is a natural or manmade disaster that interrupts those services.

The US State Department has a couple of useful services for international travel:

- US State Department: Smart Traveler Enrollment Program
- US State Department: Safety and Security Messaging App

New Challenges: Changes to agencies that interact with General Aviation

There is a new political party in Mexico, led by the current president, that has swept into power at the federal, state, and municipal level across the country. This new party has been making **significant changes to laws and leadership** across those institutions that interact with GA arrivals.

The following is a summary of what those changes have been, and the **impact they are having in varying degrees to GA flights** to Mexican Airports...



Security

The Mexican Federal Police (Federales) have been disbanded and replaced with a new entity called the National Guard (Guardia Nacional) which was formed in March of 2019 and **staffed primarily by military personnel**. While still technically a civil organization, it is controlled by the military. The Guardia Nacional now provides security at international airports and at many domestic airports in Mexico, and they are usually the first government agency that an arriving aircraft will encounter. Their degree of interaction with aircraft crews and passengers **varies widely between Mexican airports**.

Civil Aviation Authority

Mexico's CAA formerly known by its acronym of the DGAC was also replaced with the Agencia Federal de Aviación Civil (AFAC) in October of 2019. During the transition process, the top leadership at the central level, as well as the airport level, were **replaced by former military personnel, primarily from the Mexican Air Force**. The AFAC is the agency that issues Entry Permits to foreign aircraft via their central office and local offices at the Mexican international airports and they are the ones who can conduct **random ramp checks** on aircraft arriving at Mexican airports.

Customs and Immigration

In July 2021, another decree replaced Mexican Customs with a new entity called Agencia Nacional de Aduanas de México (ANAM) which falls under the control of the Mexican military. The former civil servants that functioned as Customs officers were terminated and **replaced by military personnel**. Mexican Customs is present at all Mexican international airports and reviews crew and passenger luggage and cargo on arrival into the country and again when departing the country.

In the past, visitors entering Mexico had to complete a Multiple Immigration (FMM) for Immigration control.

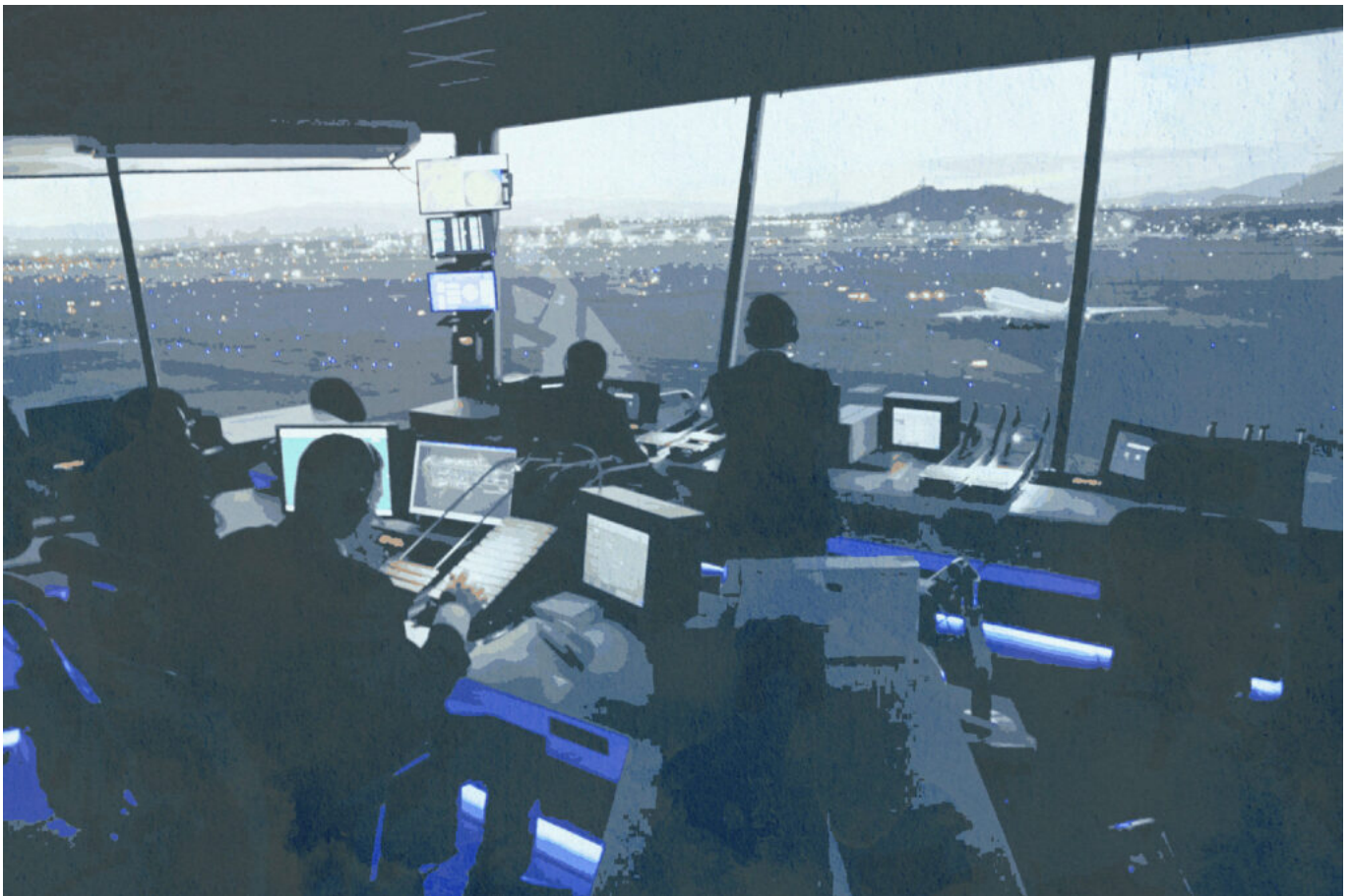
The FMM is a two part form that you fill out upon entering Mexico and the immigration officer would stamp

both parts of the form and return one part to the visitor. Upon departing Mexico, the visitor would surrender their part of this form.

However, the present government is phasing out that form and it is being **replaced with a simple Entry and Departure stamp in the visitor's passport**. Depending on the International airport that you operate from in Mexico, you may, or may not, have to complete the form. It will depend on what stage of the implementation process they are in at that airport.

ATC

In March 2023, a new law went into effect empowering the Mexican military to guarantee the security, sovereignty and independence of Mexican airspace. How this new law will affect the AFAC and SENEAM (the civil entity that provides ATC services in Mexican airspace) has yet to be seen.



How do these changes affect General Aviation?

It is difficult to imagine that these massive changes to so many different federal government agencies that interact with GA would be trouble-free during the transition.

The reality is that at the major airports that receive the highest volumes of visiting GA aircraft, like Cancun, Puerto Vallarta, the 2 Cabo airports, Toluca, Guadalajara and Monterrey, **the impact has been less significant due to the efforts of the airport operators and local FBOs to keep things operating smoothly**. Operators using ground handlers typically fare better because they have somebody on the ground who understands the proper procedures and speaks the language.



However, in all fairness to ground handlers, they cannot interfere with the actions of federal officials doing their duties. So, their abilities to minimize the inconveniences can sometimes be very limited and it is also not in their best interests to antagonize those federal officials that they must interact with every day.

At the other end of the spectrum, international airports and domestic airports that receive little GA traffic can sometimes be more onerous. What we have experienced firsthand is a **lack of coordination between the different agencies which has provoked delays in arrival and departure processing**, frustration on the part of crew and passengers as well as misplaced documents.

For example, the National Guard (Guardia Nacional) will often request that all contents of the aircraft be removed and placed on the ramp to be searched on arrival and departure. Once complete, they may tell you that you can return your items to the aircraft only to have the Customs agent come behind them and tell you to **unload everything again** and to bring it into the airport building. As these agencies rarely identify themselves, it is **sometimes hard to tell who is who**.

Another area of concern has been that these government officials are **using cellphones to take pictures of crew and passenger documents** containing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) such as Airmen Certificates, Medical Certificates and Passports. The ownership of these cellphones, the location where the images are being stored and the steps being taken to protect that data has never been explained.

Unfortunately, we have seen the **AFAC deny entry into Mexico of Experimental Aircraft or pilots using BasicMed**, even though their own published regulations specifically state that Experimental aircraft and BasicMed are allowed with no specific individual approvals.

Another issue that continues to pop up are **AFAC inspectors wanting to see Type Ratings on Airman Certificates for aircraft that do not require Type Ratings**. Fortunately, we have been able to clear up Type Ratings issues by working with the AFAC inspectors.

Bottom line

With so many new personnel entering these Mexican government agencies, some inconveniences are to be expected as they become proficient at the new tasks they are being assigned to do. In the meantime, the best strategy is to **pack an extra case of patience and a large bottle of good humor**. After all, it could be worse, you could have flown on the airlines...

About the author:

Rick Gardner of CST Flight Services, a company which provides a wide range of international trip support services for both owner-pilots and professional pilots. Rick is also the representative for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) in Mexico, Central America, The Bahamas and the Caribbean as well as a Bahamas Flying Ambassador, member of The Bahamas Civil Aviation Council and has participated on aviation committees of other foreign countries.

For many years, several individuals and flying organizations like CST Flight Services have collaborated with the heads of the different government agencies in Mexico that interact with US General Aviation arrivals in an attempt to simplify and standardize the entry process. CST's efforts over the years have been successful on a number of fronts such as: obtaining official notification from DGAC that US Issued insurance policies are valid for private aircraft and that you do not have to buy "special" Mexican insurance from 3rd parties, obtaining deferrals for almost 10 years for the requirement of 406 MHz ELTs, obtaining official permission for Experimental Aircraft to enter Mexico in September of 2008 and again in February, 2021, and obtaining an alternate means of filing Mexican APIS for private flights by sending an Excel template via email to Mexican Immigration.

www.cstflightservices.com / customersvc@cstflightservices.com / +1 786 206 6147

Air Defender 23: Hundreds of flights in Europe to be rerouted each day

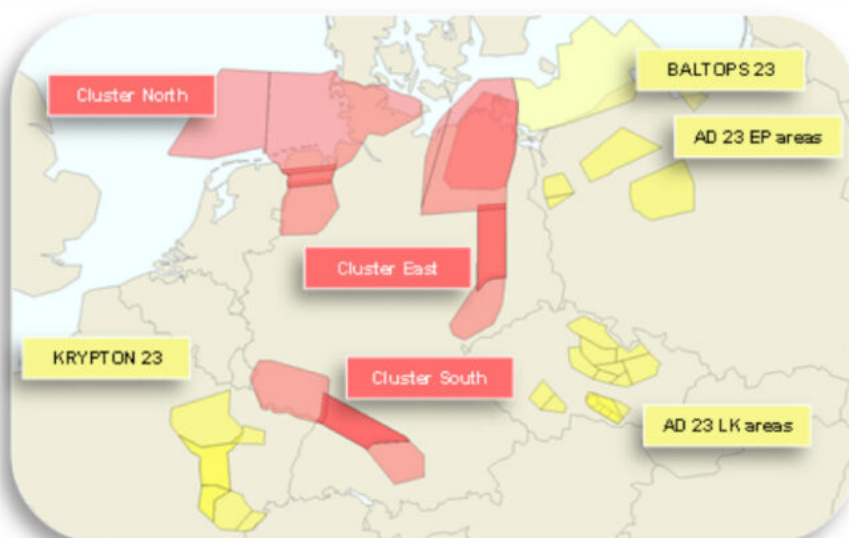
David Mumford
16 January, 2024



There are several military exercises planned in Europe until June 22, affecting some busy airspace in Germany (including Maastricht), Czech Republic, northern Poland, and eastern France.

Air Defender in Germany is going to be the one that will cause the most delays and disruption.

It's happening June 12-22 (Mon-Fri first week, Mon-Thu second week). This is going to be NATO's biggest ever air exercise, involving 250 military aircraft from 25 countries, and is all about testing their response to a simulated attack on a NATO country.



BALTOPS 23
04 -16 Jun 2023

AIR DEFENDER 23
12 -22 Jun 2023 Mon to Fri

KRYPTON 23
21 Jun 2023

TIME ALLOCATION AIR DEFENDER		
	From	To
Cluster East	08:00	12:00
Cluster South	11:00	15:00
Cluster North	14:00	18:00

Eurocontrol are going to be working hard to re-route flights – around 800 flights each day, with around **300 of these expected to have at least 60nm added to their routings**. They predicted the average delay per flight would be around only 3 minutes (but we have to say that feels extremely optimistic!)

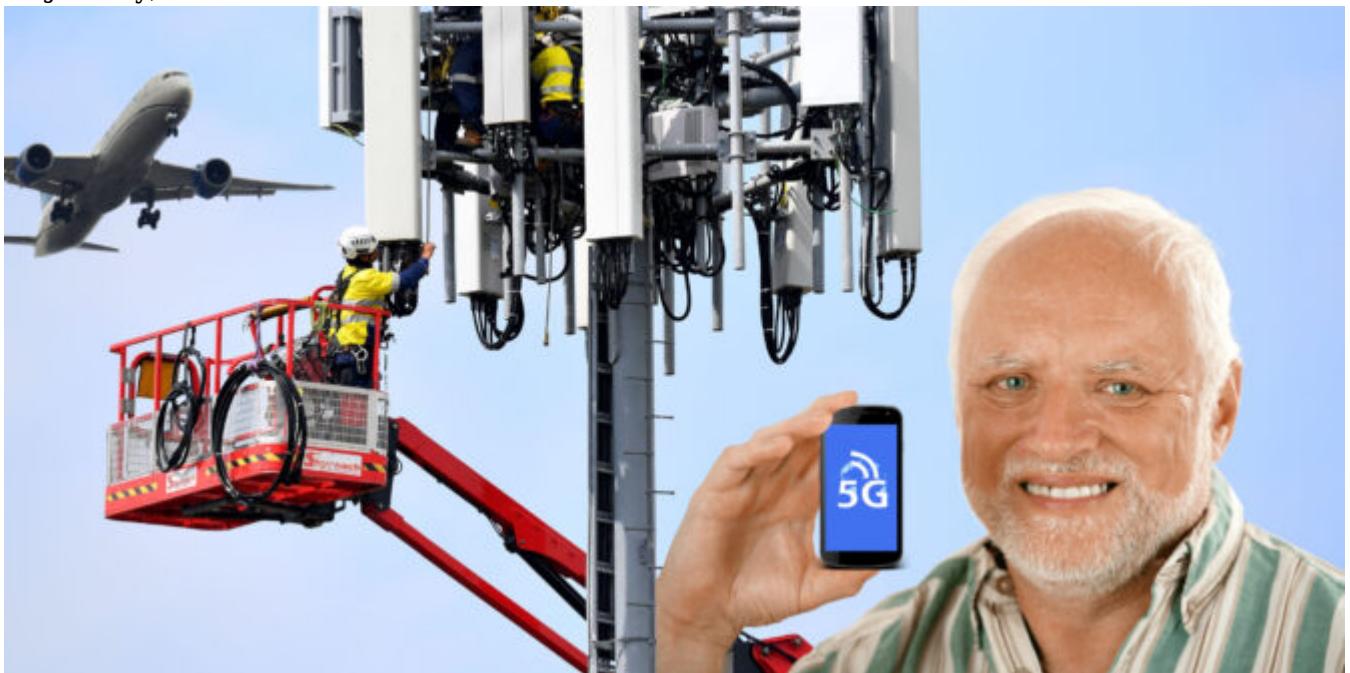
They are also warning operators **not to plan flights that will land close to airport closure times**. Several German airports are extending their opening hours on request, although for some you'll have to prove that Air Defender is the reason you need to arrive/depart late: **EDDS/Stuttgart, EDDB/Berlin, EDDF/Frankfurt, EDDL/Dusseldorf** (there may be more!)

For more info, in order of usefulness and how painful they are to read (1 = useful, low pain, 4 = bamboozling, not very useful, high pain), check the following:

1. Eurocontrol's summary of how bad they think it's going to be. [Click here.](#)
 2. Eurocontrol's full 65 page briefing. [Click here.](#)
 3. German AIP SUP 7/23 of predicted impact in German airspace. [Click here.](#)
 4. Czech AIP SUP 2/23 of predicted impact in Czech airspace. [Click here.](#)
-

US will not delay 5G aircraft retrofit deadline

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Telecoms firms will be rolling out 5G near major US airports from July 1, 2023. **Most aircraft need to upgrade their radio altimeters** by this date to continue certain operations, and the FAA has said it will not be extending the deadline.

What do you mean by “certain operations”?

These ones:

- *Special Authorization CAT I, CAT II and above approaches.*
- *Auto-landings.*
- *Head-up display landings.*
- *Enhanced vision systems through touchdown.*

For ease of reference, we're going to call these **“fancy landings”** for the rest of this article.

What do you mean by “most aircraft”?

Aircraft that need to do this are “Transport and Commuter Category Airplanes.” Just like it says in the FAA rules!

What FAA rules?

The initial set of rules (Airworthiness Directive 2021-23-12) was published in Dec 2021. But that got superseded in May 2023 (right at the death, with only 1.5 months to go until the July 1st deadline!) with Airworthiness Directive 2023-10-02. This really is the place to go to find answers to all questions.

The rules set two deadlines:

July 1, 2023: All transport and commuter category airplanes, regardless of the type of operation (Part 91, Part 135, Part 121), will be **prohibited from performing these fancy landings at any US airport unless they have upgraded their radio altimeters**. Aircraft without upgraded radio altimeters will be able to operate into any airport, but cannot fly the fancy landings.

Feb 1, 2024: US aircraft operating under **Part 121** need to have upgraded their radio altimeters to be able to operate **anywhere in the contiguous US**.

What are “transport and commuter category airplanes”?

Commuter Airplanes = multi-engine, max pax seats 19, max takeoff weight of 19,000lbs. If you have more than 19 seats, or you’re heavier than 19,000lbs, that makes you a **Transport Airplane**.

So this basically means everyone.

EVERYONE everyone? Or just N-reg aircraft?

Yeah ok, not EVERYONE everyone. **The rules only apply to N-reg aircraft.**

So, technically, if you’re not N-reg you can carry on flying the fancy landings in the US after July 1st even if you haven’t upgraded your radio altimeter. But that’s probably not a great idea, because **the 5G interference is still going to be an issue for you!**

As the FAA says in the rules (in response to no fewer than eleven foreign airlines who asked this very same question):

“Under ICAO Annex 8, Airworthiness of Aircraft, the state of registry of an airplane is the state responsible for its airworthiness. For this reason, FAA ADs apply only to U.S.-registered airplanes. To the extent the FAA's bilateral partners agree with the FAA's finding of an unsafe condition in U.S. airspace, the FAA encourages those authorities to adopt the FAA AD or similar requirements as mandatory continuing airworthiness instructions for airplanes registered in other countries. The FAA also plans to publish information in the FAA's Aeronautical Information Publication to alert international operators to the 5G C-Band situation in the U.S.,

including the agency's use of Domestic Notices. The FAA strongly urges operators of foreign-registered airplanes to voluntarily comply with the actions required by this AD when operating in the contiguous U.S. given the unsafe condition affects their airplanes as much as the airplanes subject to this AD."

What if I don't care about these fancy landings?

If you're N-reg but don't have approvals to do these fancy landings, you don't need to worry - **no radio altimeter upgrade is required.**

Before July 1st, just stick this table into your AFM, and you're done:

Figure 4 to paragraph (i)— *AFM Revision for Non-Radio Altimeter Tolerant Airplanes*

(Required by AD 2023-10-02)

Radio Altimeter Flight Restrictions

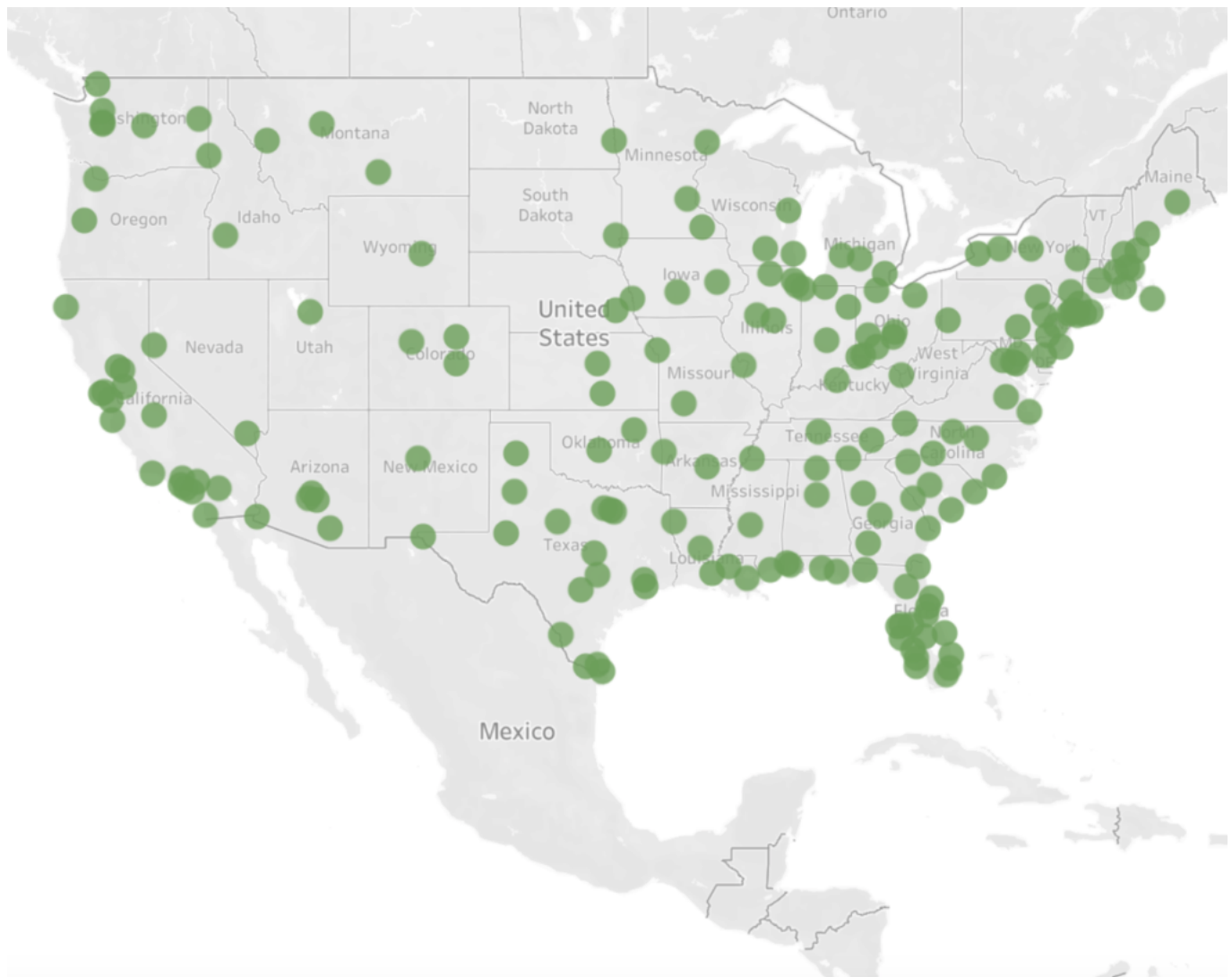
Due to the presence of 5G C-Band wireless broadband interference, when operating in the contiguous U.S. airspace, the following operations requiring radio altimeter are prohibited:

- Instrument Landing System (ILS) Instrument Approach Procedures (IAP), SA CAT I, SA CAT II, CAT II, and CAT III
- Automatic Landing operations
- Manual Flight Control Guidance System operations to landing/head-up display (HUD) to touchdown operation
- Use of Enhanced Flight Vision System (EFVS) to touchdown under 14 CFR 91.176(a).

As of February 1, 2024, this airplane must not operate under 14 CFR part 121 in the contiguous U.S.

Which airports are affected?

Right now, there are almost 200 US airports with 5G interference issues. **The FAA has an interactive map** of them all here, where you can check all the restrictions for each one.



This list of airports is probably going to increase after July 1st, as more 5G towers are installed across the country.

What's the backstory to all this? Please make it short

In Dec 2021, the FAA had concerns about 5G networks interfering with aircraft radio altimeters due to similar frequencies. They banned fancy landings at some airports, issued some guidelines, and allowed some exemptions. In the end, a deal was made to delay activation near major airports, initially until July 2022 but extended to July 2023.

Where can I find more info?

- Really, truly, head here first for the **FAA rules** on all this, to get it from the horse's mouth.
- Then if you're still keen, you can check here for the **FAA website on all things 5G**.
- And also here for a recent **webinar by AIN** on the impact of 5G, with a focus on bizav.
- Then finally here for the most recent **special airworthiness information bulletin** issued by the FAA on 24th May 2023, where they're basically asking manufacturers and operators to continue assessing the whole 5G issue and report back to them their findings.

Parking Pain in Portugal

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



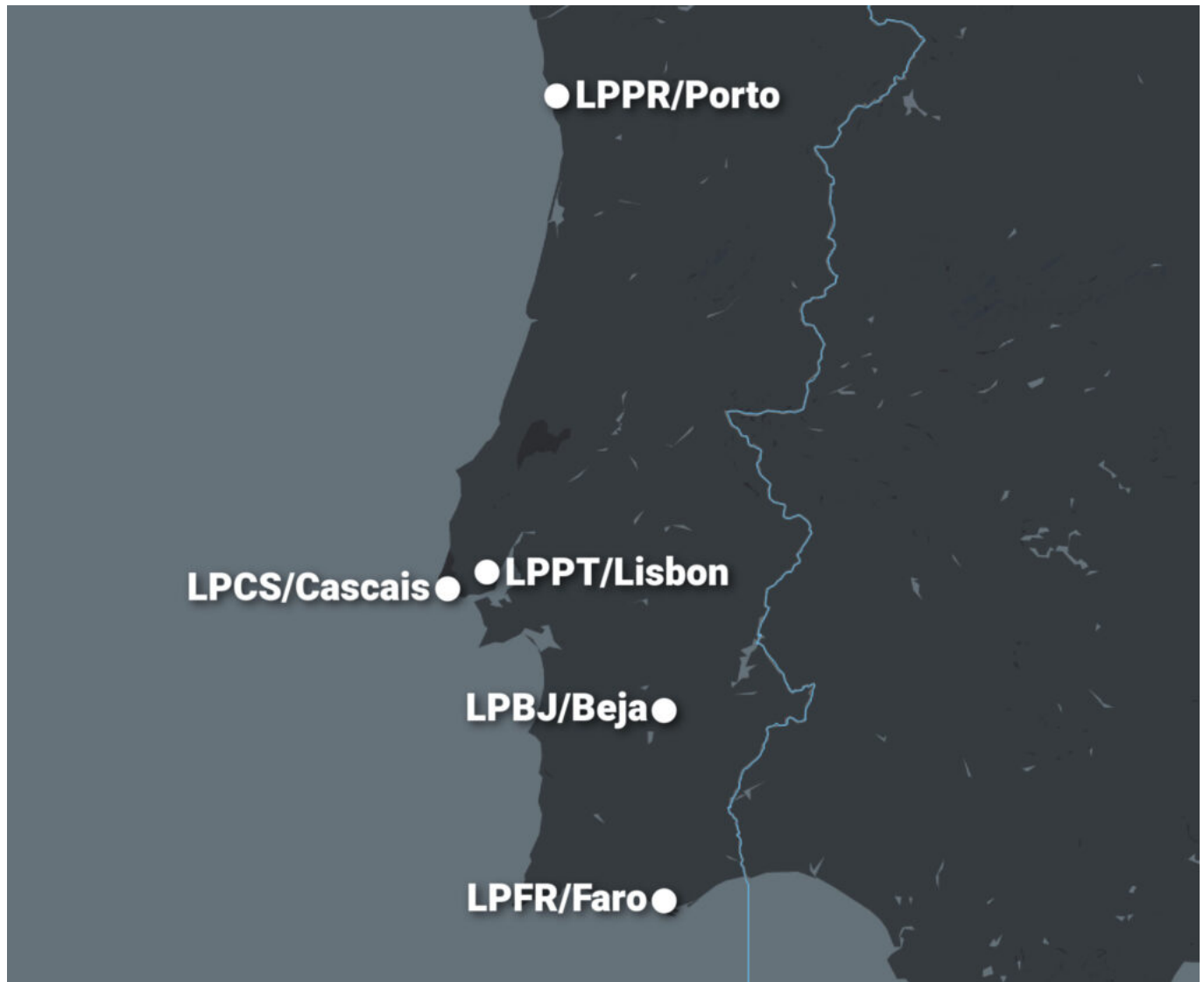
It looks like summer ops to Portugal are going to be tough. There are restrictions at the two main airports, LPPT/Lisbon and LPPR/Porto, and parking elsewhere is going to be challenging too. Here's the lowdown...

Strikes

Just before we get stuck in, it's worth knowing that there are **border control staff strikes** planned over the next month at the major airports in Portugal.

- **LPPT/Lisbon** will be impacted 05-10 local time every Sat-Mon until the end of June.
- **Strikes at other airports** are planned for all day every Friday until the end of June.

More info [here](#).



LPPT/Lisbon

Until the end of the official IATA Summer Season (that's Oct 29, to you and me), most aircraft will be limited to **max 60mins turnaround time** (and Code A and B aircraft only get 45mins). There's no Notam on this – it's hidden away in AIP SUP 61/22. Local handlers expect limited summer slots too. Contact them at lis@omnihandling.com. So essentially, it's **drop-and-go's only from now til November!**

LPPR/Porto

Porto also expects to be busy this summer. They're saying that **parking will only be granted for 4 days max** (96 hours), and can be requested only **within 15 days** of your planned trip. They do have a hangar which could accommodate longer parking, but **the airport does not have a towbar for GA/BA aircraft** so you'll have to bring your own! Contact local handler opo@omnihandling.com for more info.

LPCS/Cascais

One to consider, especially if you're headed to Lisbon as it's jus up the road. You don't need slots here, and they say that **they normally have parking availability** over the summer. The airport is open from 7am till sunset, but will open early/late for an extra fee. Contact the local handler at cascais@omnihandling.com.

LPFR/Faro

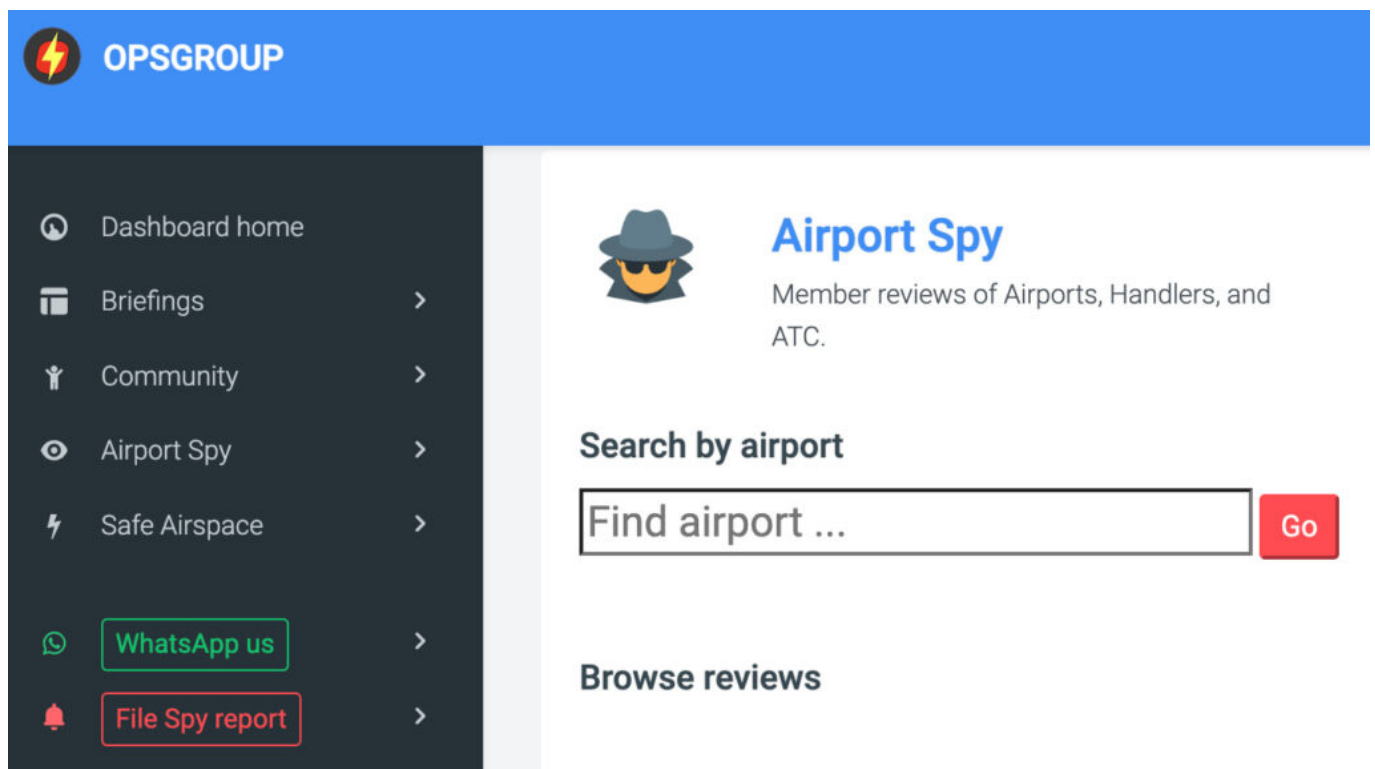
You need slots and parking approval, and **they regularly run out of both during the summer months**. Although technically open 24/7, the runway is closed every night from 23-06z due to noise restrictions. Contact the local handler at fao@omnihandling.com.

LPBJ/Beja

A cheeky extra option to consider. This is a joint civil/military airport, so you just need to get clearance in advance (they say to give 48hrs for this), but **they usually have parking available**.

Your Reports!

We've had a couple of recent Airport Spy reports from OPSGROUP members who have operated trips to Portugal – there's one for LPPT/Lisbon, and one for LPCS/Cascais.

The screenshot shows the OPSGROUP Airport Spy website. The top navigation bar is blue with the OPSGROUP logo (a lightning bolt in a circle) and the text "OPSGROUP". Below this is a dark sidebar menu with icons and text for "Dashboard home", "Briefings", "Community", "Airport Spy", "Safe Airspace", "WhatsApp us", and "File Spy report". The main content area is white and features a "Airport Spy" header with a spy icon and the text "Member reviews of Airports, Handlers, and ATC.". Below this is a "Search by airport" section with a search input field containing the text "Find airport ..." and a red "Go" button. At the bottom of the main content area is a "Browse reviews" link.

LPPT/Lisbon

- Had to wait for fueler and missed our TSAT. **Make sure you respect your numbers** in LPPT... don't mess with TSAT and EOBT otherwise you are not going anywhere.
- Slots required, +/-20 minutes. **Pax must remain onboard** unless they want to take a ride to the terminal and clear immigration, but **there's no FBO** to sit in anyways.
- We had four outbound crew members and all of the bags to support a two-week trip, plus catering. We dragged all of it up and down a few sets of stairs in the terminal, and everything had to go through a carry-on sized x-ray scanner at the security checkpoint. It took **at least 20 minutes from curbside to parking stand** and it wasn't pretty.
- We did not experience aircraft servicing delays as indicated in other reports; our late-night (2300) timing may have helped. There is a **hard midnight curfew for non-commercial ops** and some night restrictions for commercial ops outlined in the 10-1 pages, so be mindful of **potential delays sinking a late-night tech stop**.

- **Almost all of the parking stands require a pushback.** The parking stand was assigned by the airport authority on an ad-hoc basis, so the handler could not reserve one of the few taxi-through parking stands ahead of time. Pushback was with a Lektro, so no towbar required. TOBT was coordinated through the handler and pushback was requested/authorized by ATC.

LPCS/Cascais

- We ended up in LPCS when, less than 12h to departure time for an 8h leg we were informed that **LPPT would be unable to accommodate parking despite booking weeks in advance.**
- LCPS has a short runway but is still very accommodating for larger aircraft. If you have the marginal performance to land (and depart) there, **this should be your top choice!** There is ample ramp space to accommodate even the largest BizJets and local terrain is of little concern for most BizJets at the weights required to get in and out of their runway.
- **Omni handling was excellent** and they clearly were very proud of their airport, they are incredibly friendly and welcoming. The handlers were a bit discombobulated on the departure, handing us the wrong flight package and then an incomplete package but they worked hard to get us everything we needed.
- Clearing customs inbound was a bit difficult unfortunately - **they have to manually inspect your baggage.** If you have a lot of luggage do plan extra time. It took at least 3-5min per luggage (including hand luggage.)

We want your reports!

If you've been to Portugal and can share some info on how the trip went, let us know! Or even better, skip the middle man and file an Airport Spy report!



Got some intel?

Are you an Airport Spy?

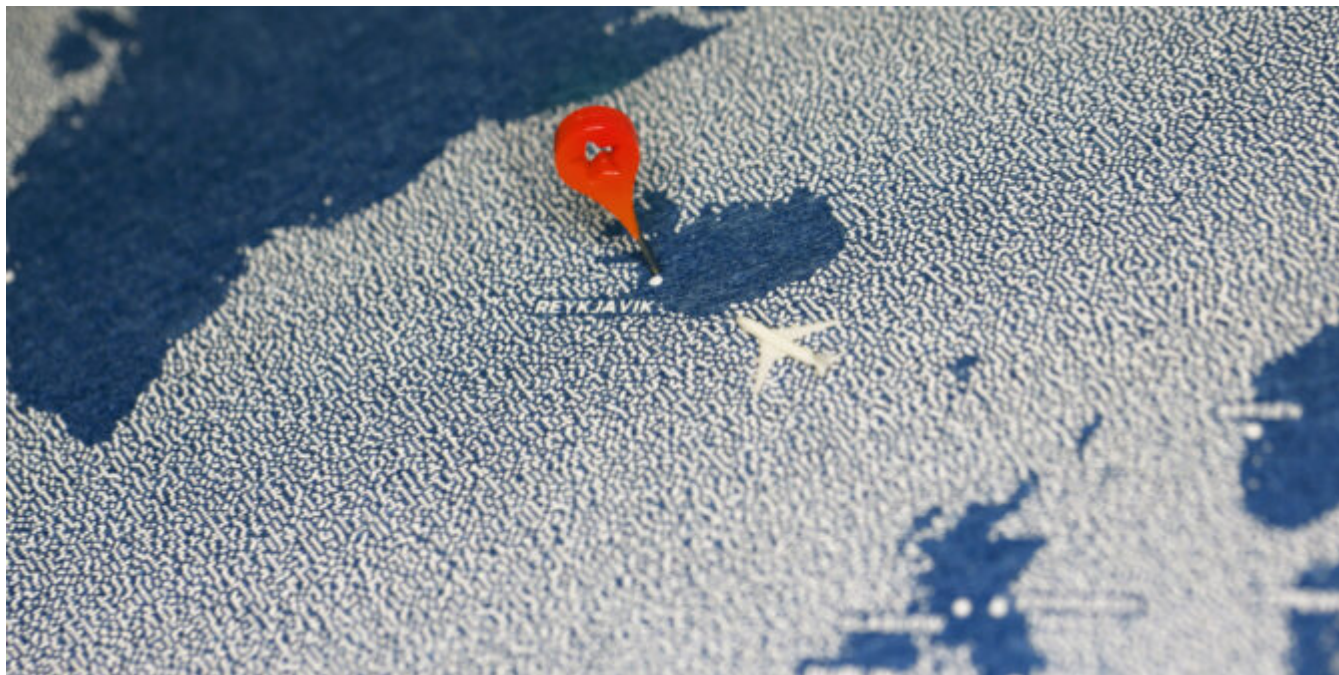
You go to unusual places and see curious things. Your turboprop friends envy you. Now, it's time to give back.

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](#) >

Iceland Airports Reopen to GA/BA Flights

David Mumford
16 January, 2024



Update 1000z May 18: The summit is over, and the restrictions on flights at BIKF and BIRK have now been lifted. Below is original story from May 16.

There's a big state summit happening in Reykjavik this week, which means **restrictions for GA/BA flights at Iceland's main airports BIKF/Keflavik and BIRK/Reykjavik.**



BIKF/Keflavik

This is the most common stop for GA/BA flights doing North Atlantic stops. **There's no parking allowed here from 0000z May 15 to 1000z May 18.** That's what this super vague Notam A0133/23 actually means:

A0133/23 - EAST APRON/WEST APRON RESTRICTED FOR SPECIAL OPERATION.
STATE, DIVERTED AND AMBULANCE FLIGHTS ARE EXCLUDED.
15 MAY 00:00 2023 UNTIL 18 MAY 10:00 2023.
CREATED: 11 MAY 14:37 2023

We checked with a local handler at the airport, who said that **quick turns are not allowed either** during this period. You can contact them for more info at ops@southair.is.

BIRK/Reykjavik

From 0700z May 16 to 1900z May 17, GA/BA flights are **not allowed to go here either!** Not unless your flight is directly related to the summit, in which case you need slots. And you can't use it as a FPL alternate.

The days before and after (May 15 and 18), BIRK will be somewhat restricted as well - it'll be busy, all areas and access to the airport will be restricted and guarded by police, and access will only be granted to operating crews, VIPs and staff that have been approved and listed by authorities. Roads and areas close to the summit in downtown Reykjavik will be closed or restricted as well, so good to keep that in mind if crews are staying at a hotels close to the summit.

The Notams for BIRK are actually pretty clear (unlike those for BIKF), and if you need more info about all this, you can contact the local handler at ops@reykjavikfbo.is, but also check out AIP SUP 6-23 below:

SUP - 1

04 MAY 2023

AIP Supplement – ÍSLAND / ICELAND
Isavia ANS ehf., Reykjavíkflugvelli, 102 Reykjavík /
Isavia ANS, Reykjavík Airport, IS-102 Reykjavík, Iceland
Sími / Telephone: + 354 424 4000
aiv@isavia.is
<http://www.isavia.is/>

AIP SUP nr 06/2023

Effective from 04 MAY 2023
Published on 04 MAY 2023



**BIRK Reykjavík - Leiðtogafundur Evrópuráðs í Reykjavík 16. og 17. maí 2023 /
BIRK Reykjavík - Council of Europe Summit 16th and 17th of May 2023 in Reykjavík**

Efningar ábyrgð: Isavia / Isavia Domestic
Content Responsibility: Isavia / Isavia Domestic

1 Inngangur
Fjórir leiðtogafundir Evrópuráðsins verður haldinn í Reykjavík dagana 16. og 17. maí 2023.
Reykjavíkflugvöllur (BIRK) mun ekki aftasta þeim fjóða loftfara sem óska eftir að lenda á vellinum ofanefnda daga.
Loftför í millitíðisflugum ofanefnda daga þurfa því að óska eftir staðisúthlutun, sem og skömmtuðum komu- og brottfaratíma.
Önnur loftför, að undanskildu, áætlanarflugi innanlands, sjúkra- og nýðarflugi munu verða fyrir takmörkunum, sem auglýstar verða með töglu NOTAM.

2 Staðisúthlutun
Aðgöngur flugrekjendur sem óska eftir að leggja á BIRK, frá kl. 07:00 þann 16. maí til kl. 19:00 þann 17. maí, þurfa að óska eftir staðisúthlutun ekki seinna en 72 klst. fyrir áætlaða komu.

Ríkisflug munu njóta forgangs og beðnir verða afgreiddar í þeirri röð sem þær berast.
Óska skal eftir staðisúthlutun á vefsbúnni
<https://airportcoordination.com/> með eftirfarandi upplýsingum:

- Kalimerki vélar
- Skráningarstöfum vélar
- Flugvæðingund
- Áætlaður komutími
- Áætlaður brottfarartími

Fjöldi staða í boði á BIRK mun verða:

- 18 loftför með kóða staf B
- 3 loftför með kóða staf C

1 Introduction
The 4th Council of Europe Summit will take place in Reykjavík 16th and 17th of May 2023.
Reykjavík Airport (BIRK) is expected to receive a number of aircraft that will exceed the airport's capacity.
Therefore, all international aircraft will be subject to landing and take-off slot allocation as well as parking stand availability.
Other flights, except scheduled domestic flights, hospital, and emergency flights, will be subject to limitations that will be published by NOTAM.

2 Parking allocation
All international aircraft operators requesting to park at BIRK, from 07:00 UTC on May 16th to 19:00 UTC on May 17th, will have to request parking no later than 72 hours before the estimated time of arrival.

Priority will be given to state flights and requests will be handled on a first come first served basis.
To request a parking allocation visit:
<https://airportcoordination.com/> with the following information:

- Aircraft callign
- Aircraft registration
- Aircraft type
- Estimated time of arrival
- Estimated time of departure

Parking capacity at BIRK will be as follows:

- 18 aircraft with code letter B
- 3 aircraft with code letter C

ISAVIA ANS

06/2023

Where else to go?

If you want to use Iceland as a North Atlantic night stop this week, local handlers are advising to use **BIEG/Egilsstadir** or **BIAR/Akureyri** in the north of the country.

BIEG/Egilsstadir is open weekdays 0800-1745z and weekends 0915-1745z (400EUR charge outside these hours), and are able to handle almost all GA/BA flights – but they do not have a VIP lounge or FBO. There seem to be a few different handling agents able to make arrangements here. We've been speaking with jetcenter@icelandair.is – so maybe get in touch with them for more info.

BIAR/Akureyri is open 0700-2300z (and outside these hours, for an extra fee), and they do have an FBO for GA/BA flights – so this might be the airport to go to. Local agents have reported that there is still space at the airport right now, but it's busier than usual due to the summit. Contact them at jetcenter@icelandair.is.

Anything else worth knowing about ops to Iceland?

- **There's been a change in AFTN addressing for filing of flight plans** in the BIRD/Reykjavik FIR. IFR FPLs now need to be sent to BIRDZPZZ. VFR and mixed FPLs should be sent to BIRDZPZX. AIC 8-23 refers.
- **Iceland's airspace is now entirely covered with ADS-B.** Coverage extends from the North Pole to Scotland and from the Greenwich Meridian to the west of Greenland. You can see their coverage map including flight levels at [this link](#).
- **There are some specific route requirements for flights to BIKF/Keflavik and BIRK/Reykjavik.** These can be found in AIP ENR 1.8.4.1.3.7 which explains exactly how you should file your flight plans to/from both BIKF and BIRK. But to make all this blurb easier to understand, the good folks at Isavia have published some handy graphic presentations of the requirements which you can find [here](#).

Anything else big we missed? Let us know! Or even better, if you've operated to Iceland recently and can share some info on how it went, file an Airport Spy report!



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