

# Navigating the UK entry rules

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



England's entry rules became much simpler from October 4, with the scrapping of the traffic light system. Now, there is **just one red list**, and then the rest of the world. There's one set of rules for the red list, and one set of rules for everywhere else.

## Red list rules

England **removed 47 countries from its red list** as of Oct 11. So from that date, the only countries remaining on the red list are now: Panama, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Basically, passengers who have been to a red list country within the past 10 days can only enter England if they are a British/Irish National, or have residence rights in the UK. And when they arrive, they must stay in a managed quarantine hotel for 10 days.

[Check here for full info.](#)

## Rules for everywhere else

This depends on whether a passenger has been vaccinated or not:

### Vaccinated Passengers

There is no requirement to get a test prior to travelling, or to quarantine on arrival. Pax will still have to get tested a couple of days later, but cheaper/easier options are coming.

### Unvaccinated or Partially Vaccinated Passengers

It's not great news. Unvaccinated pax will still need to get a pre-travel test within three days of their flight but here's the real kicker: they will have to isolate for ten days on arrival (from anywhere). Fortunately, the test-to-release scheme is still be running to get out of self-isolation early.

[Check here for full info.](#)

## Which vaccines are accepted?

Oxford/AstraZeneca, Pfizer BioNTech, Moderna, Janssen – plus a few other permutations.

On Oct 11, England added 37 more destinations to its list of countries and territories with approved proof of vaccination, meaning that arrivals from these places will be able to avoid more expensive post-arrival testing requirements.

## The UK or England?

These rules in their entirety **only affect arrivals in England**. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have all got their own sets of rules.

## What about crew?

England has a dedicated page on the rules for crew, which you can read [here](#).

The key points:

- Crew do not need a Covid test to enter England, even if they have been in a red list country.
- Crew who live in the UK do not need to quarantine, even if they have been in a red list country.
- Crew who **do not live in the UK** must quarantine in their hotel until departure if they are not fully vaccinated, or for a full 10 days if they have been in a red list country.

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# How to find the latest Covid flight restrictions

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



With Covid now present on every continent except Antarctica, travel restrictions for countries around the world are changing almost daily. Keeping tabs on everything is hard work, but if you want to know what the restrictions are for specific countries, there are some really good resources out there to make this easier.

## 1. Check the Notams!

We never thought we'd say it, but we are seeing these slowly starting to improve, with most countries issuing Notams containing specific information about exactly what kind of flights are allowed. Make sure to check the FIR ICAO code of the country (check here if you're unsure what code to use). Search the Notams using the updated FAA Notam Search site; or if you prefer the old-fashioned version, use this site instead.

## 2. UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office website

[Click here](#). The UK has eyes on the ground pretty much everywhere. Each country has a dedicated page, with a specific section on the coronavirus and the latest restrictions on inbound travel, which gets updated regularly. The focus is on the rules for UK travelers, but it's still very useful.

## 3. US website

[Click here](#). This US TravelStateGov website lists the Covid-related entry rules and requirements for all countries around the world, as published by the US Embassy in those countries. So pretty handy for US travelers.

## 4. OPSGROUP Dashboard

For more info on the latest travel and flight restrictions, OPSGROUP members can head over to the Dashboard and use the search function.

If you're still stuck for an answer, ask other members in the group in the **#questions** channel, or shoot us an email and we'll see what we can dig up.

## 5. Travel within the EU

The EU has created a simple tool for us to check exactly what travel rules are currently in place for each European country - check it out.

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# North Korea missile risk in the Sea of Japan

David Mumford

11 October, 2021

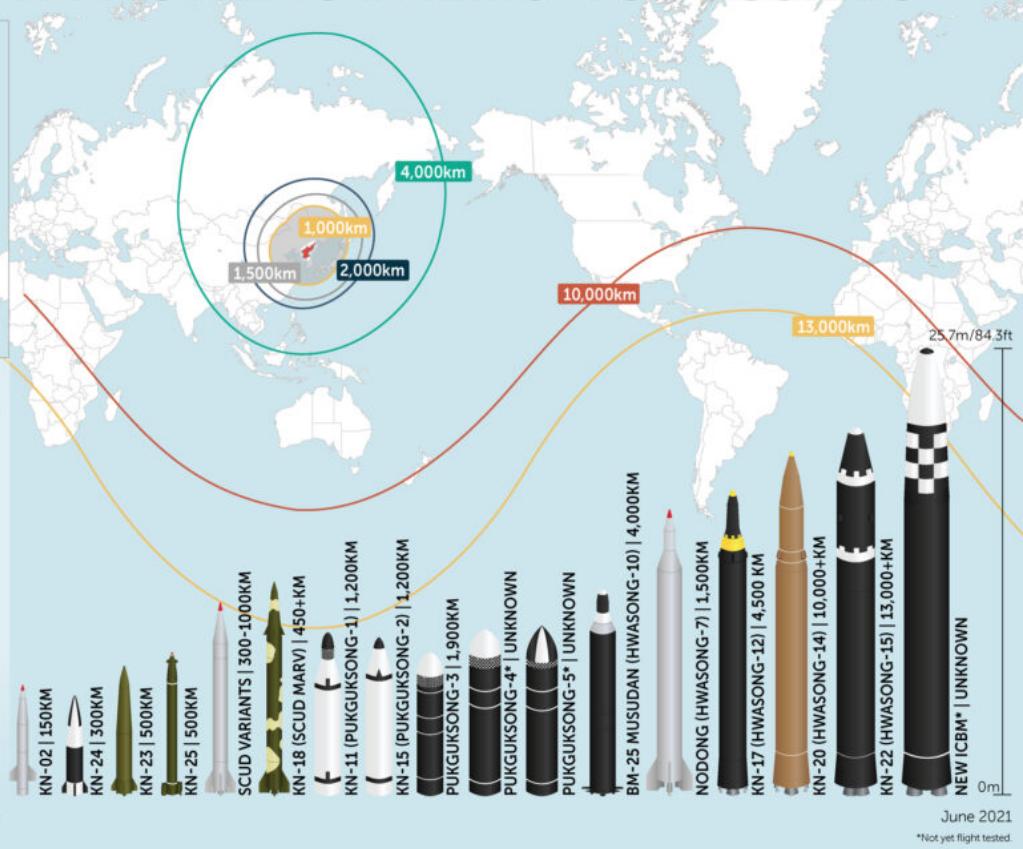


North Korea fired two **short-range ballistic missiles** across its east coast and into the Sea of Japan on Sep 15. It was North Korea's second weapons test in recent days, after the launch of a **new long-range cruise missile** at the weekend, which state media claim has a range capable of hitting much of Japan.

North Korea has in the past tested **intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs)** said to be capable of reaching nearly all of the US mainland and western Europe.



# NORTH KOREA'S BALLISTIC MISSILES



CSIS | MISSILE DEFENSE PROJECT

UN sanctions forbid North Korea from testing **ballistic missiles** (the ones that go up into space and then back down again, spraying debris all over international airways), but not **cruise missiles** (the ones that fly at low altitudes).

As usual, **North Korea did not provide any warning** prior to these recent tests – which is the key issue with regards to the airspace safety risk.

## A quick history of developments in the last few years:

- Until around **2014**, North Korea notified ICAO of all missile launches, so that aircraft could avoid the launch and splashdown areas.
- In **2015**, they gradually stopped doing this, reaching a point where there could be no confidence in an alert being issued to airlines by North Korea.
- In **2016**, airlines and aircraft operators started avoiding the Pyongyang FIR entirely, by the end of 2016 almost nobody was entering the airspace.
- In **2017**, more and more of these missiles came down in the Sea of Japan, increasingly closer to the Japanese landmass. OPSGROUP researched the locations and produced a map of the risk area, together with the article: “Here’s why North Korean missiles are now a real threat to Civil Aviation”. In September 2017, the US announced a ban on flights across all North Korean airspace, including the oceanic part of the ZKKP/Pyongyang FIR over the Sea of Japan. That ban is still in effect today. Several other countries have airspace warnings in place which advise caution due to the risk posed by unannounced rocket launches.
- In **2018**, following talks with the US, North Korea agreed with ICAO that it would provide adequate warning of all “activity hazardous to aviation” within its airspace.
- In May **2019**, North Korea resumed its practice of launching missiles into the Sea of Japan

without providing any warning by Notam.

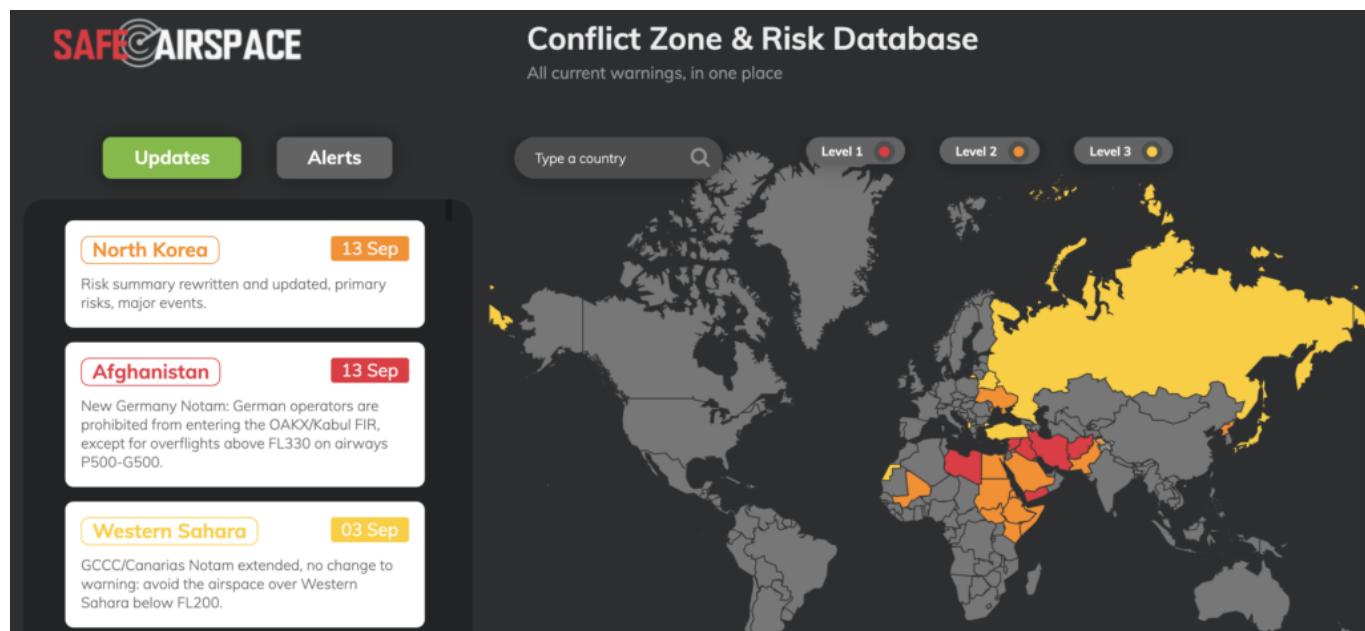
## Determining risk

The critical question for any aircraft operator is **whether there is a clear risk from these missiles in the airspace through which we operate**.

The chances of a missile, or part of it, striking the aircraft are not as low as they may initially appear - particularly given that all the **missile re-entries in recent years are occurring in quite a focused area** over the Sea of Japan. The risk to overflying traffic is arguably greater from ballistic missiles than cruise missiles, because these can break up on re-entry to the atmosphere (as happened with the 2017 tests) meaning that a **debris field of missile fragments** passes through the airspace, not just one complete missile.

## Advice to operators

- **Consider rerouting to remain over the Japanese landmass** or east of it. It is unlikely that North Korea would risk or target a landing of any test launch onto actual Japanese land.
- **Check routings carefully for arrivals/departures to Europe from Japan**, especially if planning airways which connect with the UHHH/Khabarovsk FIR at waypoints IGROD and AVGOK.
- **Read OPSGROUP's Note To Members #30: Japan Missile Risk** published in Aug 2017.
- **Monitor** safeairspace.net for latest updates to airspace warnings issued for North Korea.



# Afghanistan: Do Not Fly

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



US and allied forces have now pulled out of Afghanistan, and the Taliban have taken control of the country. **Afghanistan's airspace is now effectively closed to overflights** – the OAKX/Kabul FIR is uncontrolled, and overflying traffic should route around the country.

## Overflights

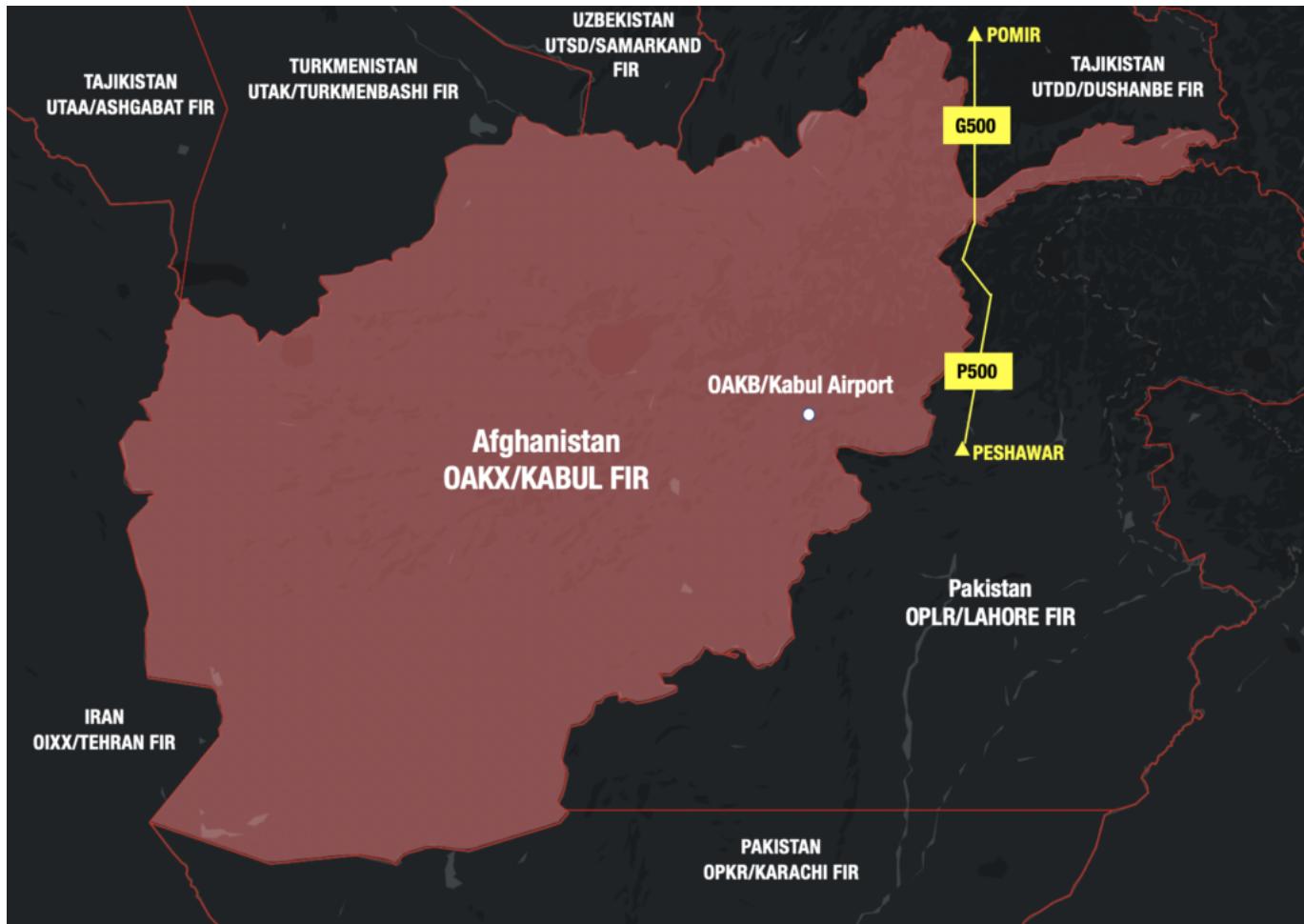
For overflights of the region, flights between Europe and parts of Asia will be those most affected by the effective closure of the OAKX/Kabul FIR. All major international airlines have now stopped using Afghanistan's airspace for overflights, most electing to route **south via the airspace over the United Arab Emirates and Arabian Sea** off the south coast of Pakistan.

However, there are **risk warnings** to consider for the airspace here too. Several countries have warnings in place for **Iran's airspace** (the OIX/Tehran FIR), including a total flight ban by the US, which were issued following the shoot-down of Ukraine Int Airlines flight 752 over Tehran in Jan 2020. The southern part of **Saudi Arabia's airspace** (the OEJD/Jeddah FIR) carries risk as well, with increasing Houthi drone and missile attacks over the past year.

To the north of Afghanistan, the options for overflights are fairly limited – via Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, or even farther north via Russia. So these are not really practical unless operating from northern Europe to China, Hong Kong, Japan, etc.

## Airspace Warnings

Following the Taliban takeover, several countries have updated their airspace warnings for Afghanistan. **The FAA now bans US operators from Afghanistan's airspace**, only permitting overflights on **airways P500 and G500** in the far east of the OAKX/Kabul FIR. EASA, along with authorities in several western countries, are now advising operators to avoid Afghanistan's airspace entirely.

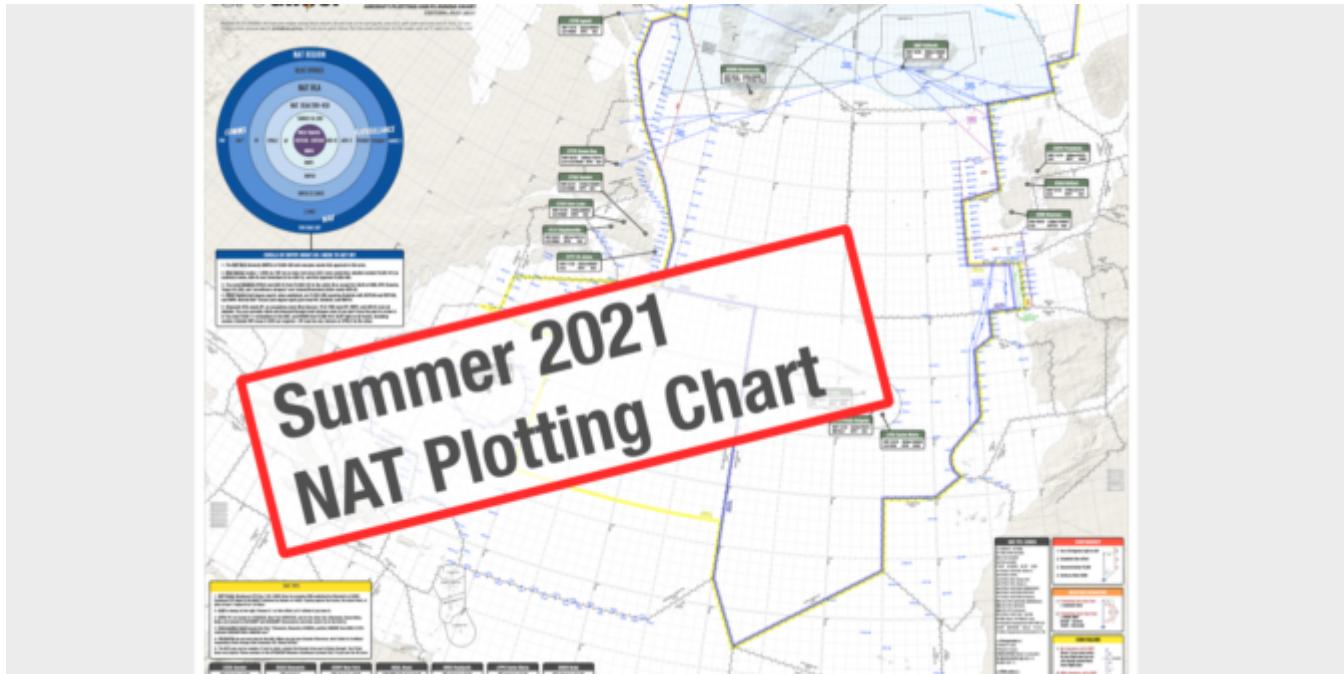


At [SafeAirspace.net](https://SafeAirspace.net) we are now listing Afghanistan as **Level One: Do Not Fly**. Check here for a full briefing.

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## 2021 New North Atlantic Plotting & Planning Chart

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



Hi members!

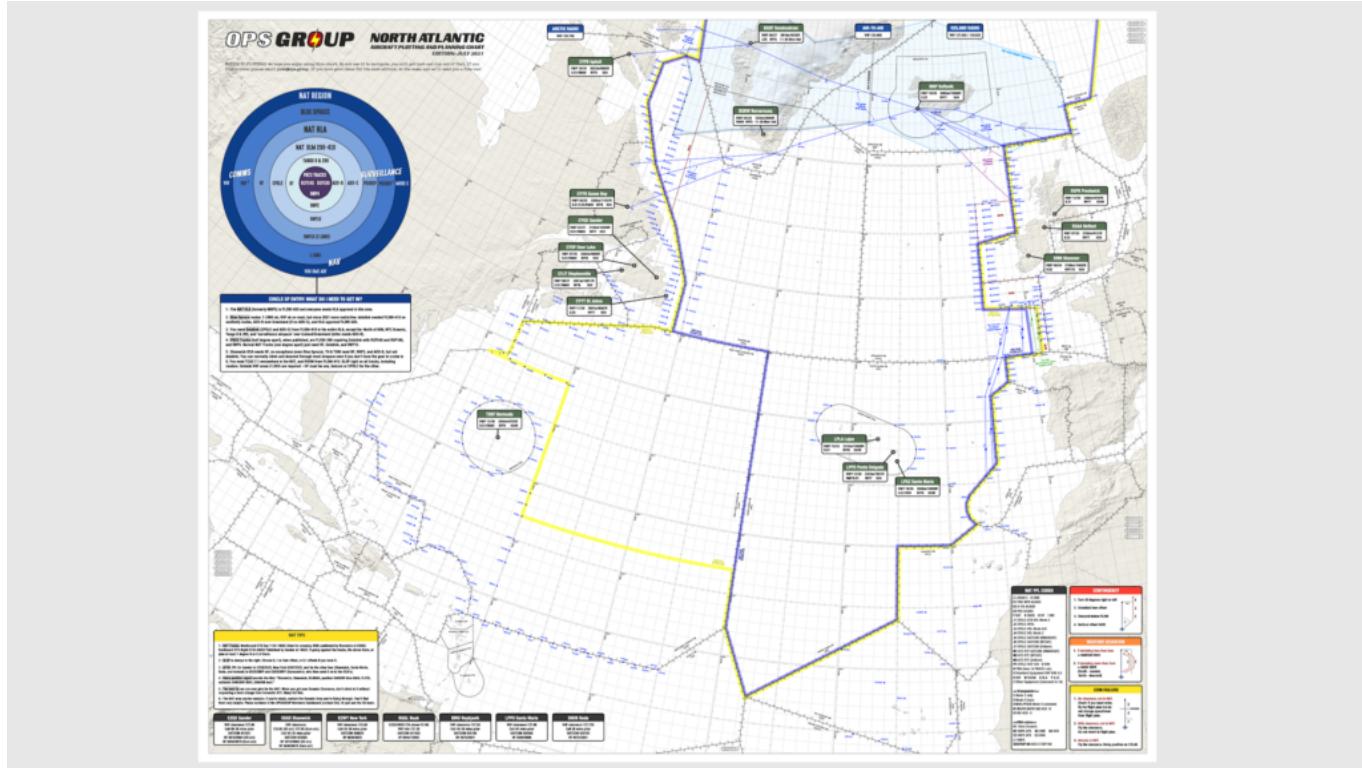
First, **thanks to all the group members who were part of making this.** We sat down from scratch and wanted to build the best possible NAT chart we could. A lot of work went into this, and we're grateful to you all! With this format and structure, we're also looking at making useful plotting charts for other areas like the Pacific, Africa, etc. – but for now, enjoy this completely updated NAT map for 2021.

So .. It's ready! You can grab it in Slack, or in your Dashboard. View it on your iPad or Laptop etc. as a PDF, or print it out as a giant wall map! It prints really well up to 15 feet wide – but you can also just put it onto A3 or A2 size paper.

If you're not a member, read on for how to get a copy.

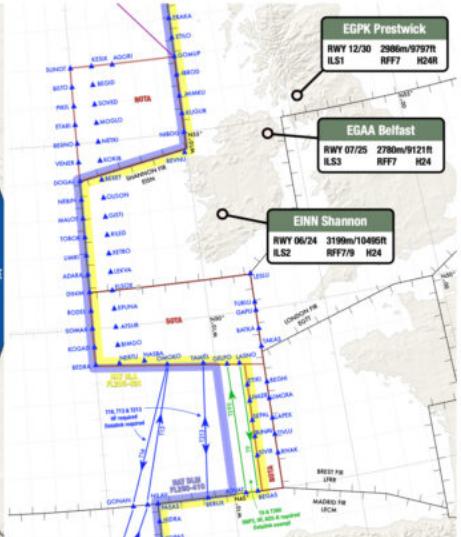
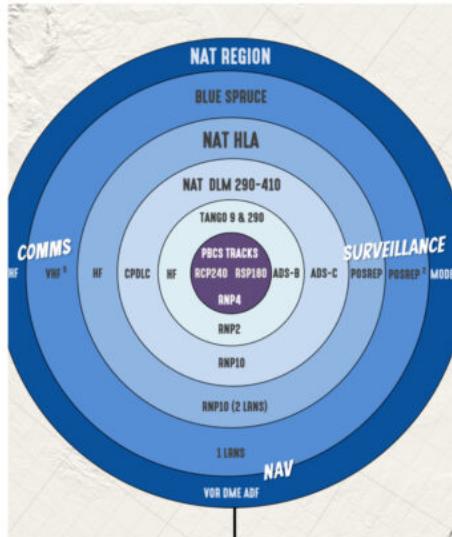
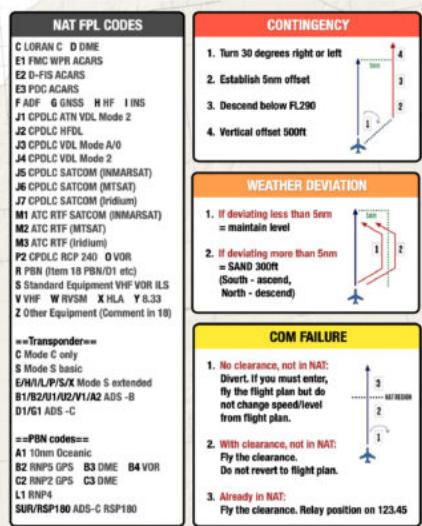
## About the 2021 NAT Chart

This chart is completely new – we started from scratch, expanded the coverage area, and then worked as a group to add all the useful things we could think of that a pilot or dispatcher crossing the North Atlantic might need.



New on this chart - effective July 2021:

- **FULLY UPDATED** for 2021 post-COVID flying!
- **EXPANDED** coverage area - much further down into the Atlantic, and further west.
- **NEW!** NAT Tips - using NAT Tracks, SLOP, filing an Oceanic Flight Plan, and helpful tips
- **NEW!** Quick reference for contingency, weather, and comms failure with easy graphics.
- **Updated:** NAT Airspace Circle of Entry 2021 - easily check what you need for Nav, Comms and ATC Surveillance depending on which bit of the NAT you will be flying through.
- Additional diversion airports, now 16 total primary NAT alternates with runway, approach, length, RFF, and hours
- Easy view of boundaries for HLA and DLM/Datalink mandated airspace
- Updated NAT FPL codes, clearance frequencies, Satcom, and HF
- Fully updated "South East Corner" with new Tango routes
- and ... Treasure Boxes!



## Other chart features:

- :: Requirements for NAT tracks, PBCS tracks, datalink mandate.
- :: Common NAT Diversion Airports.
- :: Runway Orientation, Length, best IFR Approach.
- :: RFF Category and Opening hours.
- :: NAT FPL Codes and sample FPL.
- :: Blue Spruce routes and equipment requirements.
- :: All NAT Entry/Exit points with associated required landfall fixes.

## How to get the new chart, if you're not a member?

- **Option 1:** Buy the chart in the store (\$35)
- **Option 2:** Join OPSGROUP, and **get it for free!**

OPSGROUP members get this and other publications free of charge, all available through your member dashboard.

There have been **many changes on the North Atlantic** since we published our previous chart in 2019. Here's a few things to read up on:

- Feb 2021 changes here
- July 2021 changes here
- The full NAT timeline of all changes going back to 2015

We hope you find it super useful, but also have fun using it!

# July 2021 North Atlantic Changes

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water...



Yep. Barely five months since the last version of the NAT Doc 007 was published, **we now have a new one.**

First things first – links...

To see **just the new changes**, click [here](#).

To see **the new NAT Doc 007 in its entirety**, click [here](#).

To see **the old NAT Doc 007**, and painstakingly cross-check all the changes compared to the new version (i.e. what we did so we could write this post), click [here](#).

Here's the lowdown of what's changed...

## The Datalink Mandate

**No changes to the rules here.** The old NAT Ops Bulletin 2017\_001 which contained all the info about the Datalink Mandate has been discontinued, and the essential info incorporated into the NAT Doc 007.

### Key points:

- Aircraft **without datalink** can request to climb/descend through datalink mandated airspace, but will only be considered on a tactical basis by ATC.
- Flights without datalink that file **STS/FFR, HOSP, HUM, MEDEVAC SAR, or STATE** in Field 18 of the FPL, may be permitted to flight plan and fly through datalink mandated airspace, but may not get their requested flight levels.
- For datalink failure **before departure**, you should re-file your FPL to stay clear of NAT DLM airspace. If it fails **after departure or whilst in NAT DLM airspace**, ATC may let you continue based on “tactical considerations” (i.e. how much other traffic is around).

Which brings us neatly on to...

## ATS Surveillance Airspace

This one has had us scratching our heads for a while now...

So, there is an **updated chart** showing the areas of ATS Surveillance Airspace in the NAT:

We have to say, we really don't like this chart very much. **The green blobs are misleading.** Here's what we mean...

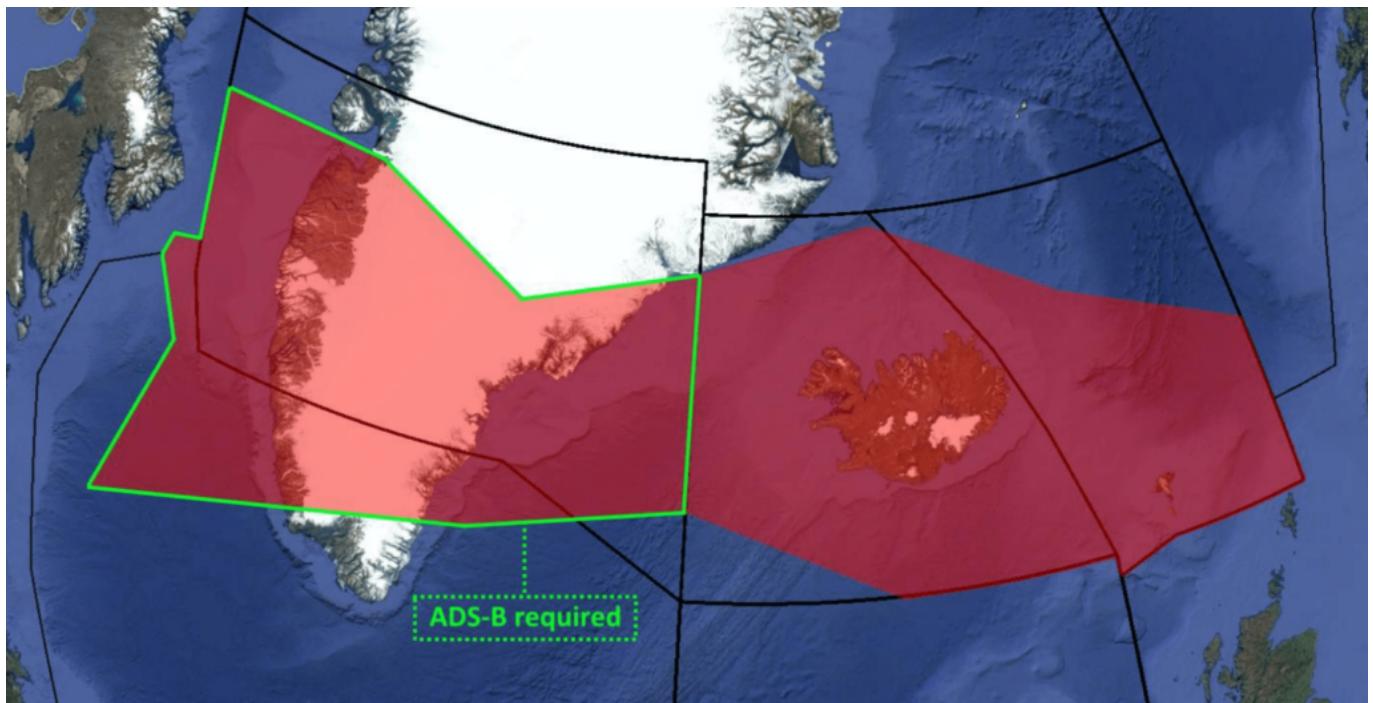
Essentially, the NAT Doc 007 says that **these are the datalink-exempt bits within the NAT Region:**

1. Everything north of 80°North.
2. New York Oceanic East FIR.
3. Tango Routes T9 and T290.
4. ATS Surveillance Airspace, where surveillance service is provided by means of radar and/or ADS-B, coupled with VHF.

So these green blobs give a **rough idea** of where ATS surveillance service is provided by radar and/or ADS-B within VHF range. But rough ideas don't win prizes, and neither do they explicitly tell you what the rules are. **Where is this mythical ATS Surveillance airspace in reality?** Give me some hard coordinates!

Thing is, they actually do, right there in the NAT Doc 007, they just don't say it very clearly.

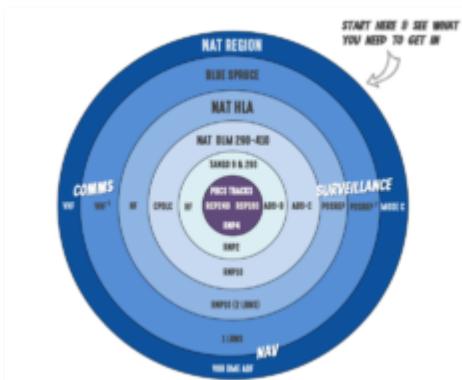
Here's the answer (we had to get in contact with Gander and Reykjavik ATC to confirm this): **ATS Surveillance Airspace is the area over Greenland and Iceland shown in this picture below. This is where you're allowed to fly above FL290 if you don't have datalink.**



There is no special datalink exemption for the **Blue Spruce routes**. That's another key point here.

The **southerly** Blue Spruce routes are not fully contained in the exempted airspace. So if you're flying these routes you will have to meet the NAT DLM requirements or fly below FL290 or above FL410.

The **notherly** Blue Spruce routes are different (i.e the ones going overhead BGSF/Sondrestrom airport). These do fall within the exempted area of airspace - so datalink is not mandatory if you're flying here.



**Confused?** We don't blame you. Here's something that might alleviate some misery though - our **NAT Airspace Circle of Entry**. OPSGROUP members can download the full hi-res PDF version [here](#). The Circle shows you what equipment you need - like CPDLC, ADS-C, HF - for each different type of airspace in the North Atlantic. With the datalink requirement effective Feb 2021, and the introduction of new requirements for the Tango Routes on the eastern side of the Shanwick OCA (T9 & T290), there are some important changes.

This NAT Airspace Circle of Entry will also appear on the **new NAT Plotting/Planning chart** that we are finalizing at the moment, and we'll send you that when it's ready.

#### **"SET MAX UPLINK DELAY VALUE TO 300 SECONDS"**

This thing started back in 2018 - a new procedure designed to **prevent pilots from acting on any old**

**CPDLC messages** that might have been delayed in the network.

So, we have CPDLC where ATC can basically ‘text’ you some sort of message. Usually a clearance to do something. There is a risk though that the message is latent meaning ‘existing but not yet developed or manifest; hidden or concealed’. **Basically lost for a longish time in the digital void** and it means there is a risk pilots might get a message to do something way after they were supposed to do it, and it is no longer valid (or safe to) anymore.

The old NAT Ops Bulletin 2018\_002 about CPDLC Uplink Message Latency Monitor Function has been discontinued, and the essential info is now incorporated into the NAT Doc 007. But there is some **new info** to be aware of.

**The key change** here is that all the NAT ANSPs have agreed on **300 seconds** as the period of time all aircraft should set their uplink timers to (any message that takes longer than that to reach you will be deemed ‘latent’). Also, they will be **sending this to all CPDLC connected aircraft immediately after they enter each control area** – so you might receive the message a bunch of times (a bit annoying) but the procedure is the same regardless of whether you’ve “done it already” or not.

**This procedure** is covered in section 8.50.20 of the new NAT Doc 007, and it **works like this**:

- When you receive the message to set your max uplink delay to 300 seconds, acknowledge it with a Roger [ACCEPT].
- If you don’t have a message latency monitoring function available then you still have to acknowledge the message but say ‘TIMER NOT AVAILABLE’.
- Now, if you do have the function available then change the max uplink delay to 300 seconds and you’re done.

If the system gives you an indication that a message has been delayed over 300 seconds then **don’t follow what it says but get in touch with ATC (by voice)** and let them know so they can confirm whether they still want you to do carry out whatever the clearance told you to do. They will also close the message out of the system.

**Bottom line:** don’t act on a delayed uplink message until you’ve checked with ATC.

## Weather Deviation Procedures

**No new rules here**, they’ve just made a nice little graphic to help understand the Procedures.

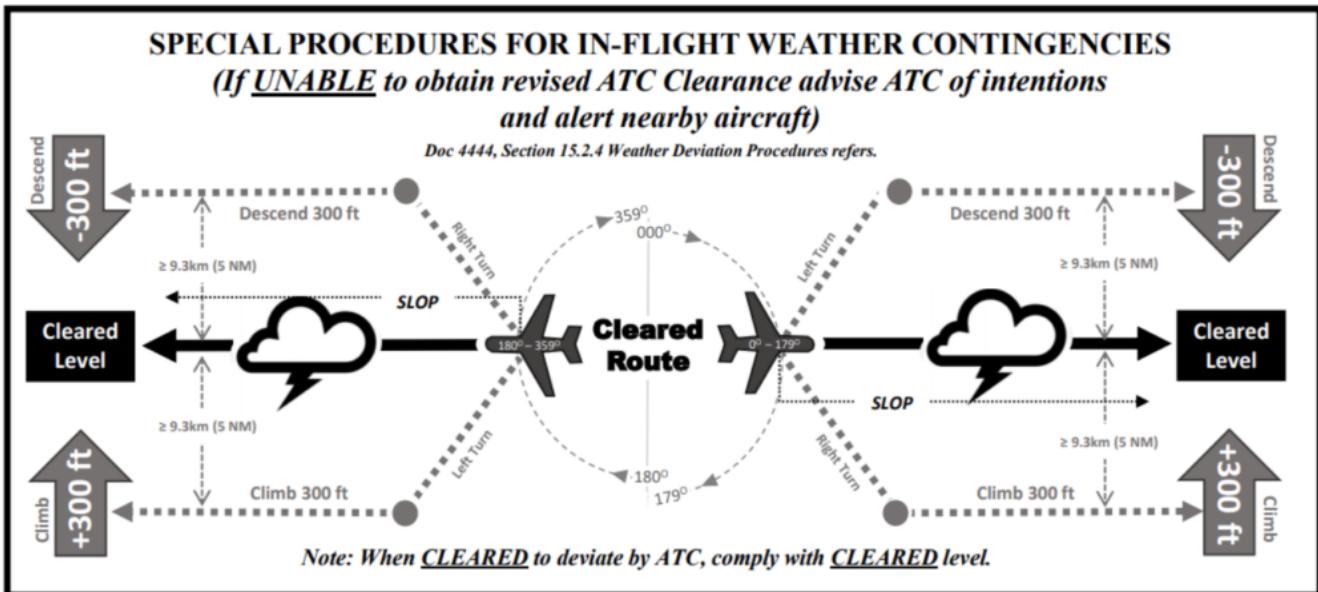


Figure 13-2. Visual aid for understanding and applying the weather contingency procedures guidance.

Funky! If you prefer a slightly simpler version, check out this one we made earlier:

Almost finished now. That's the big stuff done...

### Climbs in Gander and Shanwick airspace

Gander and Shanwick have decided that they will **advise crew in their OCA when a higher flight level becomes available**. Basically, they have a function in their ATM system which lets them interrogate the flight's vertical profile to determine when a higher level is available. They will then check there is no separation issue and if not, will offer the new level.

### What did it used to say?

It used to say that clearances tend to specify a single flight level, but that **sometimes there might be 'scope' for higher climb**. It had some stuff about how, if you got a re-clearance you should climb without delay. It also said that if you aren't CPDLC equipped you should tell ATC as soon as you've left your old level and when you reach the new level.

Actually it still says that in the new document but now it has a new bit about how Shanwick and Gander **will be a bit more proactive** about letting you know when the levels become available.

### PBCS operations

The only changes in this section are wording changes. Separation minima is no longer **"as low as"** – it is now **"as small as"**. *"How small can you go" doesn't have quite the same ring to it...*

**And that's it!! That's all the changes!!** At least, we think so. If you have spotted any biggies not listed here, send us an email at: [news@ops.group](mailto:news@ops.group)

And if all this is not enough for you, and you want a comprehensive timeline of all the old significant changes on the North Atlantic stretching back to the dawn of time (actually, just to 2015), then click [here](#).

# Shanwick's Tango Routes - 2021 changes

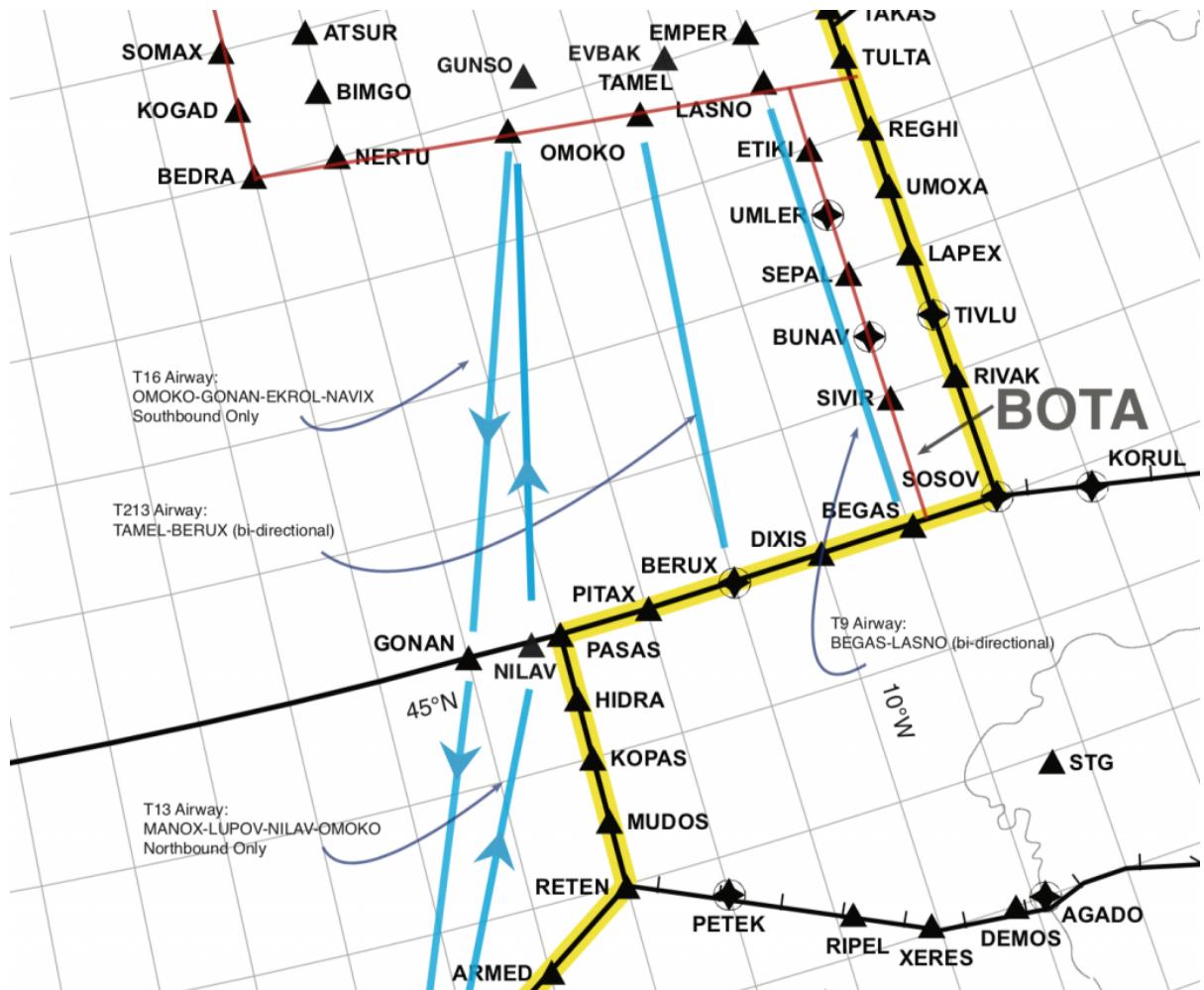
David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



When the French Controllers go on strike, the airspace surrounding France becomes of high interest to international operators, especially the north-south Tango routes within Shanwick's airspace.

With Phase 2C of the North Atlantic Datalink Mandate effecting February 2021, **CPDLC is required between FL290-FL410 throughout the entire NAT region**. Some Tango routes stay exempt: **T9**, and a new route **T290**. The other Tango routes (**T213, T13, T16**) will all require datalink.

**Map of the Tango Routes prior to 30 Jan 2020:**



### Tango 9 LASNO-BEGAS

The most popular of the Tango routes - often chock full of holiday traffic between Northern Europe and the Canaries. Requirements:

- **HF Radio.** One is sufficient.
- **An Oceanic Clearance.** Get it from Shanwick **at least** 30 minutes before you arrive at the boundary, 60 minutes is the best target time.
- At least **one** LRNS/Long Range Nav System
- **HLA Approval** if you want to fly above FL290 and above.

### Tango 213 TAMEL-BERUX

- **HF Radio.** One is sufficient.
- **An Oceanic Clearance.** Get it from Shanwick **at least** 30 minutes before you arrive at the boundary, 60 minutes is the best target time.
- **Two** LRNS/Long Range Nav Systems
- **HLA Approval** if you want to fly above FL290 and above.

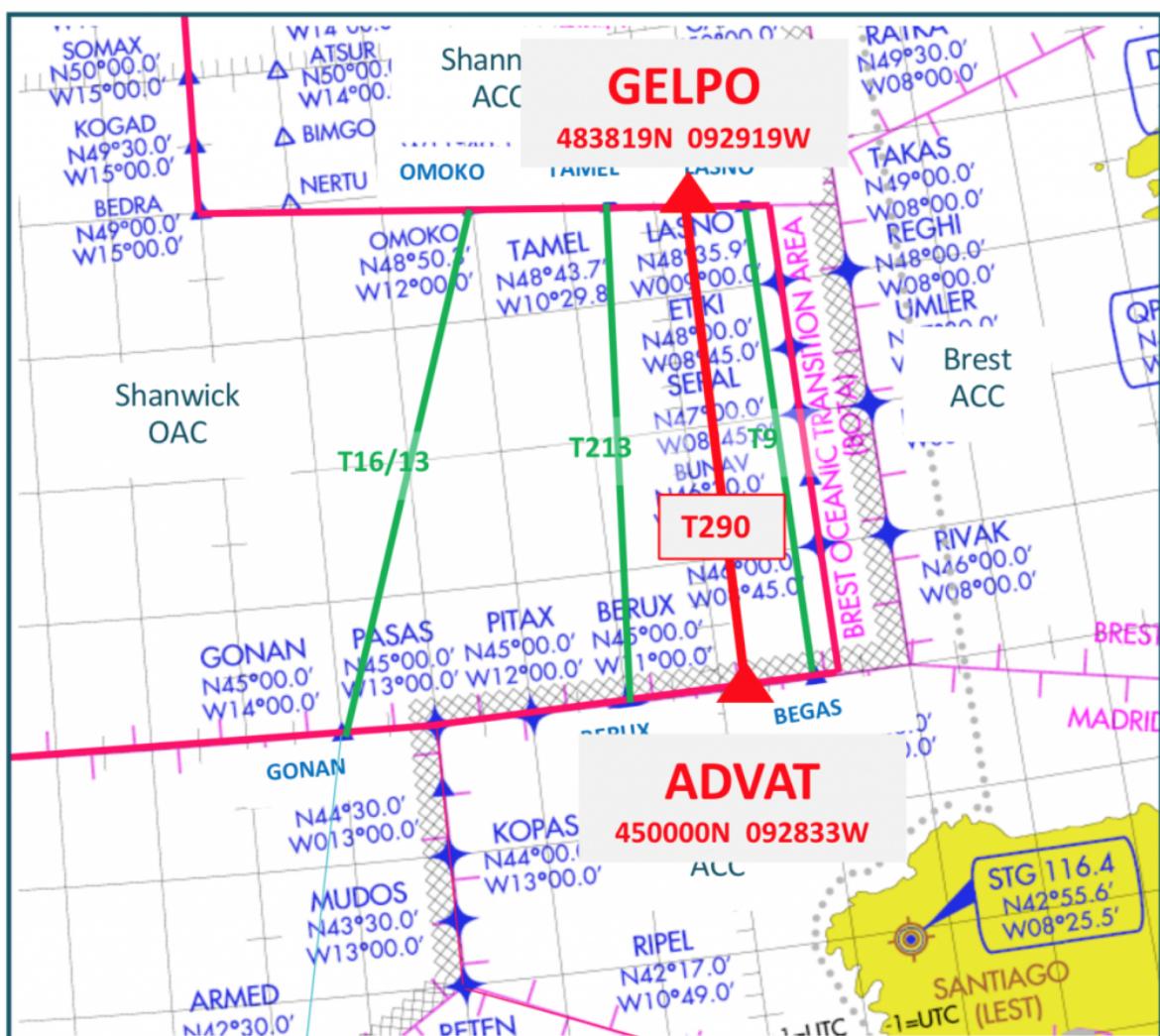
### Tango 16 OMOKO-NAVIX

- **HF Radio.** One is sufficient.
- **An Oceanic Clearance.** Get it from Shanwick **at least** 30 minutes before you arrive at the boundary, 60 minutes is the best target time.
- **Two LRNS/Long Range Nav Systems**
- **HLA Approval** if you want to fly above FL290 and above.

### Tango 13 MANOX-OMOKO

- **HF Radio.** One is sufficient.
- **An Oceanic Clearance.** Get it from Santa Maria **at least** 30 minutes before you arrive at the boundary, 60 minutes is the best target time.
- **Two LRNS/Long Range Nav Systems**
- **HLA Approval** if you want to fly FL290 and above.

### T290 to be added from 30 Jan 2020:



- T290 will be 20NM to the west of T9, in order to support the NAT Contingency 5NM offset procedure. T290 will go from new boundary points GELPO in the north to ADVAT in the south.
- Both T9 and T290 will be classed as RNP2 continental offshore routes (the UK AIP says to make sure you include NAV/RNP2 in Field 18 of your FPL). Both will require: 1 LRNS, 1 HF, and ADS-B. The other Tango routes (T213, T13, T16) will all require datalink between FL290-410.
- T9 will become southbound only, even levels between FL300-400. T290 will be northbound only, odd levels from FL290-410.
- For T9 and T290, there will be a new VHF frequency: 128.360, which will be introduced on 30 Sep 2019. Pilots must monitor this frequency, but it's only to be used for intervention and emergency - in other words, don't use it unless something's going badly wrong! You'll still need to monitor and broadcast on 121.5 for in-flight contingencies.
- For more info on the Tango routes, check out the UK AIP ENR 3.5 due to take effect from Jan 30.
- You need a HF radio to enter Shanwick FIR, period. There are no exceptions.
- You need HLA Approval to use any of the Tango routes at FL290 and above.

## Operating Tips

- You probably won't get the level that you want - either because the airway itself is busy, or because you're crossing a bunch of East-West NAT Traffic. If the rest of your Flight Plan shows FL380, plan FL320 for most of the Tango portion - especially T9.
- You can make an Oceanic request by Data-link (ACARS), Clearance delivery - 127.65 VHF, 123.95 VHF or via HF (Frequencies vary on the day, but 5598 is normally a safe bet).
- If you get a low Flight Level for the Oceanic Route, Shanwick are happy for you to check in again closer to the boundary and see if higher is now available.
- Entering the Oceanic Airspace, make a full position report: Position and time / Flight level / Next position and estimate for that point / Following position.
- Don't make a full exit position report when you enter domestic airspace, just callsign and "Approaching LASNO, FL370". Exception: Santa Maria likes one.
- No contact on HF? Relay on 123.45, or Sat Phone EGGX 423201 or EIAA 425002.

## NAT HLA Approvals

- If you have an existing MNPS approval, it's good until 2020.
- If you need a new HLA approval, then you'll need RNP4/RNP10.
- Individual Crew need training in international procedures and HLA, as part of the process.

## From Shannon ATC

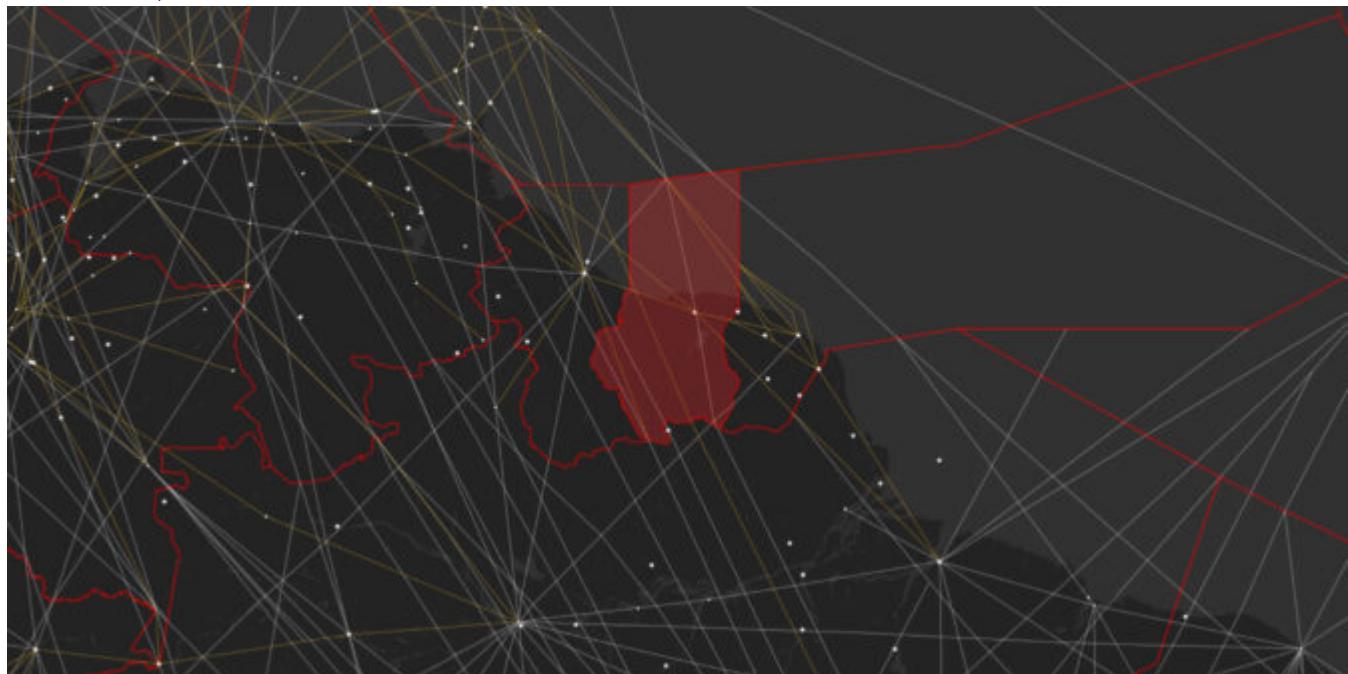
Thanks to Shannon ATC for adding this useful information for crews operating on the Tango Routes:

- EICK Departures via T9/T213/T16 should get their Oceanic clearance prior to departure - ask the Tower 45 minutes ahead of time.
- All other EI/Irish departures can request clearance when airborne. For info, the earlier crews request their clearance the better, as it means they are more likely to get a better level and it allows ATC to plan for getting the aircraft to that level.
- Important: Due to the risk of two aircraft using the same squawk leading to a mis-ident, Northbound traffic entering SOTA via T9, T13, or T213 should squawk 2000 at least 10 minutes prior to the Irish boundary.

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## No overnight ATC in Suriname airspace

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



Watch out if planning to overfly the **SMPM/Paramaribo FIR** this week - there's an **ATC strike happening each night between 0100-1100z**, finishing at 1100z on June 4.

Each night, the airspace will effectively be uncontrolled with Contingency Procedures in place:

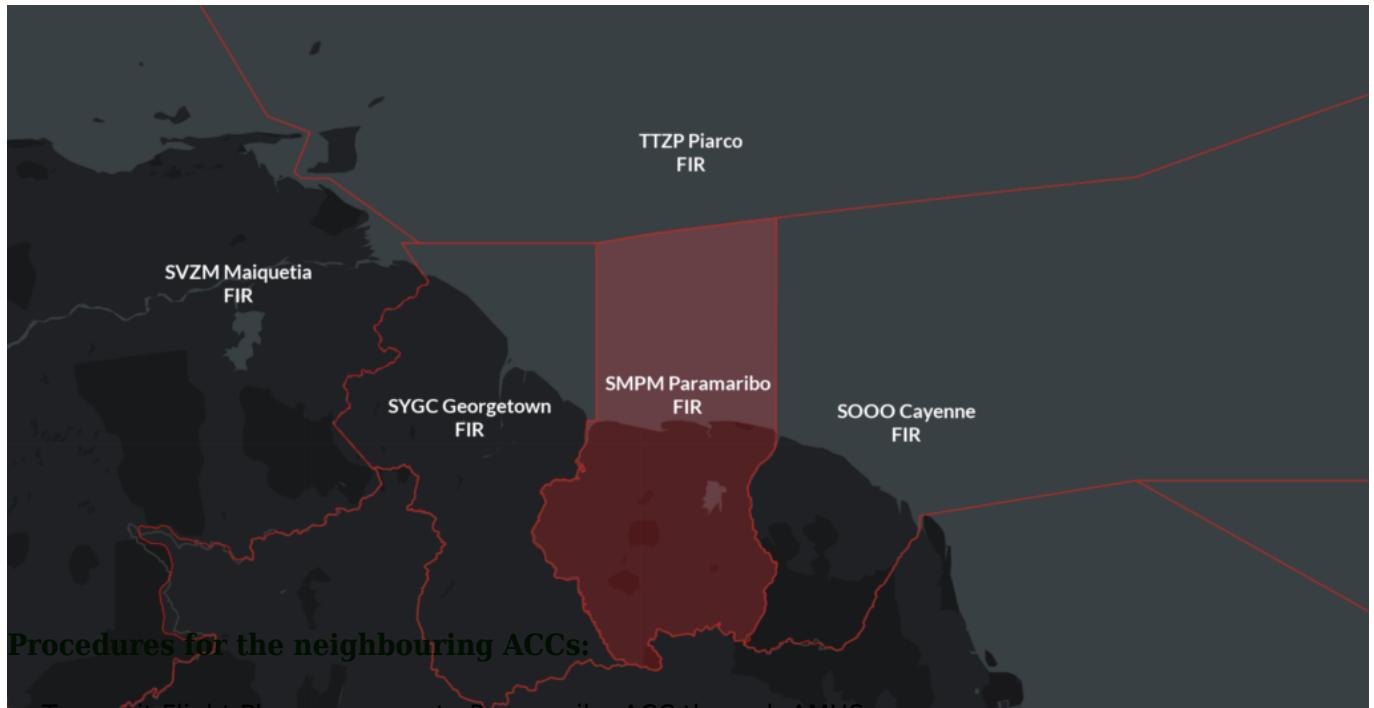
- Neighboring ACCs will be controlling the airspace
- Only certain routes are available
- No speed/level changes are allowed.
- Only medevac and emergency flights will receive any air traffic services.

**Here's the Notam:**

SMPM PARAMARIBO (ACC)

A0063/21 - DUE TO INDUSTRIAL STRIKE NO ATC SERVICE AVBL  
ATM CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR PARAMARIBO FIR ACT  
ONLY MED AND EMERG FLT WILL REC ATS.  
DAILY 0100-1100, 29 MAY 01:00 2021 UNTIL 04 JUN 11:00 2021.  
CREATED: 27 MAY 23:01 2021

**Here's where we're talking about:**



- a. Transmit Flight Plan messages to Paramaribo ~~ACC Amazonica~~ AMHS.
- b. Authorize entrance into Paramaribo FIR, in agreement with the longitudinal separation established in this Contingency Plan.
- c. Do not authorize any Flight Level or speed (Mach number, if applicable) change in the 10 minutes prior to the aircraft entrance into Paramaribo FIR.
- d. Instruct pilots to keep the last assigned Flight Level and Mach number while over-flying Paramaribo FIR.
- e. Instruct pilots to contact the adjacent ACC as soon as possible and at least 10 minutes before the estimated times over exit point of Paramaribo FIR.

#### **Pilot and operator procedures:**

- a. Pilots shall include in the last position report to the competent adjacent ACC the estimated times over entry and exit points of the PARAMARIBO FIR.
- b. Aircraft are to operate as close as possible to the centreline of the assigned contingency route.
- c. contact the competent ACC as soon as possible and at least 15 minutes before the estimated times over exit point of PARAMARIBO FIR.
- d. Keep navigation and anti-collision lights continually on while PARAMARIBO FIR is being overflowed.
- e. Maintain the flight level and the Mach number assigned by the competent adjacent ACC while operating within PARAMARIBO FIR, unless for emergency or flight safety reasons.
- f. Pilots need to continuously guard the VHF emergency frequency 121.5 MHz and should operate their transponder at all times during flight.
- g. Transponders should be set on a discrete code assigned by the adjacent stations of PARAMARIBO ACC or select code 2000.
- h. whenever emergencies and/or flight safety reasons make it impossible to maintain the flight level assigned for the transit through the PARAMARIBO FIR;

- The pilot shall immediately inform all other aircraft of the emergency, eventually level change,

using blind transmissions on emergency frequency 121.500 MHz and on pilots' air to air frequency 123.450 MHz.

- Broadcast every position and intention on emergency frequency 121.500 MHz and on pilots' air to air frequency 123.450 MHz.

**To check which routes are available, check out the Contingency Plan in full here:**

TEL/FX: (597) 462352 or 499561 AFS: SMJPVNYX / SMPBYNYX ADRES: DOEKHIEWEG OOST # 1 PARAMARIBO SURINAME P.O.BOX: 2956 E-MAIL: <a href="mailto:ais@cadur.sr">ais@cadur.sr</a> <a href="mailto:ais.sur@hotmail.com">ais.sur@hotmail.com</a>	 MINISTRY OF PUBLIC WORKS, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL AVIATION AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION SERVICES P.O.BOX 2956 PARAMARIBO REPUBLIC OF SURINAME	<b>AIC SERIES A</b> <b>A 11/18</b> <b>11 OCT 2018</b>
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**AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION CIRCULAR**

**ATM CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR PARAMARIBO FIR**

**1. OBJECTIVE:**

1.1 This contingency plan contains arrangements to ensure the continued safety of air navigation in the event of partially or total disruption of air traffic services (ATS) within the Paramaribo FIR and is related to ICAO Annex 11- *Air Traffic Services* Chapter 2, paragraph 2.31.

1.2 This contingency plan is designed to provide alternative routes, using existing airways, which allows aircraft operators to fly through or avoid airspace within the PARAMARIBO FIR.

**2. AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT**

**2.1 ATS Responsibilities**

2.1.1 In the event that ATS cannot be provided within the PARAMARIBO FIR, PARAMARIBO ACC shall publish the corresponding NOTAM indicating the following:

- Time and date of the beginning of the contingency measures;
- Airspace and air routes available for arriving, departing and overflying traffic and airspace to be avoided;
- Details of the facilities and services available or not available and any limits on ATS provision (e.g., ACC, TWR-APP and FIS), including an expected date of restoration of services if available;
- Information on the provisions made for alternative services;
- ATS Contingency Routes;
- Procedures to be followed by adjacent ATS units;
- Procedures to be followed by pilots; and
- Any other details with respect to the disruption and actions being taken that aircraft operators may find useful.

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AIC A 11/18

**If you need to contact the authorities in Paramaribo, here are their details:**

#### **Paramaribo ACC**

E-mail: [pengelacc@gmail.com](mailto:pengelacc@gmail.com) and [radha\\_atwaroe@hotmail.com](mailto:radha_atwaroe@hotmail.com)  
TEL: 00597-325203 or 00597-8555025

#### **International NOTAM office**

E-mail: [ais.sur@hotmail.com](mailto:ais.sur@hotmail.com) and [ais@cadur.sr](mailto:ais@cadur.sr)

# US FAA issues new airspace warning for Russia and Ukraine

David Mumford

11 October, 2021



On April 17, the US FAA published new Notams warning operators to **exercise extreme caution within 100nm of the entire Russia-Ukraine border**, due to risks associated with recent increased tensions between the two countries. Should hostilities escalate here, the airspace on both sides could be exposed to potential weapons activity posing a **risk to civil aircraft from misidentification or miscalculation**.

The eastern part of Ukraine along the border with Russia is still an **active conflict zone**. The main hotspot is the Line of Contact which runs north-south through the UKDV/Dnipropetrovsk FIR. Throughout April 2021 there has been a large military build-up and an increase in ceasefire violations in this area, plus reports of GPS jamming and surveillance of civil flights by military systems – **similar conditions to those prior to the shoot-down of MH17 in 2014**.

This new airspace warning from the FAA follows the Information Note they published on April 13, which provides more background on the situation.

The FAA's previous warning for Ukraine, as per SFAR 113, remains in place – **US operators are banned from overflying the eastern part of the UKDV/Dnipropetrovsk FIR** due to a continued threat of arms fire in the region. Essentially, everything east of ABDAR-M853-NIKAD-N604-GOBUN is prohibited. Airways M853 and N604 are off-limits as well. Flights to UKHH/Kharkiv, UKDD/Dnipropetrovsk and UKDE/Zaporizhzhia airports are permitted.

Put that all together – the old warning and the new one – and here's how it looks:

Several other countries have airspace warnings in place for eastern Ukraine, including Canada who

recently published a Notam advising operators to **avoid the UKFV/Simferopol and UKDV/Dnipropetrovsk FIRs** due to the risk from heightened military activity and anti-aviation weaponry. Check SafeAirspace.net for more info.

## What about the UKFV/Simferopol FIR?

For the past few years, the risk here has been quite separate to that affecting the UKDV/Dnipropetrovsk FIR. It stems from the fact that the UKFV/Simferopol is **disputed airspace**, with aircraft potentially receiving **confusing and conflicting air traffic control instructions** from both Ukrainian and Russian ATC.

In March 2014, Russia annexed Crimea, and Ukraine disputed this. The ATC Center is in Simferopol, Crimea, and is now run by Russia. Russia claims the airspace, and now refer to it as the **URFV FIR**. Ukraine refuses to recognise the change, and still calls it the **UKFV FIR** – and asks crews to talk to Ukrainian controllers in Dnipro/Odesa ACC instead of Simferopol ACC.

In October 2020, the US entirely removed their restrictions on **overflights of the UKFV/Simferopol FIR**, as they said the security situation had sufficiently improved here. While Russia continued to assert territorial claims over this region, Ukraine had established appropriate risk management measures to ensure safe operations for aircraft along the Black Sea routes.

In simple terms – since 27th October 2020, US operators have been able to overfly the Simferopol FIR.

However, tensions have been on the rise in this region throughout 2021. Russia seem to be going on a **renewed military offensive here**, focusing their efforts on the area of disputed airspace over Crimea, and establishing several large danger areas over the water surrounding the Crimea Peninsula at all flight levels. These danger areas are most likely due to **military activity which may include live firing exercises** – so use extreme care in the UKFV/Simferopol FIR at this time as the situation is unpredictable.

For more info on these latest developments in the UKFV/Simferopol FIR, see our dedicated article [here](#).

## What are other countries saying about Ukraine?

Aside from the US, several other countries consistently publish airspace warnings: the **UK, Germany, France, and Canada**

**UK and France:** both have warnings in place advising against all ops over both of these Ukrainian FIRs, with the exception of airways Black Sea routes in the UKFV/Simferopol FIR.

**Germany:** does not have any published warnings in place at all.

**Canada:** avoid the UKFV/Simferopol and UKDV/Dnipropetrovsk FIRs due to risk from heightened military activity and anti-aviation weaponry. Exercise caution across the rest of Ukraine's airspace.

For more details on Ukraine and other airspace warnings, head to [SafeAirspace.net](#)

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# New warning for Albanian airspace

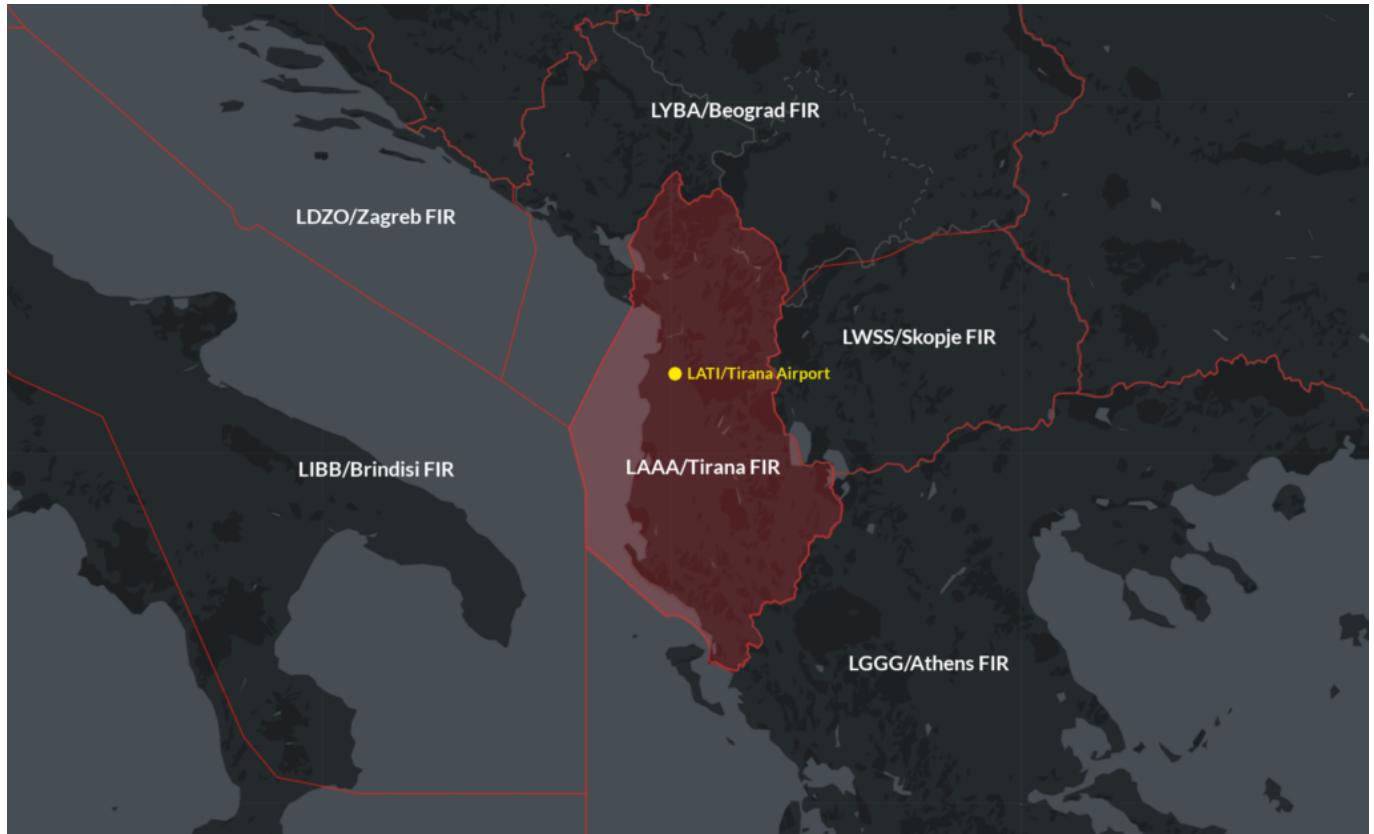
David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



On April 8, Albanian airspace (the LAAA/Tirana FIR) along with LATI/Tirana Airport was **forced to close**, after a number of local air traffic controllers declared themselves temporarily unfit to work. Several international organisations, including IFALPA and IFATCA, have since issued statements warning pilots to **exercise extreme caution while operating in Albanian airspace due to a heightened risk of degraded ATC services**.

**Why? Two reasons:**

1. **Local controllers** are now back at work but under significant duress, having been threatened with being fired (or worse - being arrested and jailed) if they do not declare themselves fit for duty.
2. **Foreign controllers** have reportedly been brought in to replace some local controllers who were arrested, despite the fact that they are not trained or rated on any of the local positions.



## What happened?

### Mid-2020

- Albcontrol (the National Air Traffic Agency) cut the salary of the controllers by up to 70%.

### Early April 2021

- Some controllers declared themselves temporarily unfit to work due to stress caused by these pay cuts. They were fired by Albcontrol.

### April 6

- A large number of local controllers (estimated at around 60-70% of ATCOs) declared themselves temporarily unfit to work due to stress, in line with the EASA regulations and the international standards. *What these regulations essentially say is that being 'fit for work' is a personal assessment by the controller to avoid undue pressure from management to perform safety critical tasks when unfit for duty.*

### April 7

- LATI/Tirana Airport issues closed at 1000z due to lack of ATC staff. Albanian airspace (the LAAA/Tirana FIR) closed at 1800z. Both stayed closed until 0659z on April 9, with a few exceptions when they reopened for short periods of time to allow humanitarian and medevac flights to operate.
- Albania's government sent troops and police to clear the "protesting" controllers out of the

tower and their offices. About two dozen controllers were questioned by police. Three were arrested, charged with 'abuse of office'. Two remain in jail; the third is under house arrest.

## April 8

- Several reports emerged that the Albanian Government had brought in Turkish controllers to replace the local ones. No official announcement was made, so their status as to training and local ratings is unknown.

## April 9

- LATI/Tirana Airport and Albanian airspace reopened at 0659z.
- The Albanian Government issued an order officially recognising foreign ATCO licenses, allowing for foreign air traffic controllers to take over in emergency situations in Albania – an attempt to justify its actions the previous day and establish legal authority for the foreign controllers already installed.
- Local controllers returned to work (except those still in jail/under house arrest) and were forced to sign a "fit for work" declaration.

## What's been the response?

The international response has been **unequivocally damning**, with IFALPA, IFATCA and ATCEUC all issuing several statements denouncing the action of the Albanian authorities (both the government and Albcontrol).

**IFALPA** have published a Safety Bulletin advising pilots to exercise extreme caution while operating within Albanian airspace, providing more detail in a Press Release calling on the Albanian authorities to adhere to international regulations. **IFATCA** have published similar info [here](#), and **ATCEUC** has also issued a statement which can be found [here](#).

## Advice to operators

Reminiscent of the Ethiopian ATC strike and subsequent cover-up by the authorities in 2018, the action of the Albanian authorities should be seen for what it is – **a terrible misjudgement, creating a safety risk across Albanian airspace**.

IFATCA define it best, in their April 10 press release –

*"The International Convention on Civil Aviation prohibits an air traffic controller from exercising the privileges of their licences and related ratings at any time when they are aware of any decrease in their medical fitness which might render them unable to safely and properly exercise these privileges. It is considered unsafe to have a person perform air traffic control that is physically or mentally impaired in any way, or unqualified and untrained for the position."*

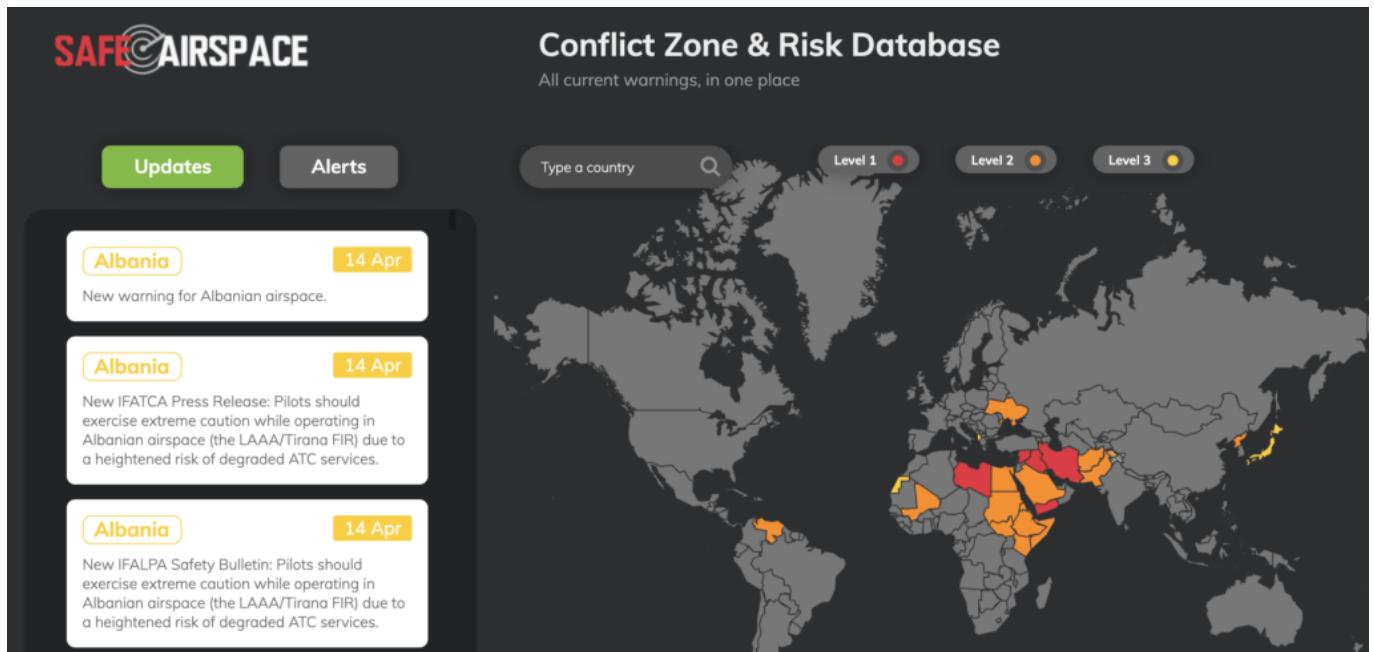
*It is the obligation of the Service Provider to provide a safe and functional workplace environment that supports the personnel to perform these complex safety roles free from distraction and duress.*

*The Albanian authorities continue to have disregard for the safety critical nature of these roles...*

*Albanian authorities have taken an irresponsible gamble on safety and stability of the air traffic services over their territory and the Network by attempting to continue operations with unlicensed and unqualified*

staff to operate, masquerading as a safe and functional service."

At SafeAirspace.net we are now listing Albania as "**Level 3 - Caution**" following these events. Pilots should exercise extreme caution while operating in Albanian airspace (the LAAA/Tirana FIR) due to a heightened risk of degraded ATC services.



#### Further reading:

- IFALPA April 13 Statement
- IFATCA April 8 Statement and April 10 Statement
- ATCEUC Press Releases on April 7, April 8 and April 10
- IFATSEA April 11 Press Release

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## UK to make permit applications tougher for EU operators

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



From April 2021 onwards, most European operators wanting to do commercial flights to the UK will have to apply for landing permits on a **trip by trip basis**.

After Brexit finally happened back in January, the UK government continued to issue **Block Permits** to EU operators – essentially just permits which last several months and cover any number of flights. These get renewed after three months, conditional on each EU country giving **the same deal to UK operators**.

Here we are, three months later, and with a number of EU countries still not providing these reciprocal deals, the UK government has finally got fed up!

So from April onwards the UK will **only issue Block Permits to operators registered in countries which provide reciprocal deals to UK operators**. According to the EBAA, so far these reciprocal deals have been agreed with **Italy** and **France** – more countries may follow, but the UK CAA say it's not looking likely at this late stage in the game.

**Important to note:** it is operators who are **registered** in these countries (i.e. France and Italy) who can still get Block Permits, not operators **flying to the UK** from these countries. The EBAA explains it like this:

*"For example a flight from Munich to London, the UK CAA would allow for it to be operated by a French operator with a UK Block Permit, under a reciprocal understanding between the UK and France that an equivalent system is in place for UK airlines. In parallel, a German operator would have to apply for a permit for each individual flight on the same route if no reciprocal understanding on a similar approval for UK airlines had not been reached with the German authorities."*

EBAA is advising all affected EU operators to contact their respective aviation authorities to raise awareness on what the withdrawal of the UK Block Permit scheme would mean for them.

## How to get a UK landing permit

So, all non-UK operators wanting to do **commercial flights** to the UK need to get a Foreign Carrier Permit beforehand. That's your landing permit. If you're applying for a **Block Permit**, you use form CPG3201. If you're applying on a **trip by trip basis**, you use form CPG3200.

If you're operating a **private flight**, or just **overflying** the country – **no permit is required** (unless you're doing some kind of delivery or maintenance flight with non-standard airworthiness).

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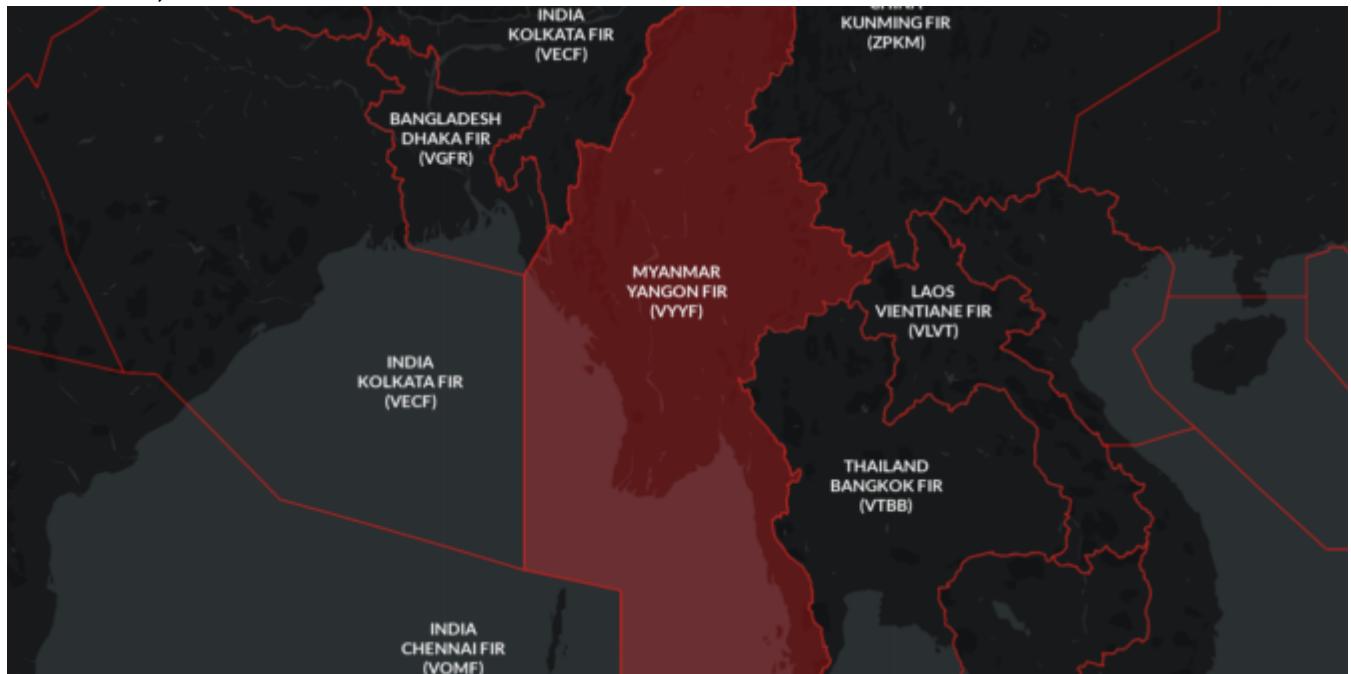
For more info on Brexit's impact on ops, check out our article from Jan 2021 here. There have been a few semi-important-to-know-about changes, but ultimately, **the big ticket items are all still the same**, and life goes on much the same as it did before - you still need a permit to do a commercial flight, the UK is still part of Eurocontrol, slots are still needed for busy airports, and nav charges are still expensive.

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## ATC service back to normal in Myanmar

David Mumford

11 October, 2021



### ***Update March 4:***

Local agents report that **ATC services are back to normal in Myanmar**, as most ATC staff have returned to work. Operators overflying the VYYF/Yangon FIR should therefore be getting normal ATC service again now, and the Contingency Procedures are no longer in effect, but be on alert for the situation to change quickly.

### ***Story from Feb 13:***

Myanmar is **no longer providing ATC service to overflights**, due to lack of ATC staff.

Thousands of people across the country are taking part in nationwide strikes and protests against the military who overthrew the government at the start of February, and some ATC staff have joined in.

Local sources estimate that **70% ATC and 80% AIS staff are on strike**, with very limited operations at NOTAM offices.

ATC service is still being provided at **VYYY/Yangon**, the country's main airport, which remains **open for arrivals and departures**.

But for **overflights** of the country (the VYYF/Yangon FIR), all operators now have to follow the **Contingency Procedures**:

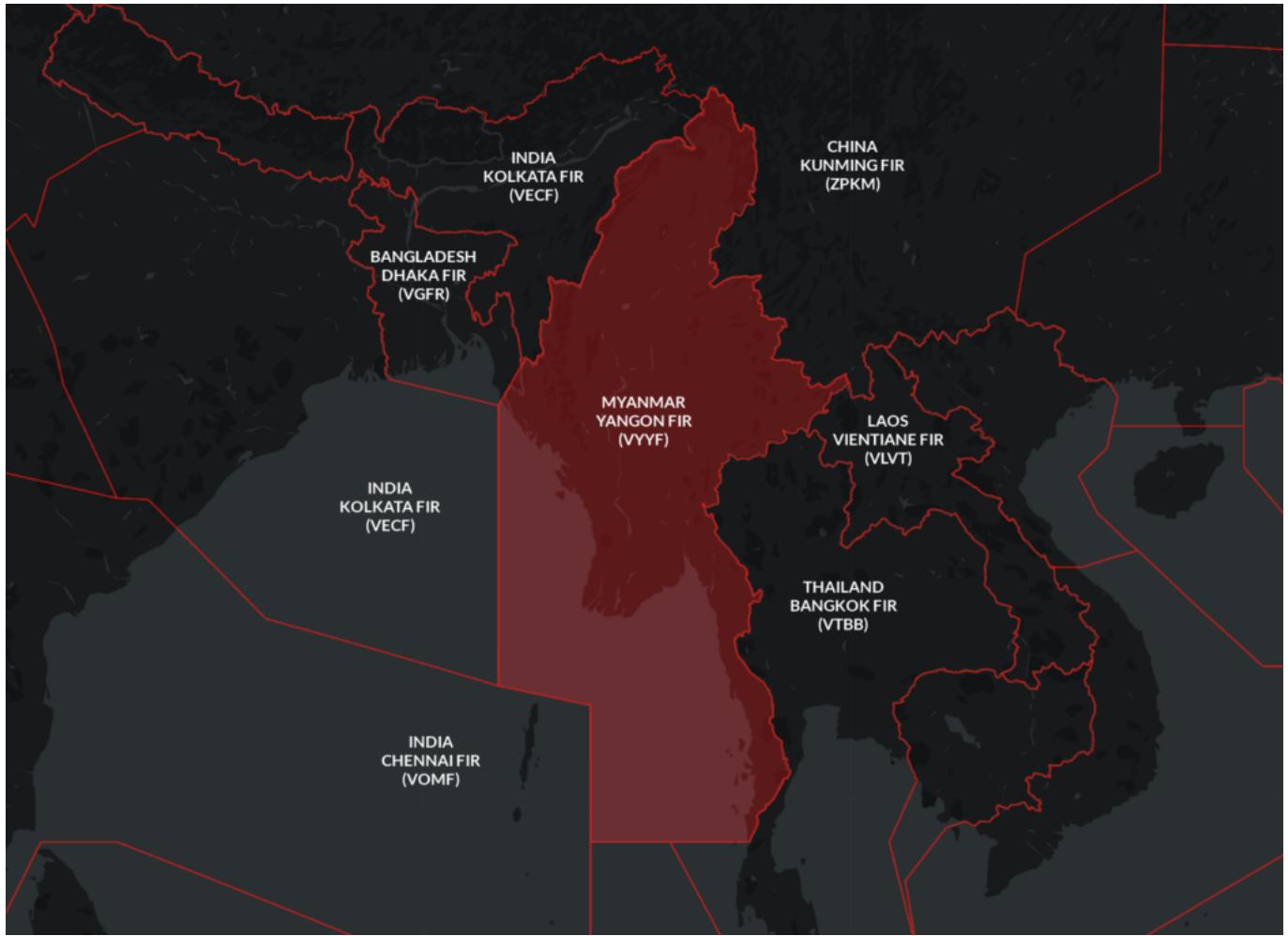
- 15 minute separation will be applied to all overflights
- You can only transit the airspace via specific waypoints, airways, and at certain flight levels.

Here are the VYYF/Yangon Notams that carry the announcement:

**A0038/21** - DUE TO DISRUPTION OF ATS IN YANGON FIR ALL ACFT ARE ADVISED THAT THE MYANMAR INT'L CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR ACFT INTENDING TO OVERFLY THESE FIRS IS IN EFFECT. FLIGHT PLANING MUST BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONTINGENCY ROUTES LISTED AND FL ASSIGNMENT. PILOTS MUST STRICTLY ADHERE TO THE CONTINGENCY PROCEDURES. ONLY APPROVED INT'L FLIGHTS ARE PERMITTED TO OVERFLY MYANMAR AIRSPACE. (RMK- YANGON INT'L AIRPORT APP AND TWR CONTROL SERVICE AVBL FOR ALL ARR/DEP TRAFFIC. 08 FEB 12:28 2021 UNTIL 28 FEB 23:59 2021. CREATED: 08 FEB 13:04 2021

**A0037/21** - YANGON ACC WILL APPLY 15 MIN SEPARATION IN YANGON FIR FOR ALL OVERFLY TRAFFIC AND DEP/ARR TRAFFIC DUE TO LACK OF ATC STAFF. MAKE SURE TO PROVIDE ABOVE MENTIONED SEPARATION OVER ALL CONVERGING POINT IN YANGON FIR AND MONITOR THE ALL TRAFFIC. 08 FEB 06:30 2021 UNTIL 28 FEB 23:59 2021 ESTIMATED. CREATED: 08 FEB 08:36 2021

Here's a quick reference map of where we're talking about:



And here's the info on the **Contingency Routes** in effect, as published in the Myanmar AIP section ENR 3.5:

Contingency Route Name	ATS Route	Direction	FL Assignment	ACCs	Com
CRMMR001	L507, G473 TEBOV-BGO-MAKAS	<b>West bound</b>	<b>320,340</b>	Kolkatta ACC	HF, ADS/CPDLC
		<b>East bound</b>	<b>350</b>	Bangkok ACC	VHF
CRMMR002	A201 ANSOS-LSO-LINSO	<b>West bound</b>	<b>320,380</b>	Kolkatta ACC	HF, ADS/CPDLC
		<b>East bound</b>	<b>290</b>	Kumming ACC	VHF
CRMMR003	L301 RINDA-DWI-TANEK	<b>West bound</b>	<b>300,380</b>	Kolkatta ACC	HF, VHF, ADS/CPDLC
		<b>East bound</b>	<b>330,410</b>	Bangkok ACC	VHF
CRMMR004	P762 LULDA-DWI-CRY3-TANEK	<b>West bound</b>	<b>280</b>	Chennai OCC	HF, ADS/CPDLC
		<b>East bound</b>	<b>270</b>	Bangkok ACC	VHF
CRMMR005	B465 APAGO-MDY-AKSAG	<b>West bound</b>	<b>300,320</b>	Dhaka FIR	VHF/HF
		<b>East bound</b>	<b>330,410</b>	Vientiane FIR	VHF

Here's what that looks like in map form:

Following the coup on Feb 1, the Myanmar Military declared a state of emergency and assumed control. Airports across the country were briefly closed, but a Notam issued on Feb 3 declared they were all open again. The strikes and protests started up on Feb 6, and show no signs of stopping anytime soon - despite a ban on large public gatherings and night-time curfews imposed by the military.

The VYYF Notams say that the current **airspace restrictions will remain in place until Feb 28**, but given the volatile situation on the ground right now, this could well get extended. We will keep this page

updated with the latest news as we get it.

You won't find the **full version of the Myanmar ATS Contingency Plan** in their AIP yet – the Myanmar CAA have stored it elsewhere on their website. You can find it [here](#).

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## Feb 2021 North Atlantic Changes

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



2021 is off to a flying start again with **NAT changes aplenty!**

We've got a new edition of the **NAT Doc 007** (the big one with pretty much everything you need to know in it), **Nat Doc 006** (the one which tells you what happens when things go wrong – also pretty big), and **three updated NAT Ops Bulletins** (the small-to-medium-sized ones which give more info about specific topics).

This image shows the docs which have changed – lots of meaningless letters and numbers in there. Fear not, we'll go through each one and explain **what it is**, and **what has changed...**

### NAT Doc 007



NAT Doc 007 is **the Bible of the North Atlantic**. It's full of NAT goodness – all the specifics about how to operate your aircraft safely through the complex airspace of the region is here. And they've just published a new edition – effective Feb 2021.

As aviation documents go, it's written in pretty digestible language. **There's just a lot in it.** But the latest release is slightly more user-friendly than previous updates, as ICAO have now included **a little summary document which explains all the changes.**

You can download a pdf of the **new NAT Doc 007 here.**

And you can get **the little explainer doc here.**

We've been looking at this latest edition for 12 hours or so now, and we think the changes are **minor**. We use that word with trepidation. **The most significant changes** seem to be as follows:

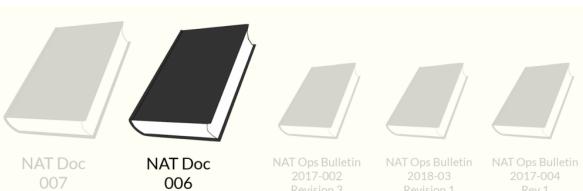
1. **No more NOROTS** - these were a system of domestic westbound tracks published daily by Nav Canada for aircraft transiting between Europe and the Northwestern US. These have been disbanded.
2. **Mach Number Technique** - they want any aircraft capable of maintaining a mach number to flight plan their requested number (not just turbojets).
3. **The southerly Blue Spruce route** which used to start/end at "HO" now does so at "PORGY" instead. HO/Hopedale NDB has been removed from service.
4. **Some clarification on Comms requirements.** Basically two long-range comms systems are needed throughout the NAT if outside of VHF coverage. One must be HF. The other may be CPDLC/Sat Voice but Inmarsat systems do not count when you're really really far north (north of 80N).

Here is latest VHF coverage chart they refer too in Doc 007 (although it says it needs updating):



Relief from the HF requirement is available for flights going for repairs, ferry flights, and special cases. This requires permission from each and every Oceanic Area Control Centre you're passing through (i.e. Gander, Shanwick, etc). Include your approval in Item 18 of your flight plan.

## NAT Doc 006



Also known as the **Air Traffic Management Operational Contingency Plan - North Atlantic Region**.

Also known as the **ATMOCP-NAR**.

Not really. There's no such thing as an ATMOCP-NAR.

NAT Doc 006 is about a different kind of monster – it tells the tale of **what happens on the North Atlantic when ATC goes down for any reason**. It's the official go-to manual to check the Contingency Plan they put in place during these so-called “ATC Zero” events.

You can download a pdf of the **new NAT Doc 006 here**.

And you can get **the little explainer doc here**.

### **Summary of what's changed:**

- They have updated the section talking about contingency plans for the Gander Oceanic FIR. There is basically some updated contact info, updated contingency routes in the event of Gander Evacuations, and some wording changes clarifying the procedures to be used in event of a comms disruption or full loss of ground-air comms capability.
- The plan only applies to Gander Oceanic FIR, and has removed the ADS-B designated airspace over Greenland because Gander no longer provide ground based ADS-B separation.

**For a breakdown of each of the big changes in this NAT Doc 006**, in chronological order (i.e. following the order they appear in the NAT Doc 006 guidance doc!), check out our separate article here.

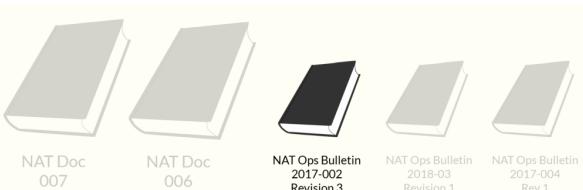
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So **NAT Doc 007** and **006** are the “big ones” that have changed.

But remember, there are some changes to **three NAT Ops Bulletins** too!

Here's the lowdown:

#### **1. The “How Not To Make Oceanic Errors” NAT Ops Bulletin**



Real name: “ICAO NAT Ops Bulletin 2017-002 Revision 3. Subject: OESB – Oceanic Errors”.

Download it [here](#).

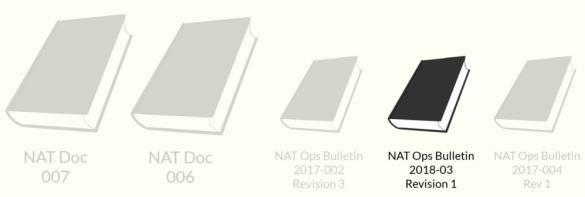
This is the one which has all the advice for operators on how to avoid the common mistakes when flying the North Atlantic. These include: Gross Nav Errors, Large Height Deviations, and Longitudinal Separation busts. There's also some advice on Flight Planning, SLOP, and some CPDLC things to watch out for.

#### **The changes in this latest version:**

- It now has up-to-date guidance on Contingency and Weather Deviation Procedures, to reflect the new procedures that were introduced on the NAT in March 2019 and then extended to all oceanic airspace worldwide in Nov 2020.

[Click here](#) for our article which has more info on all this.

#### **2. The “How To Punch In Waypoints Correctly” NAT Ops Bulletin**



Real name: "ICAO NAT Ops Bulletin 2018-03 Revision 1. Subject: Waypoint Insertion / Verification Special Emphasis Items".

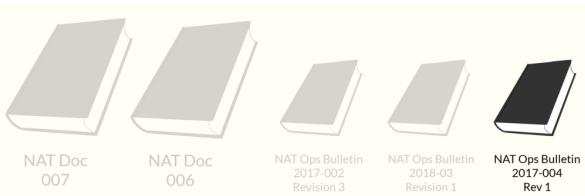
Download it [here](#).

There are some specific procedures to know when it comes to proper waypoint insertion and verification. This is considered a critical method of mitigating the risk associated the rapidly changing procedures (contingency) as well as reduced separation operations (ASEPS and PBCS) within the North Atlantic.

#### **The changes in this latest version:**

- Oceanic Clearances containing a re-route issued by voice/OCL may include half-degree waypoints. Operators should ensure that their flight crew procedures and associated training are sufficiently robust to mitigate against navigational error due to waypoint insertion errors.
- Flight Crews are reminded they have the option to respond "UNABLE" to an oceanic re-route and negotiate with ATC accordingly.

### **3. The "How To Use Datalink Properly" NAT Ops Bulletin**



Real name: "ICAO NAT Ops Bulletin 2017\_004\_Revision 1. Subject: NAT Data Link Special Emphasis Items".

Download it [here](#).

This Bulletin basically gives a tonne of guidance to operators on how to follow the correct datalink procedures in the North Atlantic.

#### **The changes in this latest version:**

- It now includes a new section on the use of CPDLC route clearance uplinks:

#### 4. CPDLC Route Clearance Uplinks

- 4.1 CPDLC route clearance uplinks are used by ATC to amend oceanic routing.
- 4.2 If a clearance is received that can be automatically loaded into the FMS (e.g. via a LOAD prompt), the flight crew should load the clearance into the FMS and review it before responding with WILCO.
- 4.3 Flight crews must be familiar with the proper loading and execution of the following CPDLC route clearance uplinks:
  - a) PROCEED DIRECT TO (position)
    - I. Instruction to proceed directly to the specified position
  - b) CLEARED TO (position) VIA (route clearance)
    - I. Instruction to proceed to the specified position via the specified route
    - II. This uplink may not show the "VIA ROUTE CLEARANCE" until it is loaded
    - III. This is not a "direct" to the CLEARED TO waypoint. It is a clearance to the waypoint via the route specified.
  - c) CLEARED (route clearance)
    - I. Instruction to proceed via the specified route
    - II. This uplink may not show the "ROUTE CLEARANCE" until it is loaded
  - d) AT (position) CLEARED (route clearance)
    - I. Instruction to proceed from the specified position via the specified route
    - II. This uplink may not show the "ROUTE CLEARANCE" until it is loaded

*Note. — Experience shows that flights crews often misunderstand the uplink message CLEARED TO (position) VIA (route clearance) when they fail to load the message and incorrectly fly directly to the CLEARED TO position. Or, even after loading, they perceive the clearance as "direct" to the "CLEARED TO" position.*

*Note. — FMS waypoint weather data (winds and temperature) may be lost depending on the route clearance message received. Flight crews should verify the weather data as they may need to re-enter the weather data for proper FMS predictions.*

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So as far as the ICAO NAT Ops Bulletins go, the full list of **current Bulletins** is as follows:



# NAT OPS BULLETIN CHECKLIST

NAT OPS Bulletin Checklist		Issued: 23 February 2021
Serial N°	Subject	Effective date
2020_002	Surveillance Service in the NAT / Flight Crew Operating Procedures	08 July 2020
2020_001	ACARS Data Link Oceanic Clearance Flight	06 April 2020
2019_003	Data Link performance improvement options- <b>Revision 2</b>	08 July 2020
2019_001	Operations Without an Assigned Fixed Speed in the NAT (OWAFS) Special Emphasis Items (SEI)	09 July 2019
2018_005	Special Procedures For In-Flight Contingencies in Oceanic Airspace <b>Revision 1</b>	28 March 2019
2018_004	Implementation of Performance Based Separation Minima-Expanded Publication of PBCS OTS	28 March 2019
2018_003	Waypoint Insertion / Verification Special Emphasis Items – <b>Revision 1</b>	23 February 2021
2018_002	CPDLC Uplink Message Latency Monitor Function – <b>Revision 1</b>	04 June 2018
2017_005	Revised Sample Oceanic Checklists	07 December 2017
2017_004	NAT Data Link Special Emphasis Items – <b>Revision 1</b>	23 February 2021
2017_002	Oceanic Errors - <b>Revision 03</b>	29 January 2021
2017_001	NAT common DLM AIC – <b>Revision 4</b>	09 July 2019
2013_005	New Service Notification for Gander Oceanic Control Area	21 November 2013
2013_002	Publication of “Track Wise – Targeting Risk within the Shanwick OCA” – updated 29 April 2013	29 April 2013

You can download each Bulletin from the ICAO page [here](#).

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**And that's it!! That's all the changes!!** At least, we think so. If you have spotted any biggies not listed here, send us an email at: [news@ops.group](mailto:news@ops.group)

And if all this is not enough for you, and you want a comprehensive timeline of **all the old significant changes on the North Atlantic** stretching back to the dawn of time (2015, actually), then [click here](#).

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## Feb 2021 NAT Doc 006 Changes

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



ICAO have published an **updated NAT Doc 006**, effective Feb 2021.

This document details **what happens on the North Atlantic when ATC goes down for any reason**. It's the official go-to manual to check the Contingency Plan they put in place during these so-called "ATC Zero" events.

In particular these include the contingency arrangements in place to deal with:

- The airspace suffering contamination by **volcanic ash**.
- The steps taken to deal with a **mass turnback of traffic** over the NAT region.

You can download a pdf of the **new NAT Doc 006 here**.

And you can get **the little explainer doc here**.

#### **Summary of what's changed:**

- They have updated the section talking about contingency plans for the Gander Oceanic FIR. There is basically some updated contact info, updated contingency routes in the event of Gander Evacuations, and some wording changes clarifying the procedures to be used in event of a comms disruption or full loss of ground-air comms capability.
- The plan only applies to Gander Oceanic FIR, and has removed the ADS-B designated airspace over Greenland because Gander no longer provide ground based ADS-B separation.

*Here's a breakdown of each of the big changes, in chronological order (i.e. following the order they appear in the NAT Doc 006 guidance doc!):*

#### **The Disruption of ground/air comms capability section was updated:**

Shanwick Oceanic FIR and Reykjavik Oceanic FIR provide supporting procedures for Gander. So if there is a general disruption of ground/air comms capability in Gander, comms services will be maintained using available equipment and will be supplemented with the assistance of adjacent facilities. HF normally

provided by the CYQX International Flight Service Station will be delegated to other International Stations and the frequencies will be published in a NOTAM.

### **They then corrected the misspelling of the word 'dependent' about 50 times:**

Ok, maybe only about 6 times.

### **The 'No Service Procedure' was updated:**

If Gander ACC is evacuated, Shanwick will take over the ATC provision in the Oceanic bit as much as they can. They won't issue re-clearances to aircraft in Gander Oceanic though. Moncton and Montreal ACC will take on the en-route ATC provision in Gander FIR.

### **Contact Info updated:**

Oceanic Centre	Telephone Number	SATCOM Inmarsat Short Code
Reykjavik, via Iceland Radio	+354 568 4600	425105
Santa Maria	+351 296 820 438 +351 296 886 042 (satellite link)	426305
New York	+1 631 468 1413	436623
Ballygirreen (Shanwick Aeradio)	+353 61 368241 Ground/Air Ops +353 61 471199 Ground/Air Ops via Switchboard	425002

### **Pilot/Operator Procedures were updated:**

If you have a clearance already, and are routing in from another OCA, then in you go and follow the clearance.

This is what it says -

*"While flights with an acknowledged oceanic clearance may transit Gander's oceanic airspace, flights not yet within Gander OCA are strongly advised not to enter the airspace. Flights operating with an acknowledged oceanic/ATC clearance that continue under pilot's discretion are expected to proceed in accordance with the last oceanic/ATC clearance issued. En-route requests for changes to route, level or speed should be limited to those required for flight safety."*

It has removed the bit about flights in other OCAs expecting a big re-route, and how Reykavik and Santa Maria will advise on procedures. The Procedures will be as per the Notam issued and the paragraph above gives the procedure.

### **East and Westbound flights above FL290 contingency routes have been updated:**

The change is that instead of just extending the OTS system to begin at fixes on the boundary between Gander and the Moncton or Montreal FIR, they will now use laterally spaced routes instead and connect them to oceanic exit points in the next agency. Once comms are established with the next agency, you'll get a re-clearance.

There are a bunch of updated route tables (like this one below). So if you're initially routing west via AVPUT and Gander evacuate, you will then proceed to NALDI, DUTUM and talk to Montreal for what to do after.

FLIGHT IS ROUTED OVER	THE FLIGHT SHALL PROCEED:	Next control agency and frequency:
AVPUT	NALDI DUTUM	Montreal ACC 134.85
CLAVY	KAGLY TEFFO	Montreal ACC 134.85
EMBOK	IKMAN FEDDY	Montreal ACC 134.85
KETLA	GRIBS JELCO	Montreal ACC 134.800
LIBOR	6101N 06241W	Montreal ACC 133.200
MAXAR	MIBNO RODBO	Montreal ACC 133.200
NIFTY	MUSLO	Montreal ACC 133.200
PIDSO	PEPKI LOPVI	Montreal ACC 135.800
RADUN	SINGA	Montreal ACC 135.800
SAVRY	LAKES MCKEE	Montreal ACC 132.450
TOXIT	IUDMAR	Montreal ACC 132.450

### **The long term contingency plan changed a bit:**

Basically they clarified notes on how evacuations and loss of the Gander ATC service will likely not exceed 48-72 hours. They will also attempt to provide immediate or near immediate resumption of service specially for emergency, humanitarian and critical military flights. Everyone else can expect a "phased approach with flow control."

### **Even more contact info was added:**

Gander Shift Manager	+1 709 651 5207 +1 709 651 5203
Gander Oceanic	+1 709 651 5324 SATVOICE 431603 or +1 709 651 5260
Gander Domestic	+1 709 651 5315 SATVOICE 431602 or +1 709 651 5315
Gander IFSS	+1 709 651 5222 SATVOICE 431613 or +1 709 651 5298
Gander Control Tower	+1 709 651 5329
Gander Airport Duty Manager	+1 709 424 1235
NAV Canada Operations Centre	+1 613 563 5626
Moncton ACC	+1 506 867 7173
Montreal ACC	+1 514 633 3365

### **The emergency NOTAM format has been updated:**

Everyone loves a big long Notam. Here's the new one they'll be using from now on if everything suddenly stops working:

DUE TO EMERGENCY EVACUATION OF [OACC] DUE [REASON, e.g. COVID19] AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SERVICES ARE UNAVAILABLE IN THE [NAME] OCA. FLIGHTS NOT IN RECEIPT OF AN OCEANIC CLEARANCE SHOULD REQUEST CLEARANCE TO AVOID [NAME] OAC/FIR OR LAND AT AN APPROPRIATE AERODROME. ONLY FLIGHTS OPERATING WITH AN ACKNOWLEDGED OCEANIC/ATC CLEARANCE ARE PERMITTED TO OPERATE WITHIN [NAME] OCA. FLIGHTS NOT YET OPERATING WITHIN THE [AIRSPACE NAME] OCA BUT IN RECEIPT OF AN [OCEANIC] OR [ATC] CLEARANCE ARE STRONGLY ADVISED NOT TO ENTER THE AIRSPACE.

FLIGHTS OPERATING WITH AN ACKNOWLEDGED OCEANIC/ATC CLEARANCE THAT CONTINUE UNDER PILOTS DISCRETION ARE EXPECTED TO PROCEED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAST OCEANIC/ATC CLEARANCE ISSUED AND MUST CONTACT NEXT ATC AGENCY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND REPORT CURRENT POSITION, CLEARED FLIGHT LEVEL, NEXT POSITION AND ESTIMATE, AND SUBSEQUENT POSITION(S). FLIGHTS MUST REVERT TO VOICE POSITION REPORTING PROCEDURES. DATALINK EQUIPPED AIRCRAFT ARE EXPECTED TO CONNECT TO/REMAIN CONNECTED TO CURRENT CENTRE UNTIL OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED. FLIGHTS MUST MONITOR 121.5 / 123.45MHZ AND VOLMET AND USE ALL AVAILABLE MEANS TO DETECT ANY CONFLICTING TRAFFIC. FURTHER DETAILS WILL BE PROVIDED VIA NOTAM IN DUE COURSE.

### Anything we missed?

Let us know. news@ops.group

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## Turkey: New rules for GA/BA flights

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



Strange things are happening in Turkey.

### Strange Thing #1

A few weeks ago we spotted a new doc issued by the Turkish CAA with guidelines for foreign registered aircraft who wish to operate **domestic legs** in Turkey - to get a permit, you now need to apply at least 15 days in advance, and you will need to **prove that you have investments in the country**.

### Strange Thing # 2

Then this week, Turkey suddenly **revoked all landing permits for non-Turkish operators** unless they had "special exemptions".

No one seemed to know why this happened, what these special exemptions were, or how to go about

applying for them.

So we got in touch with local Turkish handling agent Gozen Air for some urgent help to understand what's going on!

Here's what they said:

With effect Feb 13, 2021, the Turkish CAA (TCAA) has started to apply operational limitations for all non-Turkish registered aircraft on general-business aviation operations to/from Turkey. This was just a verbal announcement by the TCAA - they haven't made any official announcement yet, though a change in the AIP and on the permit application system is expected soon.

In the meantime, here's the lowdown:

**Flights will only be considered as Private if the following criteria is met:**

- Owner must be the same as the aircraft operator. i.e. the aircraft can't be leased out.
- Aircraft can only have maximum 12 passenger seats (or 19 seats if the country of aircraft registration has a bilateral agreement with Turkey).

**If flights don't match this criteria for any reason, then the flight will be considered a Commercial flight.** In this case, the operator must apply for a charter landing permit, and include these docs in the application:

- AOC / Operations Specification
- Authorization Letter to your representative company in Turkey
- Handling Agreement (in case you are operating more than 4 flights to/from Turkey)
- Aircraft documents: Insurance, Registration, Noise, Airworthiness.

Regardless of whether a flight is considered Private or Commercial, foreign aircraft with passengers onboard can only fly to Turkey from the country the operator/aircraft is registered in.

Bottom line, the issue is that **there was previously no separation between Commercial and Private flights** among business aviation in general, and most of the business aviation flights were considered as private before. Now, the TCAA has implemented these new measures to **regulate them**, and also to **protect the local Turkish operators** in business aviation - although the roll-out of the new rules has so far been a bit uncoordinated and confusing.

### **Strange Thing #3**

Back in December 2020, we had one report of a flight headed from Sweden to Cyprus - when on the runway about to depart, they received notification from the Turkey ACC that **overflight of Turkish airspace was not allowed**, and they would have to **route around the country**.

We had several other reports that the **United Arab Emirates CAA are now denying approvals for flights to/from Turkey** - they haven't officially published this new rule anywhere, but local permit agents have confirmed this is what's happening.

These events might be connected. Might not be. Might be to do with political tensions surrounding recent EU plans for sanctions against Turkey and naval drills off the Turkish coast. Might not be.

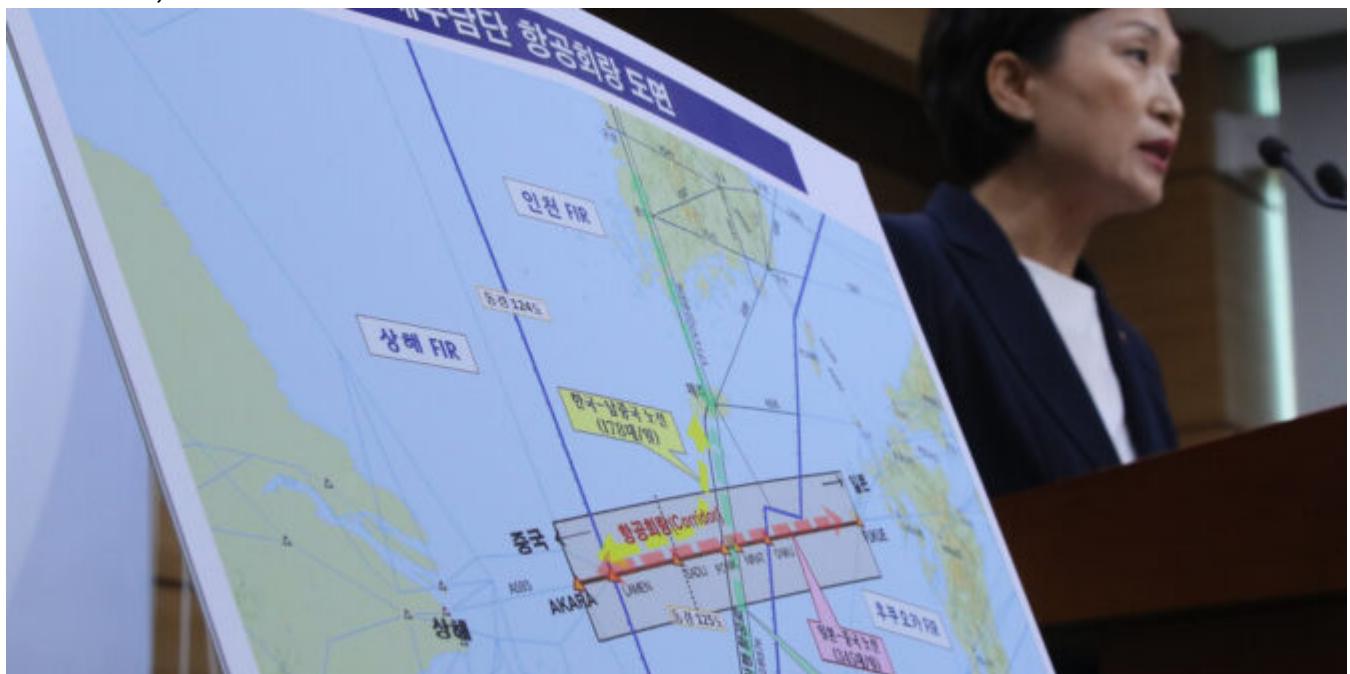
Whatever it is that's going on, if you've got a flight going **to or over Turkey** any time soon, **double-check your permits are all still valid**, and keep an eye on any AFTN replies you might get from Turkey once you've filed your flight plan.

If you need help with ops to Turkey, or for overflight of the LTAA/Ankara FIR, you can get in touch with local agent Gozen Air by email at: [occ@gozenair.com](mailto:occ@gozenair.com)

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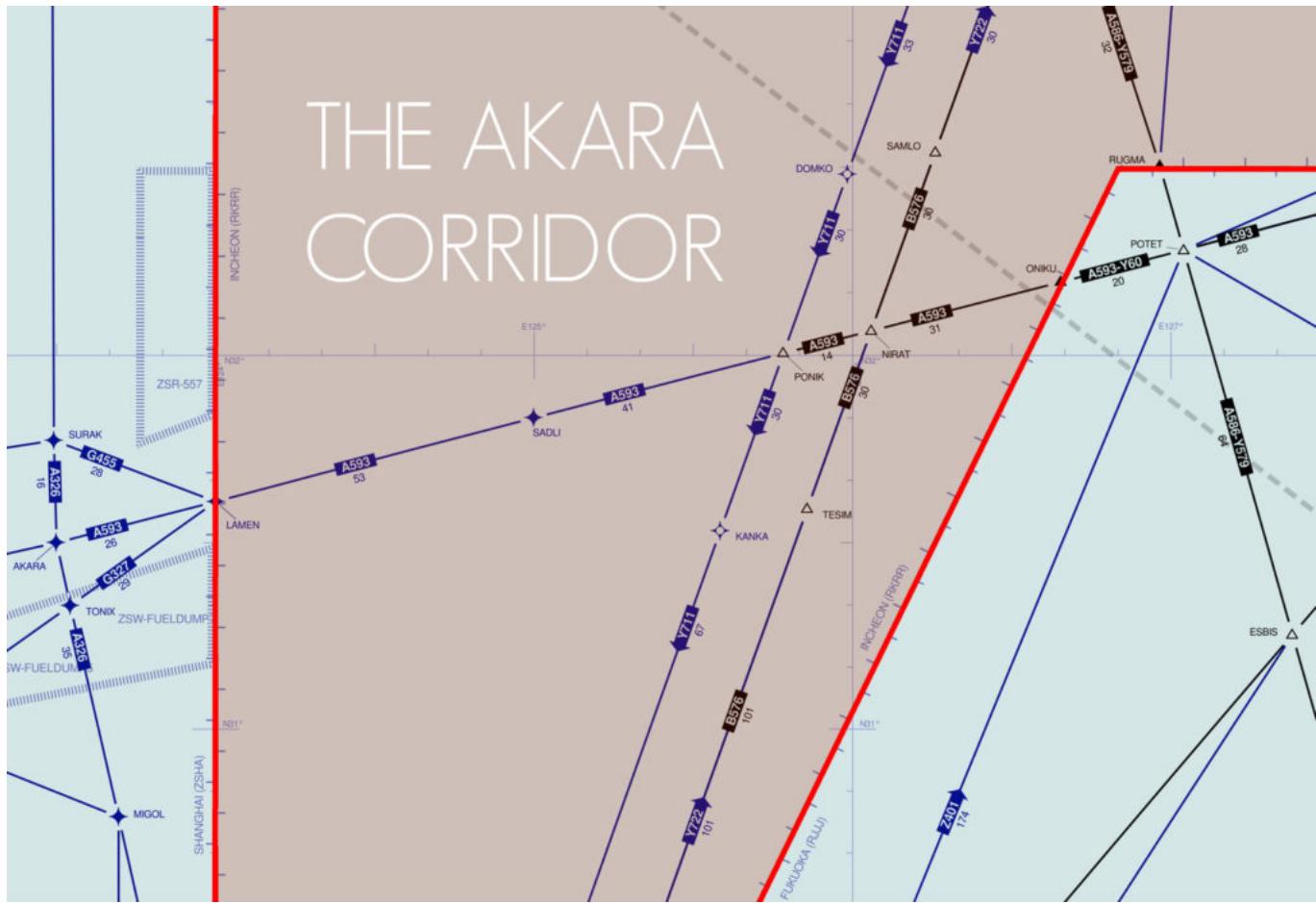
## Navigating the AKARA Corridor

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



Some big improvements are on the way for the AKARA Corridor - a piece of airspace 100nm off the coast of Shanghai that connects **China** and **Japan**.

In effect the airspace is being simplified. Currently, South Korea's Incheon ACC controls North/South routes, while Japan's Fukuoka ACC controls East/West. The two operate on different frequencies - **a cause for concern for emergency descents** while heavy aircraft out of ZPSD/Shanghai are often penalised with inefficient levels.



This area has always been unusual in that more than one center has had responsibility for controlling aircraft at different waypoints.

But on 11 Jan, 2021, ATC authorities in Japan, China and South Korea agreed to implement a proposal from ICAO regarding ATC management in this area - **so from 25 March 2021, South Korea will control all flights in this area.**

There will also be a new East/West route in addition to airway A593 to further improve efficiency. You can read all about the changes in more detail [here](#).

## US to require Covid tests for all international passengers

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



From January 26, **all international passengers need a negative Covid test** that is less than 72 hours old to board a flight to the US.

The US CDC has published the **full details of the requirements here**, and they've done a good job too - it includes a pretty thorough Q&A section split into separate sections for passengers and crew.

**Here's a summary of the main points:**

- All international travellers aged two years or older need a test, including citizens and foreigners.
- Applies to all flights, including private and charter flights.
- Applies only to international flights - from "anywhere that is not a state, territory, or possession of the United States". Therefore, passengers do not need a test if coming from: American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the US Virgin Islands.
- It needs to be a "viral test" (NAAT or antigen test) - antibody tests will not be accepted. The PCR test is a type of NAAT test (Nucleic Acid Amplification Test), so those are accepted. You can read more about the different types of tests [here](#).
- The test must be done within three calendar days of departure to the US. If passengers have one or more connecting flights to the US, it gets a bit more complicated.
- Airlines and operators will need to check that their passengers meet the requirements prior to travel.
- **For crew travelling to the US:** you don't need to get a Covid test in advance as long as you're "active crew" - i.e. you're operating the flight or travelling in an assigned deadhead status. You also have to follow the health and safety rules set out in the FAA's SAFO 20009. However, we've had several reports saying that if you are positioning crew into the US via an airline for any reason, the reality is that you will likely be asked to show proof of a Covid test. More guidance on the definition of "active crew", check out the CDC's dedicated webpage.
- If crew/pax can prove they have already had Covid, have recovered from it, and can provide documentation to this effect, they don't need to get a test.

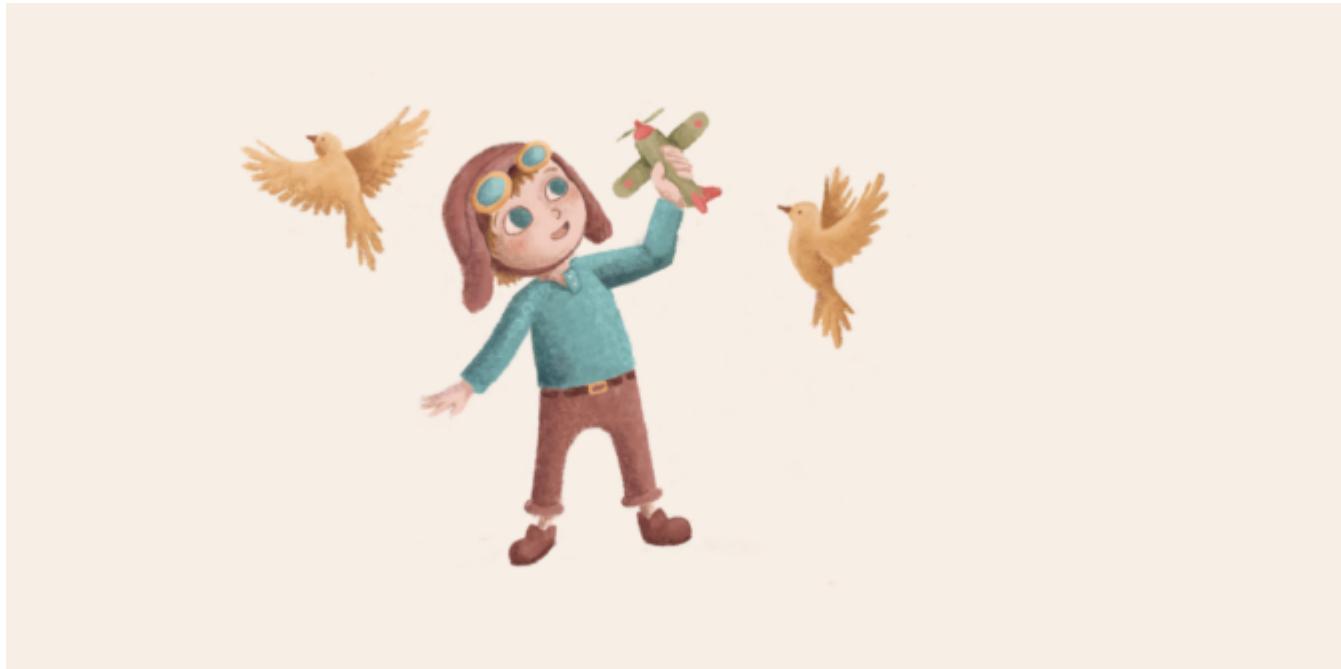
- Operators must distribute and collect Passenger Attestation Forms prior to embarkation, and keep copies of these for 2 years. Operators do not need to keep copies of passenger test results.
- If you're heading out of the US, and plan to return within 72hrs, you will still need a test. You can get this done in the US before you leave. But if you end up staying out of the US for more than 72hrs, you will need to be retested before your return flight.
- **Quarantine rules:** Technically, all pax inbound to the US now have to quarantine for 10 days upon arrival, as per the Executive Order that went into effect on Jan 26. However, it looks like the CDC will not actually be enforcing this – at least for now.

**Important to note:** the old rules banning certain pax from entry still stands: with specific exemptions, foreign nationals who have been present within the past 14 days in the European Schengen area, the UK and Ireland, mainland China, Iran, and Brazil will still be barred from entry – with or without a negative test. The ‘specific exemptions’ part basically means this: US residents and family members, and flight crew traveling to the United States on C, D or C1/D visas. For more details on this rule, check the US Government webpage [here](#).

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## A is for Airplane: The OPSGROUP 2020 Wallchart

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



2020 was a long, sometimes challenging, sometimes exciting, sometimes sad... and always very Covid filled year!

We wanted to take a quick look back at some of the things which really stood out to us over the past twelve months.

So we wrote a **list...**

The list became a **little poem...**

And then, as a logical next step, the poem turned into an **ABC wall chart!**

Here it is in all its glory!

You can download a nice hi-res version by clicking on it. Print it out, stick it on your wall, send it to a friend - whatever you like.

The OPSGROUP 2020 Wallchart was designed by our wonderfully talented artist friend, Cecilia La Rosa, and you can see more of her amazing work [here](#).



**A is for Airplane, flying high as a bird**

As always, airplanes were on our mind. The safety of them, the places they are going, and the people flying in them.



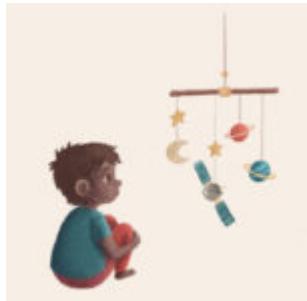
**B is for Bureaucracy and unreadable words**

Messy Notams, changes to charts, new regulations, old documents - we tried to keep you updated you on changes you needed to know about, mainly by writing things in an easier-to-read way.



### **C is for Covid not going away**

No 2020 wall chart would be complete without a mention of Covid. Traffic across the world fell by almost two thirds. Then it started to improve, then it got a bit worse again, and then the vaccine came out - unfortunately, shortly followed by a new strain of the virus... Here's hoping 2021 sees the end of it.



### **D is for Datalink on the NAT HLA**

The Great North Atlantic Datalink Mandate. It went into the final phase on 30 Jan 2020, and if you want to fly between FL290-FL410 you must be equipped with CPDLC and ADS-C... But then due to Covid this got delayed a number of times, with Shanwick saying it will remain suspended until 25 Feb 2021.



### **E is for Errors of the Gross Nav variety**

The FAA changed their definition of Gross Navigation Errors to mean anything more than 10nm. You used to have 25nm before you got into trouble (except for on the NAT HLA which was always 10nm).



## **F is for OpsFox, a secret society**

Business at the Lucky Star Chicken restaurant was up in 2020. Goat Curry (number 64 on the menu) proved to be a popular favourite. Join the secret society and submit your reports.



## **G is for Guy Gribble, gone too soon**

Our friend and colleague Guy Gribble passed away on 26th October 2020.

Guy joined OPSGROUP on Day 1 (some four and a half years ago), and was an ever-present contributor, collaborator, mentor and friend to us. If you've ever sent us an email with a difficult question and received a good answer, the chances are that Guy Gribble was the man behind the scenes who helped us figure it out for you. We lost count of the number of times Guy would post replies on Slack giving people advice and guidance.

The NBAA will have an award named after Guy for "Outstanding Contribution" – which tells you all you need to know about the impact he had on the industry.

Thank you Guy and Rest in Peace – your legacy continues.



## **H is for Humans, me and you**

Our mission is to make aviation human-friendly for us all.



## **I is for Israel overflight clearance**

Big news from the end of 2020 as Israel rebuilt relationships with the UAE, and for the first time in decades we saw a flight between the two nations. Israel then opened their airspace for overflights, and Jordan allowed Israeli bound flights to pass through their airspace as well. The overflights mean shorter, more efficient routings, and it's a highlight of the year that friendships are being rebuilt between Israel and neighbouring regions.



## **J is for Jamming and GPS interference**

GPS Jamming remained an issue, particular across Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East and Caucasus, with thousands of reports of jams through the year. The story is bigger than just the equipment issue though, it is a political and conflict related one too. We wrote this article on it to help give a bit more info on the issue.



### **K is for Kiwis showing us what to do**

New Zealand led the way on how to deal with the Covid situation, managing to go nearly a month with no cases. They slowly started to reopen a travel corridor with Australia, but remain strict on their entry requirements.



### **L is for Lockdown, no kiwi for you**

Lockdown was (and still is) a big part of 2020. For some it was a difficult time away from family, but for others it allowed time for new skills to be learned, hobbies to be enjoyed, and a fair few Zoom quizzes to take place. We will keep reporting on the big Covid changes but are definitely looking forward to a day when no Covid alerts are required anymore.



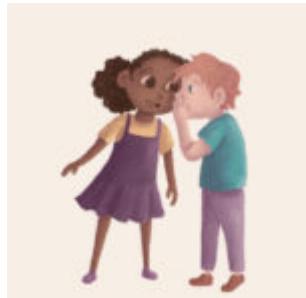
### **M is for Members, colleagues and friends**

We're grateful to everyone in the group for showing up, trading stories, experiences, and information, having regular chats, and in turn keeping us all safe and up to date.



## **N is the Notam problem again**

The Notam problem hasn't gone away, but we are getting there...



## **O is for OPSGROUP, share what you know**

OPSGROUP is more than just the team working here – it's all the members and the knowledge and information you all share.



## **P is for Pilots flying us home**

2020 was a tough year on pilots, and we think they deserve a big Thank You for continuing to fly our families and cargo safely around... but we also thank the cabin crew who looked after us onboard, the ATC controllers who kept the skies safe, the engineers who fixed the airplanes, the dispatchers and planners, handlers and airport workers, and everyone else affected by Covid and who kept working hard. So P is really for People.



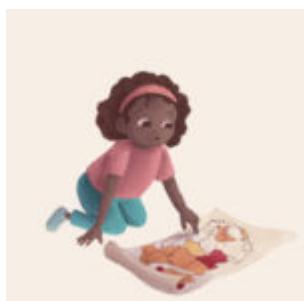
## **Q is for Quarantine in a government compound**

Quarantine can be tough. Trying to work out a country's Covid-related entry rules is one thing, but where you get locked up and how long for is quite another. So Q is for quarantine questions, queries about Covid-cancelled flights, and all the queues of people who want to go flying again. Let's hope 2021 is far quieter on all things Covid.



## **R is for Relief Air Wing, eyes on the ground**

When a hurricane hits, the world responds. But before anyone can fly in to help, they need to know what things look like on the ground. After Hurricane Dorian devastated the Bahamas in September 2019, no information was available for several days. Relief aircraft were waiting, but critical information was missing. What airports are open? Is there fuel available? Is there ATC? Where is help best directed? Learning from the lessons of Hurricane Dorian, the mission of Relief Air Wing is to get that critical information, provide it to the first responders, and help to coordinate the aviation relief effort.



## **S is for SafeAirspace, where not to fly**

On 9th January 2020, we saw the tragic shoot-down of Ukraine Int Airlines flight 752 over Tehran by Iranian Armed Forces, having mistaken the aircraft radar return for an inbound missile. And just a month later, a passenger plane almost got shot down over Syria, after coming under fire from Syrian air defences.

Throughout the year we've seen new conflict zones emerge, posing risks to overflying aircraft - from Saudi Arabia and Yemen, to Armenia and Azerbaijan, to Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Our sense of mission with Safeairspace.net is stronger than ever - to provide a single, independent, and eternally free resource for all airspace risk warnings, so that airlines and aircraft operators can easily see the current risk picture for unfamiliar airspace.



### **T is for Towers, controlling the skies**

Towers (and the ATC folk in them) controlled the skies splendidly this year. We also looked into what happens during “ATC Zero” events, particularly over the NAT HLA after we saw Gander East close briefly in December.



### **U is for Unreliable speeds on aircraft stored too long**

Unreliable airspeed incidents increased after bugs and beetles made nests in airplane probes - an unexpected consequence from Covid. And unreliable airspeed was not the only thing to look out for with long term storage.



### **V is for going Viral when you do something wrong**

From men on jet packs, to pilots drawing pictures in the sky, we laughed at some of the stories we saw this year. And not all were bad - the Don't Rush challenge went viral as aviation communities from all over created their own Don't Rush movies.



### **W is for Winter Ops, cold weather tips**

Winter is here – at least in the Northern Hemisphere. Here are 5 golden rules that could help you stay out of trouble during these colder months. Here's a quick lowdown on freezing fuel problems as well.



### **X is for Space X, launching their ships**

We reported on a fair few temporary danger airspace areas through 2020, many of which were down to Space X and other rocket launches. The operational impact for earth flights kept us reporting, but we're also a little excited at the developments in space flight. OPSGROUP GALACTIC might be a new idea for 2021...



### **Y is for a big Yes to 2021**

2020 has been tough – but we have faith that 2021 will be better. We hope borders open, vaccines roll out, Notams improve, airplanes get better, airspace gets safer, and aviation becomes more human!



**Z is for Zoom calls - sometimes they're fun!**

Our OpsChats were a big part of our year and we loved our 2-timezones-in-1-day Zoom call.

We look forward to seeing you all again in 2021!

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## US pilots and air traffic controllers can now take the Pfizer vaccine

David Mumford

11 October, 2021



US pilots and air traffic controllers are now **allowed to take the new Pfizer Covid vaccine**. On Dec 12, the US FAA issued a statement authorizing this, which means aviation professionals can take the vaccine **without risking losing their medical certificates**. You can read the FAA's official statement [here](#).

The FAA has reviewed the @pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for use by FAA-certificated pilots and air traffic controllers, with a required 48-hour waiting period after vaccination. Read more at [this link](#)

<https://t.co/iIQAKB3id6>. pic.twitter.com/tFC29Qkkex

— The FAA ✈ (@FAANews) December 12, 2020

The vaccine needs two doses, three weeks apart. The FAA say you will need to **wait 48 hours after each dose before you can operate.**

All future vaccines will need a **separate approval** – the Pfizer one is the only one you can take at this stage.

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Now that the Pfizer vaccine has been approved by the FDA, a huge supply chain effort is underway to get the vaccine ready for use as soon as possible. With crew likely to be carrying shipments of the vaccine, the FAA has issued a new safety alert for the **carriage of dry ice**. In big quantities this can be hazardous to crew and cause carbon dioxide poisoning if things aren't handled properly. It is also important to be aware of manufacturer limits on how much you can carry. The new SAFO provides guidance on the risks, and how operators can better protect themselves.

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## Hong Kong revised entry rules for flight crew

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



Hong Kong has published **extensive guidance on its entry rules** via its dedicated Covid website, but in a bizarre twist, it's actually the Notams which make it clearer to quickly work out exactly what's allowed here:

A1199/20 – IN VIEW OF THE LATEST SITUATION OF COVID-19, THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION GOVERNMENT IS IMPLEMENTING THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:

1. ALL NON-HONG KONG RESIDENTS COMING FROM OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS BY PLANE WILL BE DENIED ENTRY TO HONG KONG.
2. NON-HONG KONG RESIDENTS COMING FROM THE MAINLAND, MACAO AND TAIWAN WILL BE DENIED ENTRY TO HONG KONG IF THEY HAVE BEEN TO ANY OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS IN THE PAST 14 DAYS.
3. ALL TRAVELLERS COMING FROM MACAO AND TAIWAN, INCLUDING HONG KONG AND NON-HONG KONG RESIDENTS, WILL BE SUBJECT TO A 14-DAY COMPULSORY QUARANTINE, WHICH IS THE SAME AS THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PEOPLE ENTERING HONG KONG FROM THE MAINLAND.
4. HONG KONG RESIDENTS ARRIVING IN HONG KONG WHO HAVE BEEN TO ANY OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND REGIONS IN THE PAST 14 DAYS WILL BE SUBJECT TO A 14-DAY COMPULSORY QUARANTINE.
5. AIR CREWS ARE EXEMPTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS. DETAILS CAN BE FOUND IN <HTTPS://WWW.CORONAVIRUS.GOV.HK/ENG/INBOUND-TRAVEL.HTML>

29 SEP 07:39 2020 UNTIL 29 DEC 15:59 2020 ESTIMATED. CREATED: 29 SEP 07:39 2020

Ok, still not actually that clear. Big block of text, all upper case, an assault on the eyes...

**So, to make that even clearer, between now and Dec 29:**

- Non-residents may only enter if coming from China, Macao or Taiwan, but not if they have travelled to any other country within the past 14 days.
- All inbound pax, including Hong Kong residents, are subject to a 14-day quarantine.
- There are **special rules for flight crew...**

### **Rules for Flight Crew**

On Nov 24, Health authorities in Hong Kong published a document with the revised entry rules for flight crew. There are basically slightly different rules depending on whether crew have been in “very high risk places” in the past 14 days. Either way, all crew should have a negative PCR Covid test taken within 48 hours of operating, along with a letter from their airline/company that certifies an accredited laboratory was used. On arrival, all crew get tested again and must isolate until departure.

### **Rules for Positioning Crew**

You have to go through all the same health checks, but there's a way to get around the 14-day quarantine on arrival. You need to prepare a letter in advance (see below). As positioning crew, you're required to self-isolate at a hotel for medical surveillance whilst you're waiting for your outbound flight. You'll have to wear a mask and get your temperature checked daily for reporting to the authorities. If you have a residence in HK, you should be allowed to go there instead.

To apply for the **exemption from the 14-day quarantine for positioning crew**, you have to send a letter to HKBAC, who will charge you HKD500 (around \$65 USD). Here's how it works, and the info you need to include:

1. *Flight Operator issues the letter with company letter head describing travel purpose and duty of the concerned crew*
2. *The Operator sends email to HKBAC to get verification endorsement on the letter. After verification, a scanned copy of the letter would be sent to the Operator by email.*
3. *The Operator provides that letter with verification by HKBAC to its concerned crew.*
4. *The concerned crew brings along the letter when travelling as passengers on commercial flight*

5. Upon landing in Hong Kong, the crew approaches Crew Channel to obtain exemption from the Duty Immigration Officer before going through Immigration as passenger

Remarks:

1. HKBAC's checking is only for the identity verification based on the information provided by the Operator. HKBAC does not hold any liability on the exemption approval process.
2. Administration fee at HKD500 per endorsement would be applied and will be charged to the Operator which requests for the crew exemption letter.
3. Validity of the letter for crew exemption will be 7 days from the commercial flight date.
4. Although air crew can be exempted from the compulsory quarantine, the Department of Health (DH) will arrange Medical Surveillance for persons under the exempted categories of persons during their stay in Hong Kong. Exempted persons are subject to the temperature check and health declaration procedures carried out by DH.
5. In order to avoid your crew members being denied check in or boarding the commercial flights, please contact the commercial airlines that the crew would be travelling in in advance to ensure they are aware of the exemption.
6. Please be advised there is no guarantee that HK Health accepts the air crew letter for inbound positioning crew.

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Hong Kong has always been a tricky place to fly to, unless you're an airline with landing rights secured for the next two decades. As the world's third busiest airport, with only two runways, it goes without saying that **congestion is a big issue here!**

Things have gotten slightly easier this year due to the **downturn in traffic** caused by the Covid pandemic, with airport authorities now allowing airlines to keep their slots even if they don't use them. So, good news for them, but also good news for GA/BA operators, as the overall reduction in traffic means that **a lot more slots are available right now - daytime ones too!** So if need to go to Hong Kong and can navigate the entry rules, slots and parking should not be a problem.

Have you flown to Hong Kong recently? How did it go? Send us an email and let us know, or even better - file a report on **Airport Spy** and it will automatically go out to everyone in the group!

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## US no longer limiting international arrivals to 15 airports

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



From September 14, the US **is no longer limiting international arrivals from higher risk countries to specific airports**. Under previous rules, any passenger from China, Iran, the Schengen area of Europe, the UK, Ireland and Brazil had to enter the United States through one of **fifteen centralised airports** capable of providing enhanced health screening. **This is no longer be the case.**

The previous system was deemed ineffective because so many people who transmit the disease don't show symptoms. A new approach is being launched, which authorities say will better mitigate the risk of Coronavirus by focusing more on the individual passenger. **Here's how it will work:**

- Pre-departure, in-flight and post-arrival health education for passengers.
- Robust illness response at airports.
- Voluntary collection of contact information from passengers using electronic means as proposed by some airlines to avoid long lines, crowding and delays associated with manual data collection.
- Potential testing to reduce the risk of travel-related transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19 and movement of the virus from one location to another.
- Country-specific risk assessments to assist passengers in making informed decisions about travel-related risk.
- Enhancing training and education of partners in the transportation sector and at U.S. ports of entry to ensure recognition of illness and immediate notification to CDC.
- Post-arrival passenger recommendations for self-monitoring and precautions to protect others, with enhanced precautions, including staying home to the extent possible for 14 days for people arriving from high-risk destinations.

You can read the announcement by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [here](#), and confirmation from US CBP [here](#).

Although the 15-airports rule has gone away, all other US rules on inbound travel remain in place. The main one is this - **with specific exemptions, foreign nationals are not allowed to enter the US if they have been in any of the following countries within the past 14 days: the European**

**Schengen area, the UK and Ireland, mainland China, Iran, and Brazil.** The 'specific exemptions' part basically means this: US residents and family members, and flight crew traveling to the United States on C, D or C1/D visas. For more details, check the US Government webpage [here](#).

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## Increased ATC charges in Canada

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



Nav Canada has proceeded with its earlier proposal to **significantly increase ATC service charges**. The new fees were implemented on September 1. The price increase is to cover the loss of income caused by dwindling traffic levels during the Covid pandemic.

APRIL 2019



DAILY AVERAGES

CANADA DOMESTIC:	5,472
U.S. OVERFLIGHT:	1,818
TRANSBORDER:	1,370
CANADA INTERNATIONAL:	558
INTERNATIONAL OVERFLIGHT:	86
TOTAL	9,304

APRIL 2020



DAILY AVERAGES

CANADA DOMESTIC:	1,966
U.S. OVERFLIGHT:	493
TRANSBORDER:	149
CANADA INTERNATIONAL:	61
INTERNATIONAL OVERFLIGHT:	11
TOTAL	2,680

**Terminal fees** have increased by 30 percent; **en-route** by 26 percent; **North Atlantic Track** by 48 percent; and **international communications** by 41 percent. The good news is that the added cost to operators can be deferred over time to help absorb some of the impact.

## Movement-Based Charges

Charge	Base Rates Prior to September 1, 2020	Base Rates Effective September 1, 2020
Terminal Charge	\$ 24.36	\$ 31.86
Enroute Charge (including Overflight)	\$ 0.03008	\$ 0.03802
NAT	\$ 155.03	\$ 230.22
International Communications		
Data Link	\$ 19.99	\$ 28.19
Voice	\$ 53.14	\$ 74.93

The **NAT** and **International Comms charges** are not really a big deal – those are just flat fees charged per flight. It's the **Terminal Charge** and **Enroute Charge** where the pain will most be felt; don't be fooled by the figures in the table above – these are just the base rates that get incorporated into bigger equations and multiplied by other factors (MTOW, distance flown, etc).

If you want to test your math skills and take a deep plunge into how these equations work, check out Nav Canada's Guide To Charges. But if not, here's a basic example of how the charges have changed:

**Aircraft:** B777-300

**Route:** CYUL/Montreal to LFPG/Paris

**MTOW:** 344.5 metric tonnes

**Distance:** 1,550 km

NAV Canada is a private company and not government-funded, and is therefore entirely reliant on the fees it charges to operators. And since most of its costs are fixed, it appears there wasn't much alternative than to increase these fees, given the huge drop in air traffic over the past few months.

**You can view the full schedule of revised fees [here](#):**



Serving a world in motion  
navcanada.ca

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF REVISED SERVICE CHARGES

AUGUST 2020

### GENERAL

NAV CANADA hereby announces revised service charges, pursuant to Section 37 of the *Civil Air Navigation Services Commercialization Act*, S.C. 1996, c. 20 (ANS Act). This Announcement sets out the revisions in charges that apply to four categories of air navigation charges: (i) Terminal, (ii) Enroute, (iii) North Atlantic Enroute, and (iv) International Communications. These revised charges will become effective on September 1, 2020 except where otherwise indicated. All other service charges provisions not amended by this Announcement remain in effect.

Pursuant to Section 42 of the ANS Act, persons wishing to appeal these revisions may do so by making an application to the Canadian Transportation Agency. The application must be filed within 30 days after the filing of this Announcement with the Agency. An appeal may only be made on one or more of the grounds set out in Section 43 of the ANS Act.

This Announcement consists of three sections:

- (1) Revision to Service Charge Rates;
- (2) Implementation of the Revised Service Charges; and
- (3) Modification to Terms and Conditions.

Page 1 of 5

# Jetpack Hazard at LAX!

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



Mystery in LA! There were two separate reports of **a man in a jetpack flying uncomfortably close to arrivals** at KLAX/Los Angeles on Sunday evening. The airborne offender was spotted by jets who were on approach at 3000 feet, and estimated to be at a distance of 300 yards. Unsurprisingly, he or she successfully evaded authorities and their identity remains unknown...

Listen to the actual radio transmissions between the pilot and the tower here:

**American Flight 1997:** "Tower, American 1997, we just passed a guy in a jetpack."

**Tower:** "American 1997, OK, thank you. Were they off to your left or right side?"

**American Flight 1997:** "Off the left side, maybe 300 yards or so, about our altitude."

Fox 11 reported a Skywest pilot also confirmed the sighting:

**Skywest Flight:** "We just saw the guy passing by us in the jetpack."

Then the tower alerted an incoming Jet Blue flight to the reported hazard:

**Tower:** "Jet Blue 23, use caution, a person in a jetpack reported 300 yards south of the LA final at about 3,000 feet, 10 mile final."

**Jet Blue 23:** "Jet Blue 23, we heard and we are definitely looking."

Another pilot chimed in: "Only in LA." □

At the time of the sighting, it was still light with plenty of visibility. There are a number of jetpack-like models out there on the market, but all have very limited range, and so some reports have suggested this was possibly some sort of drone that was made to look like a jetpack. Or a small helicopter. Or a flying car. Or some guy in a lawn chair with helium balloons tied to it (ok, probably not this one!)

Regardless of the specific technology, **this incident is concerning** – particularly given that the airspace around LAX is some of the **busiest in the US**, and that the craft was flying at the **same altitude** as the aircraft as it was making its approach to the airport. The FAA has reportedly referred the incident over to the LAPD for investigation.

**Yves "Jetman" Rossi** hasn't accounted-for-his-whereabouts-on-the-night-of-the-crime yet. But we can probably rule him out, as his flights normally take place in highly controlled environments and in airspace clear of any other traffic. LAX really isn't his scene – he prefers the Swiss Alps.

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# Update on GA/BA flight requirements to the Bahamas

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



With the lockdowns and flight bans in Grand Bahama and New Providence **now at an end**, all islands of the Bahamas with Airports of Entry have re-opened to international private and charter flights. Prior approval is required - send your request to [covid19@bcaa.com](mailto:covid19@bcaa.com) and [COVID19INTLTRAVEL@bahamas.gov.bs](mailto:COVID19INTLTRAVEL@bahamas.gov.bs).

Here's the lowdown on ops to the Bahamas right now:

## Quarantine

Quarantine rules are changing from September 1. A 14-day quarantine will still be mandatory for all travellers, but they are now allowed to spend it in their own accommodation – a private residence, rental property, hotel or private/chartered yacht, all are considered quarantine facilities.

When quarantine is finished, anyone who wishes to stay must agree to be tested again. It is worth noting that you can leave the Bahamas at any point, as long as you notify authorities first.

## Covid test

All travellers must obtain a negative RT/PCR Covid test that is less than 5 days old before flying and apply for a Travel Health Visa which can take up to three days to process. Once in the country, all arrivals will be monitored by the 'Hubbcat App' on their phone.

Crew arriving to pick up passengers only, cargo and courier flights who are staying with their plane, military and emergency medical flights must obtain the Travel Health Visa.

If crew will be in the country for less than 24hrs, they need to quarantine in the hotel but do not need proof

a Covid test.

Some OPSGROUP member reports indicate that the Bahamas Travel Health Visa is not working properly, and will not complete the application process. So expect delays for a Health Visa until their systems are fully functional. Submit the form at least 24-48 hours prior to arrival. An automated response will be provided upon completion, only those who receive a green color-coded response can travel. It is essential that travellers present proof of confirmation upon arrival in their destination.

## **Hours of operation**

Hours of airport operations are reduced, and prior approval for after-hours operations is required. A call before flying is strongly recommended. Fees for after-hours ops, restrictions to curfews, and limited availability of hotel rooms are additional considerations.

Local handling agent Odyssey Aviation are open as follows (requests for after-hours operations will be reviewed on a case by case basis):

### **MYNN/Nassau**

Email: [info.mynn@odysseyaviation.com](mailto:info.mynn@odysseyaviation.com)

Opening hours: 0700-1800 local (1100-2200z)

### **MYEF/Exuma**

Email: [exuma@odysseyaviation.com](mailto:exuma@odysseyaviation.com)

Opening hours: 0800-1700 local (1200-2100z)

### **MYSM/San Salvador**

Email: [info.mysm@odysseyaviation.com](mailto:info.mysm@odysseyaviation.com)

Opening hours: 0800-1700 local (1200-2100z)

### **MYEM/Governor's Harbour**

Email: [frontdeskeleuthera@odysseyaviation.com](mailto:frontdeskeleuthera@odysseyaviation.com)

Opening hours: 0800-1700 local (1200-2100z)

### **MYER/Rock Sound**

Email: [frontdeskeleuthera@odysseyaviation.com](mailto:frontdeskeleuthera@odysseyaviation.com)

Opening hours: 0800-1700 local (1200-2100z)

## **Where to look for latest updates**

For updates to the rules, the **Bahamas official page** is here, but it tends not to get updated very quickly after new announcements from the government. **The US Embassy** keep a dedicated page on the Bahamas updated here, but that can sometimes lag behind a bit too. The most up-to-date source seems to be the one published by **the UK FCO**, which you can view [here](#).

**Odyssey Aviation** also posts the latest updates on requirements and changes for Private Aviation on their Facebook page, and check out the **Association of Bahamas Marinas** website too - they work closely with the authorities and are often faster at getting their info out than other government entities!

Oh, and **OPSGROUP** too - the quickest way to get all the latest info we know on something is to head over to the **#george** channel in Slack. George is our friendly Ops-Bot. Ask him something, and he'll dig into the OPSGROUP vault to see what the group knows. He understands a whole load of commands: permits, weather, ICAO codes, airport names, countries, keyword searches. If you're still stuck for an answer, ask other members in the group in the **#questions** channel, or shoot us an email and we'll see what we can dig up.

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# Massachusetts exempts 4 more states from quarantine requirement

David Mumford  
11 October, 2021



**Massachusetts** has added four new states to its quarantine exemption list. Passengers from Colorado, Delaware, Pennsylvania and West Virginia **no longer have to self-isolate on arrival or present a negative Covid test**.

A reminder of how the rules work there: Anyone arriving from a “high-risk” state must either present a PCR Covid test that is less than 72 hours old or enter quarantine for 14 days, while there are no requirements for travellers from “low-risk” states. There’s a travel form to fill in too.

Aviation is considered an essential business by the U.S. Federal Government. The guidance issued by Massachusetts states that flight crew are “exempt from quarantine while they are commuting to or from or while at work”, but goes on to say that “for the first 14-days after arrival, when the worker is not at work or commuting to work they must quarantine.”

Q

The classifications change frequently, so be sure to check the latest info on the official government site.