

Can you track your aircraft every 15 minutes?

OPSGROUP Team
15 November, 2018



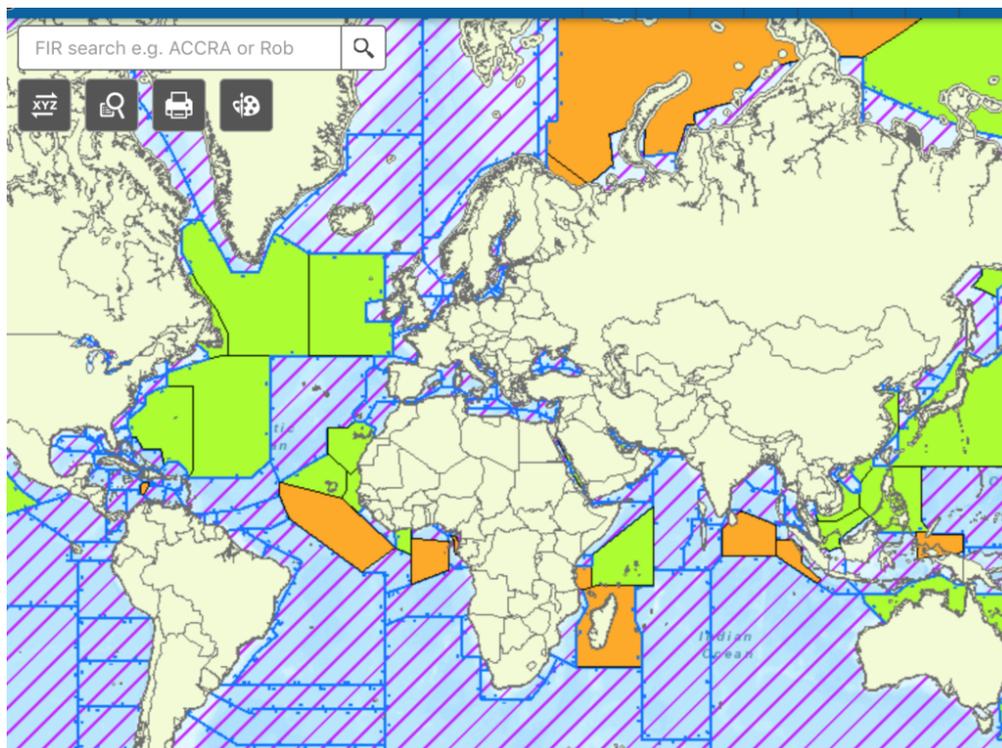
New ICAO requirements on aircraft tracking came into force on Nov 8. Large aircraft (over MTOW 45,500kg and with more than 19 seats) must now track their position every 15 minutes – down from the previously required 60 minutes. The tracking needs to take place in all regions where the local ATS gets position information at greater than 15 minute intervals. If you want to get into it, you can find it in ICAO SARPS, **Annex 6, Part I, Section 3.5.**

This requirement is part of ICAO's "Global Tracking Initiative", which came about shortly after the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370 in March 2014.

When to track?

If your aircraft is outside range of radar, oceanic waters, remote areas, (anywhere that the ATS doesn't get a position report in less than 15 minute intervals) you can count on needing to obtain and record your own position reports every 15 minutes (or less).

Where are these areas? ICAO is keeping a database to show where you're going to need to make your own 15 minute records (it's not the best tool at the moment):



[click to open tool on ICAO](#)

site

How to track?

The important part of this: **it must all be done automatically**. You can't just set a timer and manually record a position report. ICAO doesn't have a preferred method for this, just as long as it's automatic (use your ADS-B, GPS tracker, or a tracking service). It was important that ICAO keep this particular requirement in line with equipment and capabilities currently available.

Who's watching?

ICAO has told us that although the new requirement is now in place, currently there is no requirement to share the data - unless it's required for an incident.

Also, it is still yet to be seen if/how specific authorities will add this requirement into AIPs. For example, Canada has stated the below, but have yet to add any requirement into the Canadian Aviation Regulations:

Canadian air operators are reminded that they are subject to the laws and regulations of foreign jurisdictions and their respective civil aviation authorities (CAA) when abroad. Effective November 8, 2018, they may be subject to regulatory action by a CAA if they do not comply with ICAO GADSS SARP requirements. CASA 09-2018

Will this be part of SAFA ramp checks?

No. We asked SAFA this very question, and here's what they told us:

"For the time being we do not have any intention to request of ramp inspectors to perform an inspection of this new requirement."

The future?

In January 2021, there will be a further requirement to tracking, called “Autonomous Distress Tracking”, which will require automatic position reports every minute when in a distress situation. This requirement will likely depend on new equipment, or depend on expansion of Space Based ADS-B.

ICAO is also populating a “Global Operational Directory” to help communication between OCCs and ANSPs. It’s not operational yet, but this will help when ANSPs and OCCs need to communicate. It’s free to participate, as long as OCCs share their information. More information for that is [here](#).

For more reading of all the ICAO updates on Global Tracking Initiatives, head [here](#).