

ACARS Oceanic Clearances on the NAT

OPSGROUP Team

22 June, 2022



There is a revised NAT OPS Bulletin that was issued June 14. Bulletin 2020_001 is all about **ACARS Data Link Oceanic Clearances**.

It puts all the procedures for **CZQX/Gander**, **BIRD/Reykjavik**, **ENOB/Bodø**, **EGGX/Shanwick** and **LPPO/Santa Maria** into one spot, instead of having them spread between all the different individual ANSP NAT OPS Bulletins.

When we compared the old version of the Bulletin with this new one there aren't really any big differences at all. Essentially none, in fact. But since we recently confused ourselves a lot over all things ACARS related, here is a refresher summary of what it says...

Have a read of the intro first

Point 2.2 of the introduction says this:

"The ACARS Data link oceanic clearance service is provided by means of VHF and satellite to ACARS equipped aircraft via communications service providers ARINC and SITA. It should not be confused with FANS 1/A CPDLC."

(I totally confused these earlier, despite having used both.)

"Operators intending to participate in the ACARS data link process are required to contact their communications service provider and indicate they would like to receive the service."

So that means the likes of ARINC and SITA.

The Procedures (in short)

1. Put the **ACARS logon** in, along with your flight number and the OCA facility.
2. Make sure you request your clearance at the **right time** (not too early, not too late). Here is the current

table of timings:

OCA		Prior to OEP
Gander		90-60 minutes
Shanwick and Bodo		90-30 minutes
Santa Maria		At least 40 minutes
Reykjavik (entering from)	Stavanger and Scottish	25 minutes
	Murmansk	30 minutes*
	Edmonton	45 minutes*
		Rule of thumb for Reykjavik 20-25 minutes

Not too soon, not too late, or rule of thumb...

(This is the only change we spotted from the old one - Gander used to say 90-30 minutes, now it says **90-60 minutes.**)

3. Make sure your RCL has **all the right stuff** in it:

- The OEP (*this means Oceanic Entry Point, not to be confused with OAPs which mean old person*)
- Your ETA for the OEP
- The requested flight level
- The highest acceptable flight level you could reach by the OEP. *This goes in the free text section by putting MAX F123*

4. If you don't get some sort of **"RCL Received" message within 5 minutes** of sending it then you're going to have to use voice instead.

5. Once you get your clearance, **check it well**. That means checking the LATs and LONGs in your FMC. If the clearance doesn't match your flight plan, then both pilots should independently confirm the coordinates and points. If you don't like your clearance then negotiate by voice, otherwise send your CLA (clearance acknowledgement). If you don't have that function, do it with your mouth.

11. FLIGHT CREW CHECKLIST

1	Complete ACARS logon
2	Send the RCL
3	Ensure confirmation message is received
4	If error message received, revert to voice
5	Receive ACARS data link oceanic clearance
6	Confirm call sign in clearance matches the call sign in the flight plan
7	Confirm that route coordinates match the full Lat/Long coordinates in the FMS and on the NAT Track Message (if on the OTS)
8	Send CLA
9	Ensure confirmation message is received
10	If error message received, revert to voice

Some peculiarities with each of the OCAs

Gander

- If you're departing somewhere **less than 45 minutes** from your Gander OEP, then get your clearance 10 minutes before you depart.
- Sometimes you might get an ACARS oceanic clearance before you've even sent the RCL.
- If you fly an aircraft that is **not able to send an RCL**, then you can set yourself up for Gander's special service but need to do it in advance:
 - Get in touch with your comms service provider and NavCanada
 - Put AGCS in item 18 of your flight plan
 - Expect to receive your clearance automatically once you logon

Shanwick

- **You must not enter Shanwick without a clearance.**
- If you're flying between and **Irish and a Scottish airport**, its not very far, so might want to get your clearance before departure.
- You get **2 chances** with Shanwick. If at first you don't succeed (you don't get the RCL received confirmation) then try again.
- If you've left it too late and are **within 15 minutes of your OEP**, you ain't going to get your clearance via ACARS.

Reykjavik

- They don't give clearances via ACARS if you're **departing from an airport in Iceland, Greenland or the Faroe Islands**. Get it from whoever you're talking to on the ground before you go.

Santa Maria

- You don't need an RCL if you're **departing from the Azores**, you'll get it through the (VHF) radio or possibly get a CPDLC route confirmation before you head out into the great blue yonder.

Other helpful stuff in the bulletin

Inmarsat datalink probably won't work above **N82°**. Iridium and HF datalink should.

The flight level in the clearance is not a clearance to climb. ATC need to clear you, and need to make sure you reach it before the OEP. But... if you lose comms then this is the cleared oceanic flight level.

Contacts:

Gander: Robert Fleming robert.fleming@navcanada.ca

Reykjavik: Bjarni K. Stefansson bjarni.stefansson@isavia.is

Bodo: Kenneth Berg Kenneth.volden.berg@avinor.no

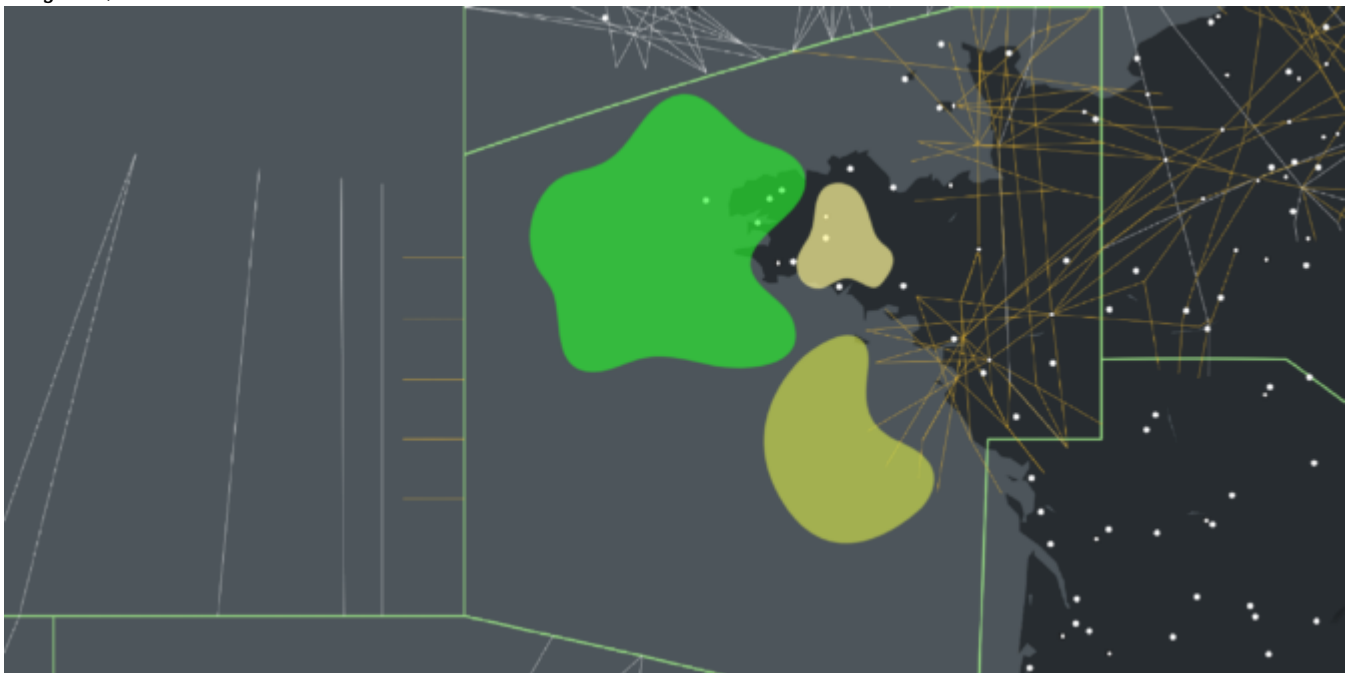
Shanwick: Iain Brown iain.brown@nats.co.uk

Santa Maria: Jose Cabral jose.cabral@nav.pt

There's a blob of airspace causing issues in the NAT

OPSGROUP Team

22 June, 2022



Why is there a huge blob of restricted airspace (and several smaller blobs too) **right over the spot where folk like to leave the NAT HLA?**

Thanks, France. Their big chunk of military airspace bordering the NAT, that they regularly activate, definitely does cause a lot of planning issues, so we figured we would take a look at it...

What (where) is the problem?

The problem is in the **LFFF/Brest FIR**, which as you can see below borders the NAT HLA BOTA bit. In fact, every exit/entry from the NAT into French airspace is via the Brest FIR/UIR border, so as you can imagine, a **whopping great military danger zone** just the other side of it is going to be a little in the way.

Which is exactly what the problem is.

That big danger zone means when folk submit their flight plans which have them routing over the Atlantic and into France another neighbouring places, they are getting rejected.

Sometimes, an alternative routing option is offered, but the NAT exits are way up on EGTT/London airspace which means **significantly longer routings**, which nobody wants.

There is also a bit of an issue with **the automated Eurocontrol flight planning system**. It doesn't always immediately reject your flight plan – sometimes it waits until midnight so you get a nice message in the morning, not too long before your flight which you now have to replan...

So the military are to blame?

That might not be entirely fair, but it is down to some **active military zones** that most of these route plans seem to not be successful.

The main one we've seen causing trouble is in AIP SUP 045/22, which is valid from **24 March 2022 to 22 March 2023**. Activation of the area is possible H24, and they activate it a lot.

You can find all the **temporary activated areas and timings** here on the French AIP SUP page.

We also saw one from June 15-23. *"Ocean HIT 2022"* uses the same sort of area and **irritatingly coincides with a different exercise (HYDRA) on June 20**. This means poor old EGGX/Shanwick is going to be dealing with most of the crossing traffic that day and there is likely to be a **medium impact for flights**.

What can you do about it?

Not a huge amount really. If the areas are active you aren't going to be able to operate through them. We asked around, and folk said they've been doing **a lot of LIZAD and NAKID routings**. Some folk have reported simply planning higher levels and that's apparently worked.

You can attempt to get inflight re-routings. You can also try these chaps who provide the actual time slots of activation to give you a better picture:

CCMAR ATLANTIQUE Phone : +33(0)2 98 31 82 69 / +33(0)2 98 84 49 57 (backup).

Anything else to know about?

The French and German Navy have been using some airspace in **EGGX/Shanwick** which occasionally gets in the way of some of the Tango routes.

All of the upcoming military exercises in Europe are notified through the Eurocontrol Network Operations Portal.

US: 5G Rollout Near Airports Delayed Until 2023

Chris Shieff

22 June, 2022



Six months have passed since the FAA hurriedly reached an agreement with Telecoms AT&T and Verizon to **delay switching on powerful new 5G antennas near major airports**.

That agreement was set to expire on July 5. And the original concerns haven't gone away - **5G can still interfere with radio altimeters**, and the industry is still scrambling for a fix. If safety buffer zones were to stop buffering at larger airports, where low visibility landings are more common, the impact would have become even worse.

However, on Friday the FAA released its first update since February - and the news is good...

A new agreement

AT&T and Verizon have agreed to **extend the delay until July 2023** to allow the FAA and operators more time to get their ducks in a row.

There is compromise happening on both sides of the deal. While the FAA hasn't gone into the specifics, they have said there is now a **phased rollout plan** to make sure that both sides are kept happy.

The FAA will begin work to identify which airports are safe enough for the Telecoms to start *enhancing* their services there right away, without turning everything on.

On the flip side, there will be **more time for operators of aircraft fitted with radio altimeters vulnerable to interference to replace them, or install special filters**. Regional aircraft are particularly affected by this.

Considering that the first customers are only just now receiving these filters from the radio altimeter manufacturers, the original goalposts were always fairly ambitious.

A new FAA deadline for operators to complete work on their fleets is set for the end of the year, and this time it looks to be firm. The Telecoms are expecting to be let loose at the end of the new deal.

In the meantime

The status quo - existing restrictions will remain in place. Back in January over a thousand Notams (1,478 to be precise) were issued when 5G hit the proverbial fan. Many of them restrict the use of Autoland, HUD to Touchdown, and Synthetic Vision Systems at specific airports. The FAA has also published a guide that explains the different types of Notams and what those limitations mean for operators at various airports.

The FAA has also since provided a number of **exemptions** for more common passenger jets to continue with **low visibility landings**. You can view those through the FAA's handy map [here](#).

Unfortunately, the support for **business jets** has not been as forthcoming. If your aircraft doesn't have an exemption, you'll have to stick to the Notams, which means paying extra special attention to the weather

and alternate planning when it's looking murky out there.

Buffers will also remain in place at several major airports to make sure that low visibility landings can continue without causing major headaches for operators. You can view that list [here](#).

Other things to look at

If you'd like to know more about the problem with 5G networks and aviation in more detail, we wrote a blog article earlier this year that would be a great place to start.

There's also the FAA's official 5G website, where updates like the one above are published.

Get in touch

If you have other questions, we'd be happy to help. You can reach us on news@ops.group.

Big Summer Slots (a Storybook)

Mark Zee

22 June, 2022



This summer is going to be **worst ever in Europe for delays** (so we're told), which means if you're going there you're going to get a **nasty CTOT** sooner rather than later.

So rather than writing a long and helpful blog post to help you navigate the slot rules, instead we've put together a vacuous and infantile story book.

But, it **might still help a little to figure out how NMOC** (the artists formerly known as CFMU) **at Eurocontrol works**, how to deal with a bad slot, requesting improvement, how and when to file, and when you should or should not contact NMOC for help.

Once you've enjoyed (or not) storytime, be sure to scroll down for some more "adult" links to the in-depth

material 



Click above for the PDF version (which you can also download directly).

If you prefer, try this “Book” version ...

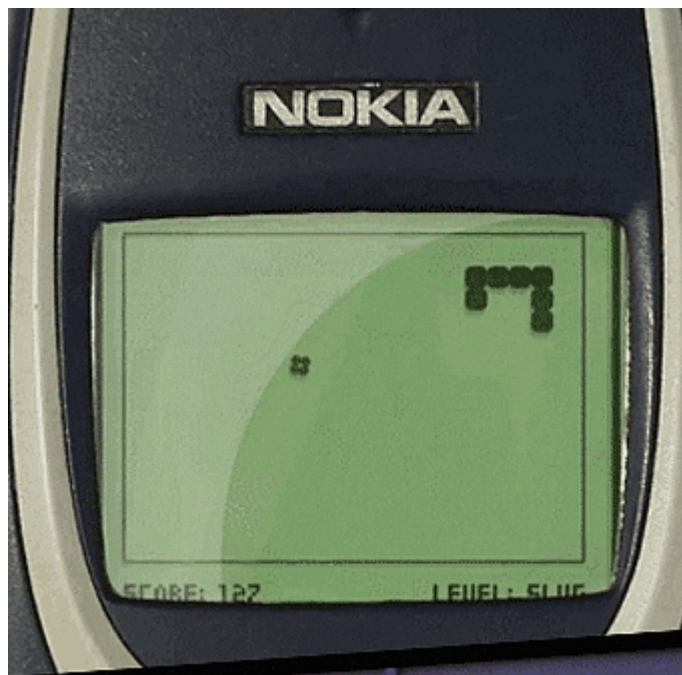
So, onto the adult version... Eurocontrol NMOC have published a **really useful guide to slots** this month, for the Summer of 2022. Download that here as a PDF (31 pages)

For the full bible, you want the IFPS users manual, and the ATCFM operations manual.

Do you have any other useful links or documents about European slots? Tell us! ops.team@ops.group.

Kathmandu got RNP-AR (and so should you)

OPSGROUP Team
22 June, 2022



RNP AR approaches are not your standard stuff. They need special authorisation and training for you to fly them. But it is worth it because these complex looking approaches are generally used in some of the most challenging places, to make your life easier (and safer).

So here is a quick look at them, some insights into why you might want to fly them, and how to sort that out.

What does this acronym mean then?

RNP means Required Navigation Performance. Which is something under the whole 'PBN' thing which basically lets aircraft fly along a nice, precise path with a lot of accuracy.

It's the newer, better version of RNAV that has **performance monitoring and alerting** involved.

You've probably come across it in a bunch of different places and with different numbers after it. RNP 4 over the oceanic and remote spots, RNP 1 on approaches... the number is the **accuracy requirement**. So 4 means accurate to 4nm 95% of the time. Or your system tells you (that's the alerting bit).

AR means authorisation required.

RNP-AR you allowed?

You can **get that authorisation with an LOA** and a bunch of training. In the US this is covered under section 9 of your En-Route / General Rules and Procedures / Holding, Approach and Departure Procedures which you can find here.

The FAA issues RNP AR authorization via operations specification (OpSpec), management specification (Mspec), or letter of authorization (**LOA C384**). There are no exceptions. Operators can find a lot of info on RNP AR aircraft eligibility, operating procedures, and training requirements in **AC 90-101**.

Which (because we're generous with our links) can be read here.

Like anything, it comes down to the equipment you have in your aircraft as well. It requires certain GNSS and an on-board inertial system (IRU/IRS) setup, an FMS navigation with multi-sensor capability (so there is something as a backup to maintain RNP if the GNSS is lost)...

Surprisingly few Bizjets seem to have what is needed. Good news though, companies do offer retrofit options.

So, what does an RNP AR look like?

Well, it should look **accurate to 0.3** (that's about 40m with SBAS), and sometimes even 0.1.

If you're in the US then your RNP AR APCH is probably going to be called an **RNAV (RNP)**. It should have **AUTHORISATION REQUIRED** scribbled somewhere on the chart too because, *you know, you need it...*

You do also get ones for departures too.

Why do we like them?

"An RNP AR APCH (approach) is a procedure that allows for narrow, linear obstacle clearance corridors in the procedure design..."

In other words they **help you get into tough places by giving more guidance** in a more sort of 3D way.

This means they can have some real funky stuff going on in them like swirly turns, RF (radius-to-fixes) and all that sort of stuff. But if you know how to fly them and are allowed to then this is going to save you a whole bunch of woe in some challenging spots.

Like VNKT/Kathmandu...

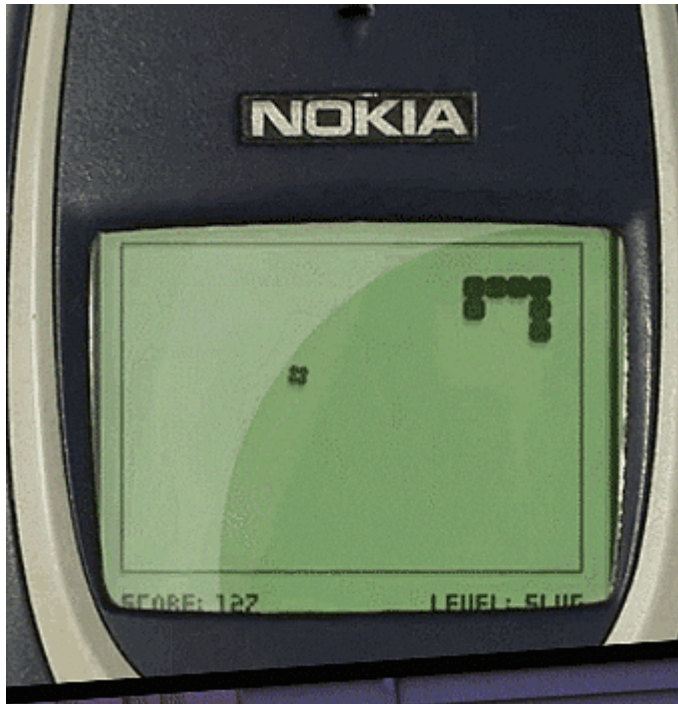
Kathmandu?

Yep, Nepal's main international airport. (They only just built their second international airport in April 2022 over at Bhairahawa).

At VNKT/Kathmandu, they just installed some **RNP AR approaches** which came into effect **May 19**. And about time too, because this is a mean airport with all that terrain, and before these new approaches you just had some VORs.

You can find the full AIP [here](#).

If they remind you of that old snake game then that's because there is **a lot of vicious terrain in Kathmandu**. Which is why RNP AR approaches which let you zigzag between all the mountainy bits are helpful.



Where else are these handy?

Anywhere there is nasty terrain. Alaska, New Zealand, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Indonesia... There is one for Cape Town that massively reduces track miles, another in Guatemala for departure that will help with your payload restrictions...

KPSP/Palm Springs makes excellent use of them, and you will even **find them at some major airports** which don't have terrain, because they can ensure **traffic remains clear** of other airports in particularly congested airspace (KMDW/Midway and KORD/O'Hare for example).

Want more info?

This is a good article from AvBuyer which goes into more depth for those of you looking to retrofit your aircraft.

Here is a presentation from ICAO on it, because who doesn't love a good powerpoint.

Aloha, RIMPAC: Major Military Exercise in Hawaii

Chris Shieff
22 June, 2022



From **June 29 - August 4**, the world's largest military exercise will be happening near Hawaii. It's called the Rim of the Pacific Exercise, or RIMPAC for short.

It's a big deal - this year over twenty-six major nations (including the US, Canada, the UK, and Australia) are taking part in **extensive naval and aerial activity** happening every day through a lengthy period.

If you're operating into (or near) Hawaii during the exercise, it'd be a good idea to brief on what to expect. The FAA's Impact Statement is the official guidance, but it's a solid read. If you're after something a little more bite-sized, we've got you covered.

Here's a breakdown on the biggest need-to-know info...

Let's Talk About Airspace

The vast majority of RIMPAC will be contained within Special Use Airspace. The usual suspects will be included - all permanent warning and restricted areas on your charts, along with other types of special use airspace with scary looking abbreviations like 'ATCAA,' 'ALTRV,' and fancy names like 'Nalu,' 'Haka' and 'Luna.'

Big picture - don't go into the red boxes when they're active (more on that in a sec).

Before you tackle the official FAA Impact Statement, for the love of Pete **have a map open next to it**. Once you can see where all this airspace actually is, as I learned, things suddenly get a lot easier - luckily the FAA has put one together:

The big one is that MILU East, MILU South, W-192/3/4 (all south of Oahu) **will remain in effect 24/7**, and at all levels.

There are also some subtle differences to timings for W189B and W190 which also extend up high. These are only active from mid-afternoon.

What will be the impact?

Just remember: **15 minutes**. It seems to be the magic number.

You can still file as per normal, but if you're operating on an affected route (including some PACOTS), you'll have to accept delays for re-routes of up to 15 minutes. Which means more contingency fuel.

Here are the routes that the FAA's guidance specifically mentions:

To/from Asia:

PACOT tracks 11/12 and A/B between Hawaii and the Far East.

To/from the US:

If you're routing between the **Pacific Northwest** and Hawaii, try and plan above FL290. If you're unable to, 'Nalu' will get in the way. ATC will be able to vector you onto another airway (A331), but it will mean a reroute. If you can stay above, there will be no impact.

If you're headed to or from the **Pacific Southwest**, 'Mahi' and 'Haka' will affect flights at all levels, with the same delays.

To/from the South Pacific:

Flights between Hawaii and **Tahiti, Fiji** and **Samoa** will be impacted by Luna West, Central and East can also expect reroutes.

The FAA advise in all cases, the delays will not be worse than fifteen minutes (and that's a worst case scenario).

What about Hono?

Retractable barriers are present on three of **PHNL/Honolulu's** four runways, which are used to simulate carrier landings – pretty neat huh?

The only downside is that when a capture is needed, that runway will be **unavailable for forty-five minutes**. The FAA advise that this could cause delays of up to fifteen minutes while ATC juggles things around.

Then there's the two nearby military airports – **PHIK/Hickam** and **PHNG/Kaneohe Bay**. As they will be used to house a number of military aircraft transiting to and from the exercise (the rest will be on a carrier), ATC may need to implement **flow control** at PHNL/Honolulu to keep things within capacity. Again, nothing worse than 15 minutes...see, the magic number.

I need to speak to someone.

The FAA has listed two contacts over at the Honolulu Control Facility:

John Wennes – john.h.wennes@faa.gov, 808-840-6161

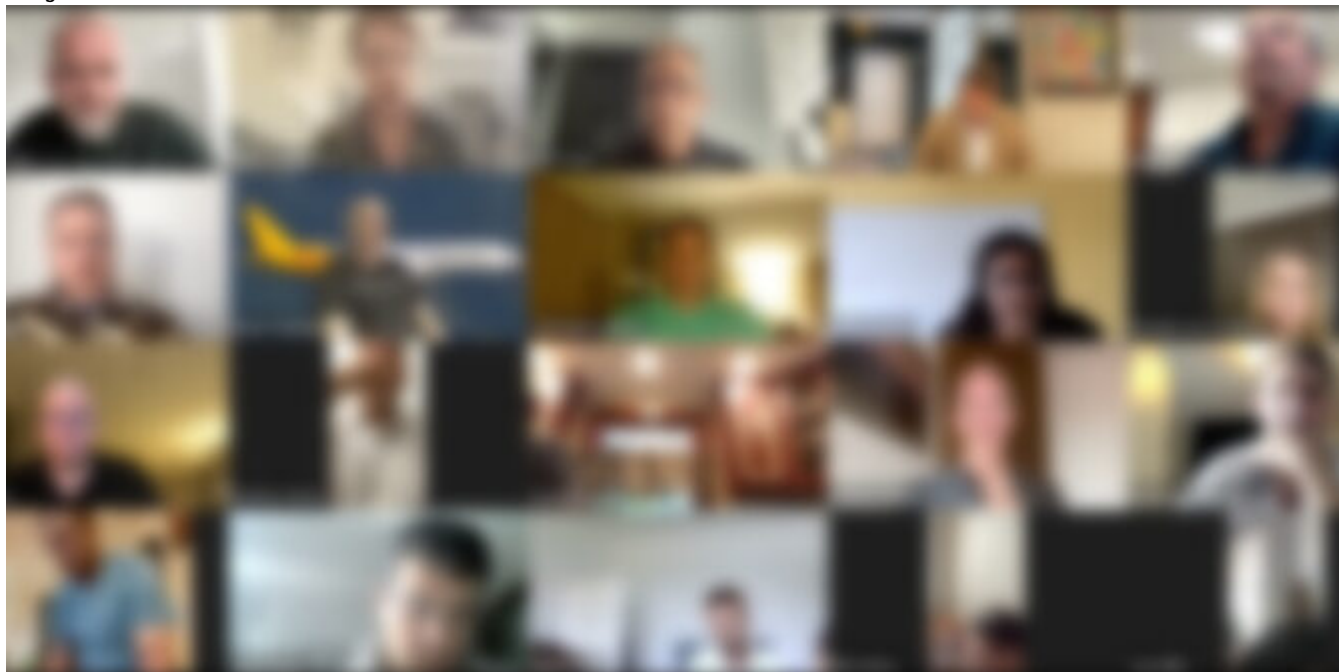
Antonio Carrilho – Antonio.a.carrilho@faa.gov, 808-840-6203

Or give the OPSGROUP team a shout on team@ops.group, and we'll do our best to help.

June 14 OPSCHAT Summary

OPSGROUP Team

22 June, 2022

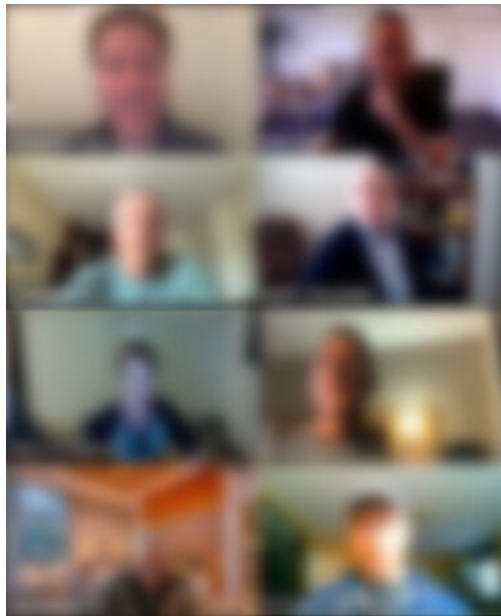


Hi Members,

And non-members reading this and thinking *“what did I miss out on by not joining in this OPSCHAT?”*

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

Here’s went down this week in the world of international operations things...



OPS CHAT

TUESDAY 14 JUNE 1300Z

**SLOTS IN EUROPE
EASA FUEL RULES
NAT OCEANIC CLEARANCE
EU-LISA UPDATE**

The Big Things

The USA - revised LOA approval process. Basically, if you're a Part 91 new aircraft you can now get the top 10 things rolled into 1 LOA. No news yet on the process being made easier for older aircraft, but watch this space...

China - Now require proof of ownership of your aircraft if you go there. Because of Russia flying "re-registered" (stolen) aircraft. We've not seen any reports yet on what this involves but we think a few extra days for permits to be approved.

Europe - Strikes remain in vogue... LFPG/Charles de Gaulle are going mad with the strikes. Fire services, airport workers strikes. EBBR/Brussels as well as Tunisia are getting in on the action as well with various airports workers and an ATC strike.

Also in Europe - EU-LISA have been having secret meetings, and our little spies have reported back saying that *if you make a profit or if there is any business stuff that takes place because of the flight* then you need to register. So it's got a little more annoying again because we thought private flights were exempt but apparently not...

Hawaii - RIMPAC military exercise at the end of June which goes on for 35 days, mainly during the day. There is a big PDF document on it but it's not particularly useful for seeing what's really going on. Basically, some delays depending on which way you're routing, and look out for all the extra military aircraft.

Slots in Europe

It is a mess, and it's probably going to get worse, because there are loads of staff missing at airports. And there are some ATC problems as well. Which means slots. A lot of slots. NMOC, who run them, have some tips on how to handle all this, and how not to - like yoyo-ing (*bad*), slot swapping (*good*), late filing (*bad*), early filing (*won't help, but good*).

Send us your slot questions at news@ops.group if you have any.

EASA Fuel Rules

We think there are two big things to look out for and read up on:

- **Which policy applies to you:** They each have different monitoring and recording, safety measuring requirements etc. The main thing they seem affect is the contingency fuel.
- **New planning requirements:** Particularly for destination alternates seem to have changed – the planning minimas mainly, as have some things like what to include in your arrival routing planning etc (they say what is ‘reasonably expected’)

EGGX/Shanwick

Something which we’re looking into, but here is what we know so far:

Shanwick want you to register with then if you want to get your clearance via ACARS. But there isn’t a CPDLC or ADS-C list as far as we know. We are working on an article on this, and on CPDLC logon things to watch out for, so watch this space.

Danger Club

We’ve been inspired to start talking about Fatigue. So we want to run a Danger Club on this and get folk talking, and help solve it from the bottom up (because some of those at the top aren’t helping...)

If you have any interesting incidents or accidents to share to talk on let us know, or come join us at the next Danger Club meetup!

Always Listening: Black Boxes in the Cloud

Chris Shieff
22 June, 2022



The problem with black boxes is that they are attached to the airplane.

Although their contents are invaluable for figuring out the cause of an accident, *if we can't find the*

airframe, we don't get the answers.

It took two years to find Air France 447, while Malaysian 370 remains lost to this day. The industry seems to be becoming more aware that there is *something wrong* with the way we have been tracking, searching for, and finding accident aircraft.

And as part of this, there is an emerging push for black box data to be **streamed** live during a flight using internet-based technology.

From a safety perspective, it makes sense. But from a practical standpoint, **it's not all smooth sailing**. Here's a brief look at how these new technologies might work, and why organisations such as IFALPA, along with some pilots, are still pushing back.

The 'Cloud'.

Storing data in the cloud is becoming a reality with both flight data and voice. All you really need is an internet connection to let the magic happen.

With that in mind, the idea is that black box data could be **streamed to the cloud constantly**. Meaning it is immediately available to safety investigators if or when an accident or incident happens.

ICAO.

As a result of accidents like the ones mentioned above, **ICAO is implementing a mandate** for new aircraft with MTOWs over 27,000kg (60,000lbs) due to come into effect from 2023.

It's an extension of their Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System, or simply 'GADSS' – their initiative to make tracking and finding aircraft in emergencies much more efficient.

A big part of it is that onboard equipment will need to recognise abnormal or emergency conditions from parameters such as speed or unusual attitudes *automatically*, and then begin broadcasting very accurate position reports as often as **once a minute** – as opposed to the 15 minutes when ops are normal.

Big Tech.

Technologies are being developed to allow manufacturers to comply with these GADSS requirements, and in some cases they are taking things one step further – to include flight data streaming.

Take Satellite Communication heavy hitter **Inmarsat** for example. Their 'Black Box in a Cloud' solution allows data to be live streamed via the internet, to the ground as soon as there is sign of trouble.

Honeywell and Curtiss-Wright have also joined forces to develop new recorders capable of continuous transmission to their own facilities on the ground.

IFALPA says nay...for now anyway.

So on the face of it, black box streaming seems like a no-brainer.

But there are still concerns. On May 9, IFALPA published a position paper on just this issue – and it seems they're not on board yet, due to **security concerns**.

Streaming flight data on the internet may open the door to those wanting to leak, or corrupt it. It is important that the media and public domain don't get a hold of it before investigations have taken place, and there may even be those with more malicious intent who want to alter it in some way.

And there are no existing technologies that are 100% secure. IFALPA argue that as the technology

develops, so too must our ability to protect it. And until then, IFALPA will remain opposed to it.

Other problems.

It's not just security either. **Here are some other roadblocks** that live flight data streaming faces:

Privacy - across the board there may be push back from crew who, understandably, don't want their voices recorded and broadcast to the internet. It may be for similar reasons why the industry has resisted the use of cockpit video recordings for the past two decades, despite the desires of the ATSB.

Cost - The suggestion of retrofitting this type of technology to existing airframes would be timely and **very costly**. And in the current industry environment, there is likely to be significant push-back on introducing additional expenses.

Speed - Have you ever tried to stream a movie on that hideously long red-eye? It can be notoriously **slow** and **unreliable** - especially in more remote parts of the world. Flight data recorders also save an immense amount of data, which means satellite time and storage could become uber-expensive.

For live flight data streaming to be effective and reliable, the logistics behind it also need to be rock solid. And there are concerns we're not there yet.

Live flight data streaming will eventually become the new normal. But how long that takes depends on the aviation's ability to overcome these hurdles.

Free Route Airspace Around The World

OPSGROUP Team
22 June, 2022



The amount of Free Route Airspace (FRA) you have available to you on your worldwide flights is growing. Here is a look at some of the new regions opening up, some that have been there for a while and some of the ones which probably never will be...

A quick overview of what it is.

Free Route Airspace is where you are allowed to fly direct rather than point to point.

*"Free route airspace (FRA) is a specified airspace within which users may **freely plan a route** between a defined entry point and a defined exit point, with the possibility to route via intermediate (published or unpublished) significant points, **without reference to the ATS route network**, subject to airspace availability."*

Now, there are usually some limits to this:

- Your direct segment can only be 200nm long otherwise you're going to have to file an intermediate point
- You'll also need an intermediate point anytime there is a level change or change in flight rules
- You can take DCTs that cross FIR boundaries, but will need to coordinate in advance for this.

Then there are the aircraft requirements (otherwise you'll be sticking to the published routes). These are general and not all FRA airspace will have the same requirements:

- Mode S transponder
- ADS-C
- CPDLC (not everywhere, but most)

The New One: Africa.

(Well, parts of it).

This actually came in during Covid because ASECNA (the air traffic folk for the region) wanted to help with fuel savings and efficiency for all the struggling airlines. Nice of them. Even nicer is they have now **extended it until at least October 2022.**

If you are flying through the FMMM/Antananarivo, FCCC/Brazzaville, DRRR/Niamey, FTTT/N'Djamena, GOOO/Dakar oceanic or terrestrial FIRs **above FL290** then you can basically take directs.

Of course, **there are some limits** – free routing through **restricted airspace** will generally not be possible when that airspace is active, and bits of the normal airspace might occasionally not be available either. So you will have to **keep an eye out for notams** on these.

All the info on Africa's FRA is published in AIC 27-22 which you can find right here.

The United Kingdom

We wrote a big old post on this back in December 2021 because it was the *"biggest airspace change ever implemented in the United Kingdom"* (their words not ours).

The major-ness of this is that it covers areas in the **North Atlantic, Scotland, England and Northern Ireland**. There is even a portion in the London UIR which is now FRA.

This FRA is H24 and from FL255-FL660

Europe

We should have started with Europe because they've been **trailblazing FRA since 2008**, when they became the first in the world to implement it. They have a whole implementation plan which you can read up on here.

Once the whole airspace is implemented they reckon it will amount to **1 billion nautical miles saved**.

As of the end of 2022, this is what will be available:

The Cross-Border FRA is the key stuff because it means you can file those 200nm segments across border. Currently, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and Sweden all have cross-border FRA operations. These are increasing through to 2030 (when the whole region should be FRA and cross-border).

2022 is the year it's (nearly) all happening.

The European Commission has a **deadline of 2022 for implementing FRA Europe-wide above FL305**.

The legal stuff for the implementation is all in here if you want a read.

They also have a jumbo document with all the planning requirements if you need it.

Maastricht. (Yes, we know this is part of Europe).

Maastricht of course have free route airspace. The Maastricht Upper Control Area (MUAC) has had it from FL245-FL660 since a long time. Here's their page on it.

Some fairly standard stuff applies:

- You can't file within 2.5nm of the lateral boundary
- Directs do need to connect to SIDs, STARs (if required)
- There are published enter and exit point for the MUAC region

They have something new too though.

Now, this isn't FRA stuff, but is "making routing through airspace more efficient" stuff so we figured a good thing to add in here too.

The big change is the **"dualisation" of the N125 route**. *What is this?* Well, its a busy route that used to be bi-directional and have aircraft climbing and descending which was a mess. So now it is two parallel routes.

Here is a picture of it:

Might not look like much, but it impacts a bunch of German airports, some in the Netherlands and also some overflights so if you fly through this area often, it's worth knowing about.

One last thing in Maastricht...

Maastricht also publishes their own **AIRAC brief** which basically coincides with the new AIRAC cycle. This doesn't supersede the AIP, but provides some handy "complementary" information to help with flight planning.

NOPAC FRA

A study was published on this earlier in 2022 and the results showed, unsurprisingly, that there is much better efficiency for flights able to utilise free routing – especially because winds can be utilised better. This isn't quite the same as Free Route Airspace, its more *“free to plan your route for minimum time or fuel burn”*.

They saw around 243kg saved on eastbound flights and 469kg on westbounders.

However, they also saw a potential increase in loss of separation events, so a balance in separation and efficiency comes up. To be honest, we aren't sure what the situation is with this. It seemed to be a trial to see if viable, but no news on whether it will go any further.

The North Atlantic

The next step for the NAT is more likely to be **Nil Tracks** than full free route airspace. And there is no sign of nil tracks becoming a permanent thing anytime soon.

Mongolia

They are implementing FRA but it is dependant on China (where entry points are dictated by city to city pairs) and Russia (which is currently not talking to many of their neighbours on aviation related topics).

Russia

Russia has some FRA, but is looking to add more entry and exit points. See above for progress on this though.

The US

The FAA are implementing some **High Altitude Redesign plans** which you can read all about this Circular.

They don't call it Free Route Airspace, but if you've flown in the US you might have noticed you do tend to get a lot of directs. If you want to plan for these a little more 'officially' then you need to look out for the (little-known by some) waypoints all around the US known as **'NRS (National Route System)' waypoints**.

Coming to an airspace near you...

Free Route Airspace is predominantly a 'Europe Thing', and a very good one, but a work in progress. If you work in the planning side of things, keep an eye out for changes to European airspace as more FRAs and cross-border routes become available.

New York ATC is grumpy for a reason

OPSGROUP Team
22 June, 2022



This started off as (and still really is) a very specific post just aimed at folk who operate into KTEB/Teterboro – because **the runway 06/24 rehab project has begun!**

So we copied all the information from the Teterboro User's Group site and threw it into here. But then we realised the 'problem' with KTEB is that it's very, very close to a lot of other bigger airports...

So if you operate into **KEWR/Newark, KLGA/La Guardia or KJFK/New York Kennedy** then we reckon it's worth a read too. Because you might not realise what is going on underneath you and having an idea of the lay of the land (so to speak) is useful for that old SA we all harp on about...

So Teterboro is back in rehab?

They have a whole 11 months of works (to April 2023) planned for **runway 06/24**. Mostly it means closures, and these are pretty much all planned over night and on weekends.

Overnight closure timings:

- Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 22:30 – 06:30
- Monday 22:30 – 08:30

Weekend Runway closure times and dates:

- Friday 22:00 – Sunday 12:00 (until August 31)
- Sunday 12:01 – Sunday 23:59 (until November 30)

Weekend Airport closure times and dates:

- Friday 22:00 – Sunday 12:00 (July 1 until August 31)
- Sunday 12:01 – Sunday 23:59 (October 1 to November 30)

But it is more than just the closures that you need to think about if you operate in here.

Arrival Stuff

Northerly Flow:

Depending on wind and weather, and what's happening at KEWR/Newark you can usually expect an ILS 6 with a Circle to Rwy 1 or the RNAV (GPS) X Rwy 6

They are trying to bring in lateral and vertical guidance for Rwy 1. Watch this space. The circle to Rwy 1 is a nasty little thing so check out their guidance on it.

Departure Stuff

Southerly Flow

If its a southerly flow you can expect the Teterboro 4 SID which means delays.

Why?

Because they try to keep a **10nm gap between KEWR/Newark 22L arrivals and KTEB 19 departures**. Which is why there is also the **Dalton 2 visual departure** (which only needs a 5nm gap).

Expect an infinite delay...

Well, that sounds bad. It doesn't actually necessarily mean a lengthy delay though, particularly if you can accept the Dalton 2. The Dalton 2 keeps you down at 1,300' and 180 knots in VFR until clear of all the KEWR traffic then you can expect a transition to an IFR clearance.

There is a meeting!

Yep, there is, on June 15 at 10:00 am EST. Organised through the Teterboro Users Group (TUG) which we strongly recommend you getting yourself in on if you do operate here and aren't already in on it.

What else is going on down there though?

Well, like we mentioned, you've got **several major international airports** to consider as well, and some smaller executive airports and a military base. We counted and found more than 10 just in the immediate proximity to Teterboro.

KJFK, KEWR and KLGA have the dubious titles of **ranking first, third, and fourth for worst delays in the nation**. They are looking at ways to improve this, but most of them involve building more runways which won't necessarily help poor old KTEB stuck underneath the every growing traffic flow.

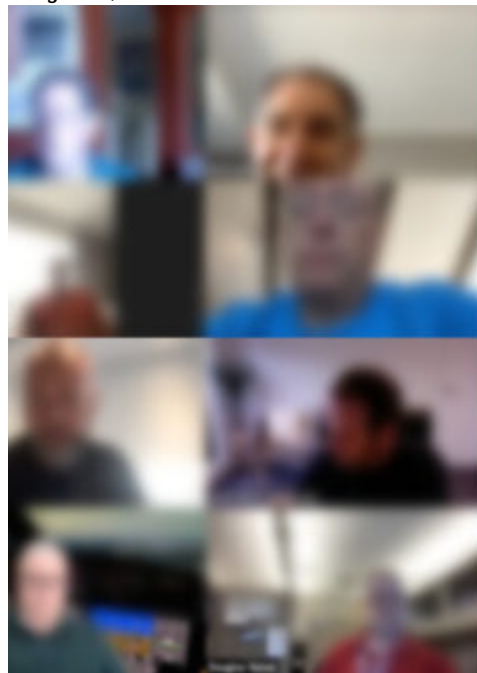
Then there is the weather.

The east coast of the US gets hit with some pretty heavy storms. In April, a single day of bad weather saw over 4500 flights into the east coast delayed and the knock on effect across the busy airspace is considerable.

OPSCAT Summary June 7

OPSGROUP Team

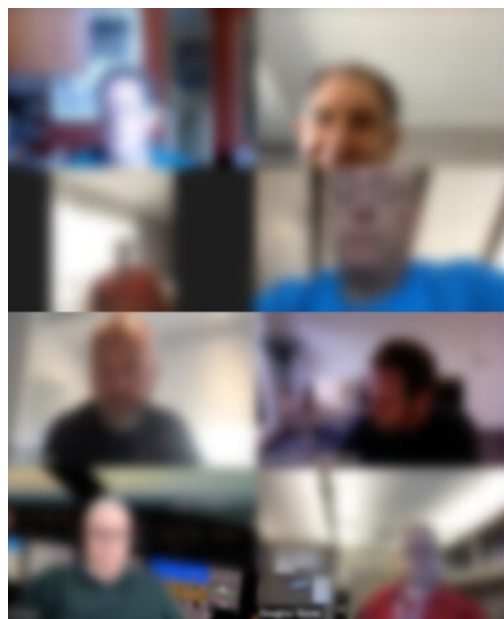
22 June, 2022



***OPS*CHAT**

TUESDAY 7 JUNE 2000Z

**CARIBBEAN OPS UPDATE
SPECIAL PROCEDURES IN LA
FUEL SHORTAGES IN EUROPE
ITALY ATC STRIKE**



***OPS*CHAT**

TUESDAY 7 JUNE 2000Z

**CARIBBEAN OPS UPDATE
SPECIAL PROCEDURES IN LA
FUEL SHORTAGES IN EUROPE
ITALY ATC STRIKE**

Hi Members,

We had another busy OPSCAT call this week with Chris in the hosting seat, along with returning Quiz Master Dave and Rebecca.

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

Here's a roundup of what we talked about:

The Big Stuff

- **Bahamas** - The Click2Clear (fast track customs clearance) roll out for everyone is no more...

indefinitely. Because it was confusing. We're waiting for clarification on the rules and a new roll out date.

- **Antigua** - TMA overflights are being denied (all the bits below FL245). 'Cross border' permits are needed. Look out for the Notam on it.
- **America** - A big political summit is happening, four TFRs across LA basin affecting access to airports here especially KBUR/Burbank and KVNK/Van Nuys ,so look out for the special procedures.
- **Europe (in general)** - World Fuel Service releases. Something is going on with them. Possibly a fuel shortage or a staff shortage? We ain't sure. But there are a few airports impacted and we think it extends beyond WFS. LFPB/Le Bourget, LIML/Milan Linate... not accepting various cards including WFS, but other airports across France and Italy have reported problems.
- **Italy** - Strike season. ATC strike June 8 for Milan ATC and then a general airport worker strike on June 16.
- **North Korea** - eight unannounced launches in one go! Keep an eye on things, and don't overfly. safeairspace.net is where we report the changes.

Unsolved mysteries

Canada FTL Regulations in Italy - Yes, you might get ramped checked. Yes, they might check your duty hours. But the general consensus seems to be that if it is state approved, and in accordance with your company's ops manuals, then you're probably A-OK. They're generally just checking everything is order, not digging deep into the specifics.

A question about the chunk of restricted airspace over the Atlantic and why - maybe because of military exercises? We're looking into it.

OPSQUIZ

Dave was back to host this week's OPSQUIZ. Congrats to this week's winner, PHIL! A prize will wings its way to you. Here's a sample question for this week: *What are the new standard symbols on US airport charts to show hotspots?*

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

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

Saudi-Yemen Airspace Update

David Mumford
22 June, 2022

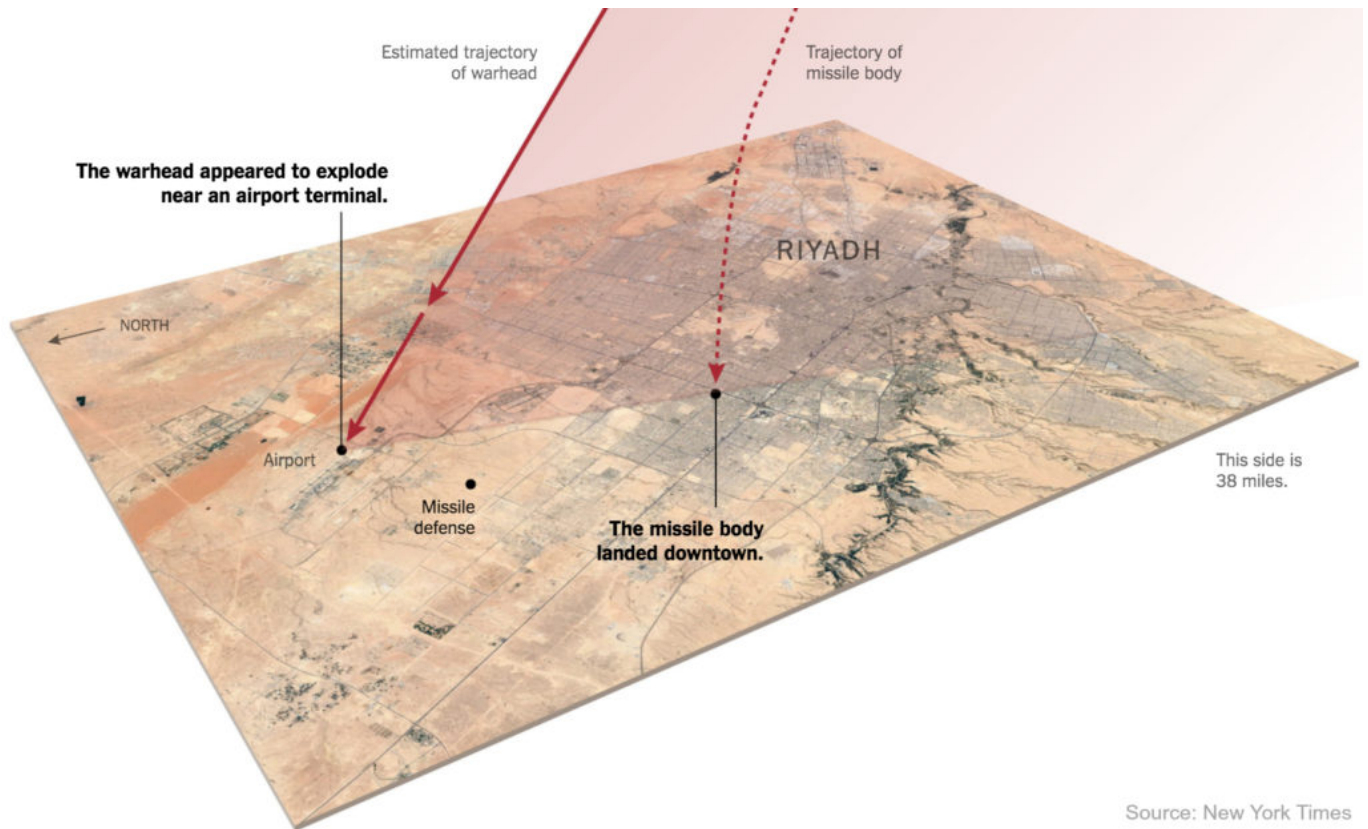


There's an **improving airspace risk picture** in Saudi Arabia since a ceasefire was agreed in April – which has now been extended to Aug 2. All groups have agreed to **halt the conflict** inside and outside Yemeni borders. The first month of the ceasefire saw **no reported drone strikes in Saudi Arabia**.

However, long-standing airspace warnings remain in place. If the conflict resumes, Houthi drone and missile attacks on targets in Saudi Arabia pose a potential threat to ops at Saudi airports, and for overflights of the OEJD/Jeddah FIR. The most significant risk is in the south of the country along the border with Yemen, but OERK/Riyadh and OEJN/Jeddah airports have also been targeted in the past.

Back in March 2021, **OEJN/Jeddah Airport** closed temporarily following multiple attempted drone attacks. Saudi media reported dozens of drones were intercepted in their airspace, and the US Embassy also issued a statement. **OERK/Riyadh Airport** was targeted in June 2020 and again in October.

Much of the information comes from state media and cannot always be independently verified. In 2017, a New York Times investigation suggested that at least one of the most high-profile attacks from that year may not have been “shot-down” or intercepted by Saudi defense systems at all.



Saudi Arabia Airspace Risk

With the ceasefire now in place, we're waiting to see if any of the countries who have issued airspace warnings for Saudi Arabia will amend their guidance.

Germany and **Canada** warn of a risk to landing anywhere in the country, but particularly along the border with Yemen in the southwest part of the OEJD/Jeddah FIR. **France** has issued similar advice, with the specific warning not to operate to OEAB/Abha, OEGN/Jazan, OENG/Nejran, OESH/Sharurah, OEWD/Wadi Al Dawasir and OEBH/Bisha airports:

A note on Yemen

The first month of the ceasefire saw notably reduced hostilities in Yemen, and commercial flights resumed at OYSN/Sanaa Airport for the first in six years.

However, Yemen remains an active conflict zone, and the vast majority of Yemeni airspace (OYSC/Sanaa FIR) should be avoided. Several countries have **prohibited flights** here due to the ongoing conflict on the ground. The oceanic portion of the OYSC/Sanaa FIR is excluded from most warnings, by nature of being offshore. The guidance issued by the US FAA currently looks like this:

Essentially, US operators are banned from flying north of a line KAPET-NODMA-ORBAT-PAKER-PARIM-RIBOK. The US FAA specifically mentions UT702 and M999 as being ok to use.

Watch out for ESCAT

You might know this as SCATANA. ESCAT is the new name, but the process is the same – if you're overflying the OEJD/Jeddah FIR and hear **"ESCAT RULES ARE NOW ACTIVE"** (or something to that effect) you need to be aware that these apply to you!

You will likely be given a **change of route directly out of the airspace**, or will be **directed to land at the nearest suitable aerodrome**. The purpose is to clear the affected airspace of all civilian aircraft at which point they close down all nav aids and airports until the threat has been dealt with.

ESCAT procedures are published in GEN 1.6 of Saudi Arabia's AIP. If you don't have a login, you can see the relevant section here. There are some special routes that you have to fly in the southern part of the OEJN/Jeddah FIR, as advised by Notam, and you can find these in AIP SUP 02/21.

SafeAirspace.net continues to provide up-to-date information for both Saudi and Yemen airspace.



The screenshot shows the 'SAFE AIRSPACE' website interface. The header includes the logo and the title 'Conflict Zone & Risk Database' with the tagline 'All current warnings, in one place'. Below the header, there are tabs for 'Updates' and 'Alerts'. A search bar labeled 'Type a country' is present. To the right, there are three risk level filters: 'Level 1' (red dot), 'Level 2' (orange dot), and 'Level 3' (yellow dot). The main content area on the left lists updates for three regions: Saudi Arabia (07 Jun), Yemen (07 Jun), and Ukraine (20 May). Each update includes a brief summary of the risk. On the right, a world map displays conflict zones with color-coded regions corresponding to the risk levels.

Busy Week in LA: Special Flight Procedures

Chris Shieff
22 June, 2022



It's a busy few days in the skies of **Los Angeles** this week.

A major political event – The Summit of The Americas – is happening there from June 6-10. A number of **TFRs** will become active affecting access to numerous airports throughout the LA Basin.

The FAA has now published the details, so let's take a closer look.

Update on Restricted Airspace

It looks as if some newer TFRs were issued after we posted this post. First up, **check the list** because we can't predict changes and they do happen.

But right now, we can see a few more like **2/5019, 2/5016, 2/5015** which might get in your way if you're not a scheduled commercial service. These don't supersede the other, they are for shorter time periods. But they are **a lot more prohibitive** (particularly if you're a GA or private flight wanting to get into KLAX).

Restricted Airspace

There will be four TFRs becoming active in the LA area. Three of them are further west near Santa Monica and Central LA, while the fourth is out east near Pomona. The upper limit of all of them is **2,999'**.

They will be active each day of the event at various times which you can access here.

If you're operating on a valid flight plan in or out of **KLAX/Los Angeles, KSMO/Santa Monica or KEMT/San Gabriel Valley** then you won't be affected.

Otherwise only **essential traffic** will be allowed through – SAR, medical, fire-fighting, or if you're experiencing an emergency.

If you are allowed into one, make sure you're squawking a discrete code. The FAA are reminding us that the timings and positions of the TFRs are subject to last minute changes, so keep an eye on the Notams too. The current one is FDC 2/4276 – and it's a solid read. So, here's a picture, because we like pictures more.

Impact

The majority of **VIP movements** will be via KLAX/Los Angeles. Although they are possible at other airports too.

Traffic may be given priority to enter the queue which means potential holding, slow-downs or delaying vectors. The impact will likely be minor, but a little common sense may prevail here – consider topping the tanks off with some **extra contingency fuel** just in case.

The largest impacts will be felt at **KVNY/Van Nuys** and **KBUR/Burbank** – flights in and out of these are not exempt from the TFR restrictions, so if you're heading in or out of one, here is what to expect:

Head-to-Head

Or in other words, **opposite direction operations** at both airports (weather permitting). It is not a normal configuration, and may take a little extra briefing – especially when it comes to traffic and runway awareness.

STARs (and not the Hollywood Type)

Over at KBUR/Burbank arrivals from the east can expect and plan for the JANNY 5 when the TFRs are active. This will temporarily replace the usual THRNE 3.

Overflights

SOCAL Terminal Area Control traffic which usually routes via V186, V201 and V459 can expect to fly via the Palmdale (PMD) VOR instead.

Other tower en-route control (TEC) routes may be unavailable during the next few days too.

I still have questions...

Detailed information on the TFR can be found on the FAA's official website, [here](#). Or if you still have a conundrum to solve, you can contact Flight Service 800-992-7433.

Otherwise get in touch with us on team@ops.group and we'll do our best to help!

Oshkosh 22': Special IFR Flight Procedures

Chris Shieff

22 June, 2022



It's that time of year again – Oshkosh 22' is just around the corner. The world-famous air show is happening this year from **July 25 - 31**.

And as you'd expect, it's going to be big. In fact, it will have the highest concentration of airplanes in the world. Over 10,000 of them to be precise, along with more than 700,000 fans.

To help with the influx of traffic, special air procedures have been published. They're effective from **July 21 - 31** and apply to several airports in the region, not just **KOSH/Oshkosh** itself.

You may not be headed in for the show, but if you are chartered to take people there (or anywhere near it), it's time to start planning.

At over thirty pages, the official doc is a solid read. To get you started, here's a bite-sized summary of the

major points for **regular turbine IFR operators**.

Special Procedures - Managing the flow

There are thirteen airports in the Oshkosh area that the generic procedures apply to. In a nutshell, if you're headed to one, you will need to take part in the IFR Reservation Program. Or in other words, if you're non-scheduled, you'll need a slot.

Big things to know for arrivals:

- They will become available at 17z on July 18, [here](#).
- They won't be issued more than 72 hours in advance.
- You have to confirm your slot within 12-24 hours of your flight (or you'll lose it).
- You must include your final confirmation number in your flight plan.

Ops tip: When working out your ETA, they suggest adding 30 minutes for delays (along with fuel).

The good news is that things are a little easier for departures - only **KOSH/Oshkosh** itself requires a slot through the same process.

Filing your flight plan

A little common sense prevails here - file early. You can file an IFR plan up to 22 hours in advance. At seven of the Oshkosh area airports, only approved IFR routes in and out are allowed. For arrivals [click here](#), for departures [click here](#).

Picking up your IFR clearance

If you're departing any airport within 600nm of KOSH (even if you're not headed near the show), it's a good idea to get your clearance on the ground to save on airborne delays.

Within 150nm, **airborne clearances will be no-bueno**, so don't try it. ATC won't issue them.

Another ops tip: Avoid plans with multiple stops. ATC advise it is better to file separate plans for each leg.

Airport Specific Procedures

Three airports have their own specific procedures (in addition to the above). Let's take a look.

KOSH/Oshkosh

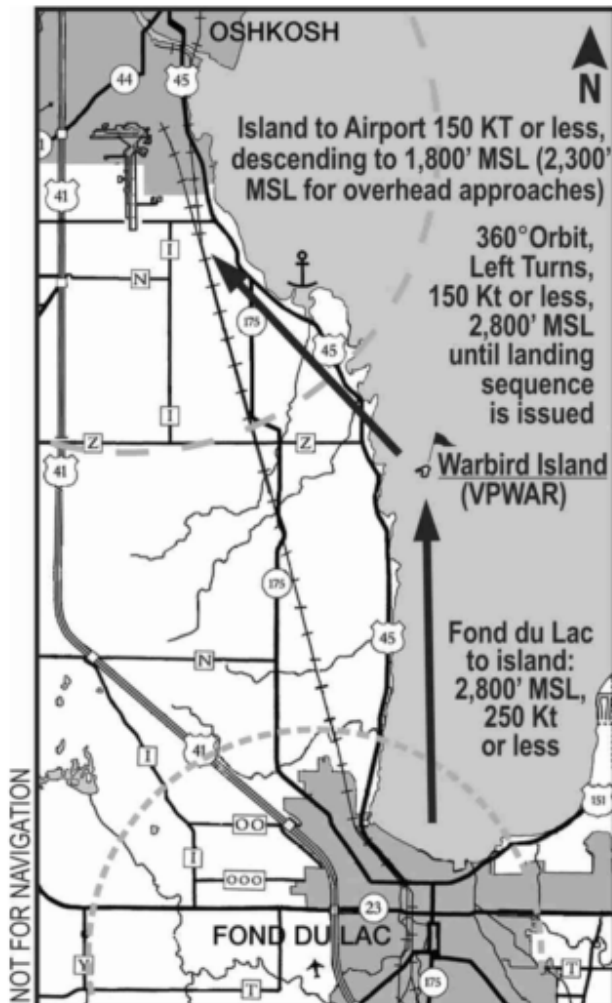
If you're headed into Oshkosh itself and the weather is good (ceiling 4,500'+, visibility > 5'), turbine aircraft are asked to cancel IFR at 60nm and transition to the arrival below.

Turbine/Warbird Arrival

Restricted to aircraft types listed

- This procedure is restricted to high-performance turbojet, turboprop, and Warbird aircraft capable of cruising at 130 knots or greater. Slower Warbird aircraft shall use the VFR Arrival from the ATC designated Transition (pages 5-14).
- The city of Fond du Lac is the entry point for all Turbine/Warbird arrivals. Monitor the AirVenture Arrival ATIS (125.9) for anticipated landing runways (see charts on pages 10-13).
- Avoid the Fond du Lac County Airport (FLD) airspace. FLD has a temporary control tower from Saturday, July 23 until Sunday, July 31, 2022 (operating hours on page 21). FLD airspace is 3,300' MSL and below within 4 NM.
- Aircraft weighing more than 12,500 pounds must advise ATC on initial contact.
- All aircraft shall report arrival over the city of Fond du Lac and again at Warbird Island to Oshkosh Tower on the appropriate tower frequency:
 - **When RWY 36L/R is in use, report on 126.6**
 - **Otherwise report on 118.5**

Examples: "Blue and yellow Wildcat, Fond du Lac"
"White Citation, Warbird Island"
- Proceed from the city of Fond du Lac direct to Warbird Island (6 miles SE of OSH, along the west shore of Lake Winnebago). When 4 NM North of FLD, descend to maintain 2,800' MSL.
- Pilots may be instructed to orbit the island until a landing sequence is issued. **Use caution; make left turns; and stay alert for other aircraft!**
- When cleared at Warbird Island, proceed to the assigned runway as directed by ATC, reduce speed to 150 knots or less and begin descent to 1,800' MSL (2,300' MSL for overhead approaches). Pilots are cautioned to maintain VFR separation at all times.
- If your landing clearance appears unsafe because of spacing, speed of preceding aircraft, or any other reason, go around! A new sequence will be issued.
- Pilots may request a 360° overhead approach to RWY 36 L/R or RWY 27. Break altitude is 2,300' MSL. Expect a right break only.
- ATC may initiate a 360° overhead approach to other runways as needed for spacing. Break altitude will be 2,300' MSL. Expect a north break for RWYs 9/27 and an east break for RWYs 18/36.
- Under all circumstances, avoid the VFR arrivals area southwest of OSH.
- Pilots of Warbird aircraft are encouraged to call Warbird Ground (123.9) when arriving at the Warbird area and also before starting engines for departure.



Make sure you grow eyes in the back of your head for other traffic, it's going to be busy.

When you land, you'll need a nice big sign to show where you'll be parking to show marshals outside of the left window. Unless you're staying for the show, it will likely be '**FBO**' for the Basler Ramp (assuming you have arranged this beforehand).

Chances are though, most non-scheduled charters won't be operating into KOSH/Oshkosh. Here are the next two closest options.

KFLD/Fond du Lac

- Distance from Oshkosh: 14nm
- Longest runway: 5941' (1800m)
- Parking: Fond du Lac Skyport (920-922-6000)

The FBO is only open between the hours of 06:30 and 21:00LT.

The biggest gotcha is there will be a **temporary control tower** in place from July 23 – 31, operating between 07:00 and 20:30LT (closing a bit earlier on the last day).

You'll need to contact them at 10nm inbound. They're expecting things to be really busy to – so take fuel for holding. They also recommend you arrive before sunset for safety.

If the weather is good, expect to cancel IFR and fly a visual approach.

KATW/Appleton

- Distance from Oshkosh: 17nm
- Longest runway: 8003' (2439m).
- Parking: Appleton Flight Center (920-738-3034)

The airport is controlled between 05:30 and 23:00 LT every day.

The Main Event Itself

KOSH/Oshkosh will **closed to all non-air show traffic** during the actual displays.

The action will happen in a TFR within a 5nm radius of the airport up to 16,000.' It will be active each afternoon during the event dates, and on two evenings – July 27 and 30. The exact timings will be published here, during which time the airport will be closed.

Need more help?

The official notice is the place to start – it's lengthy, but it's written in plain language which we like.

If you're having difficulty reserving an IFR slot, contact the Airport Reservation Office at (540) 422-4246.

If your question is about something else, you can reach us on news@ops.group and we'll do our best to help, or find the right person who can.

Sri Lanka Asks All Flights To Carry Extra Fuel

OPSGROUP Team

22 June, 2022



Sri Lanka, and Colombo's VCBI/Bandaranaike airport is a fairly key spot for aircraft requiring alternates for the likes of the Maldives, and an en-route and fuel stop option for aircraft routing to the Far East.

But there is growing political and economic instability, and this has already led to one European carrier cancelling flights to Sri Lanka, and to a Notam advising fuel availability issues.

Here is an overview of the current situation and the possible implications for international aviation.

What's been happening?

Sri Lanka is undergoing its **worst economic crisis** since gaining independence in 1948 and also just got a new Prime Minister.

Tourism was a major part of the country's economy. On top of this, the country is unable to meet the rising global gas and oil prices. There is a shortage of cash and so a **shortage of basic necessities** in the country, and this has led to a lot of unrest.

Most major authorities **advise against all but essential travel** to Sri Lanka because of increasingly violent protests and riots. These have been building since March 2022, with many through May focused in Colombo.

The Government impose **local restrictions and curfews at short notice** and although the state of emergency has been lifted, there is still a heightened military presence.

There is a **general fuel shortage** across the country which means long queues at gas stations, and long waits for transport. If you plan on having crew layover this might be something to think about.



There were also several big protests through April and May that saw roads to Colombo's **VCBI/Bandaranaika and VCCC/Ratmalana airports** blocked, in an attempt to stop parliamentarians accessing the main airport.

There have been an **increasing number of power cuts**, and with that, loss of internet services, across parts of the country. Contact with agents and permit requests might be disrupted because of this.

The Aviation Situation

One European carrier has cancelled operations into Sri Lanka because of security concerns. This is just because of security concerns though, not direct safety concerns.

There is however also a fuel shortage. Sri Lanka has issued notams under the VCCF code saying that **all flights to airports in the country should tanker fuel inbound**. Local agents report that some fuel may be available on a case-by-case basis, but don't count on it.

A0476/22 -

DUE TO LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF JET A-1 FUEL AT SRI LANKAN AIRPORTS, APPROVAL FOR NON SKED ACFT REQUESTING REFUELLING STOPS WILL NOT BE GRANTED. HOWEVER TECHNICAL STOPS SUCH AS CREW CHANGE WILL BE APPROVED. 27 MAY 18:05 2022 UNTIL 30 JUN 18:29 2022 ESTIMATED. CREATED: 27 MAY 18:05 2022

A0475/22 -

DUE TO LIMITED AVAILABILITY OF JET A-1 FUEL, SKED ACFT OPERATING TO ALL AIRPORTS IN SRI LANKA ARE HEREBY INFORMED TO STRICTLY ADHERE TO THE REQUIREMENT OF CARRYING RETURN SECTOR FUEL. THIS REQUIREMENT DOES NOT INCLUDE DIPLOMATIC, HUMANITARIAN AND EMERG ACFT INTENDING TO OPR TO SRI LANKAN AIRPORTS. 27 MAY 18:03 2022 UNTIL 30 JUN 18:29 2022 ESTIMATED. CREATED: 27 MAY 18:03 2022

Emirates is reportedly now tankering fuel from Dubai, and Singapore Airlines is carrying extra fuel on its flights to the country. SriLankan Airlines has even made fuel stops in India to refuel some of its flights, with more stops planned here in the coming days.

Fuel Stop Options

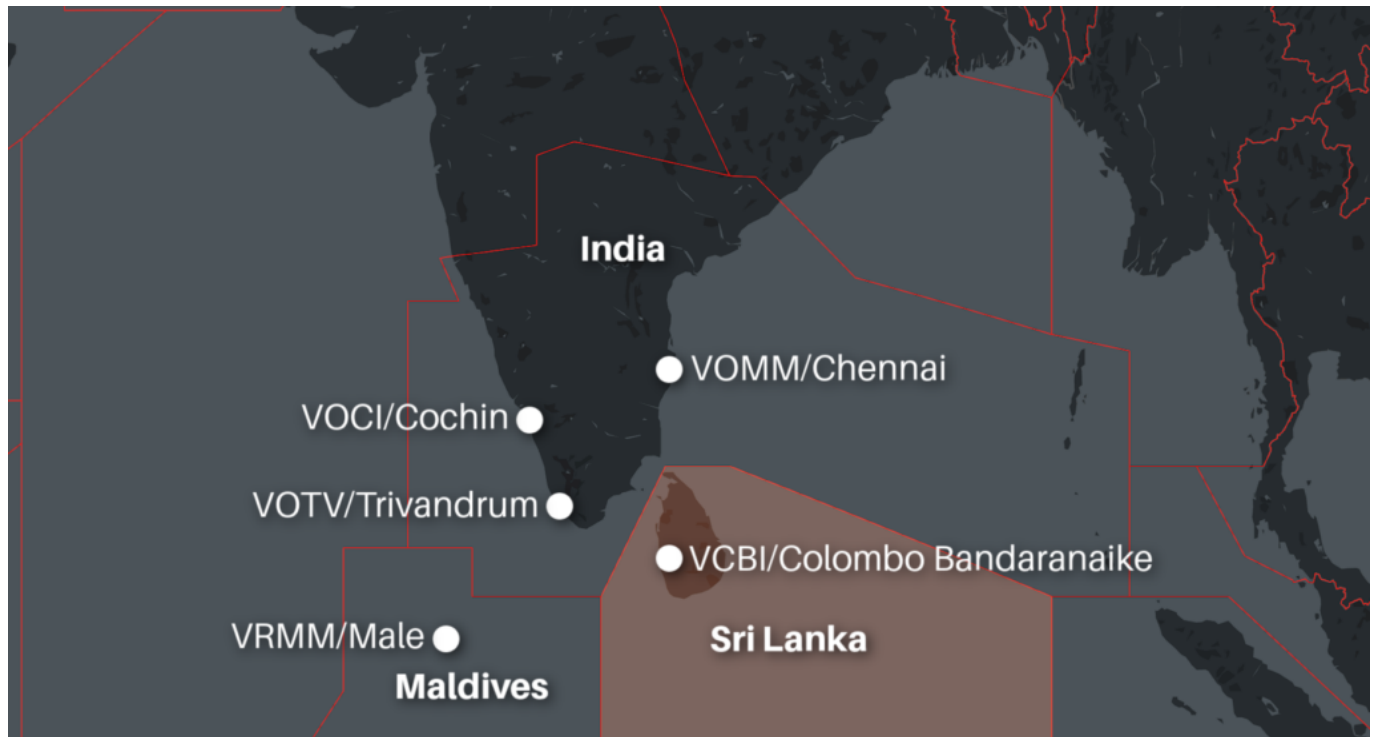
VCBI/Bandaranaika is a very handy airport for fuel stops, and as an en-route alternate, and alternate the Maldives. The monsoon season is starting soon, and the availability of this airport for possible fuel (tech) stops means it might be time to look at the other options in the area.

So what have you got?

The southern region India is as prone to bad weather during the monsoon season as anywhere else, but you do have VOMM/Chennai on the east coast, VOTV/Trivandrum in the southwest and VOCI/Cochin on the west coast. VABB/Mumbai lies further to the northwest.

VOTV/Trivandrum seems to be the big favourite for fuel stopping. You can get in touch with the airport directly on tm-d-tvm@aai.aero. VVIP Handlers are one of the main executive handling agents. Talk to them on +91 80106 86868 / ops@vvipflight.com or try Hindustan Petroleum Corp direct on mktghqo@hpcl.in (they're the main fuel supplier at the airport).

VRMM/Male is your main airport in the Maldives.



What is the level of concern right now?

The current risk is primarily with fuel availability and security. However, tensions are high within the country and the level of economic and political unrest does need to be watched.

South China Sea Dispute: Impact To Ops

OPSGROUP Team
22 June, 2022



The South China Sea dispute (don't be fooled by the sea's name) is between a bunch of the states in the region including, of course, China. It isn't so much over who owns it, but how much each bordering state owns.

The reason they all want as much as they can get? Well, it's an important bit of sea for the movement of maritime trade, and for general military control.

Who has been doing what?

There has been a lot of '*Cabbage tactics*', '*Salami Slicing*' and sneaky island building going on by several of the nations for quite some time.

Wondering what 'salami slicing' and 'cabbage tactics' are? They are when you do small things that all add up to bigger implications, and when you start 'wrapping' your military around stuff.

Here's what each country's territorial claims in the region looks like:



China and Taiwan Malaysia Vietnam Brunei Philippines

Why are we more concerned now?

The dispute has been going on for a long time and has **rarely had much impact on aviation**. However, China have recently been upping the game, carrying out large numbers of military drills across the region. We wrote about some of these a while back.

The majority of these are maritime only and the primary impact for flights ops is really just an increase in offshore helicopter traffic. Occasionally the exclusion zones have impacted aviation traffic as well because the upper limits are not always clear, and they often lie close to coastal airports.

There are drills planned through the start of June.

China are militarising islands.

China are rumoured to have **'fully militarised' several islands** in the South China Sea. These are purpose built islands (part of that sneaky island building strategy) designed to increase the Chinese military presence, and so control, in the region.

The militarisation is a potentially a cause for concern because the equipment on these **includes anti-aircraft missile systems, laser and jamming equipment, and fighter jets.**

The region is a relatively busy overflight area, with numerous airways as well as the traffic routing in and out of the surrounding countries.

Previous incidents.

In 2015, an **Australian RAAF aircraft** was carrying out "freedom of navigation" exercises over the China Sea in international airspace, but China responded with threats against them via state owned media sites, 'strongly advising' Australia that such flights were not welcome.

In 2015, a BBC News crew flew over some of China's militarised islands in a **US military aircraft** and the order on the radio was less than friendly.

Was a missile launched?

A video has been circulating this week, **reportedly showing a missile fired** into a region with commercial air traffic. The video claims to have been filmed from within an aircraft told by ATC to immediately turn 90 degrees to move out of the missile's path.

It is unverified and the airline reportedly involved have denied it occurred.

Drills were announced from May 22-27, but these referred to maritime exclusion zones only, and made no mention of possible missile launches or airspace hazards. There were no notams issued on the day for any launches and the lack of any additional information suggests it may be a fake video.

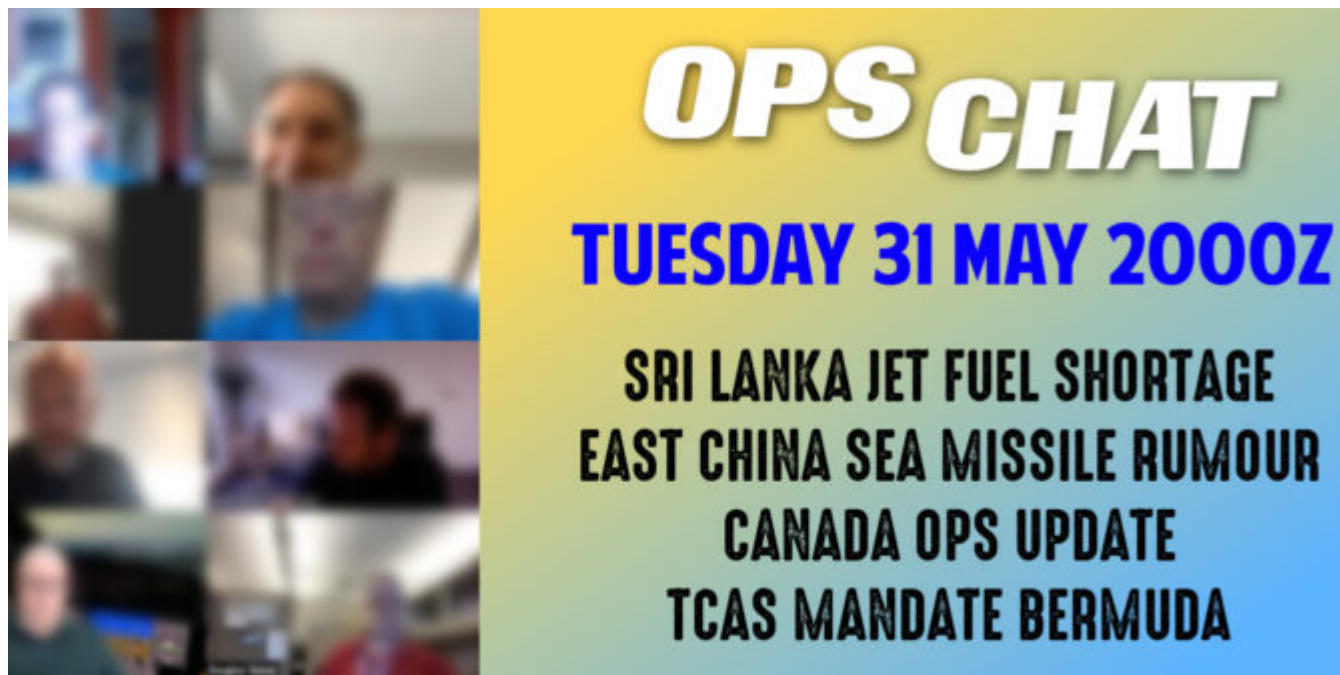
Is there a risk here?

There is a heightened military presence, an ongoing dispute and tensions are increased however there is **no verified indication** that the risk to commercial operations is increased at this time.

If operating in the region, maintain a listening watch on **121.5** at all times and ensure you are aware of contingency procedures in case of an emergency.

OPSCHAT Summary May 31

Chris Shieff
22 June, 2022



Hi Everyone,

It was another great OPSCHAT call this week hosted by Rebecca, with the help of returning quiz master Dave.

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

Here's a roundup of what we talked about:

The Big News

- **Sri Lanka** - A new VCCF Notam has been issued telling operators to tanker in fuel. A domestic crisis there has lead to widespread fuel shortages along with security issues. We talk about alternative options for fuel stops.
- **East China Sea** - Unverified footage emerged this week of a missile launch filmed from the flight deck of a commercial airliner. No official sources have released a statement. Real or not,

we briefly touch upon the ongoing dispute in the region and what to look out for.

- **Canada** - Construction is causing delays at CYYZ/Toronto. But in better news, a new list of 47 smaller airports has been published which can now be used as a point of entry.
- **Bermuda** - A TCAS mandate is on the horizon for next year. Some aircraft will be exempt - we take a look at the specifics.
- **The NAT** - A military exercise will affect some tango routes on June 1 and 2 - keep an eye on the Notams if you're flying those tracks in the next 48 hours. **[NOW CANCELLED]**

Unsolved Mysteries

Bahamas: The new 'Click2Clear' system has left us scratching our heads. Does anyone have solid intel on who needs to use it, and who doesn't?

EU LISA: That old chestnut. We still don't have all the answers, but we've received a solid update, and discuss the latest we know.

OPSQUIZ

Dave was back to host this week's OPSQUIZ. Congrats to this week's winner, "Leroy". A juicy prize is on its way to you...

As always, we're here to help with any operational support, info or questions. You can reach us on news@ops.group, or via the slack channels [#flightsops](#) and [#questions](#).

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

What's going on at Schiphol?

Chris Shieff
22 June, 2022



In the past few weeks and months, we've been reporting on delays at major European airports. But one in particular has been making headlines more than any other – Amsterdam's **EHAM/Schiphol**.

Overcrowding and understaffing have been causing multi-hour queues to clear security, or collect baggage. In fact, things have gotten so bad that airport authorities previously closed roads and asked major carriers to cancel their flights there. And it looks like there is more to come.

But why Schiphol, and why now? There's more to it than simply the Northern Summer. Let's take a closer look at what's happening there.

The Perfect Storm

The trouble at Schiphol is a unique brew of delay-inducing ingredients, all happening at the same time:

- Industrial action
- Surging demand
- Staffing
- Weather

Strikes

On April 23, airport staff went on an unannounced strike which brought ops to a grinding halt for several hours. The airport became **overcrowded** with passengers unable to travel, and authorities scrambled to close road access to the airport before things got any worse.

The news is that this may be about to happen again. A major union of airport workers (FNV) has announced their intention to strike from June 1 over pay and conditions – the impact could last for several days.

Crowds

It's good news for the industry, but not so much for airports struggling to play catch-up. EHAM/Schiphol is one of the busiest airports by pax numbers in Europe, based on the latest stats. It's streaks ahead of

Frankfurt, Munich and even big hitter, Heathrow.

All those passengers are causing a log jam, and some aren't happy about it. On May 22, news broke that a threatening security situation developed at security by passengers stuck in forever-queues, when staff began to feel unsafe – some even walked off the job. Military police were called in to calm the situation down before processing resumed. Which brings us to the next issue – staff, or **lack thereof**.

Getting more people

With Covid restrictions easing, passenger levels are steadily increasing, but staffing levels are lagging behind – it takes time to find and train new manpower. It is an emerging problem in a resurgent industry, with airports across the globe reporting similar problems. It seems that Schiphol is one of the worst affected.

Those Pesky Clouds

Talk about the straw that broke the camel's back, but the weather has also been playing a role. Or more specifically, clouds have been.

On May 24, Eurocontrol reported that low clouds were delaying inbound flights due to arrivals being regulated with holding or other delaying actions. Perhaps the only good news is that summer is just around the corner, and with it, better conditions for flying.

Outlook

With the crowds going nowhere, and strikes on the horizon, it seems things will get worse before they get better. While impacts on the ground may be bigger for scheduled operators, airborne delays affect everyone.

What are the alternatives?

The good news is that there are a couple of good options nearby which may keep you clear from the log jam.

EHRD/Rotterdam

It's only 24nm away, and about a fifty-minute drive to Amsterdam Central. It's the nearest international option with customs.

Handling:

- *Aviapartner* rtm.handling.ops@aviapartner.aero +31 10 238 27 00
- *Jet Aviation Rotterdam* rtmfbo@jetaviation.com +31 10 298 49 49

EHEH/Eindhoven

A little further afield at 56nm, about an hour and fifteen minutes on the road.

Handling:

- *Viggo Eindhoven Airport*: info@viggo.eu +31 40 258 11 58

Stay updated

For major delays, the best place to stay informed is the Eurocontrol website here, which is updated around the clock.

What we're seein' in the Caribbean

OPSGROUP Team
22 June, 2022



A bunch of Caribbean countries are changing things up to 'harmonise' themselves with ICAO SARPS. That's Standards and Recommended Practices.

Here's what we know.

You need TCAS 7.1

This is a Bermudian requirement. Bermuda is of course actually part of Great Britain, sort of (they are a British overseas territory), so by doing what ICAO say, they are fitting with the UK CAA regulations which makes it all a bit simpler.

So, if you want to visit Bermuda in a turbine-engined airplane under **FAR 121, 135 or 91K rules** which weighs more than **5700kg (12,500 lb)** or is authorised to carry more than **19 passengers** then you'll need ACAS II (that's TCAS II Version 7.1)

If you fly a turbine-engined airplane involved in **FAR 91 or non-commercial operations**, then the specifications to know are certified take-off mass more than **33,000 lbs (15,000kg)** or **passengers more than 30**, with your airworthiness certificate first issued after **January 1st 2007**.

When will you need it?

April 1st 2023.

Where's the official notice?

It is right here – OPSN 03-22 and it says exactly what we said but on official Bermudian BCAA headed paper.

You can also get in touch via email with them directly if you have any questions:
foreignoperatorpermit@bcaa.bm

You said several countries?

We did. **The Bahamas also have some changes coming in.** Actually, they came in in 2021, but with Covid you might not have noticed them so here's a refresher.

They brought out their Civil Aviation Act of 2021, published in their '*Extraordinary Official Gazette The Bahamas*'.

What it says is that foreign commercial operators will need a **Bahamian Air Transport License** to fly there. To get this you need to be safe, secure and meet some financial obligations. These are listed in Section 15.

Section 16, Subsection 2 Part 1 clarifies a little point about foreign operators – **it doesn't apply to folk overflying** or even landing if you don't have passengers, cargo or mail that gets off in the Bahamas.

There are also a lot of pages on what will happen if you don't abide by the rules etc etc so it is **worth a read if you haven't been into the Bahamas since February 16th 2021.**



EXTRAORDINARY

OFFICIAL GAZETTE

THE BAHAMAS

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

Is that it?

Yes, for now, but more things will hopefully come in at some point.

All this started to come about in 2018 during a big meeting between CARICOM (all the Caribbean member states) and ICAO where they talked about it. You can read the 2018 ICAO press release [here](#) if you want to.

NAT Conundrums: Volume II

OPSGROUP Team
22 June, 2022



Questions about the North Atlantic pop up a lot, and every time we think we've got all the answers, someone else manages to come up with a question we can't (immediately) answer.

We wrote **NAT Conundrums: Volume I** last year, which you can read [here](#). That post covered the following three conundrums:

1. **To SLOP, or not to SLOP?**
2. **What's the difference between the NAT Region and the NAT HLA?**
3. **Can I fly across the North Atlantic without Datalink?**

So today we thought we'd take a look at three more questions we've seen recently including an interesting 'what to do if...?' scenario.

4. Do you need to plot on Blue Spruce Routes?

Plotting is less *drawing your position on a big paper map* and more confirming there are no errors with your navigation, which means you can do this on paper, or via some sort of electronic system.

The reason we want to check for errors is because the North Atlantic is a big place, without radar, (although ADS-B is helping with this a lot now), and we are very reliant on our GPS navigation systems. Some routes use just lat/long points meaning there is an added chance of input error by the pilot. So we check where we are and make sure it is where we should be.

But the Blue Spruce Routes are defined routes so there's no risk? Well, no, there still is, because you're still flying over big chunks of ocean without much backup. So checking for errors is still a very good idea.

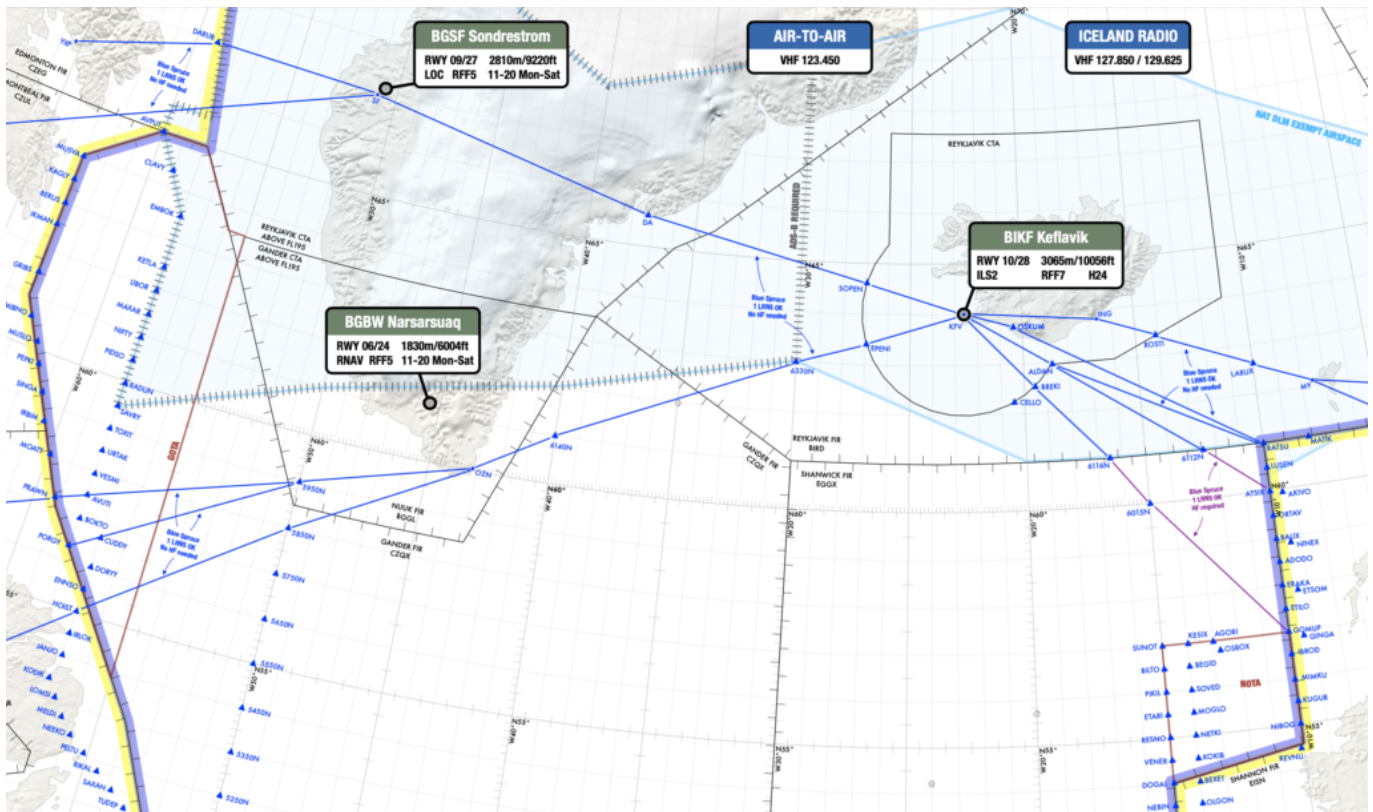
5. Do we still fly Weather Contingency Procedures on Blue Spruce routes?

The Weather Contingency Procedures are more oceanic contingency procedures than NAT HLA specific one.

In fact, since Nov 2020, there has been one standard set of Contingency and Weather Deviation Procedures for all oceanic airspace worldwide – and there are no special exemptions for the Blue Spruce

routes.

So they are a good thing to do if you encounter a weather situation and cannot get a re-clearance from ATC.



Which leads us to the big question...

6. When can we disregard an ATC clearance and follow the contingency procedure instead?

Let's set the scene.

You're flying in the NAT and there is a big old storm up ahead which you need to deviate around. Obviously, whatever happens, you can't fly into it.

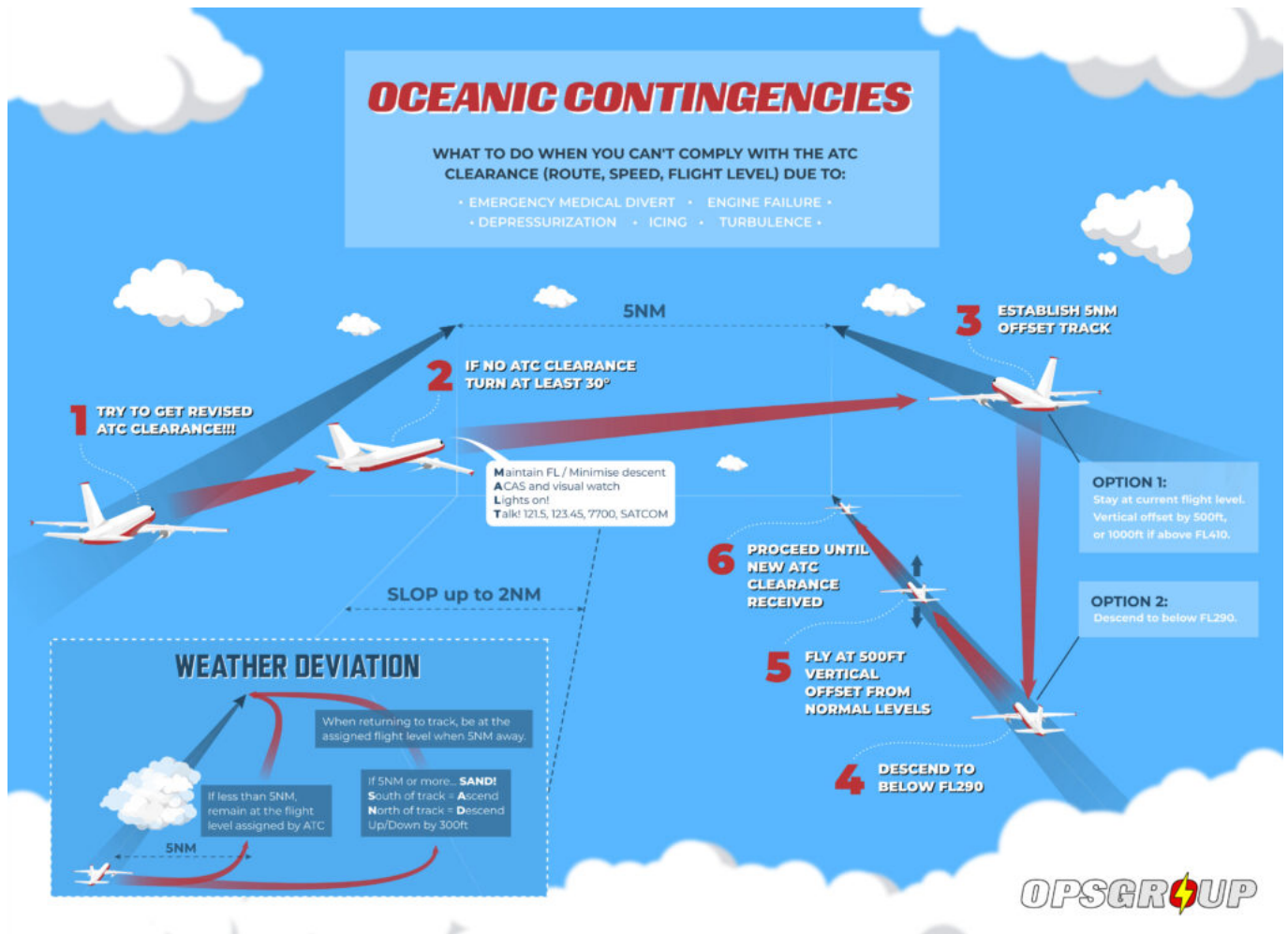
So what do you do?

Well, NAT Doc 007 provides you with some guidance: **Apply the weather avoidance contingency procedures.**

They are fairly straightforward. If the deviation you need will be less than 5nm then stay at your level, if its more than 5nm, then you'll need to climb or descend 300' depending on which way you're avoiding. **You can use 'SAND'** for that - turning south? Ascend. Turning north? Descend.

Which way to turn depends on whether there are busy tracks to the left or right of you, and how much you'll need to deviate by based on storm position (and wind). Use your TCAS and some airmanship on this.

Right, scene set. **So, do you just launch straight into the contingencies?**



No. It comes down to **whether or not you can get a clearance from ATC.**

You can keep this fairly simple as well:

1. **You can't get a clearance because there just ain't time.** In this case, it is probably best to declare a PAN and go straight into the avoidance contingency procedure. Don't delay waiting for ATC clearance if its not safe. Aviate and avoid the weather, talk to ATC as you do it.
2. **What if you can't get a clearance because you just can't get hold of ATC?** Another easy one - follow the contingency procedure, but keep transmitting what you're doing so other traffic know.
3. **What if ATC can't give you a clearance?** This might happen if it is particularly busy out, perhaps other aircraft are already avoiding, and so they can't guarantee separation. In this case, they should inform you of the issue and ask you what your intentions are. Which will probably be following that contingency procedure, because you obviously aren't going to fly into the storm.

Which brings up to situation number 4. The less simple one.

4. **What to do if ATC give you a clearance that isn't acceptable to you?** First up, if you have time to request a re-clearance then do this, advising why their first one doesn't work for you. If you don't have time, then a PAN call with your intentions (contingency procedure) is going to be the way to go.

But remember – **you need a good reason to disregard an ATC clearance** like an immediate threat to safety. You can't just do it because they told you to go right and it means a bigger detour than left, or because you just don't fancy a temporary level change.

This is where the *conundrum* comes in – because folk have different views on what is an acceptable reason for disregarding a clearance.

- **Obvious and immediate threat to safety?** Do whatever you need to do to stay safe
- **Might have a future fuel concern because of a larger deviation, or a level change?**
Well, it's not immediate and the traffic conflict you get yourself into by disregarding may be the bigger priority here...

We asked around.

The general consensus was that **fuel is unlikely to constitute enough of an 'immediate threat'** to be an acceptable reason. Things like ETOPS fuel are for dispatch planning so is not particularly relevant in flight. However, if you've already burned through your contingency, and are already running some calculations because the fuel is looking tight, then a 'Pan' call and doing what you need to do might be acceptable.

What does Doc 007 actually say?

It says the pilot **should** either follow the clearance **or** state their intentions.

There is a level of ambiguity here because there is always that need for the Commander to be able to decide another course of action is safer. A good way of thinking about it is that a crew never have to follow the letter of the law – it isn't there *just to be the law*, it is there to try and keep us safe – so doing what is most safe, with the same intent for safety in mind, is always acceptable.

What do other rules and regulations say?

The US FARs have this as fairly general rules:

'91.123 Compliance with ATC clearances and instructions.

*(a) When an ATC clearance has been obtained, **no pilot in command may deviate from that clearance unless an amended clearance is obtained, an emergency exists, or the deviation is in response to a traffic alert and collision avoidance system resolution advisory;***

(Something about changing from IFR to VFR, and then -)

(b) Except in an emergency, no person may operate an aircraft contrary to an ATC instruction in an area in which air traffic control is exercised.'

What did a helpful person in the North Atlantic ICAO office say?

Well, much the same. The contingencies are there to account for situations where ATC is unable to provide a clearance, or where the clearance they can provide doesn't solve the flight's problem. In these cases, the pilots should advise ATC their intentions and do what they need to do to stay safe.

Again, no clear line drawn as to where 'staying safe' might necessarily fall, particularly when it is a concern over fuel.

They did say they would never issue a weather deviation clearance requiring a climb without a

'negotiation' first.

So, the answer is...

Well, we don't have it. At least not a clear cut, black and white one.

The general view seems to be that **it needs to be a judgement call**. If you have a genuine safety reason that makes you question whether you should be following an ATC clearance, then declare a PAN, state your intentions, and do what you must.

Just be comfortable that your decision does still maintain that same *intent for safety*. Definitely going to result in a low fuel situation? Or just don't fancy being stuck at a lower level? There is a line, but where you set it might come down to *that* flight, on *that* day, in *those specific* circumstances.

Get in the know about the Farnborough Airshow

OPSGROUP Team
22 June, 2022



Around since 1948, the Farnborough International Airshow is one of the biggest on the airshow calendar, but like *the rest of the world*, it was cancelled through Covid.

Now, in 2022, it is back! So here is what you need to know about where it is and how it might impact your operations.

What's the date for the diary?

The show 'takes off' on the **18th July and runs to the 22nd July** at EGLF/Farnborough in the south of the UK.

Farnborough Airport is actually one of the leading business airports in Europe and is only about 20 miles from EGLL/Heathrow airport.

You can read about the airshow here on the official Airshow website.



What's the deal while the show is on?

The airport is going to be pretty much **off limits during the Airshow**, unless you and your airplane are part of it.

You can also expect some airspace restrictions around it, for all those aerial displays. Most of the airspace restrictions are generally only up to **lower levels like 5500'**. These will be published in Notams nearer the time.

They often set up **temporary holding pattern areas** for airshow aircraft as well. If you are operating in the area it is worth being aware of where these are – publishing in AIC update nearer the event.

Here is some info on this – display times (when you won't be able to book to operate on), delay times (or when they're most likely) and **a notice about the ILS** (it will be turned off on the 9th to the 25th so you'll be doing visual approaches during those dates).

Got any contacts for us?

For all FBO needs, you can talk directly with the friendly folk at Farnborough airport –

- ops@farnboroughairport.com
- +44 (0)1252 379002

TAG Farnborough can also offer some aviation services –

- By telephone +44 1252 377 977
- By email ops@tagfarnborough.com

GAMA Aviation can too –

- +44 1252 553 029
- USA +1 203 337 4600
- marketing@gamaaviation.com

Tell us more about the airport

Farnborough **runway 06/24 is an 8005' (2440m) x 46m** strip with CAT I ILS approach capability. They have **RFF6** and no slot restrictions.

While it is an international airport with customs, there is no US pre-clearance here.

The airspace is a bit of a challenge – Farnborough sits below some very **congested Class A airspace**, and there are danger and restricted areas near the airport and noise sensitive areas to know about.

There are also several smaller airports in the area with GA and glider activity.

There is loads of info to be found in here about all things Farnborough Airport if you want the official AIP info on it (*we say official, but it might be out of date, so this is just for info*).

Farnborough airspace changes

Might be a good spot to drop this in, because there have been some airspace changes around Farnborough since 2020, so if you've not flown in recently (due Covid) you'll need to get up to speed on these before you do.

Farnborough used to operate in uncontrolled airspace, which meant a lot of uncontrolled aircraft zooming about, which made it hard to have consistent flight paths into the airport.

This has now changed – **Farnborough is now in Class D airspace**, and has **RNAV procedures** (requiring RNAV 1 and 5).

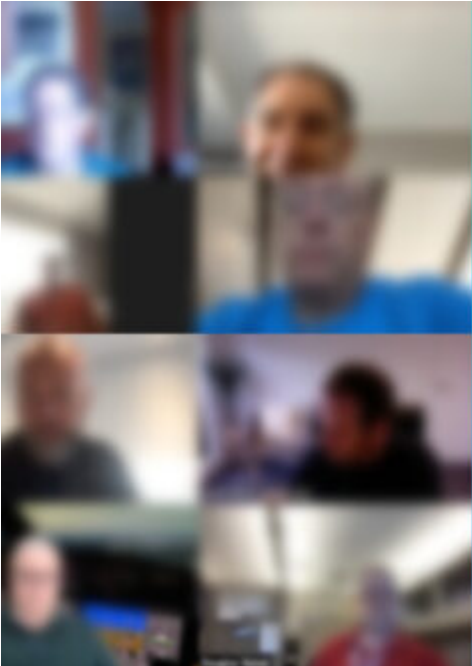
The AIC is available here for a little read.

Any other big shows?

Usually considered the biggest, the Paris Airshow is another one to look out for. This is only taking place in 2023 though, from 19-25 June. In fact, it alternates years with Farnborough.

OPSCAT Summary May 24

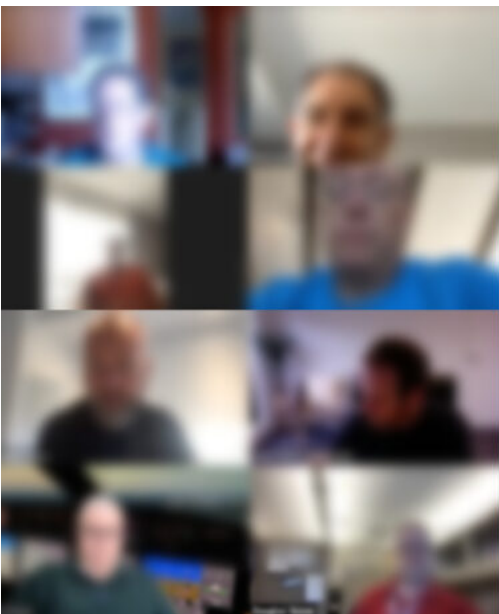
Chris Shieff
22 June, 2022



OPSCAT

TUESDAY 24 MAY 2000Z

- US CUBA FLIGHT RULES**
- TRAFFIC JAM IN VEGAS**
- BIG EVENTS IN EUROPE**
- INCOMING EU ADS-B MANDATE**



OPSCAT

TUESDAY 24 MAY 2000Z

- US CUBA FLIGHT RULES**
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Hi Members,

We had another busy OPSCAT call this week, including the return of the weekly quiz with the help of Quiz Master Dave.

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

Here's a roundup of what we talked about:

The Big News

- **Cuba** - The US Govt is set to lift airport restrictions on US commercial operators in Cuba - the

big news is that Havana will no longer be the only option. There's been no news yet on whether the ban on private ops will be lifted.

- **Las Vegas** - The three big airports KLAS/Las Vegas, KHND/Henderson and KVGT/North Las Vegas will see very high traffic volumes this Memorial Day weekend. Expect holding and other delays, and consider extra fuel.
- **France** - Two big events are happening at almost the same time in Southern France - the Cannes Film Festival and Monaco F1 Grand Prix. Special procedures are in place at both LFMD/Cannes and LFMN/Nice airports.
- **Europe** - UEFA Soccer finals are happening in both Tirana (Albania) on May 25, and Paris on May 28. We talk about the impact to ops, and how to find more info.
- **Europe (again)** - Look out for the ADS-B mandate which comes into effect on June 7 next year. Unless you're flying something very small, or very slow, your ride will likely be affected.

Unsolved Mysteries

East Hampton Airport - has anyone had any luck actually getting hold of the incoming approvals needed to land or use the instrument approaches?

Saudi Arabia - the crew visa is only valid for 72 hours. Is there anyway to get an extension beforehand, that doesn't cost the earth?

OPSQUIZ

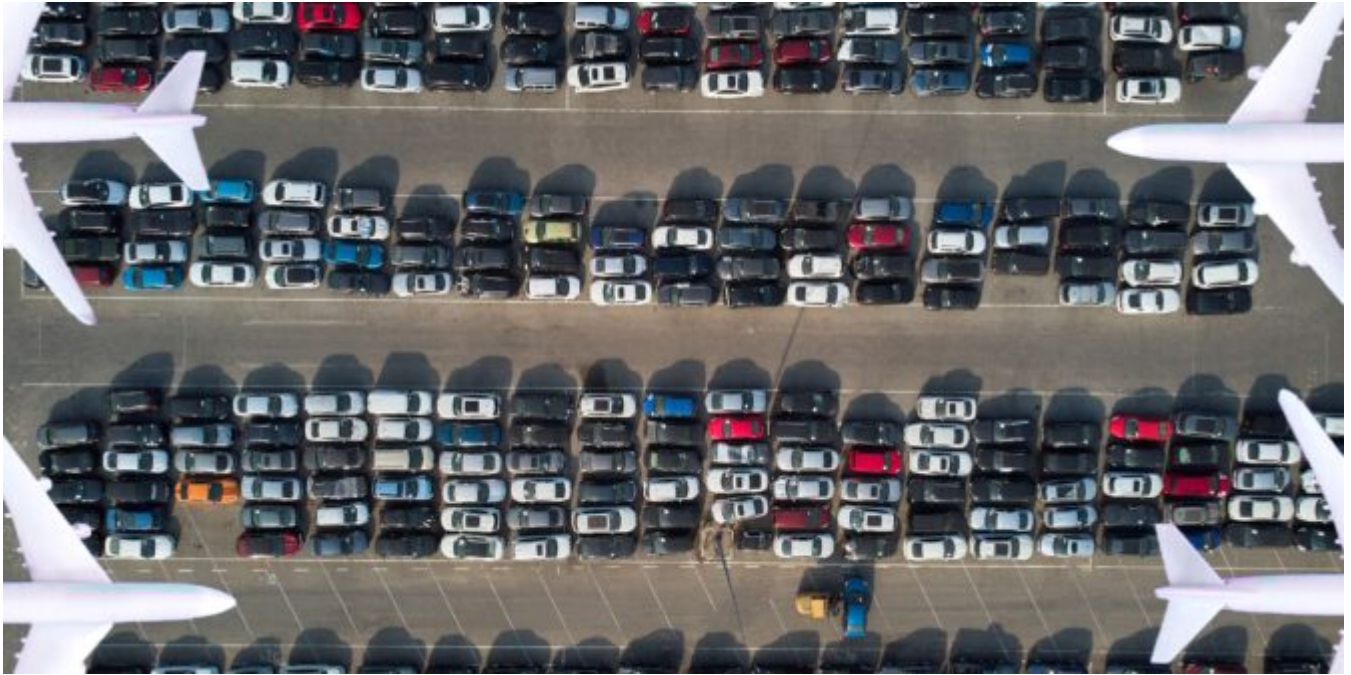
Dave took the wheel this week, and hosted another quiz. Congratulations to this week's winner who is all the way down in Auckland, New Zealand. Well done! Here's a sample question from this week: *Which major European airport closed briefly last week due to a building fire?* Join us next time as we have great prizes on offer, all hand picked by our quirky team!

As always, we're here to help with any operational support, info or questions. You can reach us on news@ops.group, or via the slack channels [#flightops](#) and [#questions](#).

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

Park It! A look at some of Europe's busiest summer airports

OPSGROUP Team
22 June, 2022



Europe in the summer is a lovely thing. Sunshine, beaches, ice cream... and then the downside – parking restrictions!

Let's talk about some of those known airports that always have parking problems – where they are, what your options are and anything else which we can think of that might help.

Why so tight?

We mean parking spots for private and corporate biz jets, not the swim trunks of French beaches.

Anyway, the problem is a simple one – everyone wants to go where it is nice, which means **a lot of traffic converging on places which have minimal parking**. Add on some summer sporting events and a few summits and it gets even tighter.

So here is a list of (*some of*) the places to think about in advance.

ITALY

Italy is a hugely popular tourist destination and during peak season **many of its smaller airports fill up** as fast as an elephant at a breakfast buffet.

In addition, some of the **southern airports have been used in the past for overflow parking** for the equally busy Greek airports.

Peak season is generally July through September.

You also have the **Italian Grand Prix September 9-11** to contend with. This is held at the Monza circuit (south of Lake Como) so your Milan airports, particularly LIMC/Malpensa, are going to see extra traffic around this time.

Italy have quite specific charter permit rules. For non-EU registered aircraft which are applying for the first time, or which haven't operated in during the last two seasons, then you're going to want to submit well in advance. It can take 20-45 days for approvals to be issued.



Naples

LIRN/Naples generally **only allow turnarounds** during their peak weeks – overnight parking is hard to come by.

Their traffic is predominantly international scheduled aircraft (64%), domestic scheduled (32%) and then charter and general aviation/transits making up the last few percent. The totals have risen from just over 6000 total in 2015 to just under 11,000 (10,860) in 2019.

So this airport has seen **a major increase in traffic**, without a major increase in capacity ability. With Covid “ending” and everywhere opening up, 2022 might prove as busy.

Milan

Milan is generally considered **a good spot for General Aviation**.

LIML/Linate is Milan’s “city” airport with easiest connections into the city, while **LIMC/Malpensa** is the bigger but further away one (although closer to the lakes).

LIML/Linate has a dedicated GA terminal and ramp and can accept all types of aircraft, but you will need to pre-arrange parking on the local apron. During *peak peak* (during the Italian F1) remote areas might be utilised, and charters may be restricted to 36 hours on the ground (actually, this is across all of Italy). Hangar space is harder to come by.

Bergamo

LIME/Bergamo is also only about 40 minutes drive from the Monza track so a good one to consider if you're heading over for the F1.

Other Airports

LICC/Catania and **LIRA/Rome Ciampino** also might be an issue. Check for parking availability as early as possible.

Members have suggested looking into **LIBP/Abruzzo** and **LICJ/Palermo** as reposition and parking options in previous years.

GREECE

Anywhere and everywhere in Greece seems to have parking problemos.

Slot coordination for Greece is handled through the **Hellenic Slot Coordination Authority** and, we don't want to say it, but the first half of the name should tell you what slot getting in peak season can be like here...

Here are their guidelines.

There are **17 coordinated (IATA level 3) airports** which you need to get a slot for prior to operating in, and you can organise this with the coordinator at slot@hsca.gr between 0800-1600LT Mon-Fri.

The earliest you can request a slot is **14 days in advance**. Oh, but before you do that, you need to organise a PPR with the airport operator.



The most popular destinations (from previous years) seem to be:

- LGSR/Santorini
- LGMK/Mykonos
- LGKR/Corfu
- LGRP/Rhodes
- LGSA/Chania
- LGIR/Heraklion
- LGKF/Kefalonia
- LGTS/Thessaloniki

During peak times most of these will have a **60 minute on the ground restriction** (sometimes less!) meaning you can **drop and go**, but not stay and park. LGRS/Santotini, LGMK/Mykonos and LGZA/Zakynthos have had this in place for the past few years so you can count on it at them.

Mykonos

Your only airport here is **LGMK/Mykonos** and it is small and it has very limited parking space (**3 spaces available**). It is also popular which means you are going to have to

- a) get a slot to land and
- b) probably coordinate parking somewhere else.

The slots are fought over by GA and scheduled ops, and guess who gets priority...

The GA slot requirements came in July 2015. So, you're going to want to request a slot as early as you can (which is 14 days before because they restrict that for GA).

During peak times you will only get **an hour on the ground** – this is between June and September (but they have been known to extend it if the sunny weather sticks around).

So, what are the options? Well, fly somewhere else and then organise a helicopter or boat transfer. Or drop your pax off, refuel fast and then go drop the airplane somewhere else until it is needed again.

So, where can you go?

LGAV/Athens is sort of the biggest so, unsurprisingly, is one of the best option for somewhere to go park. However, Athens gets busy too. They have started to issue Notams for the peak season requiring a PPR if you wish to remain there more than 2 hours.

Your next best options are going to be **Croatia or Montenegro** which are not the same country (in case you hadn't noticed). So early planning is a good plan.

SPAIN/IBIZA

Ibiza in the summer is a very busy spot.

LEIB/Ibiza is often reported as having parking issues in the summer season, while at **LEBL/Barcelona** you may find slot restrictions in place.

As an alternate try **LEVC/Valencia**.

TURKEY

Members reported cancelling trips to smaller airports like LTFE/Bodrum due to lack of overnight parking. The major airports should be able to accommodate but costs will be much higher.

Local FBOs advised there is a **3 hours max applied during busy periods**. Watch out though, they may recommend flying to nearby Greek island airports to overnight instead, but you're going to find them just as busy.

WHERE ELSE?

All the above are based off reports from members from previous years, so if we have missed one let us know!

If you have any secret spots which are good for parking please do share (although you might want to keep it a secret if it's a really good one or everyone will be trying to use it). You can send us an email at news@ops.group.

Trains, Planes and Fuel-mobiles

OPSGROUP Team
22 June, 2022



What do railways and airplane fuel shortages have in common? Well, at FAOR/Johannesburg Airport, it turns out quite a lot.

Chapter 1. Trains.

The railway lines which run through KwaZulu-Natal (the province on the east coast where FADN/Durban International airport is) were badly damaged in flooding earlier in 2022. Unfortunately, these train lines are how jet fuel is generally moved from the Port of Durban refinery to Gauteng (the province where FAOR/OR

Tambo international airport is).

The train lines are only expected to be repaired to **50% capacity by June 2022**, and **100% capacity by October 2022**. Unless further flooding occurs.

Which means FAOR/Johannesburg isn't getting the 16 million or so litres of fuel a week which it normally needs.

Chapter 2. Planes

We should say the 16 million or so litres of fuel a week which the airplanes need.

Currently (as of mid-May), the airport's **stock sits at around 3-5 days worth**.

Domestic and regional airlines will be less badly impacted by this because they can tanker more easily, or visit one of the other South African airports and uplift their fuel there.

Unfortunately, Durban (where the fuel is) lies on the southern eastern coast and for most international flights, this would require a fairly substantial diversion (fuel burn) to go simply to pick up more fuel.



Chapter 3. Fuel-mobiles.

It just rhymed...

Actually, the plan isn't to drive more fuel there in tankers, but to pipe it. **A shipment of 20 million litres is on its way**, while another 1.5 millions litres is being arranged directly with airlines that have been hit by the 'force majeures' of their normal fuel providers.

Epilogue. Where else is an option?

The fuel situation will be ongoing until October, although should ease up as plans are put in place. In the meantime, international operators do have options for fuel stops.

- **AEG** +1 305-913-5253 / dispatch@aegfuels.com is a worldwide fuel supplier, worth contacting for up to date info on the fuel situation and availability at most airports.

FBSK/Gabarone, Botswana

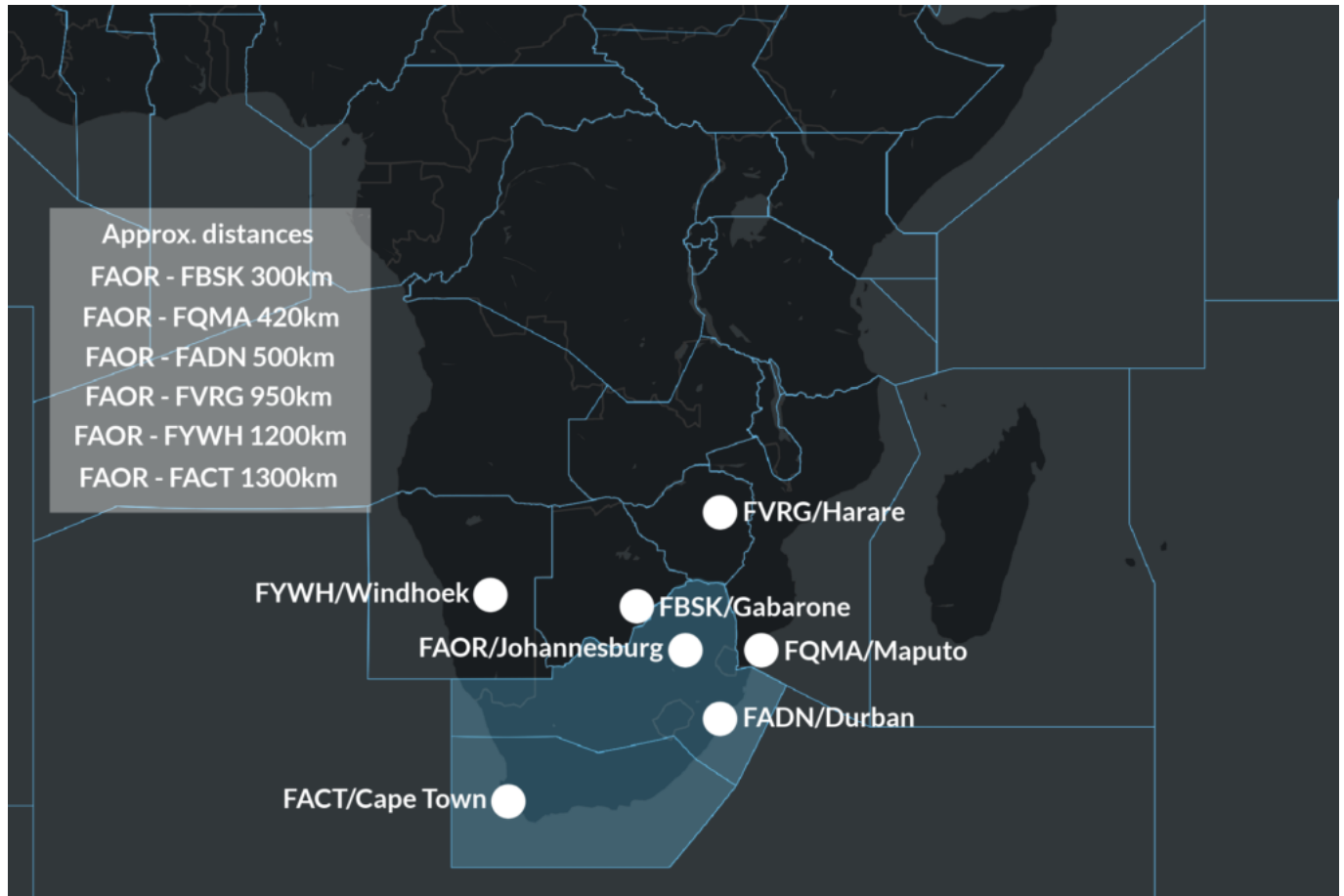
- Puma Energy +267 3 951 077 / Botswana@pumaenergy.com
- Airport contact +267 368 8200

FVRG/Harare, Zimbabwe – receives fuel supply from Mozambique (Beira). Rumour has it there is a growing shortage here though, so check in advance.

FQMA/Maputo, Mozambique

FYWH/Windhoek, Namibia

- Airport Manager shipuatal@airports.com.na / info@airports.com.na



And ones to avoid?

GOBD/Dakar and GOOY/Dakar (old one) Senegal – these are no go. They have a severe shortage and international flights have been cancelled.

Anywhere in Nigeria – There is a pretty serious fuel shortage going on here right now.

We wrote a post on the fuel shortages worldwide here which you can have a read of if you need.

Formula 1 & Movie Stars: Special Procedures in Southern France

Chris Shieff
22 June, 2022



In Southern France, two of the **biggest events of the year** are taking place almost simultaneously – and it's the perfect storm for an influx of private jet traffic to the region's main airports.

The Cannes Film Festival has just started, and will run until May 28. This is followed by the Formula 1 Monaco Grand Prix on May 29. As one of the most famous events in motorsport, it attracts huge crowds. Both these events are happening within 50nm of each other.

As a result, the nearest major airports, **LFMD/Cannes** and **LFMN/Nice** will see much higher traffic volumes than normal – and both airports are heavily restricting operations.

Three AIP SUPs have been issued for the events. Don't feel like delving into all of them? We don't blame you. **Here's a quick summary** of what they cover.

LFMD/Cannes

AIP SUP 052/22 has the deets here.

The apron is going to be full. The airport isn't normally coordinated, but you'll need a **slot** if operating in or out between May 17 – 30. You'll get a slot ID that needs to go into Item 18 on your ICAO flight plan.

Even if you like to manage things yourself, the use of handling agents will be **mandatory** during this time.

Also, if you're planning on a short hop to **LFMN/Nice** on May 28-30, no bueno. More on that below.

Monaco

Monaco itself doesn't have an airport. In fact, it is the second smallest country in the world and is found on France's Côte d'Azur – its south-eastern coast. Inside Monaco is the district of Monte Carlo, where the race is taking place.

The majority of passengers for the Grand Prix will enter via **LFMN/Nice** which is found around 20nm further west along the coast.

LFMN/Nice

AIP SUP 058/22 is the one to check here.

- All arriving and departing aircraft operating at Nice from May 24 -30 will also need to co-ordinate a time slot. You can either request one directly, or ask your handling agent to get one for you.
- You won't be eligible for a slot unless your handler has **guaranteed you a parking space** when you get there – so make sure there is room for your ride first.
- When filing your flight plan, commercial operators **won't** need to include their slot ID number. But if your arrival or departure time is outside your allocated slot, your plan will bounce back.

Restricted airspace.

Info on this is published in yet another SUP – this one: AIP SUP 107/22

- From May 28 – May 30, **special restrictions** will apply to all traffic.
- All VFR ops will be banned, and **IFR flights will not be allowed between LFMN/Nice and LFMD/Cannes**, which is a little further west along the coast.
- There will be **intensive low level helicopter traffic** to look out for. For IFR traffic departing on a SID, it is important to follow **published climb gradients** and altitude requirements.
- If you don't think your ride will make it, you'll need to let ATC know with your **start up request**. In that case you may get hit with a delay, but don't spring it on them at the last minute.
- A **temporary restricted area** will be in effect which will primarily affect traffic over the event, and at LFMN/Nice airport, and will apply from surface to 3,500'.
- If you're operating on a valid flight plan, the impact will pretty minor. Just make sure you are in contact with **Nice Tower** on 122.375, and follow their instructions. You'll need permission to enter it.

The big question, who will win?

Not only is he the championship leader, but Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc is also a local to Monaco. He's the home favourite to top the podium on race day.

Some useful contacts.

LFMD/Cannes Airport Authority +33 (0) 4 89 88 98 28.

Handling

Skyvalet +33 (0) 4 93 90 41 10, operations-acm@cote-azur.aeroport.fr

LFMN/Nice Airport Authority +33 (0) 4 93 17 21 18. If you're looking to get a slot approval directly from them, email nice-caz-agta-ld@aviation-civile.gouv.fr.

Handling

Menzies +33 (0) 4 83 76 26 02, Florence.augustyniak@johnmenzies.aero

Signature +33 (0) 4 93 21 82 18, NCE@signatureflight.fr

Swissport +33 (0) 4 93 21 58 12, nce.operations@swissportexecutive.com
