FAA Housekeeping: Foreign Instrument Procedures, Approach Chart Clutter

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9 July, 2025



Recently, the FAA has been doing some spring cleaning. You might have missed them, but recent changes to the FAA's advisory circulars and charting notices are quite important.

This article covers two of them:

- **Effective June 2025, the FAA officially shifted the responsibility for evaluating and approving foreign instrument procedures to aircraft operators themselves.**
- **From October 2, instrument approach charts will be decluttered by removing unnecessary comms data.**

Let's take a look at each of these in more detail.

Removing approvals for specific foreign procedures

Recently, the FAA advised those operating under Part 91(K), 121, 125 and 135 of changes to **foreign instrument procedure authorizations.**

It has removed outdated references to specific foreign instrument procedures by title from operator authorizations (OpSpec C058, C358 and H107).

Others were simplified (C059, C060, and C384) to remove references to specific foreign airports and procedures.

The end result? Operators are no longer required to obtain FAA approval for specific foreign instrument procedures listed by name — but they must still hold the required FAA authorization (OpSpec, MSpec, or

LOA) to conduct the type of procedure (e.g., RNP AR, CAT II/III), regardless of where it's flown.

So, does this mean I can now fly any foreign procedure without FAA involvement?

Not quite. While you no longer need FAA approval for each individual foreign procedure, you still need FAA authorization for the procedure type and must comply with host country requirements.

For instance, if Germany requires local authorisation for an RNP (AR) approach into EDDM/Munich, you must obtain it without FAA involvement.

ICAO (Annex 6) says operators are still required to obtain approvals when the host state mandates it, and crews must comply with any local procedures or limitations.

Why the change?

Without delving too much into the specifics, there are a few reasons:

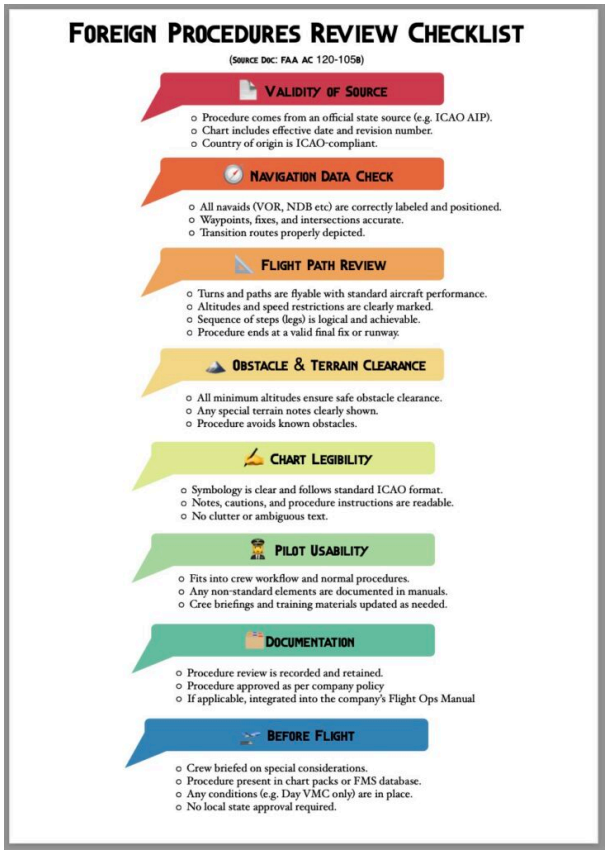
- **Less paperwork** – foreign procedural reviews are cumbersome and labor intensive, and lead to delays in approval.
- **Less workload –** inspectors no longer have to approve each foreign procedure individually.
- **Improved design –** there has been significant improvement in procedural design around the world thanks to the proliferation of ICAO PANS OPS.
- **Empowerment** – operators can perform their own risk assessments and use globally standardised instrument procedures without the extra weight of FAA approvals.

So the onus is now on the operator – what next?

That's where AC 120-105B comes into play. It provides guidance for US operators on reviewing and accepting foreign instrument procedures outside the US.

This includes a list of your areas of responsibility, recommended tools and checklists to help with your review, and advice on incorporating a review process into your company's manuals, SOPs and pilot training.

If you operate abroad, it's important you're familiar with this revised AC. We've also put together the following **checklist** based on its advice to help get you started:



Click to download PDF.

De-cluttering Approach Charts

On July 3, the FAA issued a new charting notice (advance notification of significant changes to charts and publications).

The news is that from October 2, the FAA will begin removing **redundant comms data** from instrument approach charts. This includes departure ATIS, CLNC DEL and the availability of CPDLC if all of this is shown on the corresponding airport diagram.

Listing it again on instrument approach charts is unnecessary and can reduce readability during critical phases of flight while critical frequencies remain prominent (don't worry, tower and ground ain't going anywhere).

While we have you, a couple more FAA-related tidbits to brush off the table.

- **Notams**. Big changes are coming to the US system. By September, it will be **completely overhauled.** The new system will be a fast, cloud-based, and (hopefully) rock-solid stable. A renewed focus on improved safety throughout the US NAS has escalated the project, and the targets are ambitious – user testing is expected to start later this month.

- **FAA-license holders abroad**. This is our last reminder! July 7 has come and gone, which means anyone holding US licences/ratings and living outside of the US must have provided a US based address for service to the FAA via the USAS portal. If you haven't yet, your license is **effectively now invalid** until you do – whatever you do, don't operate an aircraft while un-licensed.

Have we missed a spot?

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