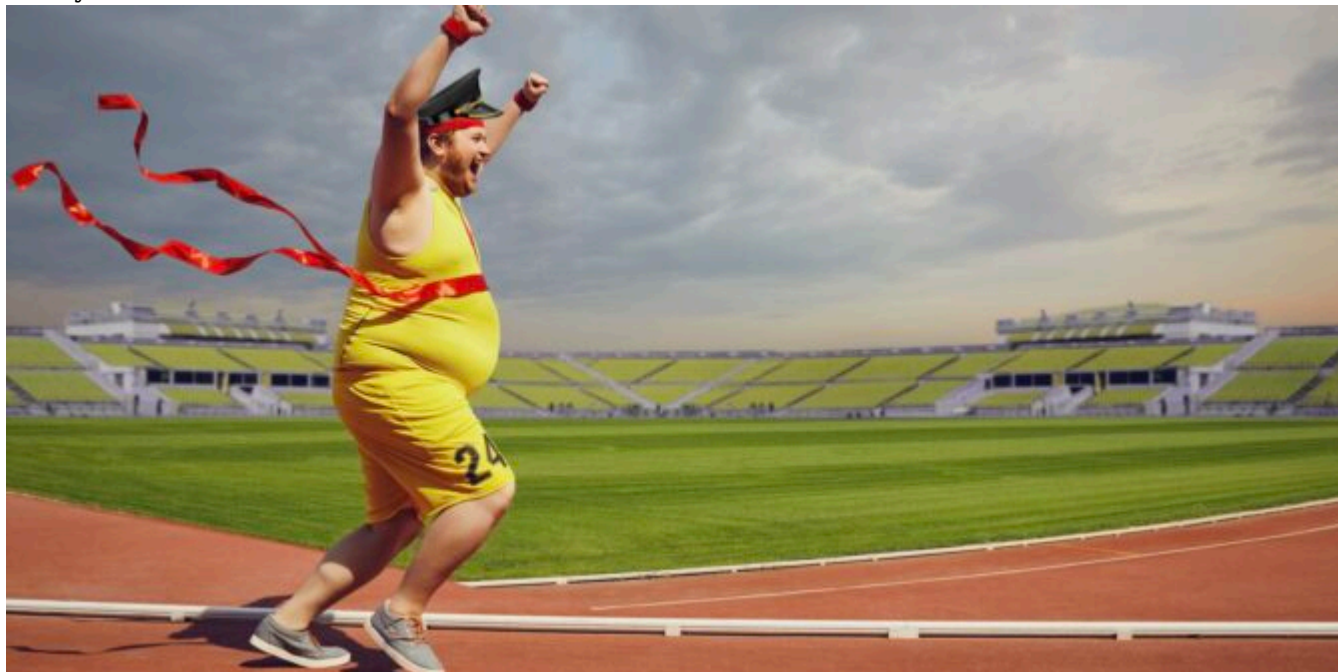


Finished: The FAA Northeast Corridor Improvements

Chris Shieff
9 May, 2023



It's finally done. On April 20, the last phase of the FAA's Northeast Corridor Atlantic Coast Routes Project crossed the finish line, officially ending (well almost) the **biggest change to the US NAS** in decades.

And April was perhaps the largest update yet - here's a summary of exactly what went down.

Wait, the what?

If you haven't heard of it, our previous article may be a good place to start. But in a nutshell, over the past few years the FAA has been introducing **new and amended Q and Y-routes** to replace the high-altitude route structure running north and south along the US East Coast.

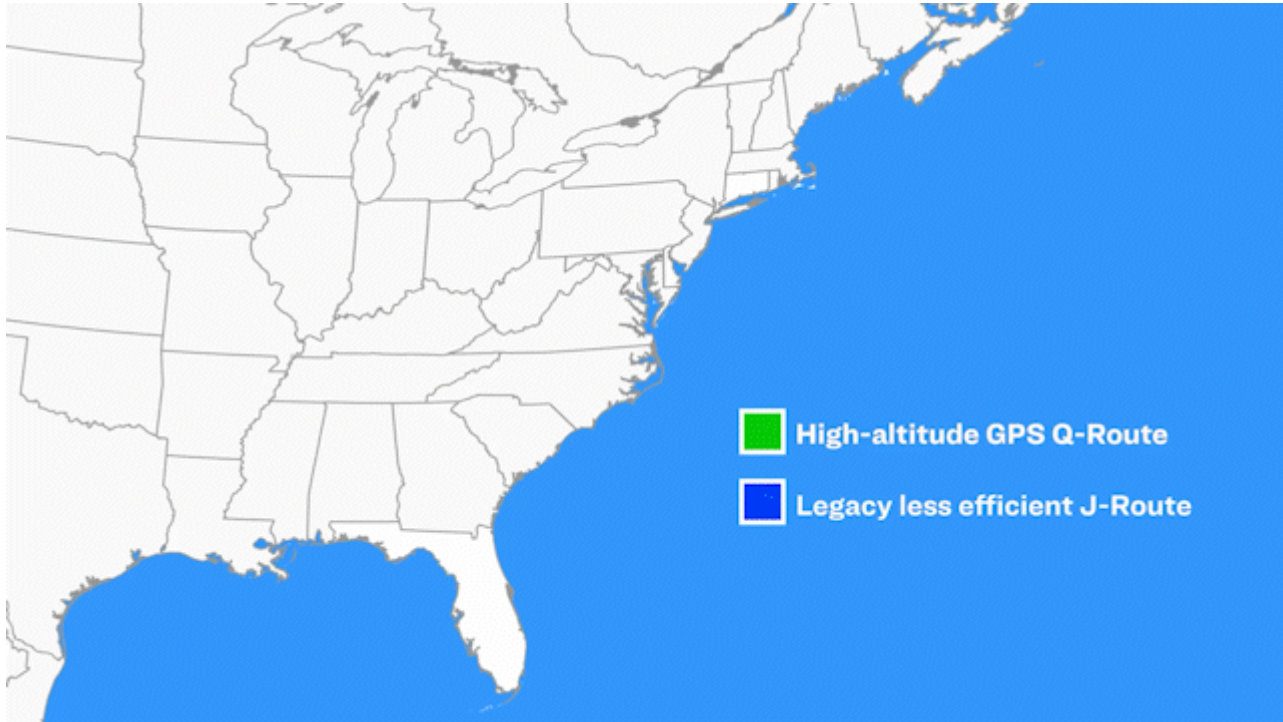


...Asking for a friend, what are J, Q and Y routes again?

J-routes (or jet routes) are high altitude airways (FL180 - 450) that rely on VOR or VORTAC fixes back on ol' terra firma. Q and Y-routes are based off RNAV (GPS) navigation.

It's not that the existing airways were broken, but they were showing their age. The project has been part of a larger transition away from ground based NAVAIDs and towards **PBN-centric US skies** - i.e. satellite

based navigation, the good stuff.



The legacy J-Routes are far less efficient than satellite based ones. Courtesy: FAA

Rome wasn't built in a day - and neither was this project it seems. In fact, changes first appeared back in October 2019 - then the world caught the flu. Since then the roll-out has been **delayed several times** with staggered changes spanning the past three years.

If you'd like to see a complete list of those 160+ changes, the FAA has produced this handy slide. For the ones that came into effect on April 20, read on...

The April 20 Update

The final seven J-routes on the chopping block were axed (J37, J55, J79, J121, J174, J191, and J209), along with a number of their associated fixes. In their place twenty Q-routes were either introduced or amended.

To make sure all these new routes were set up and ready to use, **most were published last year.** However there were a stack of 'not authorised' Notams in the system that have now been removed - essentially raising the barrier for traffic to actually use them.

Route NA NOTAMs (ZNY, ZBW, ZJX)

Effective until **4/20/2023**

- **“NOT AUTHORIZED” NOTAMs for the following will remain in effect until 4/20/2023:**
- **Q133 (new)**, IFDC 2/3317 ZNY ROUTE ZNY ZDC ZBW. Q133 CHIEZ, NC TO PONCT, NY NA. 2209080915-2304200901EST
- **Q481 (new)**, IFDC 2/3326 ZNY ROUTE ZNY ZDC ZBW. Q481 CONFR, MD TO DEEP PARK (DPK) (P) (R/DME, NY NA. 2209080919-2304200901EST
- **Q97**, IFDC 2/3295 ZBW ROUTE ZBW ZDC ZJX. Q97 CAKET, VA TO PRESQUE ISLE (P) (R/DME, ME NA. 2209080902-2304200901EST
- **Q133 (new)**, IFDC 2/3318 ZBW ROUTE ZBW ZDC ZJX. Q133 CHIEZ, NC TO PONCT, NY NA. 2209080915-2304200901EST
- **Q167 (new)**, IFDC 2/3321 ZBW ROUTE ZBW ZDC. Q167 ZJAAY, MD TO S SOXS, VA NA. 2209080917-2304200901EST
- **Q445 (new)**, IFDC 2/3324 ZBW ROUTE ZBW ZDC. Q445 P OAK, NC TO KY SKY, VA NA. 2209080918-2304200901EST
- **Q481 (new)**, IFDC 2/3326 ZBW ROUTE ZBW ZNY ZDC. Q481 CONFR, MD TO DEEP PARK (DPK) (P) (R/DME, NY NA. 2209080919-2304200901EST
- **Q85**, IFDC 2/3299 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC. Q85 JAYVO, SC TO COPLR, VA NA. 2209080905-2304200901EST
- **Q87**, IFDC 2/3296 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC. Q87 HURTS, VA TO HURTS, VA NA. 2209080904-2304200901EST
- **Q97**, IFDC 2/3289 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC ZBW. Q97 CAKET, VA TO PRESQUE ISLE (P) (R/DME, ME NA. 2209080902-2304200901EST
- **Q99**, IFDC 2/3387 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC. Q99 COLYY, NC TO HURLE, VA NA. 2209080900-2304200901EST
- **Q107 (new)**, IFDC 2/3310 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC. Q107 GABIS, VA TO HURTS, VA NA. 2209080910-2304200901EST
- **Q109**, IFDC 2/3257 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC. Q109 P OAK, NC TO DFENC, NC NA. 2209080859-2304200901EST
- **Q113**, IFDC 2/3263 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC. Q113 JAYVO, SC TO RIDDN, VA NA. 2209080857-2304200901EST
- **Q131 (new)**, IFDC 2/3314 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC. Q131 ZILLS, NC TO ZJAAY, MD NA. 2209080914-2304200901EST
- **Q135**, IFDC 2/3311 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC. Q135 JROSS, SC TO CUDLE, NC NA. 2209080855-2304200901EST
- **Q409**, IFDC 2/3301 ZJX ROUTE ZJX ZDC. Q409 JROSS, SC TO WHITE, NJ NA. 2209080852-2304200901EST

A bunch of ‘not authorized’ Notams have now been cancelled.

On the East Coast, STARs at three major airports were amended to remove ground-based transitions. At **KPHL/Philadelphia**, look out for new ones on the JIIMS 4 and PAATS 4 arrivals. At **KEWR/Newark**, the PHLBO 4 has been updated along with the JAIKE 4 over at **KTEB/Teterboro**. The good folk over at the Teterboro User’s Group have published some additional information on the latter.

The Goal Posts

Let’s address an **elephant in the room**. There’s a small chance someone will call us on the ‘finish line’ statement – fair game. There are some **small changes still to come** on June 15 – one more Q-route is being updated (Q101). There will also be a new STAR at **KCLT/Charlotte** along with some deletions. But the big changes are now done and dusted.

There’s Been A Little Trouble

Since the changes on April 20, news from the Boston ARTCC has been that foreign operators inbound from the NAT have not always been filing the **new preferred IFR routes**. This is causing a bit of headache at the boundary for pilots and controllers while traffic is ‘re-jigged.’ To see the preferred ones, click here.

The worst is likely over already, but the FAA has also advised **airborne delays are possible** while the system gets used to the changes. ATC may apply traffic management procedures to help keep the flow orderly. Consider a little more contingency fuel while things settle down.

Still have questions?

There are couple of FAA contacts provided in the official briefing:

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