

Monday Briefing: Africa Hajj Operations, London Airspace restrictions

Declan Selleck
20 September, 2011

Africa: Hajj Operations underway Sep 22nd: The annual Muslim Pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia, known as the Hajj, vastly increases the levels of Africa overflight traffic, as operators around the world dust off their aircraft and put them into operation on the routes to Mecca. Because the predominant Hajj flow is east-west, and the normal African traffic flow is north-south, this creates a need for increased vigilance during this time. Read more below about the Hajj Procedures, effective Sep 22.

London - Airspace Restrictions Sep 20th: The Olympic Games in 2012 will bring a variety of airspace closures and restrictions, as NATS seek to efficiently manage the additional traffic and the increased security risk. There will be two restricted zones during the primary Games period, from 14th July 2012, as well as a variety of additional slot and airport controls. More details and maps below .

HLLL/Libya FIR No fly Zone remains fully in force, despite efforts this week by Turkish Airlines to operate commercial flights between Tripoli and Istanbul. NATO have reminded all operators of the need to obtain clearance to enter the FIR, and this is only available as things stand for humanitarian or diplomatic flights.

LGGG/Greece FIR Delays Due to ATC Staffing issues, airspace disrupted. The Sunday Eurocontrol outlook was as follows: "EXPECT MAJOR DISRUPTION DUE TO STAFFING LIMITATIONS. ANY FLIGHTS ABLE TO RE-ROUTE TO AVOID GREEK AND MACEDONIAN AIRSPACE ARE ADVISED TO DO SO"

EN-ROUTE SECTORS:

LGGG ACC: ONLY 3 EN-ROUTE SECTORS AVAILABLE INSTEAD OF 6 OR 7 // LGMD ACC: ONLY 1 EN-ROUTE SECTOR INSTEAD OF 4 // ATHENS WEST SECTOR AND MAKEDONIA ACC COMPLETE AIRSPACE REGULATED.

AERODROMES:

MODERATE DELAYS CAN BE EXPECTED FOR LGIR, LGRP, LGSR AND LGZA
ARRIVALS IN THE MORNING. THE SAME CAN BE EXPECTED FOR LGIR AND LGRP IN THE AFTERNOON.

US Restrictions

LAX/Los Angeles RWY 6L/24R CLOSED UNTIL 22Z Saturday
MDW/Midway RWY 13L/31R CLOSED UNTIL 10/28
BOS/Boston RWY 15R/33L CLSD UNTIL 11/30
CLT/Charlotte RWY 18C/36C CLSD UNTIL 11/15
DEN/Denver RWY 8/26 CLSD UNTIL 10/12

EHAM/Amsterdam Schiphol will commence a "de-bunching" trial for nighttime arrivals in October. Participating arriving aircraft will be supplied with a Planned Time of Arrival (PTA) than can be accepted or rejected; if the trial is successful a second trial will happen in November to reduce emissions.

BIRK/Reykjavik, Iceland open H24 but Take Off not permitted 2330-0700 weekdays, 2330-0800 weekends.

LTBA/Istanbul Ataturk, Turkey Flight Planning into LTBA: RNAV Stars end at TETSA, PAZAR, ERKAL, PIMAV, DEKEK, TURKO, GELBU and ENESU. The FPL route should show one of these points as the last item in the route field, for example: ... UG80 BIG Y146 TURKO. The same, in reverse, applies to SID's, in that the route should start with the waypoint at the end of the SID, eg. via VADEN - the route field would look like this: 'VADEN UL610 ...'

HKNW/Nairobi Wilson and HKJK/Kenyatta Airports and Airspace, Ground - FL200, will close on Oct 10, 17 and 20th 0800-0900Z.

DGAC/Accra ACC, Ghana have unpacked the CPDLC and ADS-C boxes. Testing the equipment, so traffic overflying is requested to logon to 'DGAC', and indicate ADS-C Capabilities in the Flight Plans.

Africa Hajj Procedures In effect from 22 Sept. Bulk of traffic will operate via ALGIERS, ACCRA, BRAZZAVILLE, DAKAR, JEDDAH, KANO, KHARTOUM, N'DJAMENA, NIAMEY & ROBERTS FIR's. Airspace procedures divided into four regions, as follows:

- a) West WA West West of Africa aerodromes are those located along the western part of West Africa. These include Dakar, Bamako, Banjul, Conakry, Bobo-Dioulasso, Nouakchott, FreeTown, Ouagadougou and Niamey.
- b) Coast WA West Coast of Africa aerodromes are those located on the coastal regions of West Africa, namely Abidjan, Accra, Cotonou and Lagos.
- c) Central WA Central West of Africa aerodromes are those located mainly in Nigeria, Chad and the northern part of Cameroun. These are Kno, Abuja, Sokoto, Kaduna, Garoua, Maiduguri and N'Djamena.
- d) South West WA South West of Africa aerodromes are as follows; Libreville, Brazzaville, Doula and Bangui

Flight Planning information and Procedures are contained in AIP Supps - Hajj. For any visiting traffic operating in these regions over the next few months - expect a significant increase in traffic, monitor 126.9 carefully, squawk 2000, lights on, and bear in mind once again that normally Africa operates North-South. Hajj Seasonal Pilgrimage traffic is oriented on the East/West axis. Generally, statistics have shown that North-South traffic operates in the late evening or early morning hours, while the East-West Hajj traffic is concentrated mainly in the daylight hours. This characteristic creates a natural segregation between these two flows thus reducing the opportunity for conflict. Nevertheless, it is possible that during certain peak demand periods, aircraft using the North-South RNAV routes would have to operate at less than optimum flight levels due to the Hajj traffic.

Eurocontrol The Daily online Centra D-1 news conference for ATC and AO's is now taking place at 1600 CET.

Spain

Nationals of the following countries require a visa to transit Spanish Airports - regardless of onward destination or stopover time: Afganistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Costa de Marfil, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, India, Iraq, Iran, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Togo and Zaire.

London Olympics - Slots All aircraft arriving or departing from the coordinated UK airports during the period 21st of July 2012 to the 15th of August 2012, inclusive and using controlled airspace will be required to have an arrival and/or departure slot.

Slots will be available to be booked with airports for non-scheduled operations during this period from the following dates:

5 September 2011: Biggin Hill, Blackbushe, Cambridge, Chalgrove, Coventry, Cranfield, Damyns Hall, Denham, Dunsfold, Duxford, Elstree, Fair Oaks, Farnborough, Goodwood, Lee-on-Solent, Leicester, Lydd (London Ashford), London Oxford, Manston, Northampton, Northolt, North Weald, Old Sarum, Peterborough (Conington), Redhill, Rochester, Shoreham, Southend, Stapleford, Thruxton, White Waltham, Wycombe.

30 November 2011: Stansted, Birmingham, Luton and Bournemouth NB: Stansted, Luton and Birmingham will be open for provisional bookings from 1 September 2011.

1 February 2012: Southampton and London City At Gatwick booking for ad hoc flights will remain as per UK AIP (AD2.20 1h), i.e. not more than 10 days and preferably not less than 24hrs before the intended movement.

Heathrow is likely to declare reduced capacity at certain times during the Olympics period due to peak demand, and are unlikely to be available for ad hoc flights during this period.

How to arrange: Slot booking instructions for Operators 1. Review slot availability of the airport on-line at

www.online-coordination.com 2. Contact the Airport/Handling Agent as appropriate. 3. Airport uses www.online-coordination.com website to obtain slots. 4. For General and Business Aviation the Airport receive back a unique slot ID for use with confirmed slots, the slot ID is entered by the operator in field 18 of the flight plan, with the prefix of RMK/ASL: i.e RMK/ASLGBXXAPVT554300

5. For operations into the airfields listed below, the flight plan must include the address EGGOLYMI: Biggin Hill, Blackbushe, Damyns Hall, Denham, Dunsfold, Duxford, Elstree, Fair Oaks, Farnborough, NorthWeald, Redhill, Rochester, Stapleford, White Waltham, Wycombe Air Park (Booker). Submitting a flight plan without a valid slot ID will ultimately result in the flight plan being cancelled on the day. Full info at <http://olympics.airspacesafety.com/>