

Sri Lanka Asks All Flights To Carry Extra Fuel

OPSGROUP Team

1 June, 2022



Sri Lanka, and Colombo's VCB/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.

The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) advises against all but essential travel to Sri Lanka, due to ongoing political and economic instability. This advice does not apply to airside transit through Sri Lanka's international airport.

The UK FCDO travel warning.

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

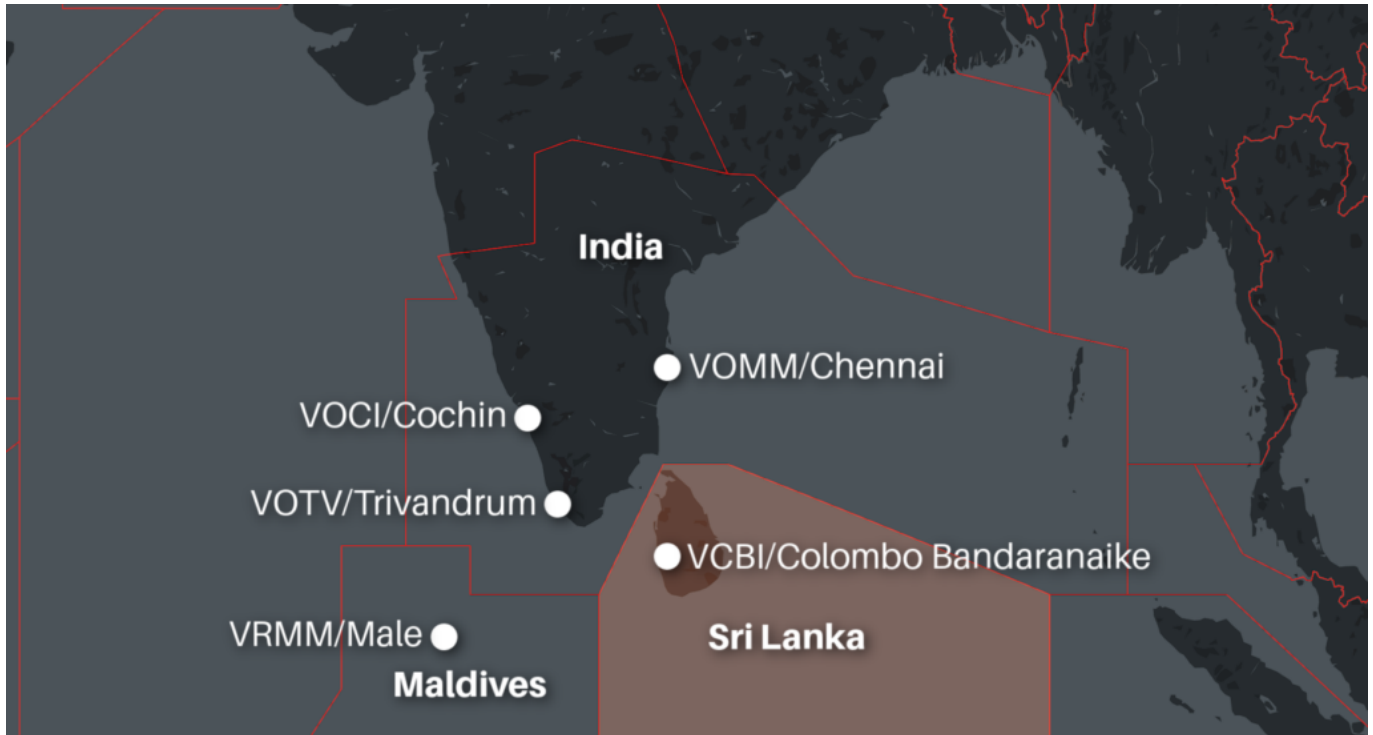
VCBI/Bandaranaika is a very handy airport for fuel stops, and as an en-route alternate, and alternate the Maldives. The monsoon season is starting soon, and the availability of this airport for possible fuel (tech) stops means it might be time to look at the other options in the area.

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
1 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:



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?

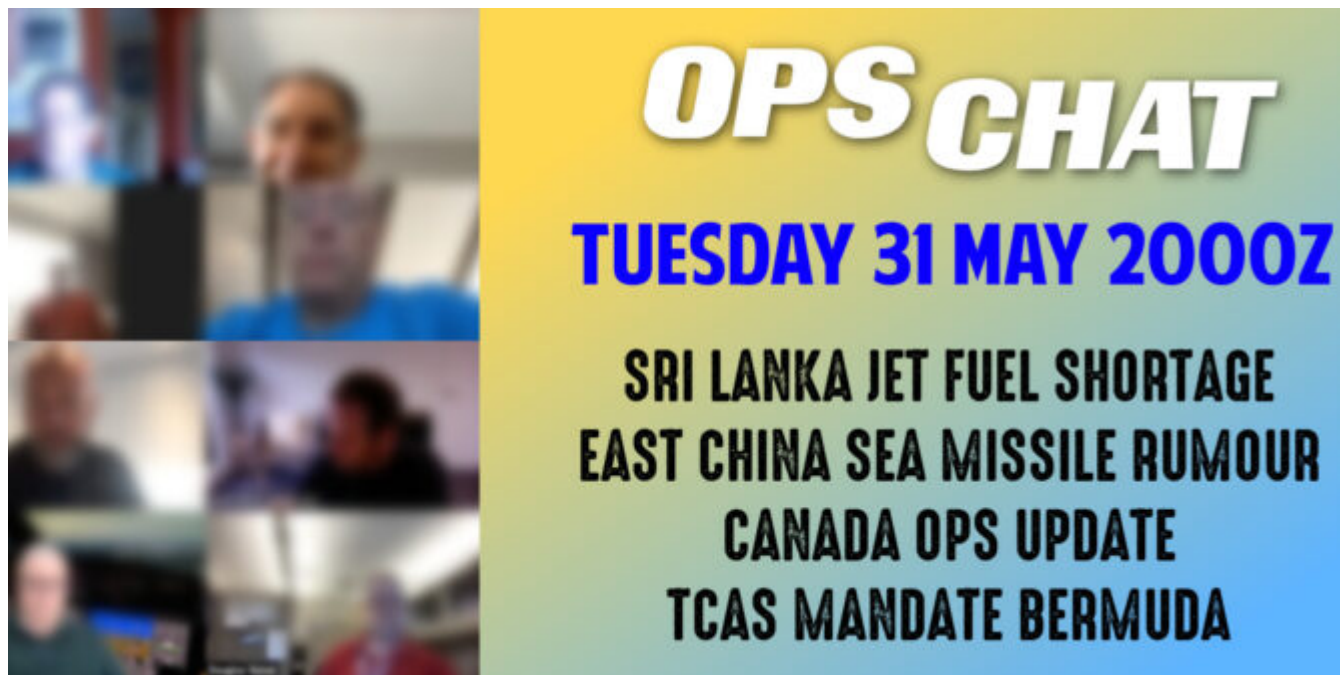
There is a heightened military presence, an ongoing dispute and tensions are increased however there is **no verified indication** that the risk to commercial operations is increased at this time.

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

1 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
1 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

1 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
1 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.

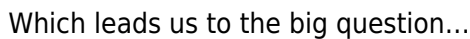
But the Blue Spruce Routes are defined routes so there's no risk? Well, no, there still is, because you're still flying over big chunks of ocean without much backup. So checking for errors is still a very good idea.

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

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

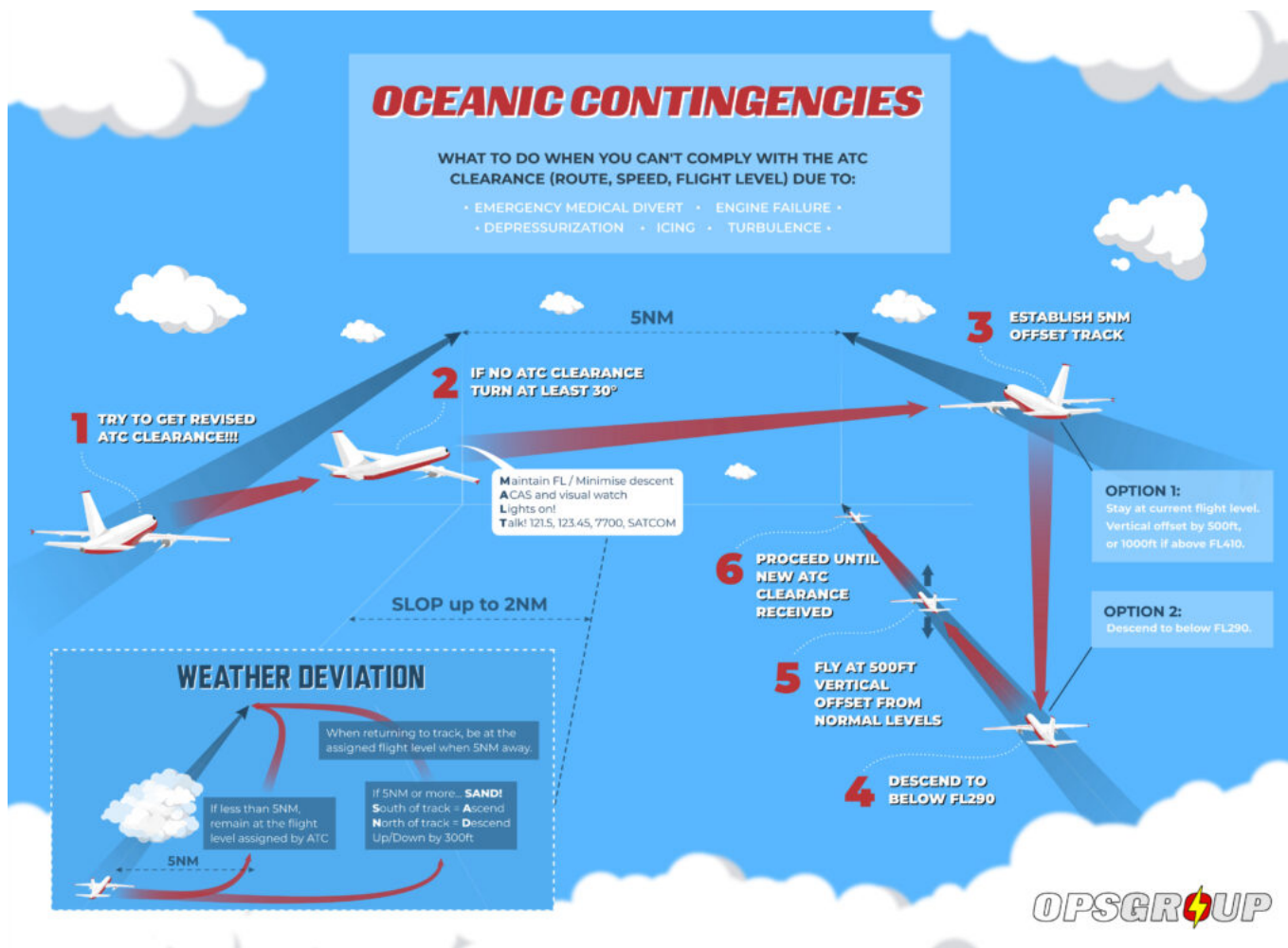


Let's set the scene.

So what do you do?

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.

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

1 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).

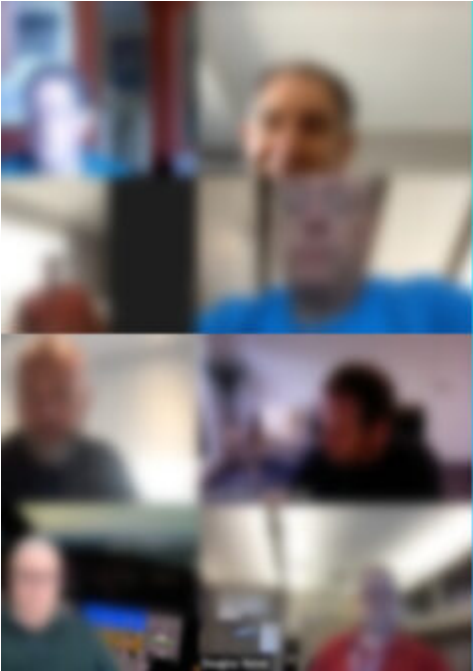
The AIC is available here for a little read.

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

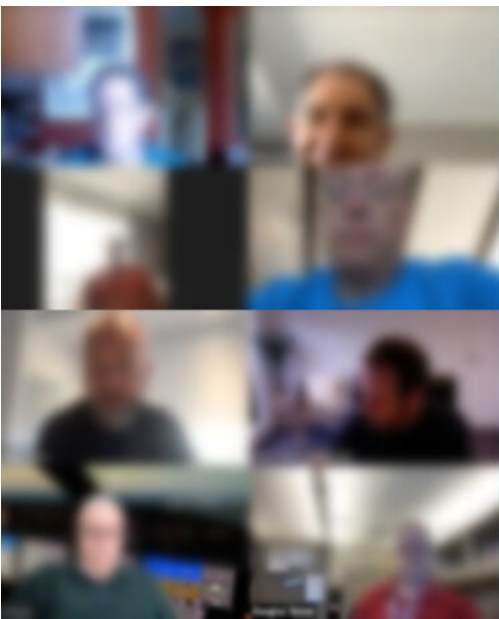
Chris Shieff
1 June, 2022



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

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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

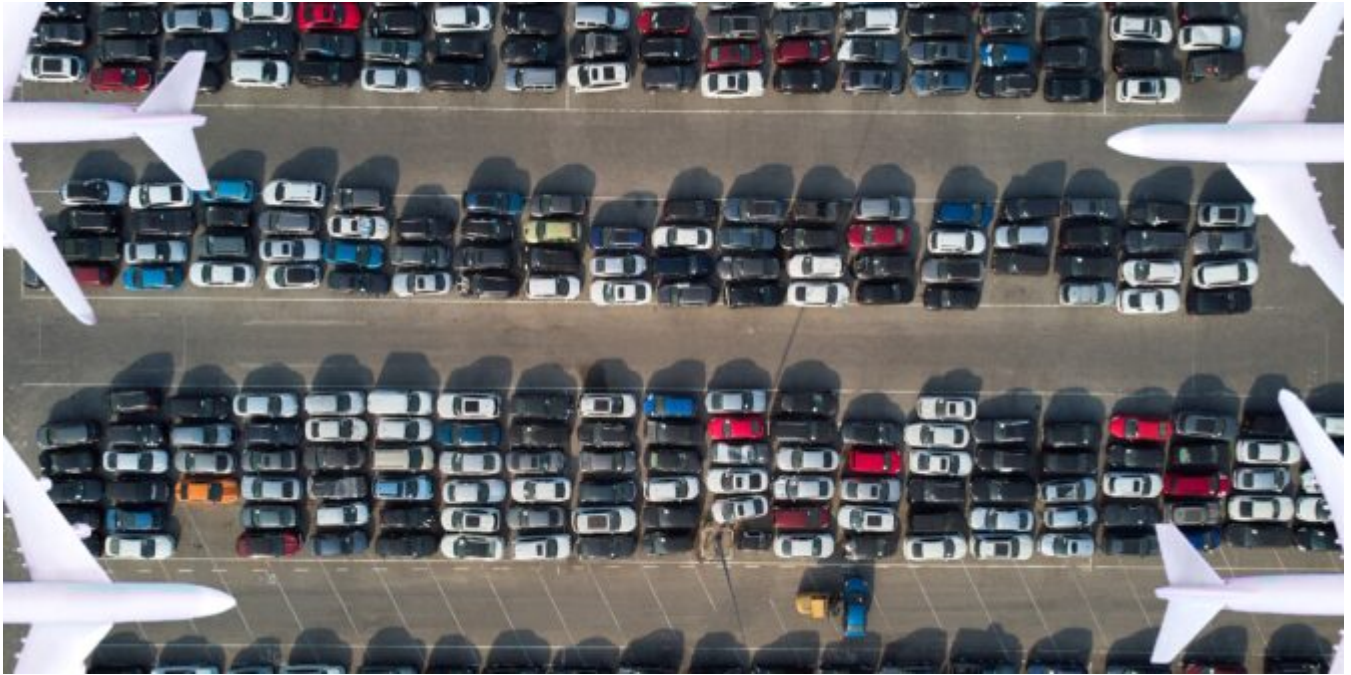
Dave took the wheel this week, and hosted another quiz. Congratulations to this week's winner who is all the way down in Auckland, New Zealand. Well done! Here's a sample question from this week: *Which major European airport closed briefly last week due to a building fire?* Join us next time as we have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

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

OPSGROUP Team
1 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. LGSR/Santorini, 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

1 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

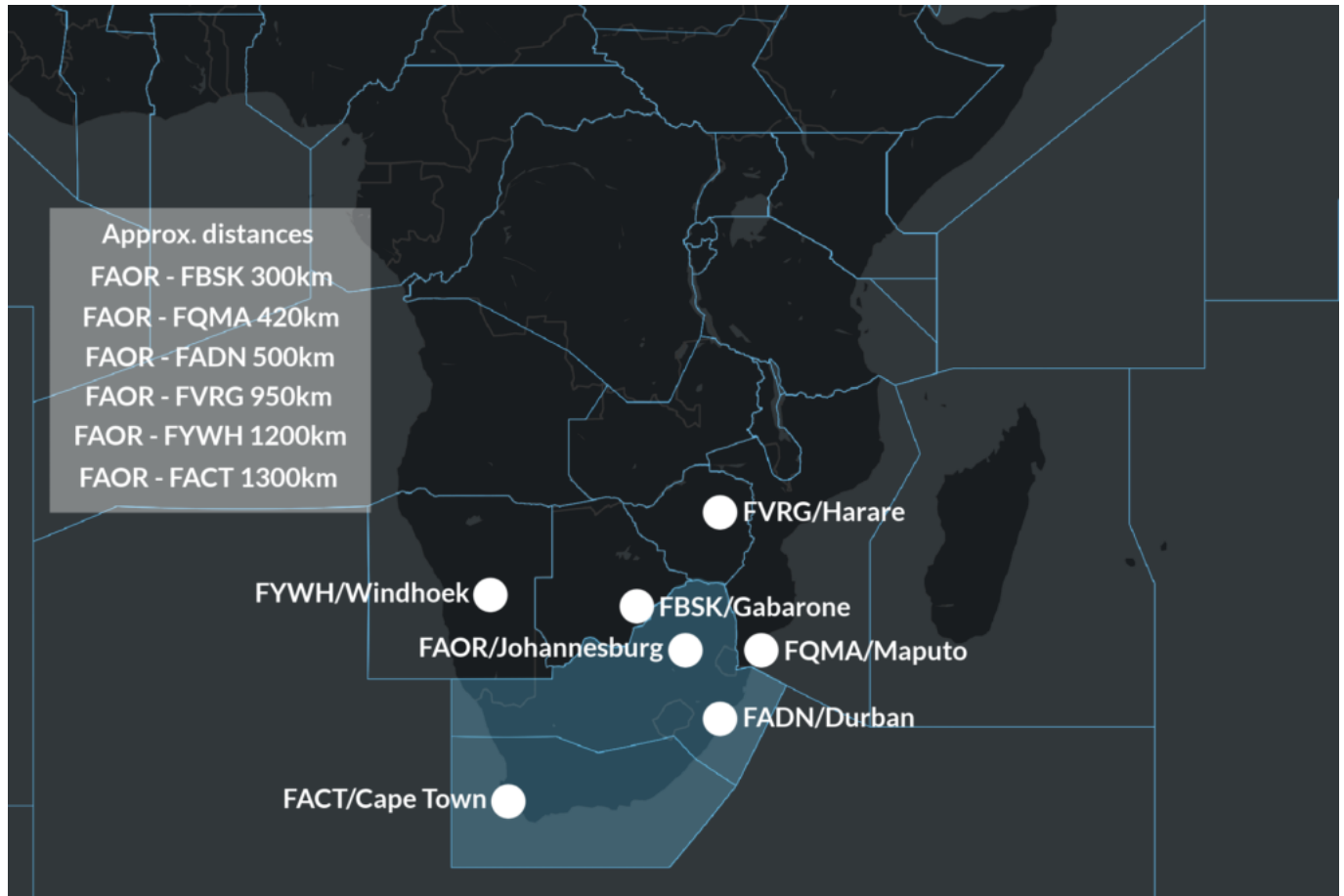
- Puma Energy +267 3 951 077 / Botswana@pumaenergy.com
- Airport contact +267 368 8200

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
1 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

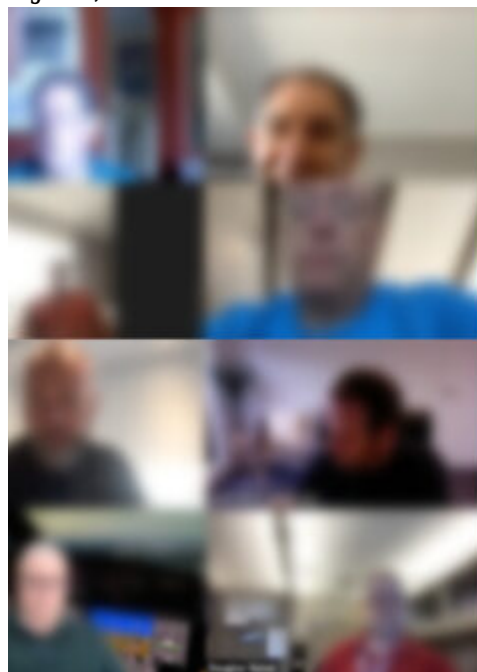
Menzies +33 (0) 4 83 76 26 02, Florence.augustyniak@johnmenzies.aero

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

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

OPSCCHAT Summary May 17

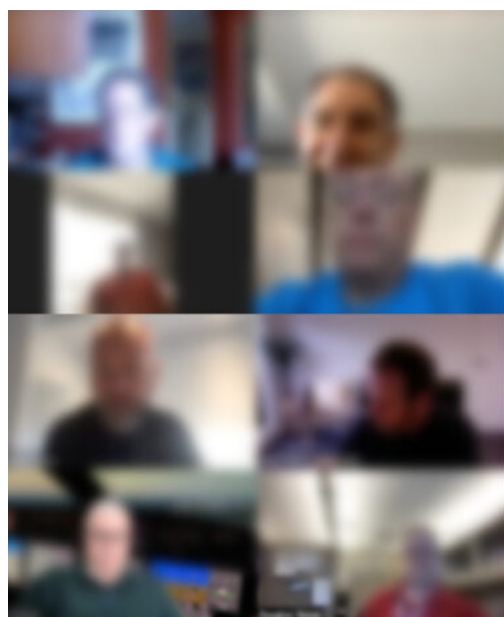
Chris Shieff
1 June, 2022



***OPS*CHAT**

TUESDAY 17 MAY 2000Z

**EUROPE BORDER CONTROLS
US AIRPORT OPS UPDATE
JAMAICA ATC STRIKE
SRI LANKA SECURITY CONCERNS**



***OPS*CHAT**

TUESDAY 17 MAY 2000Z

**EUROPE BORDER CONTROLS
US AIRPORT OPS UPDATE
JAMAICA ATC STRIKE
SRI LANKA SECURITY CONCERNS**

Hi Members,

It was another busy OPSCHAT this week!

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

Here's a roundup of what we talked about:

The Big News

- **Europe** – Some Schengen Area countries have extended their internal border controls for another six months due to “security concerns”: Austria, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and France. The EU aren't happy about this because it's questionable whether there's really any new threat here. The impact to ops is essentially delays – all passengers and crew will have their passport details checked thoroughly as if they were arriving from outside of the region.
- **United States** – There are ops updates for several airports. KCOS/Colorado Springs has been affected this week by grass fires, KASE/Aspen is open again, there are long delays at KIAD/Washington Dulles due to runway work, KHTO/East Hampton has new operating rules, and PPR is needed for non-sched ops at KBOS/Boston until late June.
- **Switzerland** -The World Economic Forum is happening from May 20 – 26. Airport and airspace restrictions will apply. We take a look in more detail.
- **Jamaica** – The entire MKJK/Kingston FIR went ATC zero on May 12 due to a strike. More are possible. Be familiar with contingency procedures if headed there. We talk about what they are, and where to find them.
- **Sri Lanka** – There is widespread civil unrest, a notam has been issued advising operators to tanker fuel as it is unlikely to be available. Security is a problem for layovers – avoid if possible.

Unsolved Mysteries

Can pilots use contingency procedures on the NAT when refusing a climb/descent clearance from ATC? We get various points of view from the group.

Danger Club!

We're holding our next session on Wednesday, May 18 at 1900z and we think it is going to be a good one. Click to register here, and feel free to invite a friend!



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!

The Big SATVOICE Question

OPSGROUP Team
1 June, 2022



SATVOICE. Satellite voice communications. The most expensive phone call you can make (probably). But also an incredibly useful bit of kit to have onboard because it lets you talk to folk much further away than VHF and HF generally do.

But just because you have it doesn't mean you can count in it, at least not as one of your official LRCS (that means long range communication system in case you didn't know).

So, there is a great system which lets you talk over long ranges, but isn't always approved as a long range communication system?

Before we get to the 'why not?'...

A quick recap on what SATVOICE is.

It is exactly what the name suggests - a system that allows voice communications, via satellites. So your voice message zooms up, bounces off the satellite and zooms back down to wherever you're aiming it. And because it heads up and then down, it can go further.

OK, it might be a little more scientific than that, but that's a basic description.

There are some things it doesn't do though.

It doesn't replace VHF or HF as a primary means of communication. One of the reasons being not every ATC has the facilities to receive or call you via it.

It doesn't always work at high latitudes because not all satellite providers have coverage up there. **Iridium satellites are ok** - they are in low earth orbits rather than geostationary ones so they don't get that SATCOM shadow you might have heard mentioned.

It doesn't always avoid the impacts space weather - the stuff that affects HF, particularly at high latitudes, can also disrupt your satellite comms.

You probably know all this already.

If you don't then you can read some more about it here.

Now, let's get down to the real question...

Can you count your SATVOICE system as a LRCS?

OK, well firstly where do you actually need LRCS?

In short, anytime you'll be flying for extended periods over watery regions or remote regions where VHF stations probably aren't possible (so anytime you'll be outside the 'line of sight' of ATC). Like the NAT HLA for example.

In these regions you generally require **two LRCS, and one of these must be HF**. Where you only require one, this must be HF.

The FAA published this which covers some info on comms requirements in oceanic airspace.

They also published this - AC 91-70B - which is the full guidance on Oceanic and Remote Continental Airspace Operations, and this has a whole section on SATVOICE that is pretty handy.

So if one LRCS is HF, what does the other need to be?

Because of frequency congestions and solar conditions that often make HF annoying to use in oceanic and remote spots, other systems can be approved as an LRCS. It doesn't only have to be HF.

CPDLC is an option that is considered suitable. The FANS 1/A+ with its RCP 240 system satisfies the requirements.

And (finally) what about my SATVOICE system?

Well... just because you have SATVOICE doesn't mean it meets the criteria...

This hasn't answered the question at all!

No, we know. We're trying...

Basically, it has to meet a whole bunch of criteria in order to be IAW 20-150B certified, and this certification should be reflected in your MMEL/MEL.

In case you don't know what that is, the info is all covered in this FAA advisory.

AC 20-150B

There is a whole looong list of requirements. We won't list 'em all here, but some of the top ones are:

- Whatever you say on SATVOICE has to be recordable on the CVR
- You have to have considered whether it will work if you're in a "load shed" situation (ie will it still be available in some hideous emergency power lever situation?)
- It has to be able to tell the pilots things like if its broken, if someone is trying to call on it, etc
- It has to meet certain RCP criteria (RCP400)
- Oh yeah, and it has to have *priority, preemption and precedence* abilities (PPP).

Say what?

PPP. Priority, preemption and precedence. Preemption is defined by the FAA as the "*immediate and automatic seizure of resources allocated to a lower priority call*".

It might be easier to look at this table, but in short calls have to be routed through the CMY and filtered according to this -

Tell me which ones are?

Well, that is a very big question and really not something we can answer. Yep, we made you read all that and still don't actually have an answer for you.

What we do know, because other people told us, is that:

- Typical AirCell installations do not meet the criteria
- Latitude SkyNode S200-12 ATC Safety Voice Systems generally do

- The Aspire 300 SATCOM system also generally does
- And there are possibly a whole bunch others but the surest way to find out is to talk to the manufacturers and ask them directly.

Anything else?

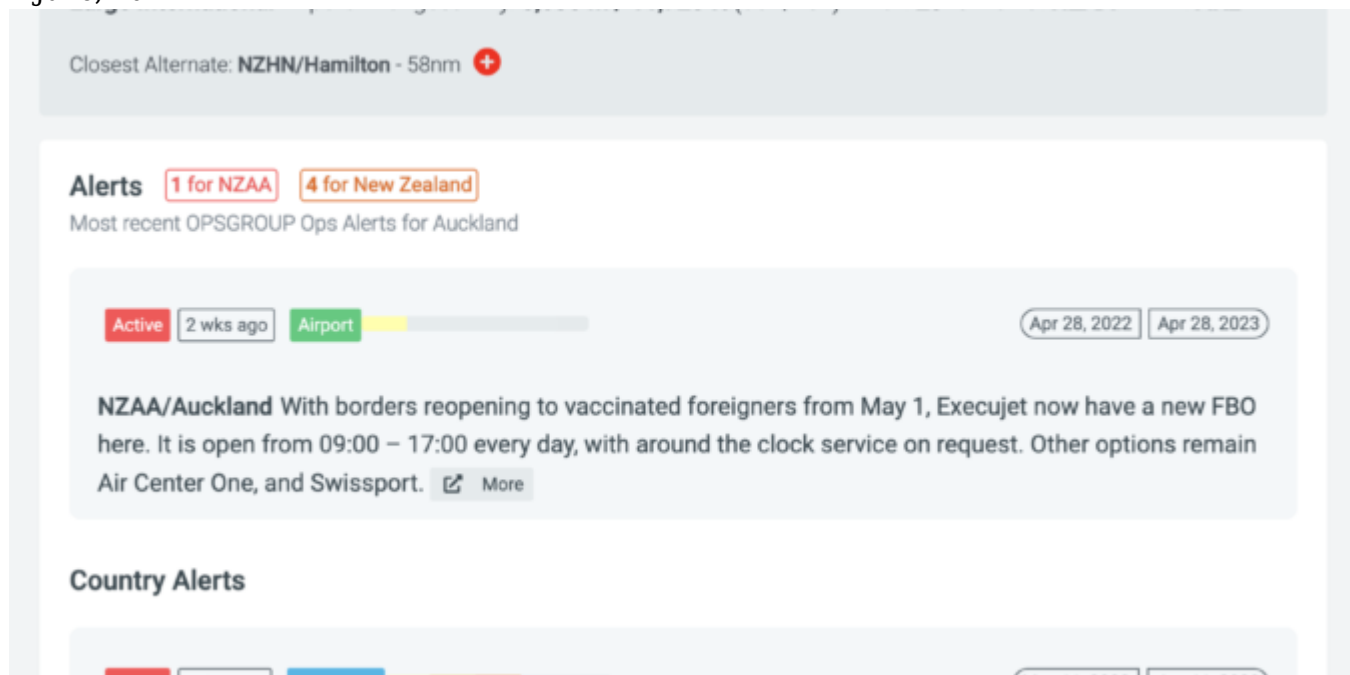
Well, we definitely don't want to get your hopes up, but a little birdie told us that a change might be coming to the "one of the LRCS systems must be HF" requirement. This is in part due to the reliability and practicality of SATVOICE systems.

When this will happen we ain't sure, but listen out.

New Dashboard Tool - Airports and Countries

Chris Shieff

1 June, 2022



Hi Members,

If you're planning a trip somewhere, you might have used the search tool in the Dashboard. We've just added a new feature, so read on.

Let's plan a quick flight to **Auckland, NZ**. So, on the main Dashboard page, just type "**NZAA**", or "**Auckl** ..."

Airport
search

Auckland

NZAA Auckland, New Zealand
AKL

Country
search

Type a country ...

You'll get this panel showing all the things we know about Auckland in OPSGROUP.

Click on the **Alerts** tab to see what's been happening lately, from a flight ops point of view.

NZAA
AUCKLAND

Auckland, New Zealand
Top 100

Large International Airport
Longest Rwy: 3,635 m / 11,923 ft (05R/23L)
Elev: 23 ft
ICAO: NZAA
IATA: AKL

Closest alternates: ⓘ

ICAO	Airport	Distance	Runway (m)	Popularity
NZHN	Hamilton	58 nm	1960 (6430ft)	1
NZRO	Rotorua	98 nm	1622 (5322ft)	7 4 reports
NZPM	Palmerston North	203 nm	1902 (6240ft)	0
NZWN	Wellington	259 nm	1936 (6352ft)	8 3 reports
NZCH	Christchurch	403 nm	3287 (10784ft)	33 3 reports
NZQN	Queenstown	553 nm	1891 (6204ft)	98 8 reports
NZDN	Dunedin	574 nm	1900 (6234ft)	6 1 report

Alerts
1 for NZAA
4 for New Zealand

Most recent OPSGROUP Ops Alerts for Auckland

Airport Spy
9 for NZAA

Member reports reviewing ATC and handling

Until now, we've been showing current alerts, and those that expired in the last 3 months.

But now, we've added the option to see **all historical alerts**.

Older stories 9 for NZAA
Historical alerts for Auckland: everything ever!

Expired 1 year ago Runway

Oct 23, 2020 Nov 05, 2020

NZAA/Auckland The airport will be closed to fixed wing traffic on November 4 from 23-05 local time (10-16z) for runway works. If you're arriving after the published closure period, it is recommended you take extra holding fuel in case there are delays getting the runway up and running again (NZAA Notam B5787/20 refers).

Expired 1 year ago Procedure

Jun 17, 2020 Jul 17, 2020

NZAA/Auckland New Zealand remains Covid-free, but there are new requirements for all arriving crews operating ad-hoc flights to Auckland. Crew must be taken from the FBO to the International Terminal for health screening checks prior to transport to local hotel to self-isolate until departure. Crews cannot use taxis, Uber or public transport to or from their hotel, transport must be arranged by the FBO. Only repatriation flights, Medevac flights, and approved ferry flights are permitted to operate into New Zealand. Thanks to Air Center One for the update. [More](#)

For both the **Airport** and **Country** search pages, you can go back in time to the beginning of OPSGROUP, and see everything ever said about that place. This might be handy to get an overview when operating to somewhere new.

What else?

Keep scrolling down and you'll see the rest of the tools that will help you with that particular airport.

Airport Spy reports from other members ...



Air Center One did an excellent job of handling our arrival

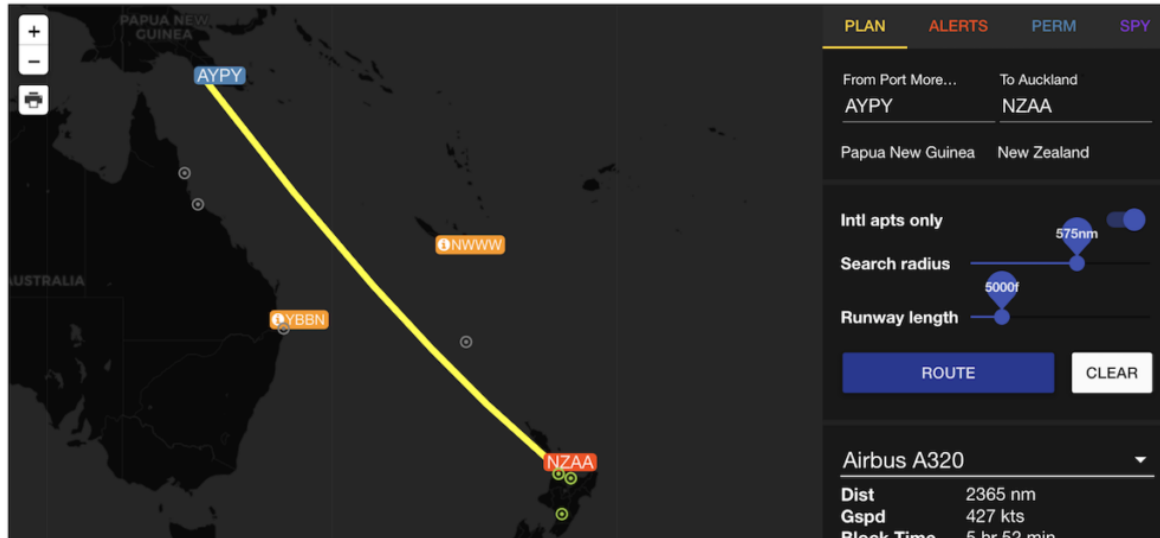
From NZWN (Wellington, NZ) to NZAA (Auckland, NZ). Arrived via the DAVEE4B STAR Runway 05R approach. Exited at A5, A, B1, C1 to Air Center One located in the northw our arrival. Robin Leach and his team understand the needs of private aircraft. FBO is walking distance to everything. Lots of restaurants close to the hotel. Outbound Custi scheduled take-off time. Cleared (to Honolulu PHNL) via MEMOR1P departure, TARIB Auckland Oceanic NZZO via CPDLC passing 13,000

Run a quick **Route Check** to see what bothersome changes might affect you enroute ... and your fuel, time, distance.

Here we'll plan a flight from Port Moresby to Auckland ...

Route Check

Generate a route map to look for risks and changes.



The **documents** tab usually has some goodies. Excellent, looks like Bec has made a Lowdown for NZAA!

Documents 1

Useful documents for Auckland, New Zealand and Pacific

Docs for NZAA

Airport Briefing: **NZAA Lowdown**

Mini brief on operational threats, challenges and

The Lowdown on: **NZAA/AUCKLAND**

THE BASICS	THE BIG	THE OPS	THE ALTERNATES
THE BASICS ICAO CODE: NZAA ICAO NAME: AUCKLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ICAO TYPE: CLASS E, CATEGORY 4 (4,000-6,000 FT) ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA	THE BIG ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA	THE OPS ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA	THE ALTERNATES ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA ICAO IDENT: NZAA

The **articles** tab should find any blog posts or articles the OPSGROUP Team has written affecting this airport or country.

Articles 7

Articles from the OPSGROUP Blog related to Auckland or New Zealand



Ops Down Under: Borders Opening Up

Throughout the pandemic, Australia and New Zealand have both had some of the strictest entry rules for foreigners in the world. They have remained firmly in place since the doors first slammed shut ..



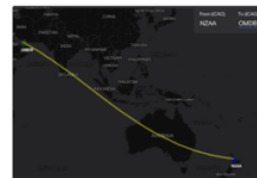
Iridium fault prompts ban by Oceanic ATC

Aircraft Operators using the Iridium Satellite service for ATC comms should be aware of an equipment issue that has prompted a ban by a number of Oceanic ATC agencies in the last few days Right ..



Ops normal at NZAA/Auckland

The fuel issue that has been affecting flights out of Auckland has been rectified and it's back to business as usual. NCRG/Rarotonga and NFFN/Fiji, which had also been rationing fuel have also ..



World's longest flight? That's about to change ...

So what is the longest scheduled air route in the world at the moment? If you said Panama-Dubai, you'd be right - but only for a few more days. As things stand, the PTY-DXB route, all 7463nm of it, ..

Not interested in Auckland? Don't blame you. The rest of New Zealand is far better! ☐ Try a search for NZCH, NZDN, or NZQN - or anywhere else in the world, in the search box at the bottom.

Airport search Type ICAO, IATA, or Airport Name ... 🔍	Country search Type a country ... 🔍	Topic search Type a topic, ask a question ... 🔍
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Enjoy! Let us know if you have any questions or we can help at all. We are always adding new features and that works best when you tell us what you need ☐

Cheers,
The O.G. Team.
team@ops.group

Somalia joins the A Team

OPSGROUP Team
1 June, 2022



Full ATC service is returning to Somalia! The HCSM/Mogadishu FIR is currently Class G uncontrolled, which means a lot of fairly annoying IFBP calls to make. This is about to change though...

(Well, not the IFBP thing sadly, they recommend you continue these even during the trial period).

From May 11 to September 21 they will be running a trial which will see the airspace from **FL245** up become Class A controlled airspace.

The trial will only be between **0300-1800z** (so during the day), but will cover the entire FIR including oceanic areas.

Notam A0051/22 (A0028/22) advises on this, whilst **AIP SUP 02/22** has all the info (we're still waiting for a copy!)

Who to talk to in Class A?

The following frequencies are your best bet:

- **VHF 132.5 MHz** if within 240NM of position MOGDU.
- **HF (Mogadishu Control)**
 - Day Primary 11300Khz
 - Day Secondary 8879Khz or 13288Khz
 - Night Primary 5517Khz
 - Night Secondary 11300Khz or 3467Khz
- **CPDLC** for those FANS1 equipped, logon address **HCSM**

If you lose comms, then the procedures are pretty standard. These are available in the Somalia SUP 05/2018. Or you have the full contingency plans to follow in SUP 03/22.

SATCOM

Mogadishu have also re-confirmed their dedicated SATCOM numbers. Here they are:

- +252 6133 50047
- +252 6233 50047
- +252 1857 390
- +252 1857 391
- +252 1857 392
- +252 1857 393

What's the difference between Class A and Class G?

In a nutshell, Class A doesn't have VFR traffic in it, and you do need **ATC clearances**. Traffic will be provided with 10mins lateral/longitudinal separation and **2000' vertical separation** at and above FL410, 1000' at and below FL400

Class G is uncontrolled which means it is all procedural, deconfliction services and traffic advisory services only.

What's (less) new in Mogadishu.

- Somalia still isn't the safest region to fly through. Major authorities **prohibit flights below (generally) FL260**, and recommend sticking to the oceanic routings rather than overflying the land. All the up to date airspace warnings are available on Safeairspace.
- IFALPA also published a bulletin back in 2018 talking about **procedures in the Mogadishu**

FIR.

- We shared a bunch of stuff on the **general security threats and risks** in Somalia here. Currently airports in Somalia are basically off limits though due big safety concerns.

Mexico City: Safety concerns

OPSGROUP Team

1 June, 2022



What is going on around Mexico City (or should we say 'Mess-ico City) at the moment? Aircraft near misses, security and safety concerns, ATC errors...

IFALPA has issued a new safety bulletin for **MMMX/Mexico City airport**, highlighting several concerns.

- Aircraft have been landing with **low fuel** due to unexpected holding
- **Diversions** (due excessive holding) have increased
- There have been reports of **EGPWS** warnings
- And reports of **confusion** over STAR clearances

IATA report there have been at least 17 incidents of EGPWS warnings in the past year, and have written to the Mexican Airspace Navigation Services expressing concern –

“As you know, these alarms, without the quick action of the flight crew, can lead to a scenario of controlled flight into terrain, CFIT, considered by the industry to be one of the highest risk indicators in operational safety, and with the highest accident rate, as well as fatalities,” their letter said.

The situation seems to be compounded by the recent opening of nearby **MMSM/Felipe Ángeles** which is causing control challenges for ATC (more on that below).

The near-miss incident at MMMX/Mexico City

On May 7, two Volaris aircraft had a near-miss, potentially due to controller error, when an aircraft was **cleared to land runway 05L** while another had been cleared to depart 05L. The last minute go-around was prompted by crew in another aircraft:

What's being done about it?

The Mexican Government have launched an investigation, but have already commented that the incident was most likely caused by an **ATC mistake**, noting Mexico has a **shortage of about 250 controllers**, which means they work longer hours.

They have also said that the airport will **reduce capacity by 25%** over the next 12 months while the situation is sorted. This is reportedly due to start in August 2022, with flights transferring to Mexico City's new MMSM/Felipe Ángeles airport as well as MMTO/Toluca airport.

The MMSM problem

MMSM/Felipe Ángeles (formally known as Santa Lucia) opened in March 2022. The government decided to upgrade an existing airbase following the scrapping of the **Texcoco airport project**.

MMSM boasts three runways, all with **CAT I ILS** approach facilities, and two **4,500m (14,764')** in length. The airport sits at an elevation of 7362', and has an MSA of 15,700' making it a relatively challenging spot (although MMMX/Mexico City is arguably more challenging).

The proximity to MMMX

Both airports serve Mexico City and are **only about 40km** apart meaning ATC have suddenly found themselves dealing with much more complex airspace, and still have that pesky terrain threat to contend with as well.

According to air traffic controllers cited in local press, **the number of aborted landings has doubled** at MMMX/Mexico City airport this year due to the redesign of airspace to allow MMMX and MMSM airports to operate simultaneously. **Insufficient training** and lower than **standard phraseology** are not helping the situation. You can read more on this [here](#).

Reports on MMSM

Sometimes folk write in with reports on airports. Someone did this about MMSM, and it wasn't great.

We have paraphrased below –

"The airport is still not fully constructed from the sounds of it, having been opened speedily by the government. The airport is not ready to support international operations and to reach it from Mexico City involves a pretty bad 2 hour drive through so rough neighbourhoods. Be safe – don't use this airport."

Safety and security

Mexico does have some **safety and security issues**, and these do impact operations, particularly into MMMX/Mexico City international.

The airport comes out one of the highest for:

- Security incidences at the airport – from illegal cargo being loaded to passenger documents not adding up
- “Follow-home crime” (ie getting followed back to your hotel and then robbed)

Both airports lie near (or in) neighbourhoods with high crime rates, so crew security if on a layover should be taken seriously.

Mexico, overall

The FAA downgraded Mexico’s safety rating back in June 2021. Here’s our post on it if you want a read.

This downgrade doesn’t mean the FAA thinks the country isn’t safe to operate into. It is generally aimed more at the safety of the airlines registered there. But it is often based off the level of oversight, quality assurance and maintenance in the country.

Which means when you see a downgrade, you should **have a little more caution** because the infrastructure, training for the likes of ATC etc, or general regulatory oversight might not be up to scratch and this could have some safety impact for you.

What to do with all this info?

Well, avoiding going would be extreme, but being **extra cautious** when you do – especially with regards to looking out for other traffic, and paying special attention to your terrain clearance – might not be a bad call.

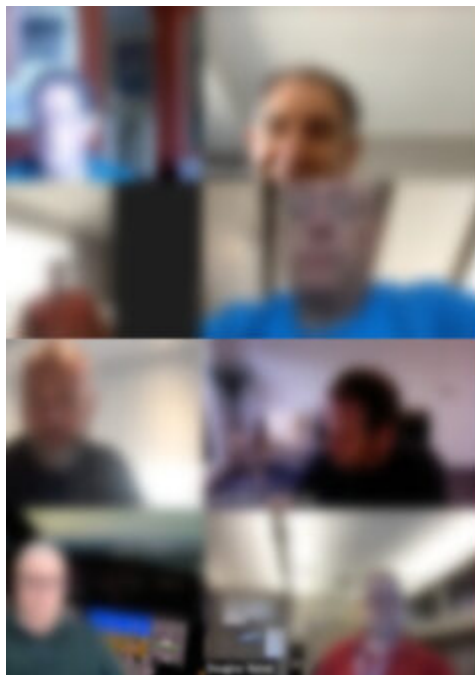
You might want to **carry extra fuel** as well to deal with those holding issues as well.

Please send us your reports.

We can only share on the info we receive from folk heading there so if you do, we would love a report from you (and will keep it anonymous if you want) – news@ops.group

OPSCAT Summary May 10

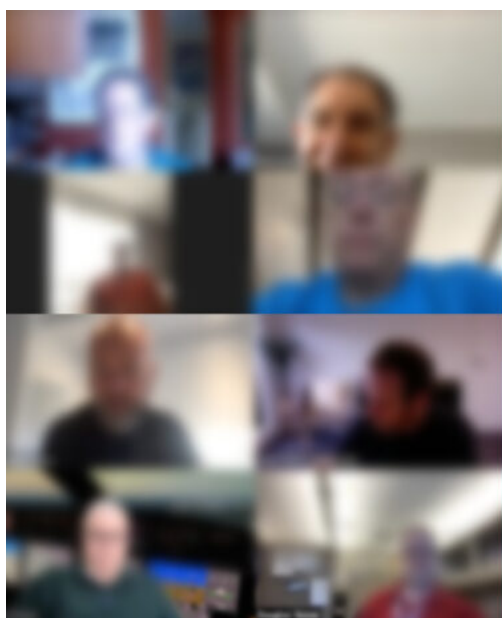
OPSGROUP Team
1 June, 2022



OPSCHAT

TUESDAY 10 MAY 2000Z

**SAFETY ALERT MEXICO CITY
AFRICA AIRSPACE UPDATES
RISKS TO OPS IN EUROPE
UNSOLVED MYSTERIES**



OPSCHAT

TUESDAY 10 MAY 2000Z

**SAFETY ALERT MEXICO CITY
AFRICA AIRSPACE UPDATES
RISKS TO OPS IN EUROPE
UNSOLVED MYSTERIES**

Hi Members,

We had another busy OPSCHAT call this week!

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

Here's a roundup of what we talked about:

The Big News.

- **Mexico** – Trouble reported at MMMX/Mexico City. New IFALPA Safety Bulletin: unexpected holding and low fuel events, EGPWS and aircraft proximity events. The new airport MMSM/Santa Lucia is causing extra challenges for ATC. Be aware of clearances using non-standard phraseologies, and pay extra attention to your terrain clearance.
- **Africa** – ASECNA airspace (the folk responsible for 6 major FIRs in Western and Central Africa) have 'Free Route' airspace available until at least October 2022. All info included in

AICs. In other news ADS-B will be operational from May 19th (but it's not mandatory yet - that's coming next year).

- **Somalia** - ATC services are back in Somalia. They're returning to Class A above FL245 across the entire HCSM/Mogadishu FIR, including the oceanic portion (starting from May 11) 3am-6pm LT. VHF, HF, CPDLC and SATCOM. Outside of these hours, it reverts back to Class G again.
- **Europe** - Spill over risks from the Ukraine/Russia conflict. EASA has published a report identifying no less than twenty risks (highlighted by operators and other authorities). Some interesting (unconsidered) ones as well, so it's worth a read.

Unsolved Mysteries.

LRCS - Is my SATCOM approved in the NAT HLA? Here is the FAA info on it. Watch this space for a post tomorrow.

Radar vectors - who is legally responsible for terrain clearance?

The OPSQUIZ.

Mark's back to host, and we have a second time champion this week! **Congratulations!** Here is a sample question from this week: *Who publishes the eastbound NAT Tracks?* Join us next time as we have great prizes on offer, all hand picked by the 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!

Are you ADS-Being watched?

Chris Shieff
1 June, 2022



ADS-B is quickly becoming mandated around the world – especially for IFR aircraft operating in busy controlled airspace at higher levels.

One of the major benefits of this is it provides ‘radar-like’ coverage where radar isn’t possible. They no longer have to wait many minutes for the next bit of info about where you are. Now aircraft can be tracked “as good as” live.

But this means you are trackable by, well, anyone, and it’s got some wondering whether this is an issue?

‘B’ equals Big Benefits.

The ‘B’ stands for broadcast and this is what makes this system so great. Your aircraft **continually broadcasts its precise GPS position**, along with other info through a Mode S transponder, to any receiver listening.

The biggest benefit seen so far is probably over the **North Atlantic** where ADS-B allows controllers to “see you” a lot better. Not literally see you, but receive info on where you are with a lot of accuracy and most importantly in a decent time frame (a mere snippet of a second).

The benefit is it allows for **reduced separation**.

But the Problem is also the ‘B.’

Anyone with the right ears (including near airports) can listen in, and see who you are, where you are and what you’re doing. You can literally buy ADS-B receivers on Ebay for less than a hundred dollars.

Take a look at FlightRadar and select the ‘ADS-B’ visibility on and suddenly the map fills up with many, *many* aircraft.

But this isn’t the main concern.

An aircraft’s ADS-B broadcast also contains a unique ICAO aircraft address – specific to every airplane and directly linked to the tail number. Which means folk can not only track an aircraft, but see a lot of information about it that the operator might not want any old Joe Bloggs seeing.

If someone knows your tail number, it is pretty easy to discover who owns the aircraft, and even the

address of the person registered to it.

And this is the concern. **ADS-B has created a privacy and potentially even a security issue.**

How can we be less visible?

If you are flying in **USA domestic airspace** then the FAA have two systems you can sign up to.

First up **LADD, which stands for 'Limiting Aircraft Data Displayed'.**

This came into place from the '*2018 HR 254 FAA Reauthorization Bill: Section 566, Right to Privacy When Using Air Traffic Control System*' as a replacement for the old BARR (Block Aircraft Registry Request) system.

This scrubs your data out of the FAA SWIM feed – the place where commercial tracking providers get their info.

You have two levels of privacy you can opt for. One that removes it all so these sites get none of your data, and one that allows tracking providers to still track you (the airplane owner or operator might like this), but not publish the data to the general public.

Then there is **PIA - the Privacy ICAO aircraft address program** where you can request an '*alternate, temporary ICAO aircraft address which will not be assigned to the owner in the Civil Aviation Registry*'.

Let's Talk Hexes.

How does the PIA program work?

Well, your aircraft has a HEX code assigned to it – the **unique 24-bit ICAO address**. This is linked to the registration number which is registered in the Civil Aviation Registry, along with a bunch of private information about the aircraft and its owner.

So via the PIA system, you can get a different code assigned to your aircraft. One that isn't linked to the tail number. This doesn't stop your aircraft being tracked, but does mean not identifying data will be published because no-one can find it now.

These don't solve the whole problem though.

There are several big limitations to know about.

Firstly, the **FAA can only tell the commercial providers what to do** with the data they receive from SWIM. Unfortunately, there are a lot of random trackers out there who have their own ways of tracking you, and the FAA has absolutely no power to stop them. Which is why getting the HEX changed is useful.

But, both **LADD and PIA also only work in US domestic airspace** which means as soon as you leave this and head into somewhere like the Deep Waters routes for example (which is Oceanic and managed but not owned by the US) then the FAA can no longer stipulate what is available and what isn't.

The Atlantic, Pacific, off the East coast of the USA, and of course anywhere else in the world, still has the same problem.

Then there is the actual **hassle of changing your ICAO HEX code**. It has to be changed within a lot of your aircraft systems and involves a fairly lengthy maintenance process.

The NBAA are on it.

As usual, the very helpful NBAA are looking out for you already, and are working with the FAA to improve the timeframe it takes for your PIA request to be processed (currently within 60 days). And they are working to see if things like multiple codes could be an option.

There is also discussion as to how the programs can be extended into non-US domestic airspace.

So if you want to register, how can you?

All of it can be done via the FAA website.

File your LADD request [here](#).

Head to this page for more info on the PIA.

If you want some more info?

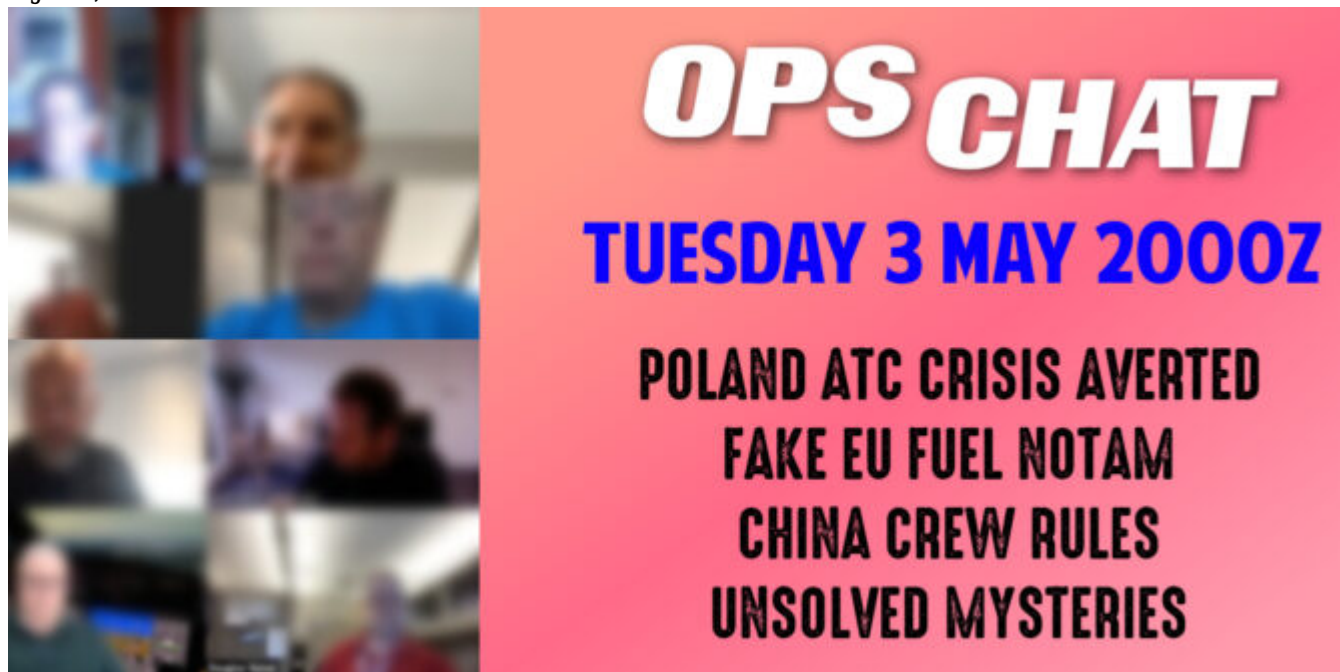
The NBAA did an excellent podcast on this not so long ago which you can listen to [here](#).

There is a good article on it here as well courtesy of 'Plane and Pilot'.

Opschat Summary May 3

Chris Shieff

1 June, 2022



OPS CHAT

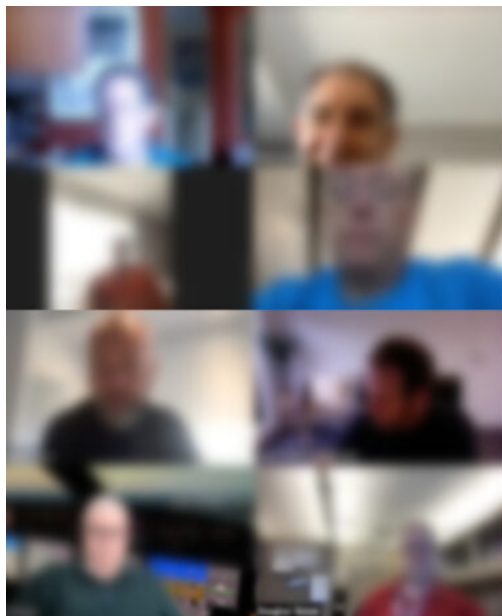
TUESDAY 3 MAY 2000Z

POLAND ATC CRISIS AVERTED

FAKE EU FUEL NOTAM

CHINA CREW RULES

UNSOLVED MYSTERIES



OPS CHAT

TUESDAY 3 MAY 2000Z

POLAND ATC CRISIS AVERTED
FAKE EU FUEL NOTAM
CHINA CREW RULES
UNSOLVED MYSTERIES

Hi Members,

We had another busy OPSCHAT call this week, with the return of our weekly OPSQUIZ and a new champion.

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

Here's a roundup of what we talked about:

- **Poland** – A mass ATC walkout has been avoided. Ops normal for now, but look out for July 10 which is the new deadline for an agreement.
- **Europe** – An alarming fake Notam has been doing the rounds alluding to big restrictions on foreign operators due to a fuel shortage. EASA has confirmed it's fake. Also, look out for big military exercises happening in Italy, France and Finland.
- **China** – Entry rules are still super restrictive. Flights to Guangzhou and Beijing are being cancelled. Unknown impact for crew.
- **Amsterdam** – Ongoing disruptions at EHAM/Schiphol due to runway closures, strikes and staff shortages. Has anyone been there recently?

Unsolved mysteries

Crew quarantine in China: We're still looking for answers. Is there anyway to avoid three weeks in a hotel? And if so, where?

Fuel prices on the US East Coast: They're soaring, but we're hearing rumours of great deals. Do you know where to find them?

Approach bans: Can ATC stop you from flying an approach due to the weather, or is that specific to the UK/Ireland?

Pringles: Bec's cautionary tale.

OPSQUIZ

Mark's back to host, and we have a new champion this week! Congratulations! Here is a sample question from this week: *When receiving radar vectors, who is legally responsible for terrain clearance?* Join us next time as we have great prizes on offer, all hand picked by the 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 [#flightsops](#) and [#questions](#).

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May's Military Exercises in Europe

OPSGROUP Team

1 June, 2022



There are a bunch of military exercises scheduled in Europe for May. Normally we would just pop out a few little alerts on them, but there are enough big ones that we thought a post combining them might also be handy.

Or you can go look on the [Eurocontrol Operations Portal](#).

The Operations Portal hurts my eyes. Just tell me now.

Athena 2022

First up, starting with the biggest, is 'Athena 2022'. You know its a big one because it is named after the Goddess of War...

This takes place in **France between May 3rd and 13th**, with the main exercises on the 10th and 11th.

It involves **a lot of aircraft at all levels**, and live firing which means some prohibited airspace in the affected FIRs – namely LFFF/Paris, LFRR/Brest and LFBB/Bordeaux. That said, the live firing is all scheduled to take place at night so the operational impact is only low to medium.

Read all about it here in the French AIP SUP 083/22.

Mare Aperto

Another big military exercise, ‘Mare Aperto’ takes place in **Italy from May 3-27**. The LIRR/Roma, LIBB/Brindisi and DTTC/Tunis FIRs are the main ones to be impacted.

It is described as a *‘multinational large scale exercise, involving naval and air assets’* and is expected to have a low to medium operational impact.

Again, there are some forbidden areas which will be activated at different times to keep an eye out on normals or read all about it here in Italian AIP SUP S3/22.

Swift Response 22

Less big, this takes place in **Lithuania from May 3rd to 16th** and is only expected to have a low impact.

Lithuania’s AIP SUP 004/2022 tells you all about it.

Ilmatakiiika

Last but actually not least is ‘Ilmatakiiika’ which I thought might mean something exciting, but actually just translates as ‘Air Tactics’ (quite obvious in hindsight).

This takes place in **Finland daily between May 2-6**. There are the usual danger zones, but they also have some big buffer zones in this one so it impacts quite a large chunk of the EFIN/Helsinki FIR.

AIP SUP 04/2022 from Finland has the full info.

They published some flight planning ideas for this one, which are useful if you’re going to be below FL110:

DEP EFKI: ETROD T95 UGLUM DCT ASTUX ...

ARR EFKI: ... ATLUL DCT UGLUM T95 ETROD

DEP EFKS: IBEVU DCT EVRIG DCT ETROD T95 UGLUM DCT ASTUX ...

ARR EFKS: ... ATLUL DCT UGLUM T95 ETROD DCT EVRIG DCT IBEVU

Please CAN you PASS the info?

OPSGROUP Team

1 June, 2022



What is CANPASS? Who can use it? How do you use it? Where do you use it?

Normally we write these things because the original 'things' with all the info are rubbish and unreadable. The CANPASS site is surprisingly good, but we'll tell you it in a slightly different way and with some pictures.

So, what is it?

CANPASS is a **Private Aircraft program** designed to make **clearing the Canadian border** on Canada-US flights easier.

It is made for private aircraft (that means non-revenue) with **no more than 15 people onboard**. That includes the crew.

The idea is it provides expedited clearances, at more airports, for anyone deemed low-risk and who is pre-screened. This makes life easier hopefully for everyone – customs folk and private aircraft flying between the US and Canada.

Which airports are signed up to it?

A fair few now. You can see the full list [here](#).

You can turn up to Airports of Entry and any of the CANPASS approved airports at anytime basically.



Tell me more!

If you're a CANPASS member you can land at any airport of entry in Canada, anytime it is open (even if the local customs and border folk aren't in).

One big point – **everyone onboard must be a CANPASS member** or there are some other procedures you'll need to follow.

So how do I join this elite sounding membership?

You have to be a **citizen or permanent resident** of Canada or the US, and have lived in one or the other for at least the last 3 years. There are some other criteria as well like not being a criminal, not having been caught trying to sneak in through immigration illegally ever.

You need to fill out an E672 form. You can find that form and a bunch more info on how to apply [here](#).

How does it work?

Long story short, you **call 1-888-CANPASS** (1-888-226-7277) at least 2 hours before, and not more than 48 hours before to let them know when you'll be arriving in Canada.

The pilots need to do this – you're responsible for yourself, the rest of the crew, and everyone onboard. You have to provide a whole bunch on info like what you have onboard, when you're arriving, the people info, etc. Someone has set up a handy PDFable form [here](#) that you can use.

The pilot also should call up on landing before you open your doors in case they want you to wait and have an agent meet you.

What if I'm not a member?

Well, then you need to enter the old fashioned way, and at a time when the local CIQ is open and available.

There is a slightly different program for Corporate aircraft.

Remember we said on the private aircraft everyone needs to be a member? Well, if you're a corporate aircraft (corporate but still private, so no charter operators) then you can get approval for up to four non-CANPASS registered travellers to be onboard.

This is still for private (non revenue) flights.

Any other things that might be handy to know?

We saw a question on **non-scheduled international licences** the other day. So here is the info on that.

First up, this isn't anything to do with CANPASS. A non-scheduled international license means you can operate a public air charter service between your country and Canada (not around Canada though. Land and leave again. No internal airport hopping).

If you want this, and you aren't Canadian, then you have to have all the documents you'd expect in your home country (where you're registered) and then go read the Application Guide here, which also have all the legal mumbo jumbo you need to know, and apply.

It takes about 7 days to get your licence. This is applicable to revenue flights. CANPASS is for private non-revenue flights.

We've not done it ourselves...

So if you've seen anything odd, experienced anything unusual, or just have something to share on it please do at news@ops.group

Poland ATC dispute resolved

OPSGROUP Team

1 June, 2022



Update - April 29:

Poland's air navigation agency PANSa issued a statement late on Apr 28 confirming that the dispute with controllers has been resolved (at least for now), averting mass flight cancellations that had been expected from May 1.

"The management of the Polish Air Navigation Services Agency and the representatives of the Air Traffic Controllers Trade Union have signed an agreement which will ensure the continuity of air traffic service in Poland and passengers will carry out their trips as planned. The agreement is valid until July 10 this year. During this time, the parties will conduct dialogue in order to work out the final shape of the cooperation."
- PANSa.

The majority of air traffic controllers were threatening to quit by May 1 after a long dispute over salary and working conditions. The new agreement basically means that **controllers will keep working until at least July 10**, giving them more time to hash out a deal with PANSa.

☐Dear Passengers, we would like to inform you that due to the signing of an agreement between the PANSa and the ATC Trade Union, after May 1st, flights will not be canceled due to staff shortages among air traffic controllers. #ChopinInfo #IMPORTANT
#ImportantForPassenger

— Chopin Airport, WAW (@ChopinAirport) April 28, 2022

Update - April 26:

Disruption to flights could start on May 1 – the day after the end of the notice period for controllers who chose to quit rather than accept the new deal they say threatens safety. If they don't reach a new agreement preventing the walkout, **here's the likely impact to flight ops from May 1:**

- **Around 300 flights crossing Polish airspace will need to be controlled by other sectors.** It isn't clear yet how this will be handled, but the Polish CAA issued an announcement saying *"flights over Poland should proceed without sudden disruption"*. In other words, don't expect to get a sudden massive detour. Despite the staff shortages, for the time being the Polish CAA and Eurocontrol are still not planning to launch the 'massive cancellation procedure' for flights transiting Polish airspace (see below for more details on that).
- **EPWA/Warsaw Chopin and EPMO/Warsaw Modlin will both operate restricted hours** – 0930-1700 local time only, due to controller shortages. So don't expect to use them outside these hours, and expect to see some Notams advising against their availability for alternates.

Original Story - April 21:

The Current State of Polish Airspace

Poland has some 600+ air traffic controllers, around **216 of which work the 'Warsaw Approach Area'** which is some very busy airspace around EPWA/Warsaw International and the region above it.

If you've routed across Europe, to and from Russia in particular, then chances are you've used Polish high level airspace because it provides a **major routing region** due to the (historic) cautions and prohibitions in Ukrainian airspace.

With the current conflict between Russia and Ukraine, the already busy airspace is now even busier with NATO and military aircraft utilising it due to the proximity to Ukraine, and with flights utilising Polish high level airspace with the closure of many surrounding airspaces.

Eurocontrol Concerns

Eurocontrol have a “live” map showing the current network situation for the region, and southern and south east Poland regularly show as having high delays. The main reasons for these are ATC staffing (causing 26% of the delays) and ATC capacity (causing 15% of the delays).

With a concern that **84% of ATC in the Warsaw control area might not be available come May 1st** - a 30% reduction in total ATC staff numbers - Eurocontrol has published a plan which sees the cancellation of all connections to and from Poland.

The Potential Impact

Currently around 1,850 flights a day are forecast for the summer season. During peak hours, this requires 8 ATC sectors to be running, while during quiet night hours only 1 is required. If only 1 of the 8 sectors is staffed, at peak times this will mean nearly **1000 flights will require redirection** through neighbouring airspace. With only 4 sectors open, 500 flights a day will have to re-route.

The Warsaw FIR covers the airspace across Poland as well as part of the Baltic Sea. If flights are redirected, it may mean **significant extra pressure** on the ATC centres in Karlsruhe, Prague, Malmö, Bratislava and Vilnius.

The main Polish airports may also experience staffing problems, leading to capacity issues, particularly at **EPWA/Warsaw International**. This may lead to flight cancellations at the airport, as well as an impact on availability as en-route alternates.

What are the Unions saying?

Well, you can watch the video here yourself. This is of course representing the ATC side of the conflict. What does stand out though is the potential impact on safety if mass layoffs do occur.

When similar staffing shortages happened in 2020, there was an increase in incidents from 7 to 173.

The union also published this press release warning Polish ATC soon to be unmanned.

What is happening now?

A major conference is taking place to try and resolve the issues. This includes 'Emergency Plan PA 8B' – a "plan in the event of a threat to operational continuity".

A full breakdown of current discussions was published by a Polish news site (which you can read if you have a translator on your computer, we use Chrome).

Have we seen this before?

Albanian ATC went on strike back in 2021, and it resulted in the "farming out" of controllers. We wrote about it here because the practice is a big safety concern.

"Why? Because safe Air Traffic Control is predicated on deeply-learned local familiarity with the airspace, the terrain, the boundaries, and above all, how the traffic flows."

PANSA have acknowledged that it is not possible to simply bring other controllers in because of the **risks involved** in using non-regional trained ATC. However, military control of airspace might be required.

What do we think?

Talks are underway and hopefully the situation is resolved before May 1st.

Eurocontrol provide the most up to date information on airspace availability and should be monitored closely over the next few days.



"[air navigation control, [...]] is a task involving the exercise of public authority and is not of an economic nature, since that activity constitutes a service in the public interest which is intended to protect both the users of air transport and the populations affected by aircraft flying over them".
(Extract of decision C.364/92 of the European Court of Justice).

The Hot Topic of Hot Spots

OPSGROUP Team
1 June, 2022

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PRESS RELEASE

Polish Air Traffic Control soon to be unmanned!



We aren't talking about a bad rash, or the trendiest new club in town... We're talking about those spots at airports where you're most likely to mess up and get in the way of another aircraft.

Why is this a hot topic?

The FAA are **standardising their symbology** so we thought it would be worth sharing with any folk based in the US who haven't spotted it yet, and for anyone who flies into the US for that matter, just to make sure no-one misses a Hot Spot warning.

What is a Hot Spot?

It is a location on an 'airport movement area' which has a **history of incursions, collisions and confusion**. Or which has the potential for all the aforementioned mess. Basically, anywhere there is a risk of an aircraft going the wrong way or get in another aircraft's way.

What do these spots currently look like?

They look like a really confusing bit of taxiway, often near a runway...

On the charts this might be shown with **a circle, a square, an ellipse, a rectangle, an octagon, even an octopus** if the chart maker so fancied. There is no standard shape for marking these which means if you aren't familiar with an airport (or its chart) then you might not notice the spot to watch out for.

What will they look like going forward?

From **May 19 2022** they will become **only a circle or an ellipse**, with the details in a little rectangle linked to it.

Here is a picture of the before and after:

These are in line with the symbology that the likes of LIDO and Jeppesen already use.

But also...

The FAA will be issuing **Arrival Alert Notices (AAN)** at airports which have a particularly bad history of

misalignment risk.

This is all to do with the runways and the risk of aligning the wrong one (or not one for that matter). The new symbology will show **'wrong surface' hotspots in ellipses**.

Which airports have this problem?

Here's a list of the known baddies:

- KIDA/Idaho Falls
- KRNO/Reno
- KRHV/Reid-Hillview
- KPSP/Palm Springs
- KTUS/Tucson
- KHNL/.Honolulu
- KFCM/Flying Cloud
- KTKI/Dallas McKinney
- KPDK/Peach Tree DeKalb
- KROC/Rochester

Why isn't KSFO/San Francisco on this list? Who knows. Actually, we do - it is because these occurs most often with GA aircraft, so just because there isn't an AAN, **don't assume there isn't still some risk** if there are parallel runways, taxiways, or even nearby airports with similar orientation. These are generally noted on the charts in text format anyway.

Read about it direct from the FAA

You can find the link to their page on it here.

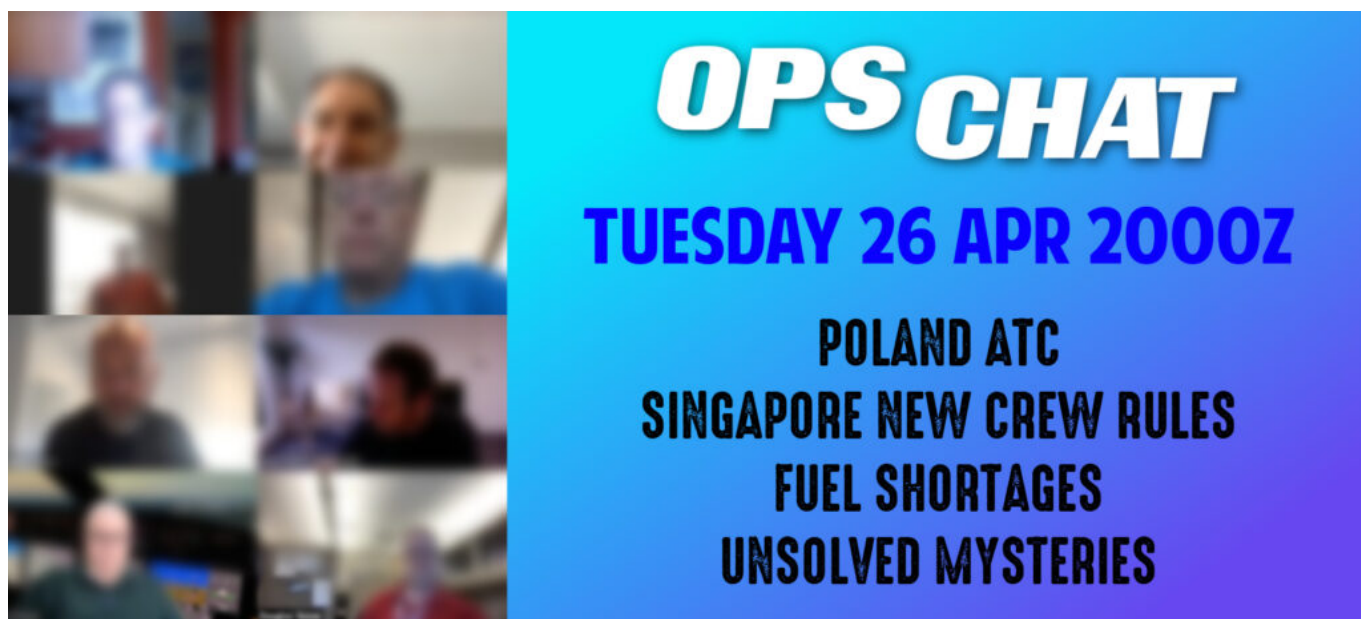
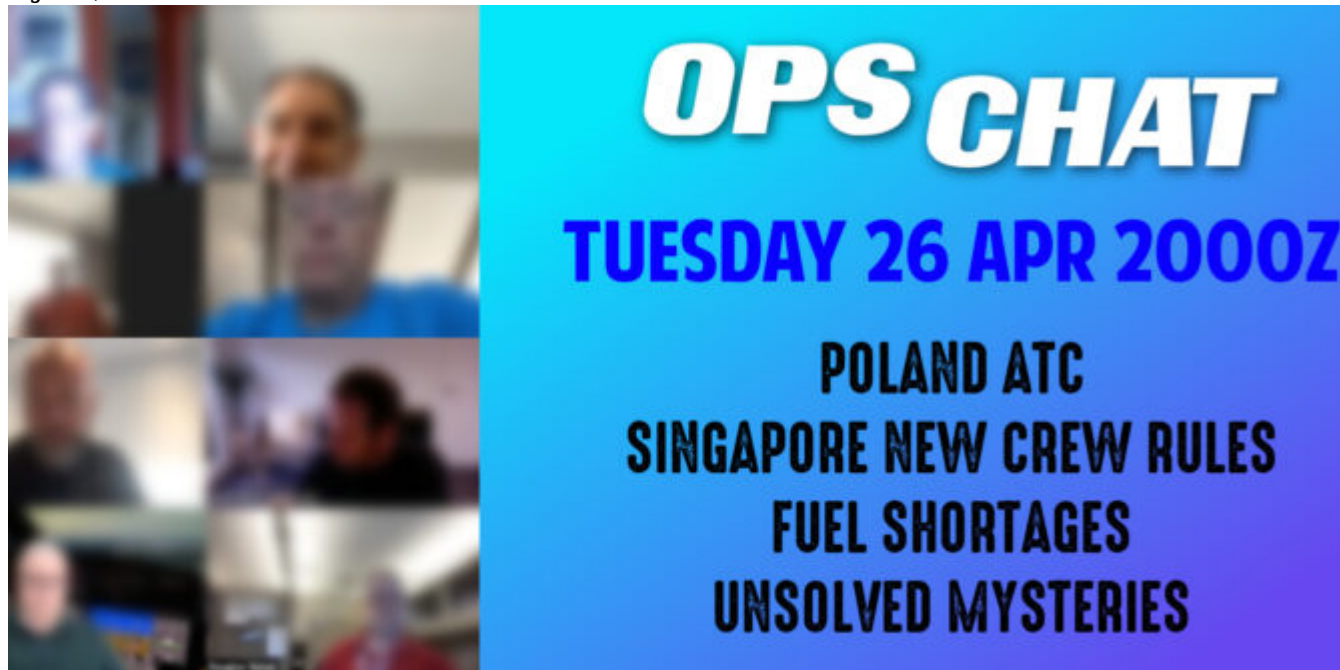
There are also links to PDF documents containing lists and details on all the hotspots at the major airports. Like these for the Northeast US states.



Opschat Summary April 26

OPSGROUP Team

1 June, 2022



Hello Members.

It was another busy OPSCHAT call this week, along with our new quiz!

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

Here's a roundup of what we talked about:

- **Poland** – An ongoing ATC industrial dispute may lead to big controller shortages in the EPWW/Warsaw FIR from May 1. There may be knock on effects for neighbouring airspace. See our article for more.

- **Singapore** - There are new crew Covid rules. The main change is that vaccinated crew no longer need a pre-arrival Covid test, and they are no longer limited to the three approved layover hotels - you can choose from any now. But be careful of this gotcha: if one crew member is unvaccinated, the whole crew must follow those rules (which means isolating in an approved hotel).
- **Hong Kong** - From May 1, fully vaccinated foreigners will be able to enter for any reason. But the quarantine rules aren't changing - they will still need to stay in approved hotels for at least seven days. You can check the official page on pax rules [here](#). Local agent HKBAC have told us that there's currently no official plans for any changes to the crew rules - which are pretty restrictive: crew must be vaccinated, take a pre-arrival test, another test on arrival, isolate in their hotel on layover until their outbound flight, and wear a wristband for location tracking.
- **Africa** - Fuel shortages at big airports are spreading. They're now reported at DNMM/Lagos, FAOR/Johannesburg and GOBD/Dakar. More may soon follow.
- **Netherlands** - There have been big delays at EHAM/Schiphol thanks to multiple runway closures and an unexpected strike. Things are expected to improve from Apr 27 onwards, but keep an eye on the Eurocontrol NOP website and the Notams for updates.

Unsolved mysterious

Crew quarantine in China. You can enter but will be stuck in quarantine for weeks, or drop your pax and leave. Does anyone have a clever alternative solution?

Russian alternates. Is anyone still using Russian airport for ETOPS alternates? Most folk seem to be saying no. We discuss some other options in more detail, including lesser known PADK/Adak Island and PASY/Shemya. We also talk about Part 91 ops and risk tolerance when ETOPS doesn't apply.

A new mystery - where do you actually need to call in in advance? Where have you been that doesn't match the AIP? China, Myanmar, Pakistan, Iran seem to still want you to... basically any of the ADIZ.

Opsquiz!

Congrats to the reigning ruler who now has a two in a row streak and will shortly claim his prize - his own little piece of Scotland. *As a taster, here is the toughest question from this week: If you are talking to Shanwick on HF, who are you actually talking to?*

As always, the team is 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!

Nepal's New International Airport

OPSGROUP Team
1 June, 2022



A second international airport has officially opened in Nepal. Here is the lowdown on it.

Introduce us.

It is called **VNBW/Gautam Buddha**, and it is located in Bhairahawa, approximately 250km west of VNKT/Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu.

The airport was officially inaugurated on **April 22, 2022** but won't see any international flights until May 16. It isn't entirely new – an old airport was located here, and the original runway now serves as a taxiway.

What's the lowdown on it?

The airport has a **9834' (3000m) runway** with a RNP approach to 10 and 28, and a VOR approach to runway 10 as well.

You're going to want to watch out for the high terrain which lies to the north of the airport. **The MSA is 9600'** in the northerly sector, and 7000' for the rest, all of which makes for some altitude restrictions on the way in and out.

The airport itself is relatively small – just a few stands of the international apron and a few on the domestic apron.

The airport is RFF 5.

It isn't a 24 hour airport though. The tower is only operational daily 0600-1845 local time (0015-1300z) and the general operational hours are Sunday-Thursday 1000-1700 local, 1000-1600 Wednesday and Friday 1000-1500.

Who can we talk to there?

We have a few contact details for you. Starting with the **general airport info:**

- Telephone: +977 71 507 110
- Email: gautambuddha_cao@caanepal.org.np

- Tower: 122.5
- AFTN: VNBWYDYX

There is an **agent based in Singapore** who can offer some support if you want to operate in:

- Telephone: +65 6592 7623
- Email: ops@aerogon.aero

Fuel is expected to be supplied by AEG, and they **only have Jet A1**.

Want some more info?

The AIP section for the aerodrome can be found here. It's valid today, but might not be tomorrow so don't use for operational purposes.

And they are building more...

Pokhara International Airport is expected to open later in 2022, offering connections to neighbouring countries whilst Nijgadh International Airport is expected to open sometime in 2025.