

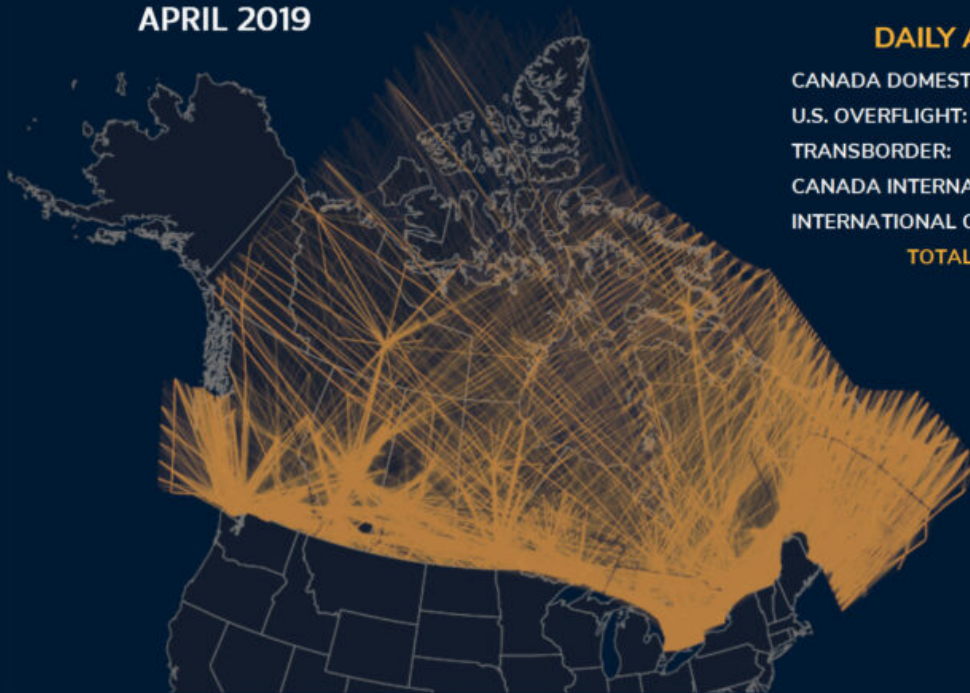
Increased ATC charges in Canada

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



Nav Canada has proceeded with its earlier proposal to **significantly increase ATC service charges**. The new fees were implemented on September 1. The price increase is to cover the loss of income caused by dwindling traffic levels during the Covid pandemic.

APRIL 2019



DAILY AVERAGES

CANADA DOMESTIC:	5,472
U.S. OVERFLIGHT:	1,818
TRANSBORDER:	1,370
CANADA INTERNATIONAL:	558
INTERNATIONAL OVERFLIGHT:	86
TOTAL	9,304

APRIL 2020



DAILY AVERAGES

CANADA DOMESTIC:	1,966
U.S. OVERFLIGHT:	493
TRANSBORDER:	149
CANADA INTERNATIONAL:	61
INTERNATIONAL OVERFLIGHT:	11
TOTAL	2,680

Terminal fees have increased by 30 percent; **en-route** by 26 percent; **North Atlantic Track** by 48 percent; and **international communications** by 41 percent. The good news is that the added cost to operators can be deferred over time to help absorb some of the impact.

Movement-Based Charges

Charge	Base Rates Prior to September 1, 2020	Base Rates Effective September 1, 2020
Terminal Charge	\$ 24.36	\$ 31.86
Enroute Charge (including Overflight)	\$ 0.03008	\$ 0.03802
NAT	\$ 155.03	\$ 230.22
International Communications		
Data Link	\$ 19.99	\$ 28.19
Voice	\$ 53.14	\$ 74.93

The **NAT** and **International Comms charges** are not really a big deal – those are just flat fees charged per flight. It's the **Terminal Charge** and **Enroute Charge** where the pain will most be felt; don't be fooled by the figures in the table above – these are just the base rates that get incorporated into bigger equations and multiplied by other factors (MTOW, distance flown, etc).

If you want to test your math skills and take a deep plunge into how these equations work, check out Nav Canada's Guide To Charges. But if not, here's a basic example of how the charges have changed:

Aircraft: B777-300

Route: CYUL/Montreal to LFPG/Paris

MTOW: 344.5 metric tonnes

Distance: 1,550 km

	Before 1st Sep 2020	After 1st Sep 2020
Oceanic Charges: NAT	\$155	\$230
Oceanic Charges: Datalink	\$20	\$28
Oceanic Charges: Voice	\$53	\$75
Enroute Charge	\$829	\$1047
Terminal Charge	\$2608	\$3411
TOTAL	\$3665	\$4801

NAV Canada is a private company and not government-funded, and is therefore entirely reliant on the fees it charges to operators. And since most of its costs are fixed, it appears there wasn't much alternative than to increase these fees, given the huge drop in air traffic over the past few months.

You can view the full schedule of revised fees here:

ANNOUNCEMENT OF REVISED SERVICE CHARGES

AUGUST 2020

GENERAL

NAV CANADA hereby announces revised service charges, pursuant to Section 37 of the *Civil Air Navigation Services Commercialization Act*, S.C. 1996, c. 20 (ANS Act). This Announcement sets out the revisions in charges that apply to four categories of air navigation charges: (i) Terminal, (ii) Enroute, (iii) North Atlantic Enroute, and (iv) International Communications. These revised charges will become effective on September 1, 2020 except where otherwise indicated. All other service charges provisions not amended by this Announcement remain in effect.

Pursuant to Section 42 of the ANS Act, persons wishing to appeal these revisions may do so by making an application to the Canadian Transportation Agency. The application must be filed within 30 days after the filing of this Announcement with the Agency. An appeal may only be made on one or more of the grounds set out in Section 43 of the ANS Act.

This Announcement consists of three sections:

- (1) Revision to Service Charge Rates;
- (2) Implementation of the Revised Service Charges; and
- (3) Modification to Terms and Conditions.

Jetpack Hazard at LAX!

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



Mystery in LA! There were two separate reports of **a man in a jetpack flying uncomfortably close to arrivals** at KLAX/Los Angeles on Sunday evening. The airborne offender was spotted by jets who were on approach at 3000 feet, and estimated to be at a distance of 300 yards. Unsurprisingly, he or she successfully evaded authorities and their identity remains unknown...

Listen to the actual radio transmissions between the pilot and the tower here:

<https://ops.group/blog/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Pilot-landing-at-LAX-reports-guy-in-jetpack-flying-near-plane6-Mp4-Video-640x360-Https-.mp4>

American Flight 1997: "Tower, American 1997, we just passed a guy in a jetpack."

Tower: "American 1997, OK, thank you. Were they off to your left or right side?"

American Flight 1997: "Off the left side, maybe 300 yards or so, about our altitude."

Fox 11 reported a Skywest pilot also confirmed the sighting:

Skywest Flight: "We just saw the guy passing by us in the jetpack."

Then the tower alerted an incoming Jet Blue flight to the reported hazard:

Tower: "Jet Blue 23, use caution, a person in a jetpack reported 300 yards south of the LA final at about 3,000 feet, 10 mile final."

Jet Blue 23: "Jet Blue 23, we heard and we are definitely looking."

Another pilot chimed in: "Only in LA." ☐

At the time of the sighting, it was still light with plenty of visibility. There are a number of jetpack-like models out there on the market, but all have very limited range, and so some reports have suggested this was possibly some sort of drone that was made to look like a jetpack. Or a small helicopter. Or a flying car. Or some guy in a lawn chair with helium balloons tied to it (ok, probably not this one!)

Regardless of the specific technology, **this incident is concerning** – particularly given that the airspace around LAX is some of the **busiest in the US**, and that the craft was flying at the **same altitude** as the aircraft as it was making its approach to the airport. The FAA has reportedly referred the incident over to the LAPD for investigation.

Yves “Jetman” Rossi hasn’t accounted-for-his-whereabouts-on-the-night-of-the-crime yet. But we can probably rule him out, as his flights normally take place in highly controlled environments and in airspace clear of any other traffic. LAX really isn’t his scene – he prefers the Swiss Alps.

Update on GA/BA flight requirements to the Bahamas

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



With the lockdowns and flight bans in Grand Bahama and New Providence **now at an end**, all islands of the Bahamas with Airports of Entry have re-opened to international private and charter flights. Prior approval is required – send your request to covid19@bcaa.com and COVID19INTLTRAVEL@bahamas.gov.bs.

Here’s the lowdown on ops to the Bahamas right now:

Quarantine

Quarantine rules are changing from September 1. A 14-day quarantine will still be mandatory for all travellers, but they are now allowed to spend it in their own accommodation – a private residence, rental property, hotel or private/chartered yacht, all are considered quarantine facilities.

When quarantine is finished, anyone who wishes to stay must agree to be tested again. It is worth noting that you can leave the Bahamas at any point, as long as you notify authorities first.

Covid test

All travellers must obtain a negative RT/PCR Covid that is less than 5 days old before flying and apply for a Travel Health Visa which can take up to three days to process. Once in the country, all arrivals will be

monitored by the 'Hubbcat App' on their phone.

Crew arriving to pick up passengers only, cargo and courier flights who are staying with their plane, military and emergency medical flights must obtain the Travel Health Visa.

If crew will be in the country for less than 24hrs, they need to quarantine in the hotel but do not need proof a Covid test.

Some OPSGROUP member reports indicate that the Bahamas Travel Health Visa is not working properly, and will not complete the application process. So expect delays for a Health Visa until their systems are fully functional. Submit the form at least 24-48 hours prior to arrival. An automated response will be provided upon completion, only those who receive a green color-coded response can travel. It is essential that travellers present proof of confirmation upon arrival in their destination.

Hours of operation

Hours of airport operations are reduced, and prior approval for after-hours operations is required. A call before flying is strongly recommended. Fees for after-hours ops, restrictions to curfews, and limited availability of hotel rooms are additional considerations.

Local handling agent Odyssey Aviation are open as follows (requests for after-hours operations will be reviewed on a case by case basis):

MYNN/Nassau

Email: info.mynn@odysseyaviation.com

Opening hours: 0700-1800 local (1100-2200z)

MYEF/Exuma

Email: exuma@odysseyaviation.com

Opening hours: 0800-1700 local (1200-2100z)

MYSM/San Salvador

Email: info.mysm@odysseyaviation.com

Opening hours: 0800-1700 local (1200-2100z)

MYEM/Governor's Harbour

Email: frontdeskeuthera@odysseyaviation.com

Opening hours: 0800-1700 local (1200-2100z)

MYER/Rock Sound

Email: frontdeskeuthera@odysseyaviation.com

Opening hours: 0800-1700 local (1200-2100z)

Where to look for latest updates

For updates to the rules, the **Bahamas official page** is here, but it tends not to get updated very quickly after new announcements from the government. **The US Embassy** keep a dedicated page on the Bahamas updated here, but that can sometimes lag behind a bit too. The most up-to-date source seems to be the one published by **the UK FCO**, which you can view here.

Odyssey Aviation also posts the latest updates on requirements and changes for Private Aviation on their Facebook page, and check out the **Association of Bahamas Marinas** website too – they work closely with the authorities and are often faster at getting their info out than other government entities!

Oh, and **OPSGROUP** too ☐ – the quickest way to get all the latest info we know on something is to head

over to the **#george** channel in Slack. George is our friendly Ops-Bot. Ask him something, and he'll dig into the OPSGROUP vault to see what the group knows. He understands a whole load of commands: permits, weather, ICAO codes, airport names, countries, keyword searches. If you're still stuck for an answer, ask other members in the group in the **#questions** channel, or shoot us an email and we'll see what we can dig up.

Massachusetts exempts 4 more states from quarantine requirement

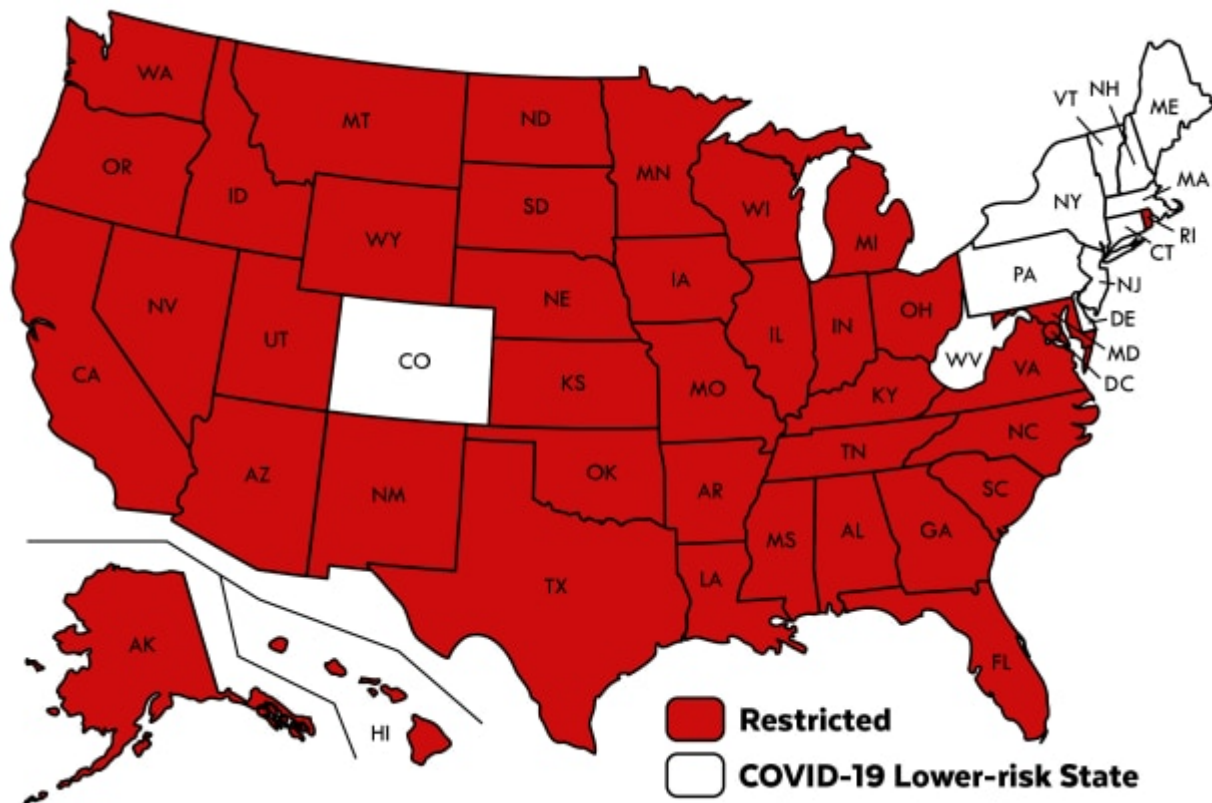
David Mumford
8 September, 2020



Massachusetts has added four new states to its quarantine exemption list. Passengers from Colorado, Delaware, Pennsylvania and West Virginia **no longer have to self-isolate on arrival or present a negative Covid test.**

A reminder of how the rules work there: Anyone arriving from a “high-risk” state must either present a PCR Covid test that is less than 72 hours old or enter quarantine for 14 days, while there are no requirements for travellers from “low-risk” states. There’s a travel form to fill in too.

Aviation is considered an essential business by the U.S. Federal Government. The guidance issued by Massachusetts states that flight crew are “exempt from quarantine while they are commuting to or from or while at work”, but goes on to say that “for the first 14-days after arrival, when the worker is not at work or commuting to work they must quarantine.”



The classifications change frequently, so be sure to check the latest info on the official government site.

EU delays alcohol testing on ramp checks to 2021



The EU had some changes planned for Ramp Checks and Pilot Mental Health which were due to take place on 14 Aug 2020, but these have now been delayed to 14 Feb 2021.

The three big changes

1. EASA regulations will be updated requiring **alcohol testing during ramp checks**. This will take effect across all SAFA participating countries. However, a lot of countries have already started doing this anyway: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, UK, and Singapore. In most places, local authorities have the power to carry out breathalyzer tests at any time – not as part of ramp checks. For more on SAFA ramp checks, see our article.
2. All pilots working for European airlines will have access to **mental health support programs**.
3. European airlines will perform a **psychological assessment of pilots** before the start of employment.

Despite the delay to the implementation date, it's still something worth looking at now. The UK CAA has published a Safety Alert with the following recommendations:

1. *Operators are strongly recommended to continue to introduce Flight Crew Support Programmes as required by the Regulation and to maintain existing programmes despite the deferred implementation date.*
2. Operators should also consider the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on cabin crew and other safety-sensitive personnel as well as flight crew. It remains essential that senior management of operators, mental health professionals, trained peers and staff representatives work together to enable self-declaration, referral, advice, counselling and/or treatment, where necessary, in cases where there may be a potential safety issue resulting from a decrease in medical fitness.
3. Additionally, operators are encouraged to use this delay to develop their policies on the prevention and detection of the misuse of psychoactive substances and on the psychological assessment of flight crew.

Unreliable Airspeed and the Hidden Risks of Aircraft Storage

Chris Shieff
8 September, 2020



The dramatic effect that Covid-19 has had on the aviation industry has **grounded an unprecedented number of aircraft**. They have been placed into storage whilst the world waits to recover. The pandemic emerged without warning, and some operators were likely not prepared for what was coming.

Now travel bans are lifting, airports are reopening, and airlines are **scrambling to return aircraft to the skies**.

EASA recently released a disturbing Safety Information Bulletin. There has been an alarming trend in the number of aircraft experiencing unreliable speed and altitude indications during first flights after storage, caused by **contaminated air data systems**.

The result has been multiple rejected take offs and airborne returns. Most of the events have been caused by nesting insects in the pitot static system - **even after covers were installed**.

Modern flight instruments provide large amounts of information to crew with great precision, while automation makes flying transport category aircraft almost routine. Flight envelope protections and aural/tactile warnings keep us safe even in most abnormal scenarios.

At the heart of all of this is the **air data computer (ADC)** - a small piece of hardware that **needs accurate information from outside of the aircraft to work correctly**. They are the "Achille's heel" of modern electronic flight information systems. In a nutshell, these small computers obtain and process information from the aircraft's pitot static system, and supply critical systems with information such as airspeed, altitude and temperature.

Like all computers, they don't think for themselves. They are only as accurate as the information they receive. So, when the pitot static system is contaminated, they can only respond to what they sense. **They can't look out the window**.

History has shown that unreliable airspeed events are dangerous:

February 6, 1996. Birgenair Flight 301, a Boeing 757, departed Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic, on a routine flight. During the climb out, the Captain's airspeed indicator began to increase dramatically. The autopilot reacted as designed, and increased pitch to reduce airspeed, while the auto-throttles reduced power.

In the meantime, the co-pilot's ASI indicated a dangerously slow airspeed which was decreasing. Almost

simultaneously, an overspeed warning was generated. The autopilot reached the limits of its programming and disengaged. The stick-shaker activated, warning the confused crew that the aircraft was flying critically close to a stall.

The Captain responded by applying full thrust. The excessively high angle of attack resulted in insufficient airflow to match demand and the left-hand engine flamed out. The right-hand engine developed full power and the aircraft entered a spin. Moments later the aircraft became inverted, before impacting the Atlantic Ocean. The three pilots had 43,000 hours of experience between them.



A Mud Dauber Wasp entering the pitot tube of a 737.

*The cause of the accident was a **blockage of a single pitot tube**. The likely culprit was the black and yellow mud dauber – a small wasp known to nest in artificial cylindrical structures. **The aircraft hadn't flown in 20 days.***

The threat of similar events is greatly increased by **improper storage techniques** and **rushing to return to service**.

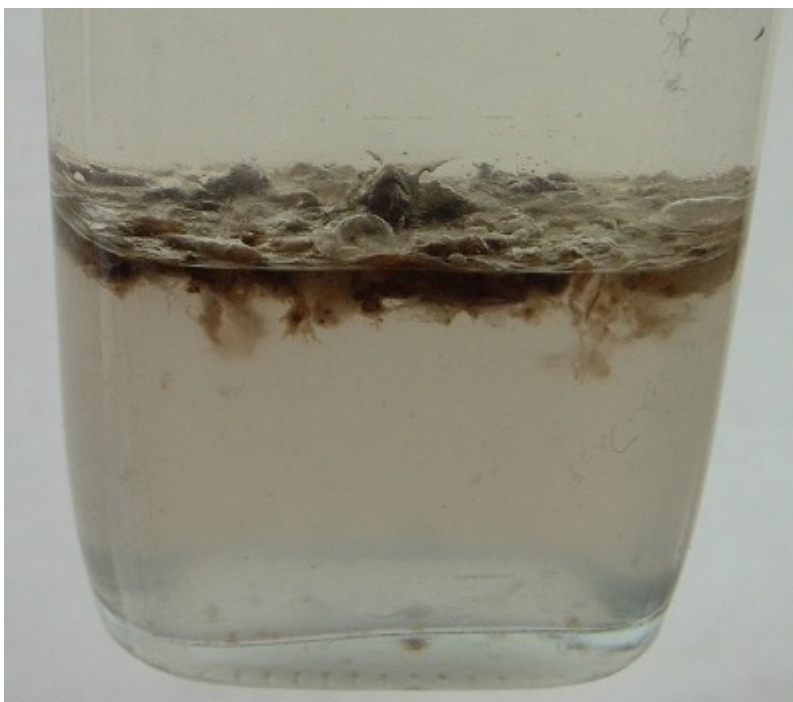
Getting aircraft flying again is a **complex process** and presents **major risks**. It is up to operators to ensure adequate procedures are in place to accomplish it safely. They must anticipate the difficulties and rapid adaptation to internal procedures that this entails.

Don't know where to start? We don't blame you. Thankfully, EASA has published guidance which can help mitigate some of these risks. Here is a brief rundown of their recommendations:

- **Assemble your A-team.** Everyone needs to be onboard. Flight operations, CAMOs,

maintenance organisations, type certificate holders and aviation authorities are your first port of call. Find out what needs to be done for each individual tail number and communicate with human resources for manpower, supply chain for the tools, and flight ops for hangar spacing and crewing. Think about who you need to talk too and get started early.

- **Similar aircraft stored in similar conditions will invariably behave in the same way.** Safe return to service begins with **good data**. It is vital that defects are reported and linked. If a nest is found in an aircraft's pitot tube, the odds are there will be many more. The data needs to be analysed, and operating procedures (**such as additional checks**) need to be changed to reflect it.
- **Storage Procedures.** It is possible that aircraft were not fully stored in accordance with manufacturer procedures. Implement a **rock-solid audit programme** to make sure things are being done properly. EASA recommend extra inspections, ground runs and flight testing of **at least ten percent** of aircraft before release to service.
- **Storage Environment** The storage environment presents significant hazards to airworthiness. Insects, sand, salt, dust and humidity can all damage aircraft. There may not have been enough protective covers to go around. Was there biocide in the fuel? Is it even useable? It is advised that extra checks be carried out on aircraft parts that are susceptible to contamination, **particularly pitot/static systems**. Get additional support to add those inspections.



Jet Fuel contaminated with bacterial growth.

- **Remote Storage** This presents unique challenges. Engineering services may be limited, and staff may become overwhelmed with the large number of aircraft waiting to become airworthy. You may need to send additional manpower or require ferry permits to move aircraft around. Is enough equipment on hand to complete extra checks?



A Boeing 777 in deep storage in the Australian outback.

- **Time.** Nothing happens in a day. **Commercial time pressure is a major risk factor.** Getting an airplane airworthy can cause delays and rushing has a profound effect on safety. Plan ahead and make sure your deadlines are realistic. Communicate them with your staff to ensure confidence.
- **Inappropriate decision making.** This is hazardous, particularly with unfamiliar procedures. Storage on this scale has never happened before and **answers may not be in existing manuals.** Key personnel may not be immediately available to help. Remind staff not to act alone and create a team responsible for making decisions in this challenging scenario
- **Limited staff experience.** Remember that **this has never happened before** and you may need the help of staff who are new to your organisation. Make sure they are aware of internal procedures that they need to know beforehand. It is a good idea to **properly supervise them** and assess their work.



Big teams: It takes a lot of people to get aircraft back in the air.

- **The elephant in the room. Covid-19.** The virus has changed the way we can work. Staff can't move around as freely and there may be restrictions on how many people can work together. You may need to plan ahead and establish isolated teams who work remotely if practical.
- **Overdue maintenance.** Airworthiness directives, MELs, routine maintenance, inspections, ground runs, test flights. There is a lot to do. Start with comprehensive **airworthiness reviews** of each individual tail number.
- They will be under the same pressure that you are. Communicate with them ahead of time and **check their availability**.
- **Pilot training.** It is likely they are uncurrent, and operating aircraft which have just come out of long-term storage. **Simulator training should be relevant to the challenges they will face in the current operating environment.** Consider critical systems vulnerable to damage in storage and the affect that these might have on the first flight. In other words, expect the unexpected and provide them with the ability to **react quickly and with confidence**.

Covid-19 has created a lot of unknowns in our industry. Amongst the noise of statistics and global media, it is important to **remain vigilant** to the risks specific to aviation that the virus has created. Most of us will have heard by now that aviation itself is not inherently dangerous, but terribly unforgiving of complacency. Never has this been more important than when returning 75% of the world's fleet from storage to the skies.

New Covid testing rules in Iceland

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



There are new rules for **all crew and passengers** from August 19 regarding Covid testing on arrival.

The rules for crew have not been officially published yet, but local handlers have confirmed that if crew stay for more than 24 hours **they will need to take a Covid test.**

The process is different for passengers – all arriving pax will be able to choose between 14 days of self-quarantine, or a Covid test at the airport. However, those who choose to be tested will **still have to enter self-isolation** and be retested again 4-5 days later before they can be released. This was not previously the case. The rule applies **regardless of whether or not their first test was negative.**

All passengers must also complete a pre-registration form before travelling at covid.is. Iceland's borders are currently open to all EU/Schengen States in addition to those countries on the EU's "safe list."

Bamako Airport reopens following military coup

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



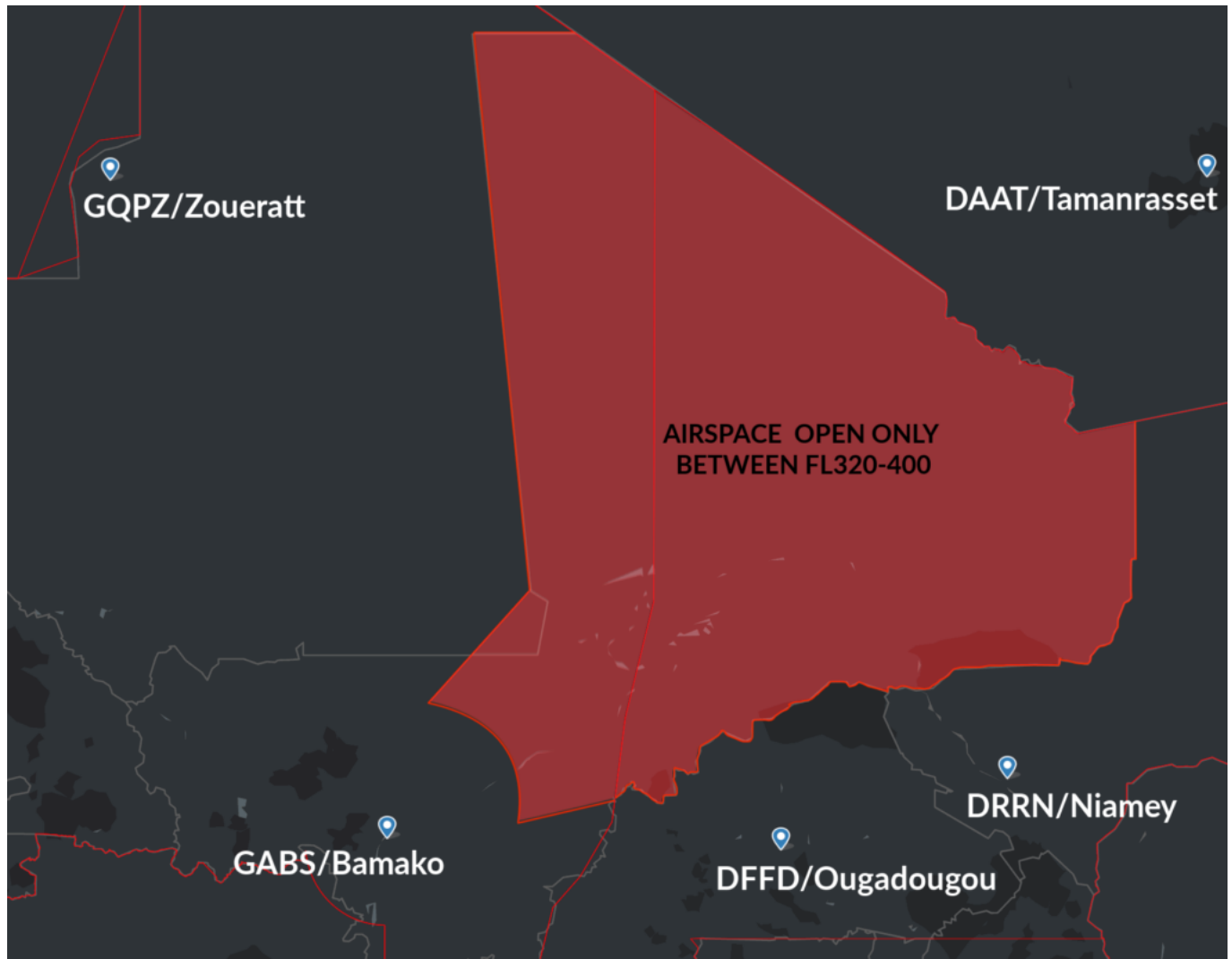
Bamako Airport has **reopened** following last week's military coup which overthrew the government, though monitor G000/Dakar FIR and GABS/Bamako Airport Notams for further – **it may change**.

The Bamako TMA (which sits under the G000/Dakar FIR) remains operational with **overflights unaffected**.

ICAO is actively monitoring and ensuring that there is a timely flow of information on continued airspace/ATC service availability. MedAire have given us a local situation update: with the continuing uncertainty they **recommend against overnights** until things settle. There is likely to be a high demand for emergency/evac flights in the coming days, and they recommend those to be quick in and out for now.

Meanwhile, the Northern Mali conflict continues, and there have been no improvements in stability. The US, Germany, France and the UK all have **airspace warnings** in place, advising to operate FL250/260 or higher, and avoiding GATB, GAGO, and GAKL airports. We would suggest, as usual, that a higher level closer to FL300 is more sensible.

Senegal and Niger control the airspace over Mali, and they have long-standing Notams (published under the G000/Dakar and DRRR/Niamey FIRs) warning that **you can only fly between FL320-400 through the entire airspace in Mali north of the GABS/Bamako TMA** due to military ops across the region. Here's what that looks like:

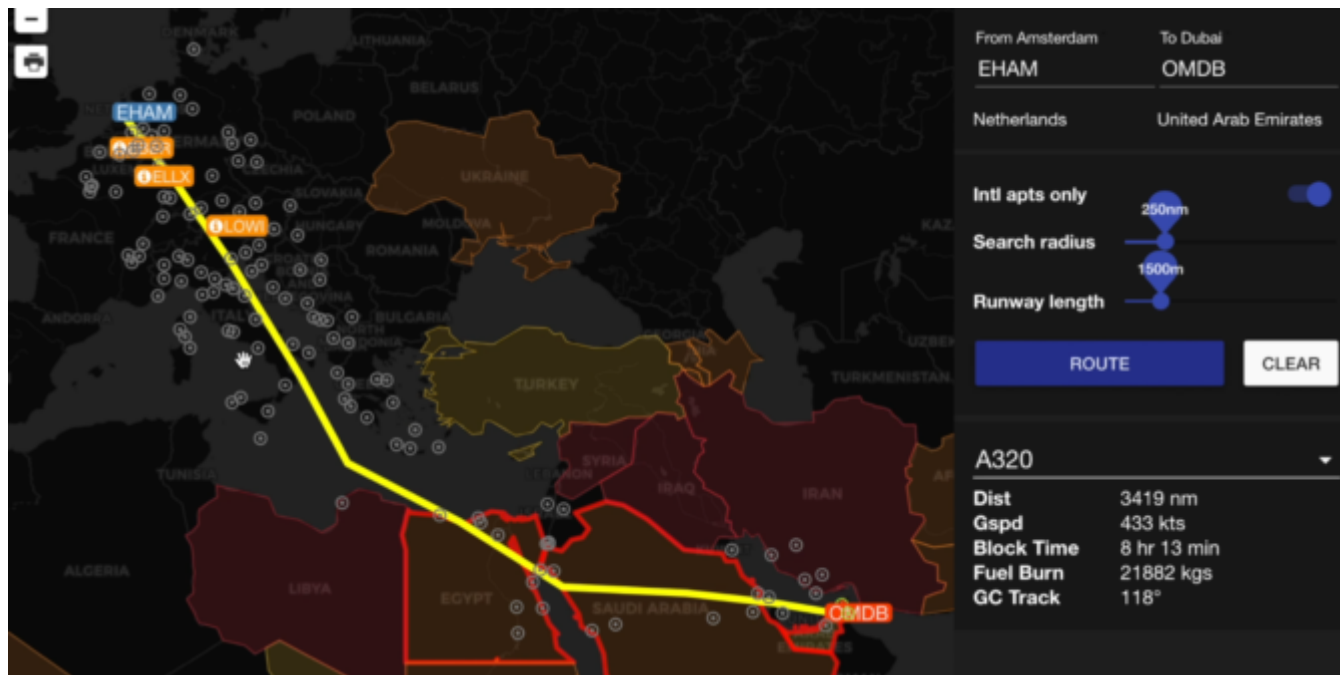


The UK recommend against all travel to northern Mali, and against all but essential travel to the south of the country, including Bamako. The US advice is more straight-forward: **do not travel to Mali** due to COVID-19, crime, terrorism, and kidnapping.

For more info on operating in this region, check out SafeAirspace.net

GoCrow planning map - 2020 update!

Mark Zee
8 September, 2020



Hi again members!

There's a new version of **GoCrow** – the OpsGroup route analysis and planning map...

There's some cool new stuff:

- **SafeAirspace warnings** are now on the map, you'll see them very clearly. Click on a country for more info.
- All OpsGroup **Alerts** will show on the route
- **Permit information** is fed directly from the Permit Tool in your dashboard
- New underlays – all kinds of maps
- You can print a **route briefing**.

All of this is still in beta, there are still a few bugs and some design issues to work out, but it's pretty solid. Have a play with it! **Watch the video** above to get a better idea of what it can do.

GoCrow is here: <https://ops.group/dashboard/gocrow/>

Comments welcome!

Jobs: our shared spreadsheet

Mark Zee
8 September, 2020



Jobs

Share the open positions you know about

Flying jobs

Ops jobs

Choose one to get started

Hi all! This is a shared document that all OPSGROUP members can edit. If you know of a position not listed, just add it. Very simple concept! Just make sure this is an **active position** that is **available now**.

Hi members!

A very simple **new little thing** in OPSGROUP is now alive ...

The idea is wonderfully easy. **It's a shared Google Sheet**. All group members have access to add and edit.

If you are looking for a new Flying or Ops job, browse the jobs listed.

If you know of a Flying or Ops job, add it ...



Jobs

Share the open positions you know about

Flying jobs

Ops jobs

Choose one to get started

Hi all! This is a shared document that all OPSGROUP members can edit. If you know of a position not listed, just add it. Very simple concept! Just make sure this is an **active position** that is **available now**.

There are a handful of jobs in there to get us started, but we need your help to add more.

Got one to add? Jump in and add that job. Just make sure it's an active position available now, and not some kind of hiring agency resume-collector ... ☐

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Country	Location	Company	Job Title	<i>Ops jobs</i>	How to apply	Apply link	Date added	Notes
2	USA	Florida	XOJet	Flight Ops Analyst	Flight Ops Analyst (FOA) is our entry level operations position in the Operations Control Center (OCC) the position does require an FAA Dispatch License but we do not currently release our flights from a regulatory nature. That	Web	https://jobs.jobvite	Aug 1, 2020	
3	USA	Quincy, MA	Magellan Jets	Trip Manager	Hybrid customer service/operations position. Flight Support Trip Manager will be responsible for not only executing the day to day flight operations on behalf of Magellan Jets' clients but also delivery exceptional service and care to a	Web	https://magellanjets	Aug 18, 2020	

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Country	Location	Company	Job Title	<i>Flying jobs</i>	How to apply	Apply link	Date added	Notes
2	Germany		MHS Aviation	CL604 FO	MHS Aviation, Germany. F/O on CL604.	Web	https://www.mhs-	Aug 1, 2020	
3	USA		AbbVie	G600 Capt	We're looking for two sharp professionals to join the Corporate Aviation team at AbbVie. These openings are to support the Q1 2021 addition of a G600 to our current fleet of three G550s and one S76D.	Web	https://careers.ab	Aug 1, 2020	Position filled
4	USA	California	NASA Armstrong Flight Research Center (AFRC)	ER-2 Research Pilot	ER-2(U2) & Boeing 747SP, DC-8, Gulfstream III, etc.	Web	https://careers-13	Aug 18, 2020	
5	USA	Portsmouth, NH + 32 bases	PlaneSense	PC-12 Capt & FO's	PlaneSense is hiring! PC-12 first officers and direct entry captains. Full time Captains have their choice of 32 reporting bases across the U.S., including our headquarters in Portsmouth, NH (PSM). Part time Captains have the choice of	Web	https://www.plane	Aug 18, 2020	
6	USA	Nashville	Jet Linx	SIC Citation Sovereign	Jet Linx operations are under FAR part 135 and 91. Preferred PIC applicants will have at least 3,000 hours of total flight time, 1,500 Pilot in Command time and 250 hours as Pilot in Command time in this aircraft type. Initial or Recurrent 142	Web	http://jobs.jobvite	Aug 18, 2020	

And that's it! Hope you find it useful, we'd love any feedback or suggestions for improvement.

Have a lovely week!

Flying to the EU: Everything you never wanted to know about customs regulations

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



If you are a **non-EU operator**, you are probably already using the **Temporary Admission customs regulation** when flying to the European Union – whether you know it or not!

It's always been generally accepted that you trigger the use of this regulation **just by filing a flight plan** and crossing the external border into the EU, but in July 2020 the EU Customs Code was updated to **explicitly ratify this practice**.

As we were looking into this latest change and what it meant for operators, we quickly got that sinking feeling you get when you realise you're about to be engulfed by a world of bafflement and overwhelming complexity. **EU customs rules and regulations will do that to you.**

So we asked our pals over at OPMAS to break it down for us. **What is the Temporary Admission? How does it work? Who does it apply to?** What follows below is their quick overview, giving you the essentials of what you need to know in less than 10 minutes.

To start, watch their quick explainer video, and to continue your journey check out their more detailed info below.

The Basic Rule: Any aircraft must come under customs control

Any aircraft flying into the EU will fly under EU customs control either using the Temporary Admission (TA) regulation or full importation. There are no other options. If the aircraft is not already fully imported, the aircraft will automatically be considered as flying under the TA regulation even though the owner or operator have not themselves taken any action to activate the TA regulation or realize that their aircraft is actually flying under the TA regulation. Non-compliance with the TA regulation will most likely activate a direct payment of the VAT (ranging 15-27%) and customs duty (7.7%).

KNOW MORE: See what is actually needed when arriving within the EU?

Who can use Temporary Admission?

Temporary Admission (hereafter TA) is meant to allow EU outsiders, which means that the aircraft is both owned/registered/operated/based outside the EU (all criteria must be fulfilled), to be able to roam freely within the EU for a certain period. TA cannot be used by EU insiders where the aircraft is either owned/registered/operated/based and mainly used inside the EU (just one criterion must be fulfilled). Mandatorily, EU insiders must use full importation.

Advantages

Most EU outsiders will practically have the same flying privileges as given under full importation as the few limitations do not influence the typical flight and will even give the typical operator more flexibility and extra advantages, such as: unrestricted personal/family/guest use without consequences; and no tax, VAT (Value Added Tax) or duty liability anywhere. Many of these points are often a problem and burden when using full importation.

KNOW MORE: See the quick overview: What you can and cannot do

Disadvantages

There are a few limitations:

1. Flights where the aircraft will be used for passenger transport subject to an individual and personal ticket fee or direct payment
2. Commercial freight items are not allowed

The below descriptions also include other matters that must be handled the correct way.

The basic preconditions for EU outsiders

TA can only be used if the aircraft is owned by and registered to a non-EU entity and further operated by a non-EU operator. The aircraft must also have its normal fixed base outside the EU. The term 'non-EU' relates to anything other than the 27 EU member states and related customs areas as the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands (at least until Brexit has become a reality).

KNOW MORE: The 27 European Union member states and special member state territories

Private or commercial use

The TA regulation distinguishes between *private use* and *commercial use*; where *private use* in general offers more privileges and flexibility than *commercial use*. There has been some earlier confusion about these forms of usage under TA, but the 2014 working paper from EU Customs Code Committee gave some clarification of these definitions where upon the modern use of TA is based. This description only describes *private use* of an aircraft.

KNOW MORE: See the quick overview: Private or commercial use of aircraft

When do the restrictions start?

Any EU outsider can fly to one EU destination without any consequences, if the next following flight is to a destination outside the EU. The restrictions are only related to internal flights within the EU.

What about the VAT and the customs duty?

Both the VAT and the customs duty is suspended as long the preconditions for TA is fulfilled. A violation will activate a full payment of these taxes.

KNOW MORE: See the quick overview: Customs duty and end-use exemption

When is TA used?

Any aircraft flying within the EU must somehow come under EU customs control using either TA or full importation, there are no other options. So, if the aircraft is not already fully imported, the aircraft will automatically be considered as flying under TA.

KNOW MORE: See the quick overview: What to do?

When is TA activated?

The use of TA regulation is activated (knowingly or not) every time an un-imported aircraft crosses EU's external border on an entry and is terminated again when the same aircraft is crossing the EU's external border on the way to a non-EU destination.

The grey zones - owned by?

Most aircraft used or indirectly owned by a high net-worth individual are directly owned by non-EU SPV. This is basically fine as long as this individual does not have their official place of residence or their centre d'affaires within the EU or is registered as a tax resident.

The grey zones - EU entities involved?

We recommend that no EU entities are part-owners or a part of a leasing structure (like a sublessee) for an aircraft using TA.

The grey zones - EU base, long-term parking or not?

The aircraft must have its fixed base outside the EU and spend the majority of time outside the EU, but certain facts can indicate that the operator or aircraft has become 'resident/domiciled' in an EU airport even though an official home base is established outside the EU. The TA regulation cannot be used as a circumvention of the import for free circulation by predominately using the aircraft within EU as opposite to outside the EU.

KNOW MORE: What is the limit for multiple continuous stays at the same place?

Which entity is actually 'using' the aircraft?

The users of the aircraft are actually the pilots (read: the operator of the aircraft) according to the 2014 working paper from EU Customs Code Committee. Most lay persons would probably think that the user of an aircraft would be the owner entity or the passengers, but the pilots are actually considered to be the users in a customs context.

Which entity must be the declarant?

The declarant must always be the entity who is truly operating (physically piloting) the aircraft. No other entities are allowed to be the declarant. If the aircraft is managed, the management company is normally considered to be the correct declarant in customs terms. Please be aware, that the 'operational control' definition related to the use of TA in the EU is not the same as the FAA's definition which means that the typical entity with the FAA's understanding of operational control is often not the correct declarant when using TA in the EU.

KNOW MORE: See the quick overview: Entity responsible for flight in the European Union

KNOW MORE: Which entity is allowed to be the declarant?

How can the aircraft be used?

The aircraft can be used for any business or non-business purposes (as Part 91) according to the 2014 working paper from the EU Customs Code Committee.

KNOW MORE: See the quick overview: Aircraft usage

EU resident passengers on flights within the EU

EU resident passengers are allowed according to the 2014 working paper from the EU Customs Code Committee.

EU resident pilots on flights within the EU

EU resident pilots are allowed according to the 2014 working paper from the EU Customs Code Committee but only if the pilots are directly employed by the declarant.

Non-EU resident passengers and pilots on flights within the EU

There are no restrictions.

Does the owner of the aircraft have to be on board or present in the EU?

According to Danish interpretation and the 2014 working paper from the EU Customs Code Committee, an aircraft under TA is used by the person who acts as the pilot and not by the passengers. Accordingly, the presence of the aircraft owner/registered party is not needed in most cases unless the aircraft is occasionally borrowed and used by an EU-resident person, who acts as the pilot. This rule is meant for smaller aircraft without hired pilots. Furthermore, the EU Customs Code Committee have also confirmed in one of its earlier minutes/summary records that any restrictions for EU residents only refers to the pilots on board.

What is a non-EU aircraft registration?

Aircraft registered in the 27 EU member states and related customs areas are not eligible for TA, but any other aircraft registration will work. This disqualifies aircraft registrations from the Isle of Man (M) and the

Channel Islands (2/ZJ) at least until Brexit has become a reality.

KNOW MORE: See the quick overview: Aircraft registration

KNOW MORE: SURVEY 5: Does the nationality of the aircraft registration matter?

Period of stay within the EU

A stay is limited to a maximum of 6 months per entry. Multiple continuous stays are allowed as long as the aircraft is roaming around within the EU. We will advise any operator to check whether or not the preconditions for TA are still fulfilled, if the aircraft often tends to stay at the same location – or stay close to or more than 50% of the time within the EU. Please also see the above paragraphs about grey zones for *owner entity* and *base*.

KNOW MORE: See the quick overview: Period of stay in the European Union

KNOW MORE: SURVEY 7: How is the 6 months period of stay practically interpreted?

Demand for documentation?

The operator must always be able to document the flight pattern within the EU.

How to document a flight?

A form called the ‘Supporting document for an oral customs declaration’ can be used to document the entry and the exit. The operator should also document the flight pattern within the EU with EUROCONTROL records and the operator’s own flight records. Furthermore, the operator should always have records of all relevant EUROCONTROL charges and a total flight list. The use of the ‘Supporting Document’ can be beneficial but is not mandatory.

KNOW MORE: BREAKING NEWS: See what is actually needed when arriving within the EU?

What is the function of the ‘Supporting Document’?

A customs stamp on the ‘Supporting Document’ only serves to acknowledge that the aircraft has arrived and/or eventually exited the EU. The stamp does not mean that customs have accepted any use or the aircraft set-up as TA compliant. It is a common misunderstanding that the use of this form gives the operator/aircraft some kind of free circulation status for the next 6 months or a *carte blanche* to fly freely within the EU without meeting any preconditions. Even though the form is used, the operator is still obligated to comply to the TA regulation continuously when flying within the EU.

What is the validity of the ‘Supporting Document’?

The form is only valid as long as the aircraft has not left the EU, and for a maximum of 6 months. A new form must be stamped upon the next entry (even though there is still some time left within the 6 month period). The 6 months mentioned here is the maximum stay of the specific entry whereupon the form is stamped (in customs terms = period for discharge). Again, it is a common misunderstanding that any future entries into the EU can be endorsed in advance by using this form.

KNOW MORE: Is a Supporting Document valid for one EU-trip or multiple EU-trips within 6 months?

Commercial group charters

This is allowed according to the 2014 working paper from the EU Customs Code Committee as long as the aircraft is used in the EU for passenger transportation without a ticket fee/direct payment. This means that a commercial group charter (as Part 135) is treated in customs terms as *private use* as long as the mentioned preconditions are met, even though the same flight is treated as *commercial use* according to the aviation regulators.

Traffic rights

Commercial non-EU operators will still need traffic rights where they are normally needed. A customs handling like an importation/admission will not influence any of the demands for traffic rights anywhere in the aviation regulation.

How to be ready to use TA?

Here’s what to do:

1. Check that the basic preconditions are fulfilled
2. Understand the limitations and subjects that must be handled correctly
3. Have the relevant paperwork ready on board the aircraft in order to document the correct use of TA
4. Instruct the pilots so that they are ready to handle a customs ramp check

How can an operator secure all positions?

OPMAS can help non-EU operators to check whether or not an aircraft operation is complying to the TA regulation. The important matters are simply to secure compliance and thereafter set-up a system to document that the preconditions for the TA regulation are fulfilled continuously and that the pilots have the correct paperwork ready for a customs ramp check.

Always ask first

Our advice has always been to ask the local tax authorities for a binding advance tax ruling prior to any importation/admission in order to eliminate any doubt about the outcome. All cases have different details and a binding advance tax ruling will also consider all new European Court of Justice (ECJ) judgements. Even if you have a fully working set-up, we believe, an importation/admission without a binding advance tax ruling from the EU member state into which the aircraft is to be imported, is too great a risk to take. Many of the above-mentioned points/uncertainties could easily be covered by simply asking and you should walk away from any service provider that refuses to provide a binding advance tax ruling.

Tax havens and the Paradise Papers

A few EU member states handle aircraft admission/importation differently. These states do not follow the EU standards or guidelines, and this is often sanctioned by their local tax/customs authorities in order to offer a better business environment or to create local gateways for certain industries. These jurisdictions are known to bend the rules in favor of local companies often by only implementing a light version of any new regulation or by simply ignoring or delaying the required implementation. The Paradise Papers have highlighted some of these EU tax havens. These jurisdictions and related industries will without any doubt have the full attention of several national and EU authorities in the future. We will see many changes and audits of the regulation in the future, thus no one should import an aircraft without a binding advance tax ruling.

Denmark as a jurisdiction

Denmark has the very best reputation both within the EU and worldwide and is the number one on the Transparency List over the least corrupt nations in the world. We are known always to implement all EU-directives promptly and 100% by the book without any bending of the rules in favor of local companies. Denmark is the only EU member state that is known to facilitate aircraft importation and admission for non-EU operators where the member state is not considered a tax haven.

Thanks to Frank Hansen at OPMAS for this post. To get in touch with OPMAS for more info on any of the above, contact: info@opmas.dk

The Lajes Lowdown: Atlantic Stopover and ETOPS Alternate

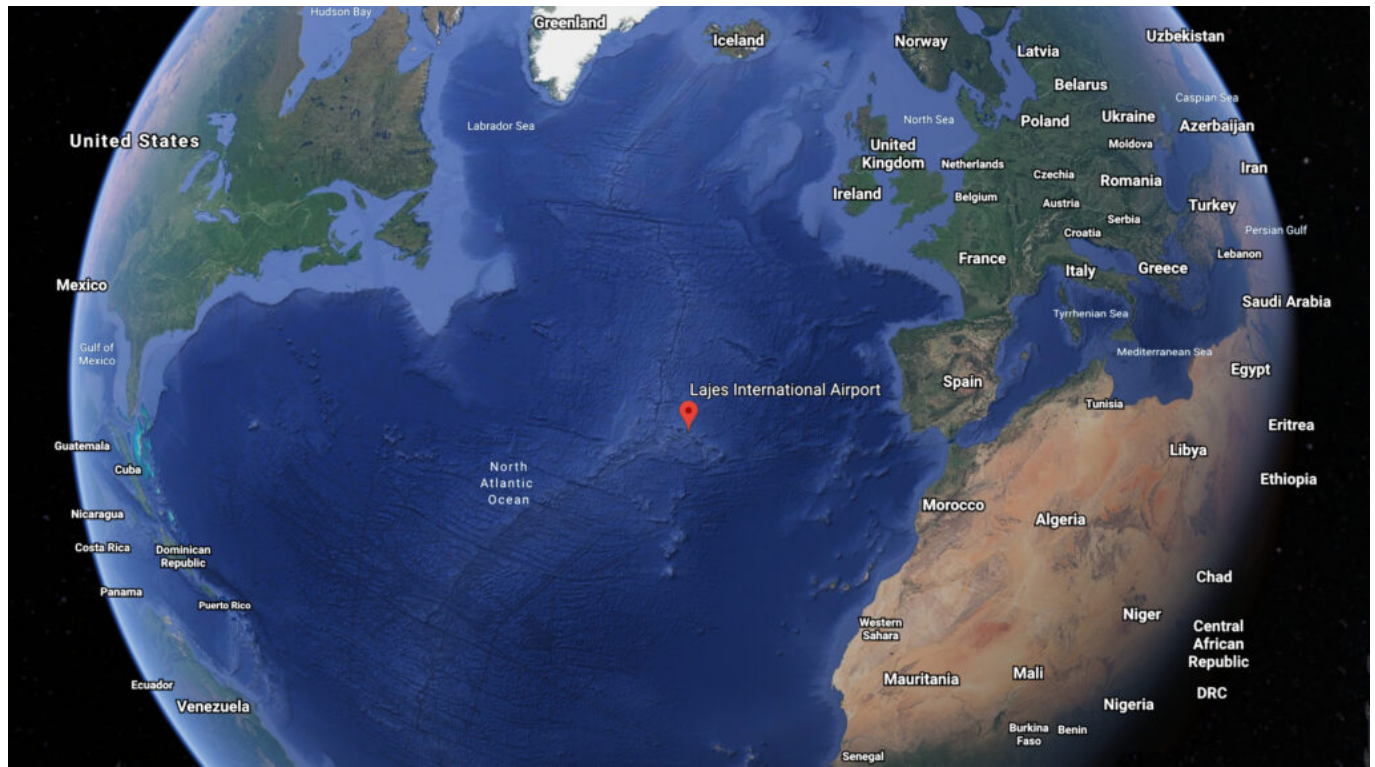
Chris Shieff

8 September, 2020



In 2001, Air Transat Flight 236, a heavily laden Airbus A330, developed a massive fuel leak midway across the Atlantic and lost power to both engines. It was hundreds of miles from land. The pilots managed to glide the stricken jet to an emergency landing at a lesser known air force base, Lajes, in the middle of the ocean. Its runway saved the lives of 306 people.

LPLA/Lajes is a large military airfield located in the Azores Islands – a Portuguese territory found midway across the Atlantic Ocean. It's nestled amongst the NAT Tracks, 1900nm east of New York City, and 800nm west of Lisbon.



LPLA/Lajes, 38°45'43"N 027°05'27"W.

LPLA/Lajes was approved for civilian use by ANAC (the Portuguese Aviation Authority) in 2018.

Since then, it has grown considerably in popularity as a **convenient stopover, refuelling point** and **ETOPs alternate airport** for aircraft crossing the Atlantic. Lajes is regularly used by a variety of operations including scheduled airline services, ferry flights, air ambulance, VIP and private traffic.

The Lajes Lowdown

It's long enough, and strong enough. The fully lit asphalt runway is 10,870 feet (3,330m) long and 164 feet (50m) wide and has no weight restriction.

It's fully IFR equipped. ILS approaches are available for landing in either direction and the runway is equipped with PAPI slope guidance and a Category 1 approach lighting system.



The ILS equipped Runway 33/15.

There's always someone home. The airport is open and ATC is on watch 24 hours a day. There is no curfew at night and landing fees remain competitive. RFF category 8 and emergency medical services are available around the clock, along with accurate weather forecasting. Santa Maria FIR will direct aircraft experiencing an emergency in their airspace to LPLA/Lajes.

Fuel is available. Jet A1 is available through Petrogal/Galp (a reputable Portuguese company) in partnership with WFS World Fuel Services, Total Aviation, AEG Fuels, US Government Air Card and AML Global. They will also happily accept cash and credit card payments.

It was good enough for the Space Shuttle. Lajes was used by NASA as an emergency landing site in the event of aborted shuttle launches. Emirates have also used Lajes as a primary alternate for their A380 aircraft crossing the Atlantic since they received approval in 2013. The USAF and NATO forces regularly use Lajes for large scale air exercises.

There's ample parking. It has a spacious ramp capable of accommodating the largest transport category aircraft in the world including the A380 and Antonov AN225.

It is an EU entry point. Customs and immigration are on hand to process entry to Europe, and the terminal has both Schengen and non-Schengen circulation areas.

It has all the usual amenities. A well-equipped terminal includes check in counters, dining, security, customs and immigration, lounges, ground handling and rental cars. The airport is located an easy twenty-minute drive from downtown where ample accommodation options exist for crew and passengers.



The civilian terminal building at LPLA/Lajes.

How do I land there?

To land at LPLA/Lajes **you need prior approval.**

The good news is that it is **really easy to get.** Your request will generally be processed within four hours by the Civilian Terminal Operations.

If it is just a **simple fuel stop** you need, refuelling at the airport is also now authorised with passengers onboard.

If you prefer to handle things yourself, you can apply directly here or call airport operations on +351 295 545 461.

However, there are several local handling agents who can take care of clearances, approval, fuel, lavatory servicing and catering for you:

GROUNDLINK

Phone: +351 217 923 750

Email: portugal@groundlink.pt

SATA AZORES AIRLINES

Phone: +351 295 540 033

Email: terklsp@sata.pt

By VHF radio: 131.700 MHZ

WEXJET SUPPORT
Phone: +351 218 701 025
Cell: +351 938 650 864
Email: lpla@wexjet.com

For fuel enquiries contact:

PETROGAL/GALP
Lisbon Office
Mr Joao Meneses
Phone: +351 217 240 739
Email: joao.c.meneses@galp.com

Terceira (local) Office
Mr Gilberto Pereira
Phone: +351 295 512 396
Email: galpair.lgs@mail.telepac.pt

Thanks to Miguel Santos for this post. Visit www.atlantis-lajes.com for more information.

Planning for “ATC Zero” events in Oceanic Airspace

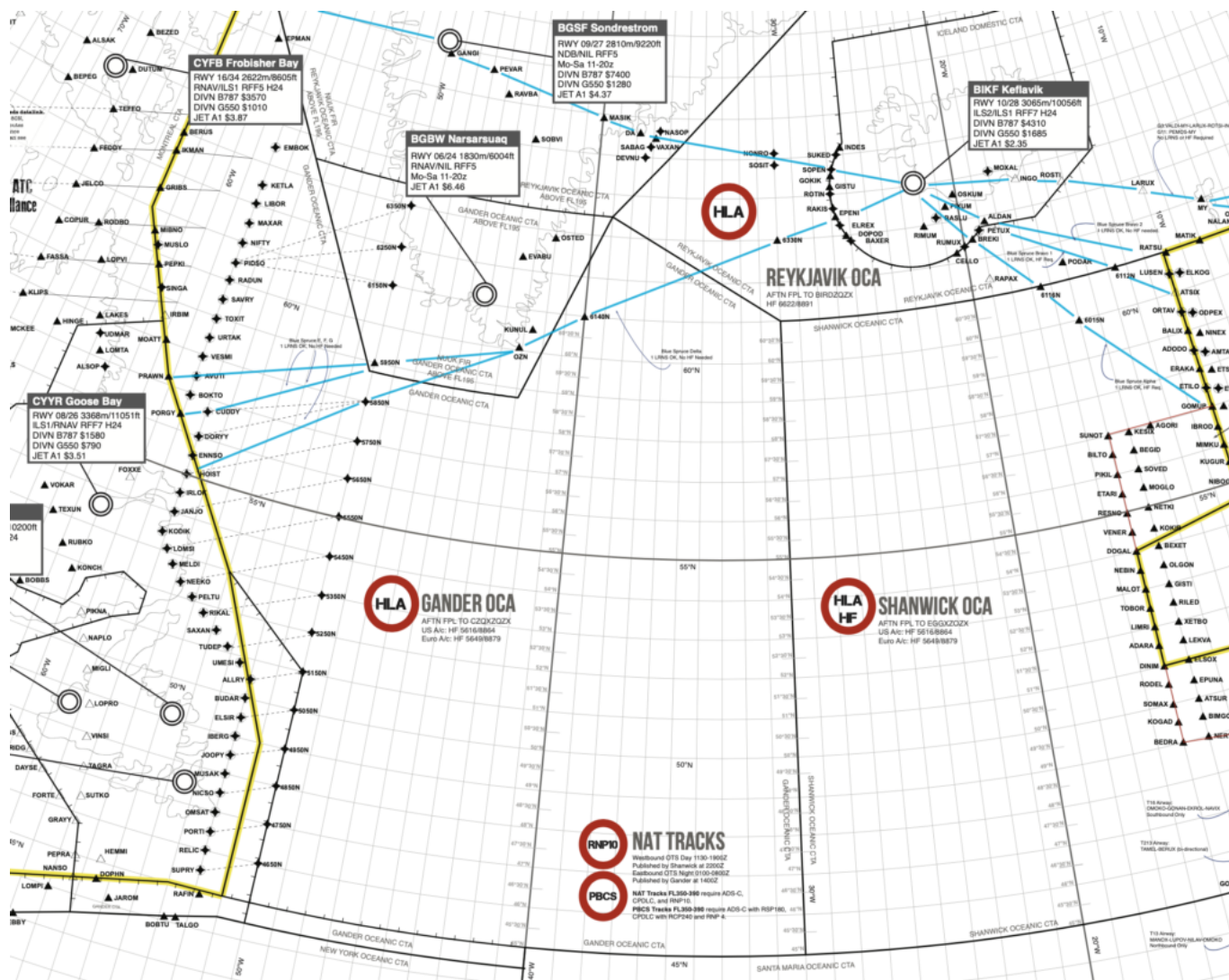
David Mumford
8 September, 2020



You're halfway across the Atlantic when **ATC declares that they are suspending all services**. TIBA procedures are now in effect. **Would you know what to do next?** As Covid infections impact ATC

facilities, short notice closures are currently a constant risk. With the possibility of an entire oceanic ATC area being shut down due to Covid, there are some big questions to consider, and to factor in to your planning: Are you tankering enough fuel if you suddenly have to fly around large sections of oceanic airspace? Where are your ETPs? Do you have a wet footprint?

Back in 2011, there was an incident where transatlantic flights were not allowed to enter CYQX/Gander oceanic airspace due to a smoke situation in ATC control centre which meant that controllers had to be evacuated. They issued a Notam, but that wasn't much use to the traffic en-route at the time, which all had to be **re-routed around the CYQX/Gander Oceanic FIR** – a vast portion of oceanic airspace.



Fast forward to March of this year, where New York Air Route Traffic Control Center was forced to temporarily close due to **a controller testing positive for Covid-19**. The affected airspace restricted flights into New York area airports, with aircraft having to take longer routes in order to avoid closed sectors, as well as Oceanic airspace which stretches from New York past Bermuda and services flights heading to the Caribbean, Europe, South America, and Africa.

The New York ARTCC is not the only ATC center that has been affected over the past few months due to controllers coming down sick with coronavirus. Eleven sites across the US, including at major airports in New York, Chicago, and Las Vegas, have been **temporarily closed for cleaning**, affected flight operations. Some facilities have been **closed for several days** leaving inbound and departing aircraft left to their own devices for taxi, take-off, and landing.

NAT Doc 006 is the official go-to manual to check what happens during these **“ATC Zero” events** on the North Atlantic, but the spate of recent ATC shutdowns in the US led the FAA to re-examine the increased potential for these situations occurring during the Covid crisis, and in early July they published a SAFO as a

result.

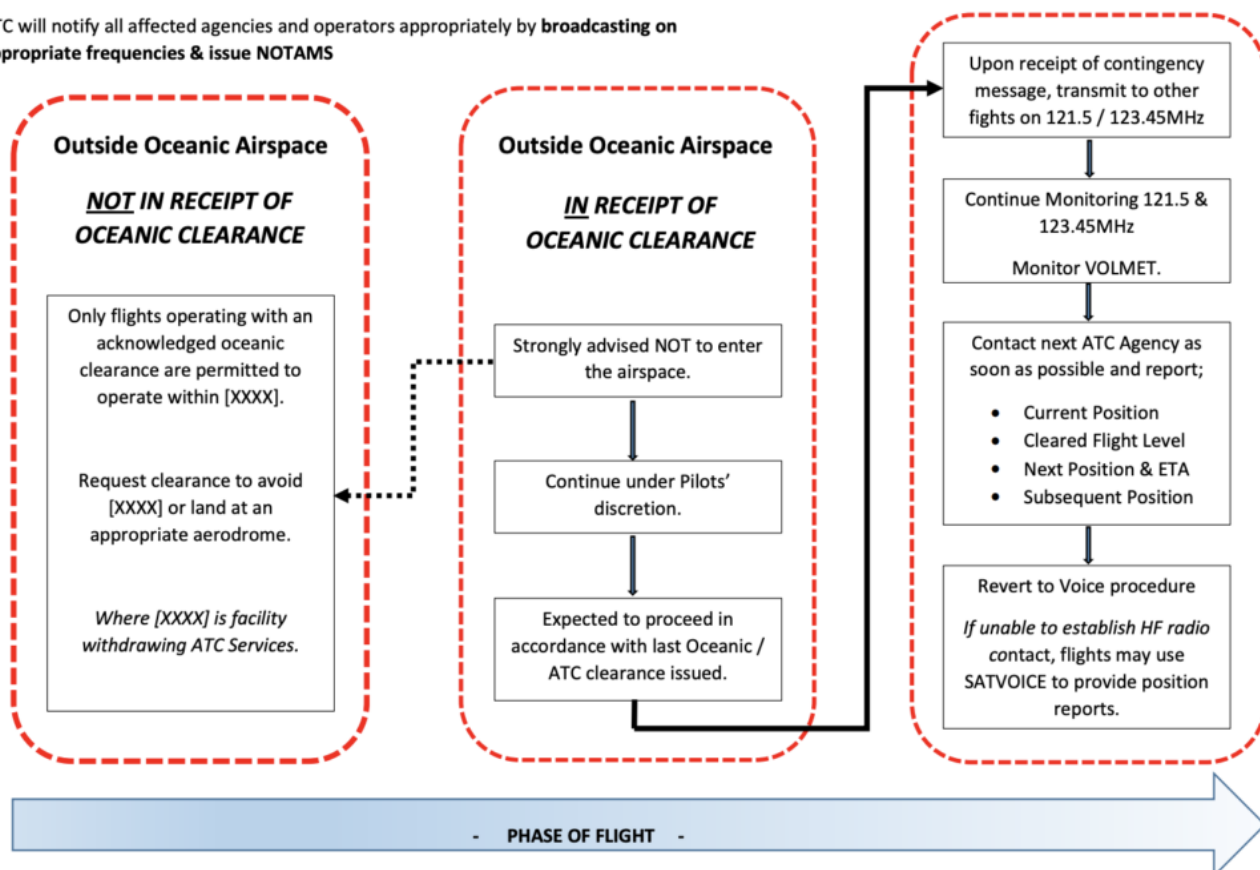
The NAT Doc 006 and the US SAFO are great resources, but here are **two more** which you might not know about!

Code7700.com has published an excellent **2-page crib sheet** with clear guidance for pilots on what to do in these situations. You can download it here:

CONTINGENCY CONSIDERATIONS

GUIDANCE FOR PILOTS IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF A SUDDEN WITHDRAWAL OF ATC SERVICES IN OCEANIC AIRSPACE

ATC will notify all affected agencies and operators appropriately by **broadcasting on appropriate frequencies & issue NOTAMS**



CONTINGENCY CONSIDERATIONS

GUIDANCE FOR PILOTS IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF A SUDDEN WITHDRAWAL OF ATC SERVICES IN OCEANIC AIRSPACE

ICAO IN-FLIGHT BROADCAST BY AIRCRAFT (TIBA)

Broadcast on the last assigned frequency, 121.5 and 123.45 the following:

ALL STATIONS (call-sign),
FLIGHT LEVEL (number) (or CLIMBING/DESCENDING TO FLIGHT LEVEL (number)) (direction) (ATS Route) (or DIRECT FROM position) TO (position)
AT (time)
ESTIMATING (next reporting point, or the point of crossing or joining a designated ATS route)
AT (time) (call sign) FLIGHT LEVEL (number) (direction)
TIBA calls should be provided at the following times:

- 10 minutes before entering the designated airspace;
- 10 minutes prior to crossing a reporting point;
- 10 minutes prior to crossing or joining an ATS route;
- At 20 minute intervals between distant reporting points;
- 2 to 5 minutes, where possible before a change in a flight level;
- At the time of a change in flight level; and
- At any other time considered necessary by the flight-crew.

SATVOICE

SATVOICE Numbers for ATC Centers and Radio Stations can be found on the Jeppesen enroute charts

LEVEL CHANGE WITH AN ACKNOWLEDGED CLERANCE

NOTE: Flight-Crews shall use extreme caution and all available means to detect conflicting traffic

The following procedures shall be applied when conducting any level change to **comply with an acknowledged clearance** within airspace affected by the sudden withdrawal of ATC services.

At least 3 minutes prior to the commencement of a climb or descent the flight should broadcast on the last assigned frequency, 121.5 and 123.45 the following:

- ALL STATIONS (call-sign) (direction) DIRECT FROM (position) TO (position) LEAVING FLIGHT LEVEL (number) FOR FLIGHT LEVEL (number) AT (distance) (direction) FROM (position) AT (time).

When the level change begins, the flight should make the following broadcast:

- ALL STATIONS (call-sign) (direction) DIRECT FROM (position) TO (position) LEAVING FLIGHT LEVEL (number) NOW FOR FLIGHT LEVEL (number).

When level, the flight should make the following broadcast:

- ALL STATIONS (call-sign) MAINTAINING FLIGHT LEVEL (number)

REF: ICAO NAT DOC006, ICAO DOC 7030, (PAC Para. 9.3), FAA SAFO 20011

V1.0 JULY 2020

And 30WestIP.com have recorded a **video webinar** discussing this topic in more detail, which you can view here:

Call for volunteers from OPSGROUP: We need flight ops people

Chris Shieff
8 September, 2020

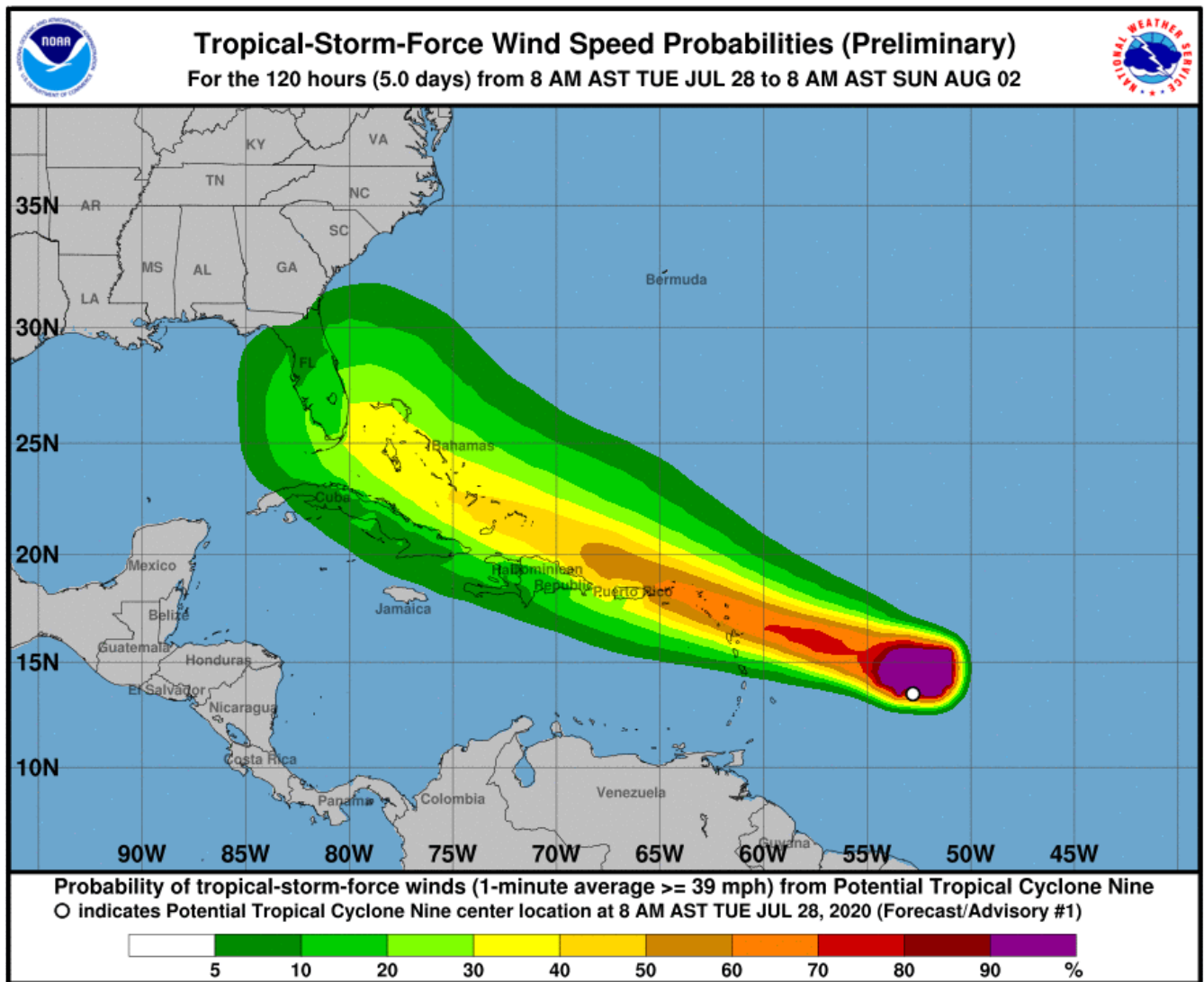


We're tracking this developing storm in the eastern Atlantic, which is forecast to become a tropical storm (named Isaias) in the next 24 hours – and quite possibly develop into **Hurricane Isaias**.

There is a huge problem this year in relief efforts: Covid. It will mean that as little as 20% of the normal relief resources are available. We want to help, and we have a request...

If you are willing to **share your expertise as a volunteer**, we're looking for flight planners, dispatchers, schedulers, pilots, ops specialists, and anyone that can offer a small amount of time to help out. Very simply, **there's stuff you are good at, and it can be extremely useful in a hurricane relief situation.**

Volunteer to help



Relief Air Wing: OPSGROUP helping in disaster relief

We're making a very specific plea for help today. OPSGROUP is capable of great things, and we are focusing on how we can assist families and individuals affected by major hurricanes in the Caribbean and the Atlantic seaboard this season.

It might be next week, it might be in a month, or two – but this is already an extremely active season. Sea temperatures are extremely high – and this is the fuel for hurricanes. **2020 is already setting records**, but the worst is yet to come.

The depth of knowledge, experience, wisdom, and compassion in this group is huge. I think we all want to help, if only we knew how. So that's what we're working on.

This year more than ever, the Caribbean and the Atlantic seaboard will need real help. Covid is changing the relief landscape. **Relief workers will have a tough time getting in to affected countries.** Many may simply not be able to travel. Priorities have shifted. For families and individuals hit by a hurricane, help will not come as easily and quickly as normal.

So, we have set up a dedicated relief organization called Relief Air Wing. Why?

Because in Hurricane Dorian, as you might remember, OPSGROUP got involved in a big way. We were able to help, but we also saw a lot of big problems how aviation worked. **It was a dangerous, chaotic mess.** Airspace became saturated, and there was little ATC (pilots called it the "Wild West"). Rogue pilots flew

dark. Little information was known about airports. Permits were hard to get. There were streams of small aircraft, individually helpful, but overall contributing to bottlenecks and preventing larger aircraft and the USCG from doing their work. Few knew how best to help, and many just flew in based on their own assessment. There was little communication between different agencies.

Volunteer to help



One of the great mysteries of Hurricane Dorian, Warlock 48.

The simple net result: Relief flows far more slowly than it needs to. Supplies are wasted. People devastated by the hurricane suffer longer than they need to. Pilots and aircraft at put at risk.

So, how can I help?

Please **sign up with Relief Air Wing** and volunteer your time and expertise.

We thought of some basic ways that OPSGROUP members can help, and these are below, but you may have ideas too, and we would love to hear them. Here's what we've got so far:

Overflight and Landing Permits

Make a list of the most overflown countries and FIR's inbound to the hurricane area. For example, if it's Dominica, relief operators from the US might need to overfly Cuba, Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico. What are the rules? What are the current contacts? What documents are needed? Aim: create a briefing sheet for overflight and landing permits to get in.

Operating permission

The local CAA will set up rules around what's required for a permit to operate in the affected area. Get this information, prepare a briefing, so that crews know how to get a permit.

Security risks

Assess the situation on the ground. What risks – new or existing – exist for relief operators. Are airports secure? What is happening locally? Aim: A set of notes highlighting risks for relief operators.

Flight Planning routes

Build flight-plannable routes to and from affected countries and airports. Look at airway restrictions, talk to ATC create routes that can be used by relief aircraft to get in and out. From this we can publish clear lists of how to flight plan in and out. This saves time and effort, and means relief can come faster.

Travel restrictions

Once it becomes clear what country is affected, we need to act quickly to create a clear briefing on how to get in. The more we can do before the storm, the better. What are the Covid entry rules? Are there exceptions for relief workers? Can you make contact with the Ministry of Health, Foreign Affairs? The CAA?

Listen in on Hurricane Telcons

The FAA and other agencies often have hurricane telcons a few times a day when big storms are approaching, and we need someone to join those calls and make notes of pertinent info to share.

Hunt down airport situation updates

Call the airport, email them, fax them, AFTN them. Try ATC. Find the airport manager on LinkedIn. Look through twitter hashtags. Ask a friend. Ask a friend to ask a friend. Whatever it takes.

Analyse situation PIREPS

Best info comes from those that have flown in. Use your network to ask crews for PIREPs, so we can tell other relief agencies what the picture at the airport is. We have a standard PIREP form for relief operations, you can help by analysing those pireps, fact check as much as possible, and add the report to the list.

Weather analysis

Track potential hurricanes, monitor their progress, alert the group when you think it might be a big one that will hit land. Monitor for further bad weather post-hurricane.

Use Tech

Maybe you know places we don't. Secret satellite feeds. Apps, tools ... wherever you think tech can help, suggest it and work on it.

Offer an Aircraft

Your owner, company, or operation may have an aircraft that you wish to offer for relief operations. Especially useful are freighters, large capacity aircraft, helicopters, and floatplanes.

Coordinate

Help to manage the relief efforts in Relief Air Wing. Take charge of specific items, and direct and guide volunteers.

Contactors

Reach out to people on our list of relief organizations. Find out who is responding. What flights are planned. What they know. What their needs are.

Local Networks

Lead a WhatsApp group of local people. We're setting up small local networks, connecting ATC, Airports, FBO's, Fuellers. The aim: Get the information on the local situation out Help them to report on critical info: is the airport open, what are the runways like, is there fuel, is there ATC, what are traffic levels like,

what frequencies are working. More about Local Networks [here](#).

Administration

Keep the info documents, maps, spreadsheets up to date. Add new information as it comes in. Filter and remove information that is not useful. Keep things simple.

What else?

You might have ideas of other ways that our OPSGROUP community can help. There are 7,000 of us. 75% are pilots. Even with a low average of 2,000 flying hours TT, that means **we have a minimum of 10.5 million flight hours of experience in the group**. How do we leverage that? We also have dispatchers, flight planners, ATCO's, tech gurus, agencies, organizations. How else can we provide support? Ideas please!

Volunteer to help

How will it work?

1. We have a dedicated **Slack group** for Relief Air Wing. Here, we can all talk to each other, discuss, share information. This is the hub of our work. Specific channels for flight planning, permits, weather, airport status.
2. We set up **international groups** to coordinate with relief agencies responding (WhatsApp)
3. We set up **local networks** to bring aviation contacts together on the ground (WhatsApp)
4. We will prepare **simple briefings** for relief operators flying in.
5. We will **coordinate** between relief organizations, host nation government, CAA, and the relief operators to determine where help is needed.
6. We will help to **match** empty seats, capacity, and offers of aircraft with relief organizations that need it.

How do I sign up and get involved?

1. Start by reading Lessons from Dorian: aviation problems in relief, and read the story of Relief Air Wing
2. Sign up to volunteer here, and your details will be added to our list of volunteers.
3. You'll get an invite to join the Relief Air Wing slack group. Post a quick intro.
4. **When a storm looks like it will hit, we'll contact you.**
5. If you're free and available, jump in and take part. Choose the area you can help in best, and get stuck in. We'll guide you on how to best help.

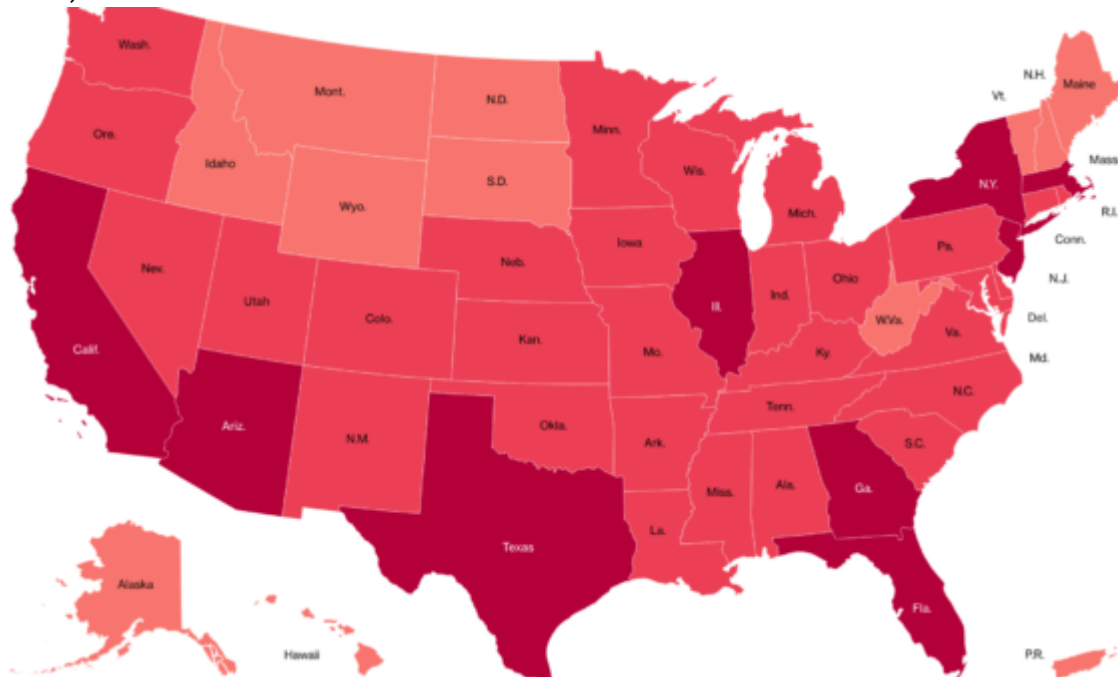
Volunteer to help

In advance, **thank you for your kindness, help, and generosity**. There's no obligation to take part when the time comes if you're not able to, but if you are able to help at all in any way, we will be very grateful to get your volunteer registration.

Also, if you know of someone that might like to get involved, it doesn't matter if they aren't an OPSGROUP member – the more hands we have on deck, the better. **Please share, or forward this post.**

Covid restrictions by US state

Diogene De Souza
8 September, 2020



With the United States seeing new hotspots for Covid-19 cropping up, varying forms of restrictions have been implemented by the individual states. **Restrictions imposed at the state level are below, and also include links that may be helpful.** States in red text have stronger regulations than the standard 'mask and social distancing' and are worth a closer look. *All information is accurate to the best of our knowledge as of 28 July 2020.*

However, here are a few things to keep in mind regardless of where you plan to fly:

- Always check all NOTAMs and relevant publications before flying
- Consider fuel levels and alternates in light of unexpected ATC closures/restrictions
- Follow CDC and state/local government guidance - this may include masks, gloves, Covid-19 testing, and cleaning/disinfection regimes
- Check with your handler or airport representative to verify that city or county government regulations do not differ from the state regulations, and to confirm availability of services at the airport
- Aviation is considered an essential business by the U.S. Federal Government, but some states may not have explicitly named it as such in their regulations.

However, keep in mind that U.S. federal regulations still restricts international travel into the U.S. for those who are not citizens or permanent residents. **There's a long list of countries where passengers are not allowed to have travelled to within the past 14 days if they want to enter the US.** This includes the European Schengen area, the UK and Ireland, mainland China, Iran, and Brazil. Passengers who have been in one of these countries in the past 14 days but who are exempt from the restriction to enter the US (i.e. they are US residents or family members), are only able to land at one of 15 airports: ATL, BOS, ORD, DFW, DTW, HNL, LAX, MIA, JFK, EWR, SFO, SEA, IAD, FLL and IAH. More information can be found on the Centres for Disease Control website.

Alabama:

- All individuals are required to wear a mask when within six feet of a person from another household.
- Social distancing of six feet is also required between members of different households.
- <https://covid19.alabama.gov/>

Alaska:

- All travellers from outside Alaska must fill out a declaration form, and present results of a negative Covid-19 PCR test from within the last 72 hours. If your test results are from the previous five days, you must be tested again on arrival.
- In either case, those remaining in Alaska must also take another PCR test 7-14 days after arrival.
- There is no mandate to wear a mask or social distance, but it is strongly encouraged.
- Alaska has a large number of remote settlements that may not have a robust healthcare system, and as a result may have instated stronger regulations – check local resources.
- <https://covid19.alaska.gov/>

Arizona:

- There is no statewide mandate to wear a mask or social distance, but it is strongly encouraged.
- Phoenix (Maricopa County), Mesa, Tucson, Flagstaff, Tempe, and a host of other cities have enforced masks/face covering requirements – check local resources.
- <http://azhealth.gov/COVID19>

Arkansas:

- There is a statewide mandate requiring masks/face coverings to be worn in indoor public areas, and in outdoor areas where social distancing cannot be guaranteed.
- <https://govstatus.egov.com/ar-covid-19>

California:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://covid19.ca.gov/>

Colorado:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.

- <https://covid19.colorado.gov/>

Connecticut:

- Visitors to Connecticut from certain high risk states are required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival and fill out this form. The states are: Alaska, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.
- Face coverings are required in all public areas where social distancing cannot be maintained.
- <https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus>

Delaware:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://coronavirus.delaware.gov/>

District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.):

- Masks are required in public areas and social distancing is encouraged.
- Those who have participated in non-essential travel to/from high risk states must quarantine for 14 days upon arrival. The states are: Arkansas, Arizona, Alabama, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin.
- <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/>

Florida:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, but many individual cities and counties have one in place – this site lists them.
- Visitors from the Tri-State area (New York, New Jersey, Connecticut) must isolate for 14 days upon arrival.
- Florida is emerging as a hotspot, and many local authorities are rolling back plans to open businesses as a result – check with local contacts for the most up to date information.
- <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/>

Georgia:

- Usage of masks/face coverings is strongly encouraged, but not mandated. Certain cities, including Atlanta, have mandated the use of face coverings. Social distancing is also encouraged.

- <https://georgia.gov/covid-19-coronavirus-georgia>

Hawaii:

- All interstate travellers must quarantine for 14 days on arrival in Hawaii, although this may be avoided from September 1 through the presentation of a negative PCR test from the preceding 72 hours.
- Inter-island travellers must fill out this form.
- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://hawaiiicovid19.com/>

Idaho:

- Ada County, which includes Boise, is encouraging a 14 day quarantine for those entering the area. Other counties are further along in their reopening plans and do not request a quarantine.
- Some counties are requiring the usage of masks/face coverings and others only encourage them. Social distancing is still encouraged.
- <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/>

Illinois:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Travelers from the following states should quarantine upon arrival in Chicago: Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Nevada, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah. Effective Friday, July 31, travelers from Missouri, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and North Dakota will also be directed to quarantine.
- <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/>

Indiana:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/>

Iowa:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering mandate, but Johnson County (which includes Iowa City) has a mask mandate in place. The state government is encouraging the wearing of masks and social distancing.

- <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus>

Kansas:

- There is a statewide face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Those who have travelled to/from Florida will be required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival in Kansas. The same applies to anyone arriving from China, Iran, the European Schengen area, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Brazil, and anyone returning from a cruise ship.
- <https://covid.ks.gov/>

Kentucky:

- There is a statewide face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Individuals who have travelled to/from Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Mississippi, Nevada, South Carolina, Texas, and Puerto Rico are advised to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival in Kentucky.
- <https://govstatus.egov.com/kycovid19>

Louisiana:

- There is a statewide face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged. Local areas have the ability to opt out of the mask mandate if they meet certain criteria.
- <http://ldh.la.gov/Coronavirus/>

Maine:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Only those residents of Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, New York and New Jersey can enter the state without restriction. All others must have a negative test result or must quarantine for 14 days – and must sign a Certificate of Compliance which is necessary to check-in to lodging in Maine.
- Maine residents who visit one of the five exempted states may return without restriction, but visits to any other states are still subject to testing and/or quarantine upon return.
- <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/>

Maryland:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place for public areas, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://www.visitmaryland.org/article/travel-alerts>

Massachusetts:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- All those entering the state must complete the Massachusetts Travel Form and quarantine, unless coming from a low-risk state or able to present a negative test result from the preceding 72 hours. Low-risk states are Connecticut, New York, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Hawaii, Maine, Rhode Island, Vermont.
- <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-updates-and-information>

Michigan:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged. Businesses may deny entry to those not wearing face coverings.
- <https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/>

Minnesota:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>

Mississippi:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,0,420.html

Missouri:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, but many individual cities and counties have one in place – this site lists them.
- <https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/>

Montana:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place for counties with more than four active cases – 25 counties currently meet the criteria. Social distancing is encouraged.
- The state also includes multiple areas of tribal land governed by local councils – check local resources to see what rules may apply.
- <https://www.visitmt.com/montana-aware>

Nebraska:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, but many individual cities and counties have one in place, including Omaha.
- <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/COVID-19-Directed-Health-Measures.aspx>

Nevada:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://nvhealthresponse.nv.gov/>

New Hampshire:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering mandate, but the use of them is encouraged along with social distancing.
- Those travelling into the state from outside the New England area are encouraged to quarantine for 14 days.
- <https://www.nh.gov/covid19/>

New Jersey:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Travellers from high-risk states are asked to voluntarily quarantine for 14 days, and provide contact information. States include Alaska, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.
- <https://covid19.nj.gov/>

New Mexico:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- All out of state travellers are required to quarantine for 14 days upon arrival.
- <https://cv.nmhealth.org/>

New York:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Those who have spent more than 24 hours in a high-risk state must quarantine for 14 days upon arrival. The states include Alaska, Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri,

Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

- Those arriving at New York area airports will be required to fill in a Health Department traveller form.
- <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>

North Carolina:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://www.nc.gov/covid19>

North Dakota:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering mandate, but the use of them is encouraged along with social distancing.
- <https://ndresponse.gov/covid-19-resources>

Ohio:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Travellers from high-risk states are asked to voluntarily quarantine for 14 days. States include Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Mississippi, Nevada, South Carolina and Texas.
- <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/>

Oklahoma:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, but many individual cities and counties have one in place, including Oklahoma City.
- <https://coronavirus.health.ok.gov/>

Oregon:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://govstatus.egov.com/or-covid-19/>

Pennsylvania:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Travellers from high-risk states are asked to voluntarily quarantine for 14 days. States include

Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Utah.

- <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

Rhode Island:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Travellers from high-risk states are asked to voluntarily quarantine for 14 days, although this can be avoided with a negative test result from the preceding 72 hours. States include Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming. Visitors from Puerto Rico must also quarantine.
- <https://health.ri.gov/diseases/ncov2019/testindex.php>

South Carolina:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, but many individual cities and counties have one in place – this article lists them.
- The state also recommends those who have come from an area of widespread community transmission voluntarily quarantine for 14 days.
- <https://www.scdhec.gov/infectious-diseases/viruses/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

South Dakota:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, and social distancing is encouraged.
- The state also includes multiple areas of tribal land governed by local councils – check local resources to see what rules may apply.
- <https://covid.sd.gov/>

Tennessee:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, but many individual cities and counties have one in place – this site lists them.
- <https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19.html>

Texas:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place for counties with more than twenty active cases. Social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://www.texas.gov/covid19/>

Utah:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, but many individual cities and counties have one in place, including Salt Lake City.
- <https://coronavirus.utah.gov/>

Vermont:

- There will be a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place effective August 1, and social distancing is encouraged.
- Most arrivals to the state have to quarantine for 14 days, unless coming from a list of approved states/counties. Unlike other states, you may quarantine elsewhere before entering Vermont, provided you travel in a private vehicle and only make essential stops while wearing a mask. Quarantine may be shortened to seven days with a negative test result.
- <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19>

Virginia:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/>

Washington:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/>

West Virginia:

- There is a statewide mask/face covering mandate in place, and social distancing is encouraged.
- <https://dhhr.wv.gov/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>

Wisconsin:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, but many individual cities and counties have one in place, including Milwaukee.
- Wisconsin residents have been asked not to travel to summer or holiday homes, and local restrictions may apply.
- <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/travel.htm>

Wyoming:

- There is no statewide mask/face covering requirement, but many individual cities and counties have one in place.
 - <https://covid19.wyo.gov/>
-

For more information on some of the wider restrictions in place at US state level beyond the realm of aviation, Kayak.com keeps a pretty neat little page updated here.

OPSCHAT: 23rd July 2020 - Flight Ops discussion

Mark Zee
8 September, 2020



When: Thursday 23rd July @ 10am Eastern, 1400 UTC
(Thurs 7am San Francisco, 10am New York, 3pm London, 4pm Berlin, 10pm Hong Kong)

The next **OPSCHAT** is coming up this Thursday, and there's definitely some stuff to talk about!

Here's what we've got so far on the agenda:

- Analysis: That jet that went to Italy and got turned around.
- Risks - what might you be missing because of the Covid headlines?

- If a country need a Covid test, where do you get one before leaving?
- All the 2020 NAT changes in ten lines - and what's coming in November.
- Staying proficient when we aren't flying. What's being done to keep people in the flying mindset?
- Jobs - seekers and finders.
- Relief Air Wing - how OPSGROUP can help hurricane survivors this year.
- Going to Europe - can you or can't you?
- The KEF - STN run, backdoor into Europe?

What else would you like to see discussed? Or, is there something you'd like to present on?

What's the barrier to your next flight? Tell us, and we'll bring it up on the call, and see who else is struggling with the same thing (you're never alone!)

You can already register and **save your spot** here.

But do please tell us what else we should talk about! We'll update the agenda once we have expanded the list.

See you there!

Email: opschat@ops.group.

OPSGROUP wants to help you find that new job.

Mark Zee
8 September, 2020

Hi, I'm Clara. I live in the Catskill mountains, my base was Teterboro. Until last month, I was flying the G550 - we flew mostly internationally, and I have 4,000 hours on type. Before that, I flew the A320 at United (2000 hrs), and before that, in Brazil flying Air Ambulance across Latin America. My first job was as a Flight Dispatcher, and I'd happily do that again. I miss aviation already! Happy to relocate in the US, and also have an EU passport. **What has been your biggest adventure?** In 2015 a group of us sailed a 30ft yacht from Indonesia to Palau. Before that, I thought flying could be challenging: this was something else. I learned life lessons from that. **What's the best thing about working in aviation?** The community. Maybe it's just me, but I feel like no other industry is as connected as ours. Everyone has to work together to get a flight out, and there's a huge sense of teamwork. **What is your superhero skill?** In my last three positions, I've worked on CRM - delivering courses and helping people out on a one-on-one basis as an ear to listen. I'm passionate about understanding how humans interact in the cockpit, and learning and teaching on that subject.

Contact me: [Email](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Social](#)

Hi. Mark here. On Saturday morning, I posted a little note to our members in Slack, and this on LinkedIn:



Mark Zee
Founder at OPSGROUP | Air Traffic Controller, Airline Pilot, Dispatcher
2d · 🌐

Good morning! If you've just landed in the position of needing (or wanting) a new job in aviation - I want to help you try to find it. So I had an idea.

You've got great experience, and specific skills that few others probably do. There are probably a hundred jobs out there right now that you'd be great at. But how to make the connection to the person that's actually hiring?

We have 7,000 members in OPSGROUP - many of whom are Chief Pilots, Airline managers, Corporate flight department managers, Dispatch Chiefs, and the rest of whom are likely just one step removed from the hiring decision maker.

So, instead of a CV/Resume, just summarise it into a little story - a simple, clear paragraph. Really make it about you, and what work you'd love to do. Make it different!

Just PM me, and we'll gather these together, and in a week or so we'll write an email to our entire group.

If you are tempted to think that aviation is all doom and gloom at the moment - it's definitely not. What we're seeing in OPSGROUP is that there is a lot of flying happening, many people are hiring, and there's more than a few rays of sunshine between the Covid cracks. This might be when you find your dream job - why not?

 122 · 13 Comments

I got a lot of messages. In starting to compile a list, it struck me that I hadn't quite asked for the right thing.

I felt I wasn't doing justice to telling each person's story.

What I'd said was, condense your CV/Resume into a little paragraph, and we'll send that out to the group. But it felt a little flat.

And I think that's because CV's are a little flat. **It's just a snapshot of your story, but there are better ways to tell it.** I want people to read your story, and think – yep, that person could be right for us. It's hard to do that with a list of aircraft types and places you've worked and what certificates you have.

So if I'm really going to help, I have to look for a better way to tell your story.

When we hire at OPSGROUP, we don't ask the standard HR questions. They don't work for us. *"Where do you see yourself five years from now?"*: Kidding, right?

What we do, is try to get to know you a little – what lights you up, what do you love working on, what do you want to change in aviation, what adventures you've been on. We like those questions. They may be specific to our mission, but the concept is important: **something about you stands out, and we want to find it.**

So, if I'm going to send an email out to our group and tell them about you, *how can I tell your story so that something stands out?* How do we make it engaging, so that it's actually fun to read, and people will actually read it – and in turn, give you a decent chance of someone contacting you with a role that might fit?

And so, I had a better idea (I think). How about we make each one into a mini-feature. Like you might read in a magazine. Short and sweet, but with a few good questions that bring out more about you than a CV can. Here's what we have to get started – **If you have a great question to add**, comment below or send it to me and we'll add it to the list (this is just a starter):

- * **What has been your biggest adventure?**
- * **What book has had the biggest impact on you?**
- * **What is your superhero skill?**
- * **What would you love to do in aviation that you haven't done yet?**
- * **In the last five years, what new belief, behavior, or habit has most improved your life?**
- * **What's the most positive impact of 2020?**
- * **What unusual hobby do you have?**
- * **What advice would you give to your 20-year-old self?**
- * **Is there something that really lights you up?**
- * **What's the best thing about working in aviation?**

So here's the plan. Send me your paragraph, but structure it like this:

1. Your name and your 'resume snapshot' – where you are based, your experience, etc.
2. Choose three questions from the list and answer them
3. Put down your contact details – email, LinkedIn profile, and if you like – social.

Here's an example of what you might end up with:

Hi, I'm Clara. I live in the Catskill mountains, my base was Teterboro. Until last month, I was flying the G550 - we flew mostly internationally, and I have 4,000 hours on type. Before that, I flew the A320 at United (2000 hrs), and before that, in Brazil flying Air Ambulance across Latin America. My first job was as a Flight Dispatcher, and I'd happily do that again. I miss aviation already! Happy to relocate in the US, and also have an EU passport. **What has been your biggest adventure?** In 2015 a group of us sailed a 30ft yacht from Indonesia to Palau. Before that, I thought flying could be challenging; this was something else. I learned life lessons from that. **What's the best thing about working in aviation?** The community. Maybe it's just me, but I feel like no other industry is as connected as ours. Everyone has to work together to get a flight out, and there's a huge sense of teamwork. **What is your superhero skill?** In my last three positions, I've worked on CRM - delivering courses and helping people out on a one-on-one basis as an ear to listen. I'm passionate about understanding how humans interact in the cockpit, and learning and teaching on that subject.

Contact me: [Email](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Social](#)

So if you like, make your own paragraph, and then just **email it to me**. Whether you're a member of the group or not doesn't matter, we'll get the word out. **I suggest keeping it short and sweet!** Maybe 10-15 lines, just like the one above.

If you don't know about OPSGROUP, here's our own little story: OPSGROUP was formed to solve a problem. When MH17 was shot down over Ukraine, we learned that a handful of people had known about the risk, and avoided the airspace. Nobody else did, because they didn't know. Today, OPSGROUP has 7000 individual members - We are Flight Dispatchers, Pilots, Air Traffic Controllers, and operational specialists from large airlines, small aircraft operators, Civil Aviation Authorities, ICAO, NBAA, and a multitude of other aviation organizations. We work together to share critical new information about airspace risk, procedures, and just help each other out. Most importantly, this is a group **of people**, not of companies or authorities. More on us [here](#).

What this means for you, right now, is that we have a big group of people at the heart of flight operations, who will read your story, and might have a job that suits you. I know we have a great group and if there's a chance for someone to help, they'll take it.

As promised, I'll compile a list, make it into an email, and send it out to our group.

I can't promise that you'll get responses, but I do think that this way of doing things gives you a much better chance.

I would also love your thoughts. Maybe you have even better ideas.

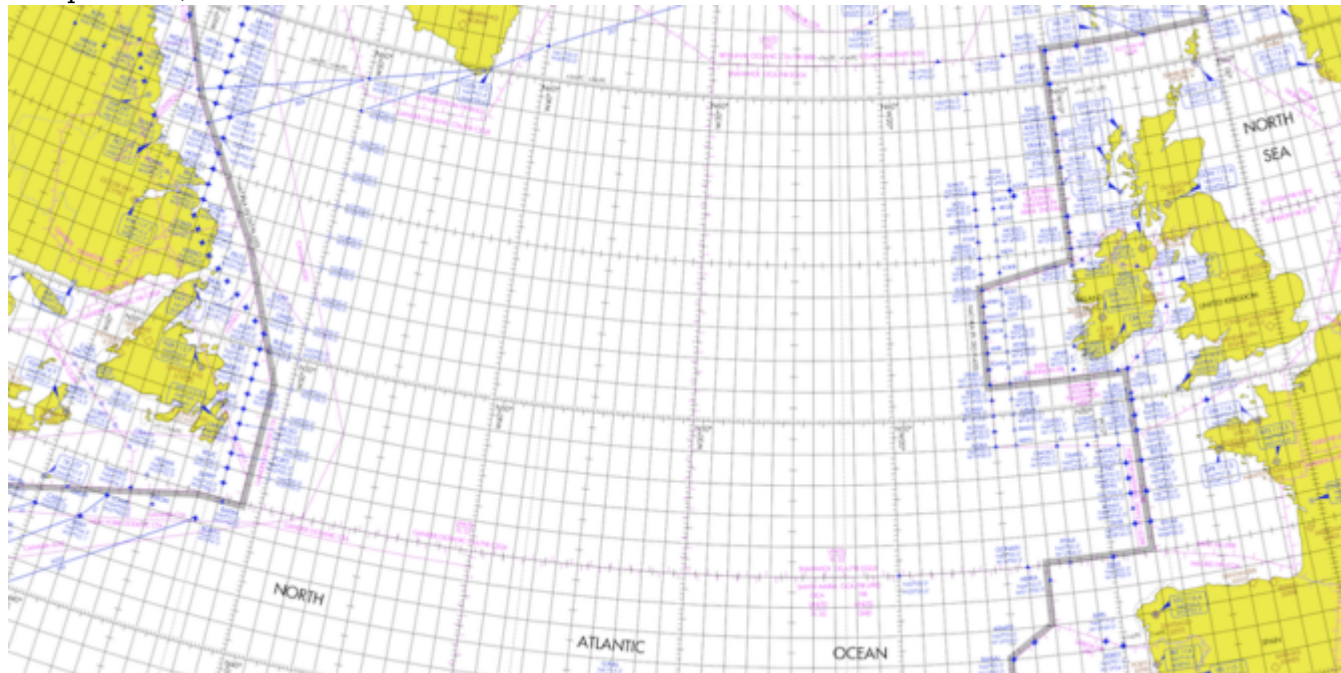
Cheers - Mark.

Email: mark.z@ops.group

July 2020 North Atlantic Ops Update

David Mumford

8 September, 2020



July 2020: There's a bunch of new things to tell you about the North Atlantic this month! Here's a summary:

- Two new ICAO NAT Ops Bulletins
- An updated NAT Doc 007 from ICAO (aka the North Atlantic "Ops Bible")
- A guide for pilots from the FAA about what to do if ATC suddenly has to suspend services
- Some juicy Notams from all the NAT FIRs extending the relaxation of the North Atlantic datalink mandate rules until the end of September.

ICAO NAT Ops Bulletins

Two new ICAO NAT Ops Bulletins have been published this week, but it looks like there's no need to panic.

First up, there's **2019_003 Rev 2: Data Link Performance Improvement Options**, which is just an updated list of common datalink errors and what to do about them.

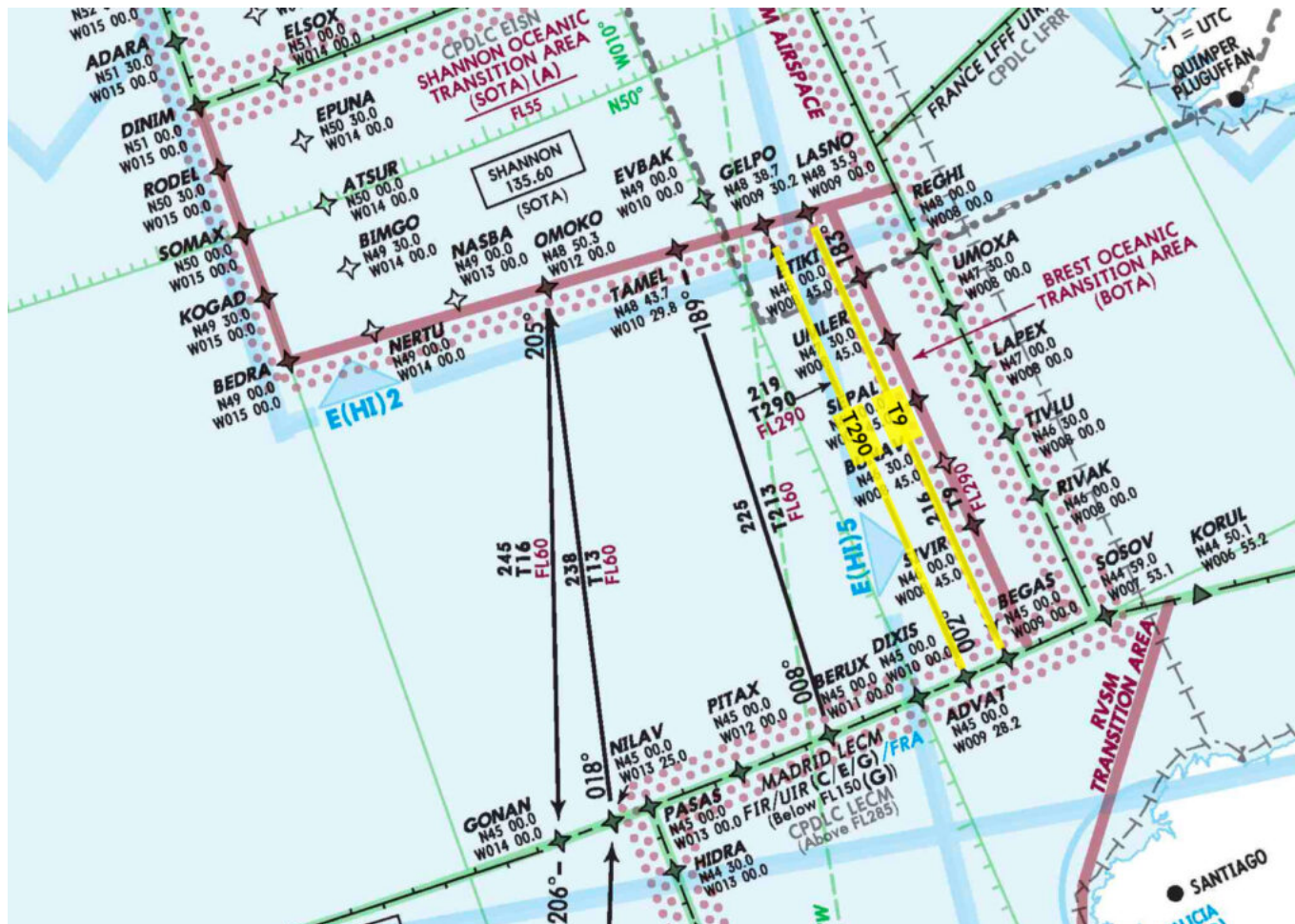
Second, there's a new Bulletin called **2020_002: Surveillance Service in the NAT Region / Flight Crew Operating Procedures**. This is a strange one. The message seems to be this: back in the old days, you used to get a call from ATC saying "radar service is terminated" or "surveillance service is terminated" when heading out into the NAT, or when crossing from one oceanic control centre to the next. But nowadays, with improved SSR equipment and ADS-B more widely implemented, you might not get this message anymore.

ICAO NAT Doc 007 (2020, Version 2)

ICAO has published an updated version of the NAT Doc 007, applicable from July 2020. There are only some minor changes from the previous version, concerning the **Tango Routes**:

- There's now a specific note saying that **state approval** is required to operate on these.
- There's also a change to the **transponder procedures** when using **T9** or **T290**: normally you


change transponder code to 2000 30mins after NAT entry, but because of the limited time spent in the NAT HLA when flying on T9 and T290 you should instead make this change 10mins after joining either of those routes.



T9 is southbound only, even levels between FL300-400. **T290** is northbound only, odd levels from FL290-410. For more info on the Tango Routes, check out our article here.

What to do during “ATC Zero” events

You’re halfway across the Atlantic when ATC declares that they are suspending all services. TIBA procedures are now in effect. **Would you know what to do next?** As Covid infections impact ATC facilities, short notice closures are currently a constant risk.



SAFO
Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 20011
DATE: 7/1/20
Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration

http://www.faa.gov/other_vhls/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo

A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. Besides the specific action recommended in a SAFO, an alternative action may be as effective in addressing the safety issue named in the SAFO. The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Subject: Operations in Oceanic Airspace during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Purpose: This SAFO serves to advise flightcrews of the potential loss of Air Traffic Control (ATC) services in the event of an oceanic ATC facility shutdown and recommends the mitigating procedures contained herein.

Background: Suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 among ATC facility staff and technicians that provide service to such facilities have led and will likely continue to lead to intermittent, total, or partial closures of ATC facilities, which may occur with little or no warning. Accordingly, the Flight Standards Service is providing recommended actions for flightcrews and operators, in anticipation of potential disruptions in ATC services due to an oceanic ATC facility shutdown.

Recommended Action: Flightcrews are encouraged to review relevant guidance in the Aeronautical Information Publications (AIP) for the countries where they operate; regional operational air traffic management contingency plans, such as the Air Traffic Management Operational Contingency Plan for the North Atlantic Region (NAT) Doc 006; and Regional Supplements Doc 7030. Operators should ensure that flightcrews and dispatchers, if applicable, are familiar with the guidance contained in their contingency plans for unexpected closure of an oceanic ATC facility. See references and considerations in the Appendix to this SAFO.

Contact: Questions or comments regarding this SAFO should be directed to the Flight Technologies and Procedures Division at 202-267-8790 or the Air Transportation Division at 202-267-8166.

Distributed by: Air Transportation Division

The FAA has published a safety alert for international flight crew with contingency procedures in the event of loss of ATC services in **Oceanic airspace**. It's a good one to have in your flight bag. Dispatchers and flight crew are reminded to be thoroughly familiar with AIP specific procedures and traffic management contingency plans for the regions they are operating in. You can read the FAA's alert [here](#).

They have also published another one for ATC Zero events in **Terminal airspace**, which you can read [here](#). There have been multiple 'ATC Zero' events at major air traffic control centres due to Covid prevention and the subsequent cleaning required. The alert contains important information regarding instrument approach selection, TCAS use, alternate minima, aerodrome lighting and other CTAF procedures at unattended airports. There are also important considerations applicable to Part 121 operations discussed.

NAT Datalink Mandate

EGGX/Shanwick, BIRD/Reykjavik, CZQX/Gander, KZWY/New York Oceanic West and LPPO/Santa Maria have all published Notams extending the relaxation of the North Atlantic datalink mandate rules until the end of September. This is due to the fact that there's still significantly less traffic because of all the Covid restrictions. **Non-datalink mandate compliant aircraft may therefore continue to flight plan and operate across the North Atlantic between FL290-410 until Sept 30.** For more info on the NAT Datalink Mandate, check out our article [here](#).

In addition, ICAO are saying that due to the decrease in traffic, there is a significantly higher chance of flights being cleared as requested, and are encouraging operators to file and request their optimal profiles at all stages of the flight. Read ICAO's guidance [here](#).

For a brief history of the most significant North Atlantic-related ops changes, check out our dedicated article [here](#).

UIA flight 752: Iran military shot down plane after chain of errors

David Mumford
8 September, 2020

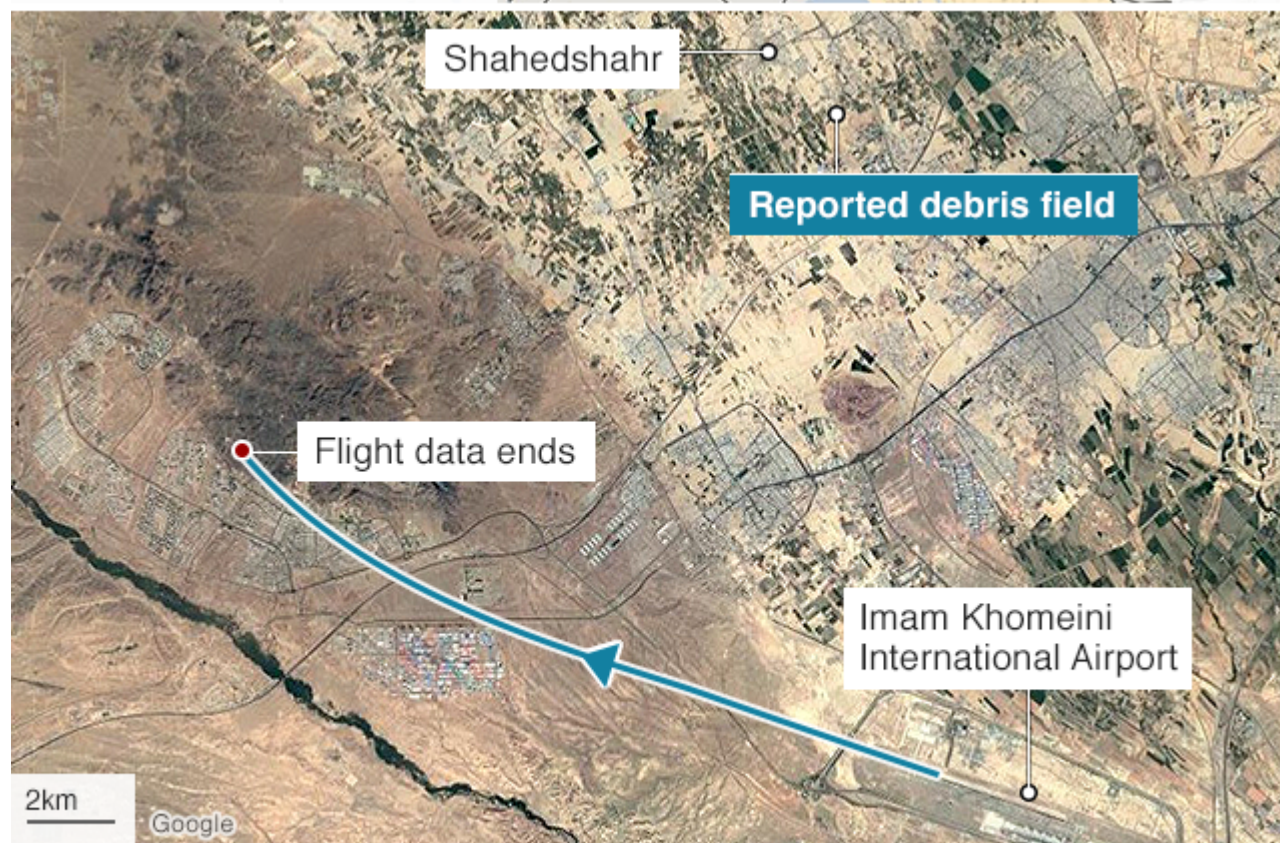


Iran has released its first official report into the shoot-down of UIA flight 752 in Tehran on Jan 9. They blame a **misaligned missile battery, miscommunication between troops and their commanders, and a decision to fire without authorization** as the major factors which led to the shoot-down of the plane by Iran's Revolutionary Guard.

All 176 people on board were killed when the plane was hit by two missiles shortly after take-off in Tehran.

Iran initially denied responsibility for the incident, only admitting fault days later after Western nations presented extensive evidence that Iran had shot down the plane.

Flight PS752 crashed shortly after taking off



Indicative route from previous flight shown

Source: flightradar24.com

BBC

Iran's air defences had been on high alert at the time. Just hours prior to the shoot-down, the US FAA issued "Emergency Order" Notams **banning all US operators from overflying the airspace of Iraq and Iran**. This was in response to an Iranian missile strike on US military bases in Iraq, which had just occurred the same night.

A full version of the report has not been made publicly available, but excerpts have been published by state news agency Fars. It places the blame entirely on those manning the missile system, and details a series of key moments where the shoot-down could have been avoided, the main two being:

- **The surface-to-air missile system had recently been relocated and was not properly calibrated. As a result, it misidentified the civilian plane as a hostile object.**
- **Those manning the system could not communicate with their command centre, and fired on the plane without receiving official approval.**

"If each had not arisen, the aircraft would not have been targeted," the report said.

It also notes that the flight had done nothing unusual prior to the missile launch, with its transponder and other data being broadcast. It claims that the troops manning the missile system tried to contact the Coordination Centre with details of a potential target but they did not manage to get through, and that firing on the aircraft under these circumstances was against approved protocol:

"The system operator began analysing the observable information and categorised the detected target as a threat... At 02:44:41, without receiving any response from the Coordination Centre, the air defence unit operator fired a missile at the threatening target he had detected... Under the applicable procedures, if the defence system operator cannot establish communication with the Coordination Centre and does not receive the fire command, they are not authorised to fire."

After repeated delays, Iran has said it will release the aircraft's black box to officials in France on July 20, where Ukrainian and French experts are expected to examine it.

Airspace warnings

In the days and weeks following the shoot-down, several other countries followed the US in issuing airspace warnings of their own for Iran, including: the UK, Ukraine, Canada, Germany, and France. The US and Ukraine are the only countries to have issued **outright flight bans** on Iranian airspace, but all the others **advise against landing or overflying the country at the lower flight levels**. Check SafeAirspace.net for a full summary.

Traffic flows

It's worth considering that most airlines other than Middle Eastern carriers are still **avoiding Iran**. For traffic that normally operates through the Tehran FIR, a predominant alternative for east-west flights into the Dubai area is a southerly routing via Saudi Arabia and Egypt. There are warnings for both of these airspaces as well. Northerly reroutes for Europe-Asia flights are predominantly using a Turkey-Armenia-Azerbaijan-Turkmenistan routing. If entering Afghanistan airspace, note the current warnings there too.

Unfamiliar routes

For many operators wanting to avoid Iran, you may be using routes that are unfamiliar. Take the time to ensure you have the full package of charts, are aware of the risks in each FIR, are aware of the potential for GPS outages en-route (especially in the Turkish, Tel Aviv, Amman, and Jeddah FIRs), and have considered drift down over mountainous areas on the northerly routes.

Advice

Every air operation different. We know OPSGROUP has a huge variety of members – some conducting routine airline flights, some business aviation, charter flights, private ops, military, government flights. Therefore, offering blanket advice is difficult. You must undertake your own risk assessment, but paying

close attention to the international warnings as well as what other carriers are doing is a good place to start.

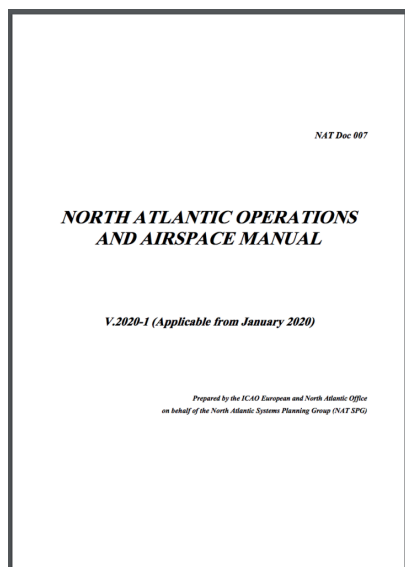
On SafeAirspace.net, we continue to list Iran as **Level One: Do Not Fly**. The same goes for **Iraq**. Outside those two countries, just consider carefully what connections to the current situation there may be. Nowhere in the Middle East is without some level of risk.

2020 Edition: New NAT Doc 007 - North Atlantic Airspace and Operations Manual

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



July 2020

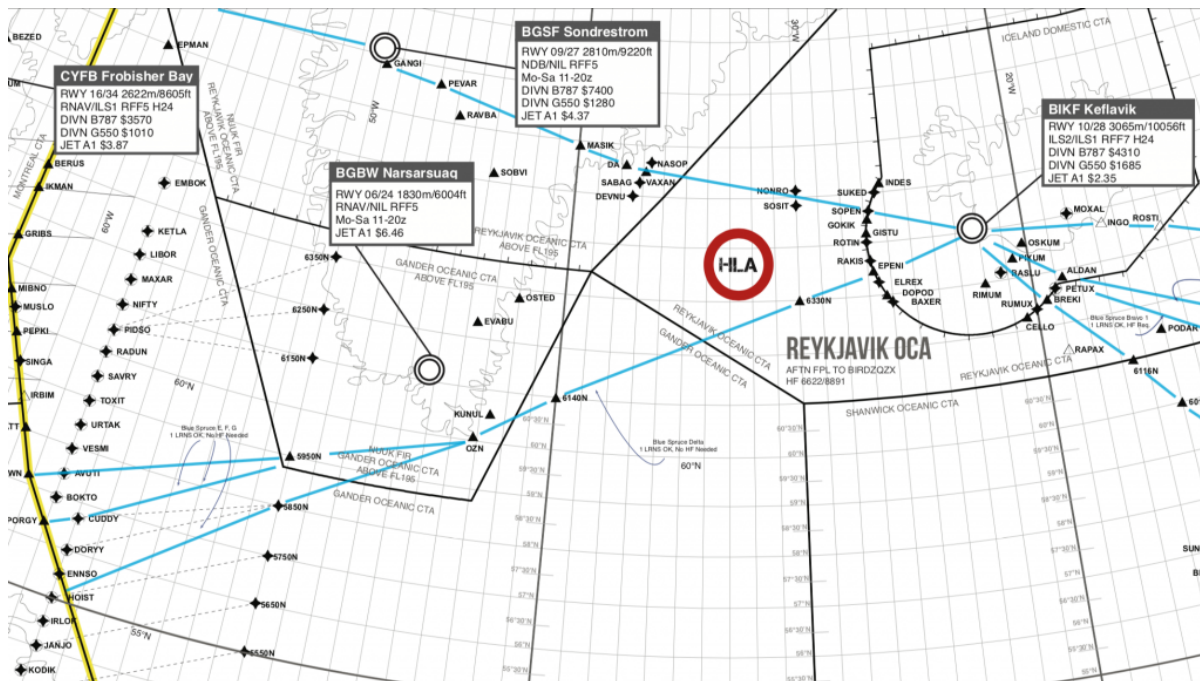


ICAO have published a **new NAT Doc 007** too. Download it [here](#)!

The only changes in this edition are to do with the rules and guidance relating to the Datalink Mandate.

Despite the expanded mandate, there are still some places where you won't need datalink:

- **Everything north of 80° North**
- **New York Oceanic East FIR**
- **ATS Surveillance airspace** These are areas where surveillance is provided either by: Radar, VHF, or ADS-B - which is basically the airspace over Iceland, the southern half of Greenland, and a big fish shape of airspace over the Azores (see image below)
- **Tango Routes** T9 and new route T290 that was also introduced today (the other Tango routes T213, T13, and T16, will all require datalink).



To figure out where you are welcome on the NAT, depending on what equipment and training you have, **check out our NAT guides and charts** [here](#).

FAA extensions to pilot regulatory relief

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



The FAA has agreed to extend the regulatory relief packages for both Part 91 and Part 135 operators beyond the original end date of June 30. Here's the lowdown:

Part 135

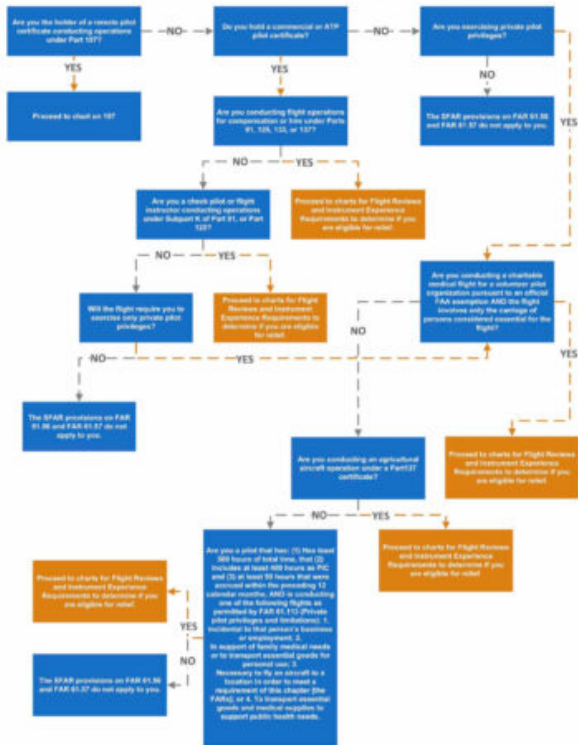
- Back in March, the FAA announced a 3-month extension to the grace period for recurrent training requirements for Part 135 operators. They're now saying that operators who have training due in July will have until the end of October to get this done. Read the FAA letter [here](#).
- In addition, the FAA has provided two additional months of flexibility on the protective breathing equipment requirements, extending that exemption until the end of July.
- Note that you still have to tell the FAA if you're planning on using these exemptions.

Part 91

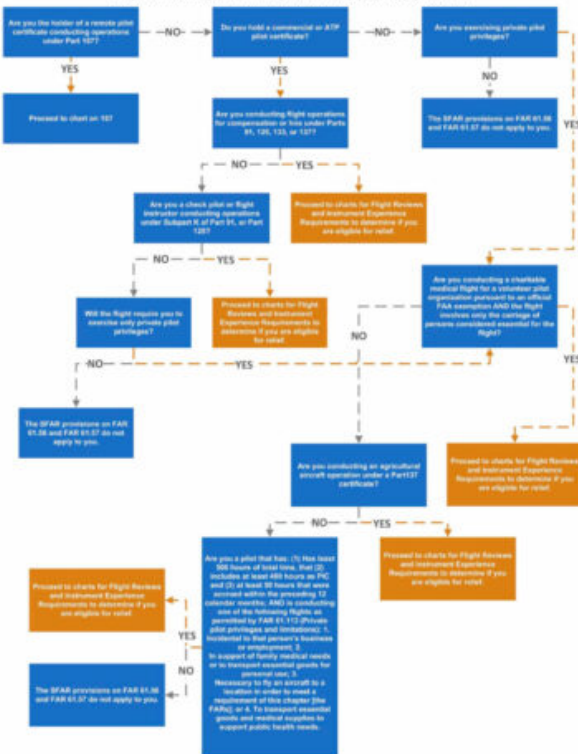
- Pilot medical certificates which expired in March do not have any extra time beyond June 30; but for those expiring between April 30 and Sept 30, these will all get three months extensions to their validity.
- Validity of flight reviews, instrument currency, and knowledge tests have also been extended to September.
- Read the updated SFAR in full [here](#).

For US pilots keen to know if the SFAR on Part 91 regulatory relief applies to your individual situation, check out these easy-to-follow flowcharts to help you work it out! *(No need to squint - just click on the image and get whisked away to a magical place where these flowcharts will all make perfect sense ☺)*

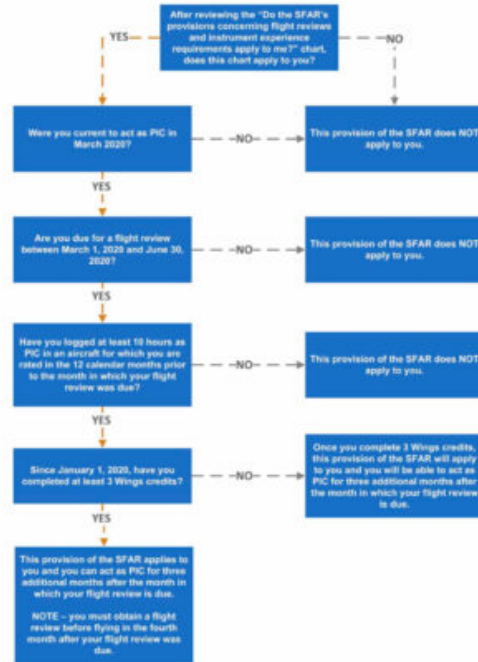
Do the SFAR's provisions concerning flight reviews (FAR 61.56) apply to me?



Do the SFAR's provisions concerning instrument experience requirements (FAR 61.57(c)(1)) apply to me?



FAR 61.56 – Flight Review



FAR 61.57 – Recent Flight Experience



“Operation: Paperwork Misery” - new US rules on pilot data reporting are coming soon

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



The FAA has launched **“Operation: Paperwork Misery”** – a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking which will require operators to submit a whole bunch of additional pilot data to the agency via a new Pilot Records Database.

Here’s the plan, according to the FAA:

The FAA is proposing to require the use of an electronic Pilot Records Database (PRD) and implement statutory requirements. The PRD would be used to facilitate the sharing of pilot records among air carriers and other operators in an electronic data system managed by the FAA. Air carriers, specific operators holding out to the public, entities conducting public aircraft operations, air tour operators, fractional ownerships, and corporate flight departments would be required to enter relevant data on individuals employed as pilots into the PRD, and this would be available electronically to those entities. In addition, this proposal identifies all air carriers, fractional ownerships, and some other operators or entities that would be required to access the PRD and evaluate the available data for each pilot candidate prior to making a hiring decision.

Here’s a translation of how that may work in real life, from the NBAA:

The FAA’s PRD proposal would subject many business aviation operators to a substantial pilot-data reporting burden not previously applied to non-commercial operations. This proposed rule also amounts to a complete overhaul in the way commercial operators access information about a pilot before hiring and the way certificate holders will provide FAA historical and future records. It expands the types of operations required to give the FAA records documenting an individual’s compliance with FAA or employer required training, checking, testing, currency, proficiency, or other events related to pilot performance, including check pilot comments. Due to the extensive nature of the reporting requirements, the proposed rule has the potential to impose significant new burdens on Part 91 operators of all sizes.

“This is really regulatory overreach at its worst,” said Doug Carr, NBAA’s vice president for regulatory and

international affairs. “We have a situation where our community will see no safety benefits as a result of compliance with this program, and the creation of a definition solely for the purpose of satisfying paperwork is not in the best interest of our community.”

Although the FAA’s new rule was issued on March 30, they have so far resisted calls from the industry to extend the comment period beyond June 29 – meaning many operators now don’t have enough time to trawl through the 200-page NPRM document to work out just how brutal the onerous new requirements are going to be, nor get much of a chance to provide any objections to the plan.

“It is exasperating that the FAA has given industry just 90 days to unpack a complicated plan amassed over nine years, and released as the aviation community fights for its survival during COVID-19,” said Koester. “It would not seem unreasonable to allow another 30 days for discussion, so we are pursuing other means to encourage the FAA to provide for this minimal, reasonable accommodation.

The NBAA are now encouraging affected operators to review the NPRM and submit comments providing as much detail as possible about the impact of these proposed changes to their operations. To do that, click [here](#):

I DON'T ♥ THIS NPRM

Alternatively, you can submit your comments via the tool NBAA has launched to assist with this. Click [here](#) for that.

For more info on the specific impact of this proposed NPRM, here is what the NBAA have compiled, which we’re sharing here with their permission:

Concerns for all operators

Check pilot comments

The NPRM would require operators to include check pilot comments from training events in the pilot record database. As unflattering comments may cost pilots future job opportunities, this may leave check pilots or their employers open to liability and diminish the opportunity to improve safety by focusing additional training on check pilot comments.

Overly burdensome and inconsistent reporting requirements

Both the draft advisory circular and the NPRM contain language requiring operators to report a pilot’s aeronautical experience, flight time, and flight maneuvers performed to maintain privileges of their certificate. These burdensome reporting requirements could reasonably result in a need for certificate holders to log every flight hour, instrument approach, and landing in the pilot record database.

Language within the NPRM also contains many contradictory statements leaving operators unclear on the intent of the proposal and the actions required by the rule. Most notably, 111.220(b)(3) states no person may report records documenting aeronautical experience, yet 111.220(a)(2) requires air carriers to report records related to currency and proficiency.

Concerns for Part 91 operators

Definition of Corporate Flight Department

For the first time, this NPRM would codify a definition of a “corporate flight department”. The definition crafted solely for compliance with record keeping requirements does nothing to enhance other elements of our industry and excludes a substantial portion of business aviation that considers itself part of the community.

New recordkeeping and reporting requirements

This NPRM results from Public Law 111-216 (Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act of 2010), which indicates operators must report training and employment records already maintained by operators. The proposed rule would require Part 91 operators to undertake new record keeping and reporting burdens. Some operators already use sophisticated software systems for managing and tracking pilot training, checking, testing, currency, and proficiency. However, many operators use simple tracking systems that will require manually reporting these records to the FAA.

Concerns for Part 125 and Part 135 operators

The FAA will charge operators a \$110 fee any time they pull records for a pilot candidate.

Part 125

The NPRM requires Part 125 operators to report historical records dating back to August 1, 2010. Operators will be required to upload employment, training, checking, testing, currency, proficiency, and disciplinary records for every pilot under their employment over the last ten years. Operators will be able to upload records in XML or manually.

Part 135

The NPRM requires Part 135 and 121 operators to report historical records dating back to August 1, 2005. Operators will be required to upload employment, training, checking, testing, currency, proficiency, and disciplinary records for every pilot under their employment over the last 15 years. Operators will be able to upload records in XML or manually.

NBAA's Perspectives

While the NPRM contains some potential efficiency improvements for the Part 125 and Part 135 communities, we believe that a substantial number of these proposals would burden the part 91 community far beyond the intent of Congress. For certificated operators currently required to comply with the Pilot Records Improvement Act (PRIA), the NPRM may streamline record reporting and requesting processes, expedite response times, and allow for more informed hiring decisions.

The NPRM would also require reporting more information than under PRIA by more segments of the aviation community, including corporate flight departments and 91.147 air tour operators. The proposal would require these constituencies to report not just training and checking events, but also any event that leads to proficiency or maintains currency, such as day or night landings, flight hours, and instrument approaches. This process will be burdensome and provide little information that enhances hiring decision making abilities.

NBAA encourages affected members to review the NPRM and submit comments to the public docket providing as much detail as possible about the impact of these proposed changes to their operations.

Read the NPRM on the [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) website.

[Download the NPRM \(PDF\)](#)

Comments should be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT on June 29, 2020.

[Submit comments](#)

The impact of Covid restrictions on Medevac ops

David Mumford
8 September, 2020



Under normal circumstances (pre-Covid) the magic word “MEDEVAC” was more or less **a guarantee to get any overflight or landing permit in time**. Now, with restrictions in place worldwide, that has changed dramatically.

Here are a couple of cases reported by OPSGROUP member Markus Salomon, Deputy Manager Ground Ops at Quick Air Jet Charter GmbH – an air ambulance provider based in Cologne, Germany – of how the Covid restrictions have impacted some of their flights recently.



Case 1: UK to India

We received a quote request to bring an Indian patient from the UK back to his home country. He was terminal ill and wanted to die at home with his family. Due to previous experience we warned the client that it would be **unlikely that the destination country would allow this flight to go ahead**, due to the total lockdown in India at the time. The patient insisted that we apply for the permit anyway – he desperately wanted to get home and claimed to have useful diplomatic contacts.

So we applied for the permit. Almost immediately our permit agent advised us that it would be unlikely to get the permit and even more unlikely to get permission for a **night stop** at the destination. After a lot of checking it turned out that we would get permission for a night stop in Sri Lanka (another hour of flight time beyond the destination).

One day before the planned departure we had received all the permits – **except for India**. Our agent assured us that the CAA had already given their approval; they only had to wait for the approval by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. According to them this should only be a matter of some more hours.



On the day of planned departure the landing permit for India was **still missing**. Departure was planned for early afternoon, so we asked our agent to put some pressure on the responsible authorities, so we might still receive this permit. Long story short – 2 hours after the planned departure time we decided to **abort the mission**. After a long and intense discussion we decided not to make a second attempt.

The patient not only insisted on making a **second attempt**, he more or less begged for it. So we re-started the whole process with a view to make a departure 3 days later (under normal circumstances we get most permits within 24 hours or less).

The second attempt ended just like the first one – we aborted some time after planned departure. Then, again after a long debate, we decided that this was definitely going to be our **last attempt**. We assumed that the authorities were playing the game of **“not wanting to approve, but at the same time not wanting to deny the request”**.

Again, the patient insisted on making a **third attempt**, which we scheduled for another two days later. This time, the landing permit for the destination country came on the day of planned departure, early in the morning. We decided to take a risk and depart, even though the permit for the night stop in Sri Lanka was **still pending**. After pushing our agent several times, we finally received this permit during the third sector! We managed to bring the patient home as planned and also arrived at our night stop destination without any complications.

But then, the **positioning flight back home** included a fuel stop at VABB/Mumbai, a place which we normally **avoid at all cost**, as it is terribly overloaded. After having checked Flightradar24 and discovering that they also only had 10% of the normal movements, **we took the risk - and failed**. Due to reduced staff, all services could only be activated once the aircraft was actually on-block. The fuel stop, which we had planned with our usual 45 minutes, took almost 1.5hrs ☐

In the end, we finally managed to get home just minutes before the crew duty time ended.

Case 2: South Africa to Germany

We received a booking to pick up a patient from South Africa – which was under full lockdown at that time.

According to our agent, **no night stops were allowed at all** and the permit had to be **requested via diplomatic channels**. So we contacted the German embassy. Only minutes after our request, the military attaché replied, confirming that no night stops were allowed at all. They had already applied for several other ambulance operators – and were rejected each time.

Almost at the same time, the second agent we had contacted replied to us that they had good diplomatic contacts in the country and had already managed to get a couple of permits for night-stops for other operators. So we sent them our request.



Two days later – on a Saturday – our agent advised us that the authorities had told them they would issue the permit as soon as they received the **verbal note from the German embassy**.

Now try to get hold of an embassy on a weekend! We tried the emergency number from their website, which asked to send a text message to this mobile number to request assistance – **no reply**. We tried the mobile of the military attaché – **no reply**. We tried to find another contact via the German ministry of foreign affairs – they only had the emergency number which we already tried. We called MOFA again and they suggested trying the embassy's Corona hotline – **we succeeded**. The duty officer was very nice and helpful and only half an hour later the military attaché sent instructions on what he needed from us. You could tell from the style of his writing that he was not so amused (no greeting, no bye, just one-liner). But that did not matter very much, once we received a copy of the verbal note only one hour after first contact.

Departure was scheduled for Sunday morning, just at change of shift in Ops. As the South Africa landing permit still was not available some minutes before departure, we decided to **abort the mission**. We advised the crew to go home, and then we advised our agent about the situation – they then called just minutes after our email and urged us to wait a few more minutes before aborting. He said that the

destination was his home country and he knows the situation there very well and even for ministry staff the working conditions are difficult at best. While we still were talking, one of his colleagues shouted something at him and he said that they had **just received the landing permit!**



We managed to hold back the crew just seconds before they entered their cars. We departed with about half an hour delay, but the crew managed to make that good again during the mission - **which finally was a success.**

After return to base, the crew reported that the situation en-route and at the destination was really spooky. **Two of the three fuel-stop airports and the destination had been opened only for us and closed just minutes after departure.** At the destination they were escorted to the hotel by police. During their half hour drive on a three-lane motorway they passed not more than three cars. Police checks took place at every entry and exit to/from the motorway. The hotel staff were not allowed to leave the hotel - they had to live in the hotel for the entire lockdown period.

Conclusion

These were the cases which were impacted most by the restrictions, but almost every flight - except for the typical two- or three-leg operation within Europe - is either **different from normal**, or even **not possible at all**.

Some countries **do not allow night stops** even for flight crews (or they do allow them for flight crews but consider the medical crew as passengers - and for those, night stops are prohibited in any case).

Many countries are now demanding **diplomatic clearance** - whereas before you could simply send the handling request, file the flight plan and go...

Report by: Markus Salomon, Deputy Manager Ground Ops at Quick Air Jet Charter GmbH.

Fake Navigation fees are still a problem

Declan Selleck
8 September, 2020



It's a concern: instead of sending your Nav Fees payment to Eurocontrol, you've actually sent it to some guy sitting in his underpants in his mother's basement. And you're not going to get it back.

We've seen an increasing variety of scam emails, that at first glance look like they are from Eurocontrol – but aren't. Here's a good example from this week:

From: Alexandre Skonieczki
Date: June 15, 2020 at 7:29:41 AM EDT
Subject: open payment- eurocontrol
Reply-To: alexander.skonieczki@eurocontrolint.in

Dear Colleagues,

We have sent a couple of letters to you, but no response, could you please let us know the status of outstanding with respect to Air navigation and communication charges on review of your files, we discovered that these invoices in reference to your flight charges dated 15-02-2020 and 15-02-2020 for QPSIX (reference 05/044579/56/1906/01 and 05/044579/56/1907/01) are still in arrears, please kindly confirm the status of these invoices, that is let us know if payment has been made or not by providing a copy of the bank swift confirmation payment proof to enable us reconcile and update your account accordingly.

Note also that, the wire transfer and banking details have changed and the new payment instructions will be sent to you

prior to the next payment run, please advise accordingly, so that we can forward details promptly.

Thanks for your cooperation, we await your prompt advice.

Yours faithfully,

Alexandre Skonieczki

COLLECTION OF CHARGES
CRCO/CAT/ACCOUNTING
EUROCONTROL
Rue de la Fusee 96130
BELGIUM

You'd be forgiven for glancing over it and responding to request the details of 'their' new bank account. And that's where the problem begins - you'll get a new bank account, only it won't direct your money to Brussels.

IATA has the same issue:

IATA AGENT
To: Karen Welsh
IATA INVOICE

IA

Dear Sir,

Your company still have IATA invoices that are overdue for payment, kindly check your records and get back to us as soon as possible if payment has been made we would appreciate if you could send us a copy of the Invoice... Failure to do so may lead to sanctions

Expecting your usual prompt co-operation

Best Regards,

Karen Welsh

Accounts /Invoicing

International Air Transport Association

IATA Head Office, 800 Place Victoria

Fortunately, most of these emails are poorly written, and easy enough to identify as bogus - but that's only if you are on your guard. The best solution is to simply be aware of the risk:

Eurocontrol

1. Look at the sender address: real emails come from **eurocontrol.int**. Fake ones look similar, but might be something like @eurocontrolinc.com or @eurocontrolint.in.
2. Most of the emails ask for a copy of an invoice or payment - be suspicious when you read that.
3. Be especially alert when the email mentions a **change in bank account**. Eurocontrol has no plans to change bank accounts any time soon.

4. Best advice: write to the real address: **r3.crco@eurocontrol.int** and ask for confirmation of any message, or call the Route Charges office on +32 2729 3838.
5. The most secure way to handle Eurocontrol charges and payments is through their CEFA portal.

IATA

1. Most recent fake addresses: *invoice@iatahelpdesk.org*, *payments@iataaccounting.org*
2. Contact the real address: **information.security@iata.org**

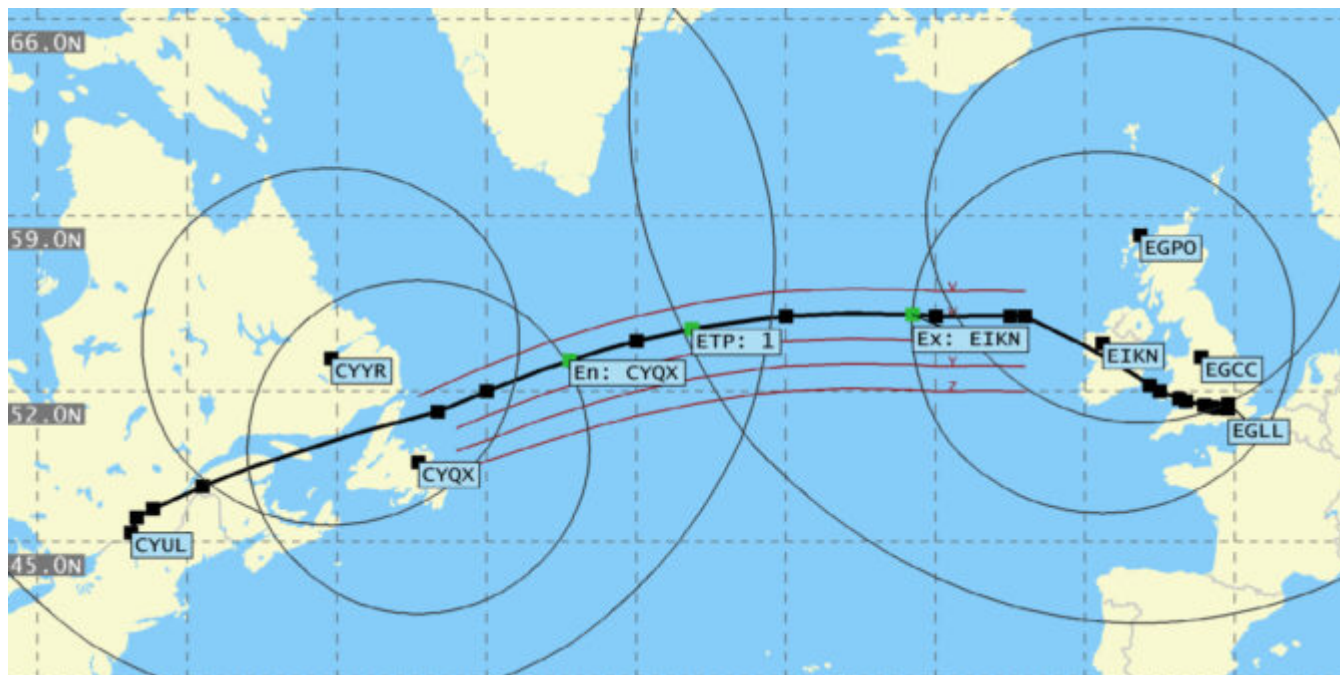
The Air Charter Association have also warned that scammers have recently targeted business deals where operators charter out their aircraft to brokers. Similar to the fake IATA invoices scam, but more elaborate. Bottom line, if you're chartering out your aircraft — or if you're chartering one yourself — work with a reputable broker and triple-check all contact details (email addresses as well as phone numbers) and bank account details before pushing the button on any money transfers.

Even the mighty Japan Airlines fell victim to a targeted email scam back in 2017 which defrauded the company of JPY384 million yen – the equivalent of around USD \$3.4 million. The airline received a series of emails purporting to be from a U.S. financial services company that had been leasing aircraft to Japan Airlines. Not realising it was scam, JAL promptly paid the money into a Hong Kong bank account, as requested. It was only later discovered to be fraudulent, when the genuine U.S. company demanded payment!

Have you been the target of similar scams? Let us know! – and we'll add it to the list of dodgy email addresses and common scams.

Covid impact on North Atlantic diversion airports

Chris Shieff
8 September, 2020



Planning diversion alternates is always fun – particularly when flying across **vast tracts of open ocean like the North Atlantic**. Check a few Notams, google some airport pics to work out just how scary the runway is, stick a couple of en-route alternates into your flight plan, and away you go...

The reality is it's a bit more complicated than that. For use as a diversion alternate, an aircraft operator must ensure that the airport concerned meets basic criteria to be classified as 'adequate'. In other words, **just a runway is not enough** – if only it were that simple!

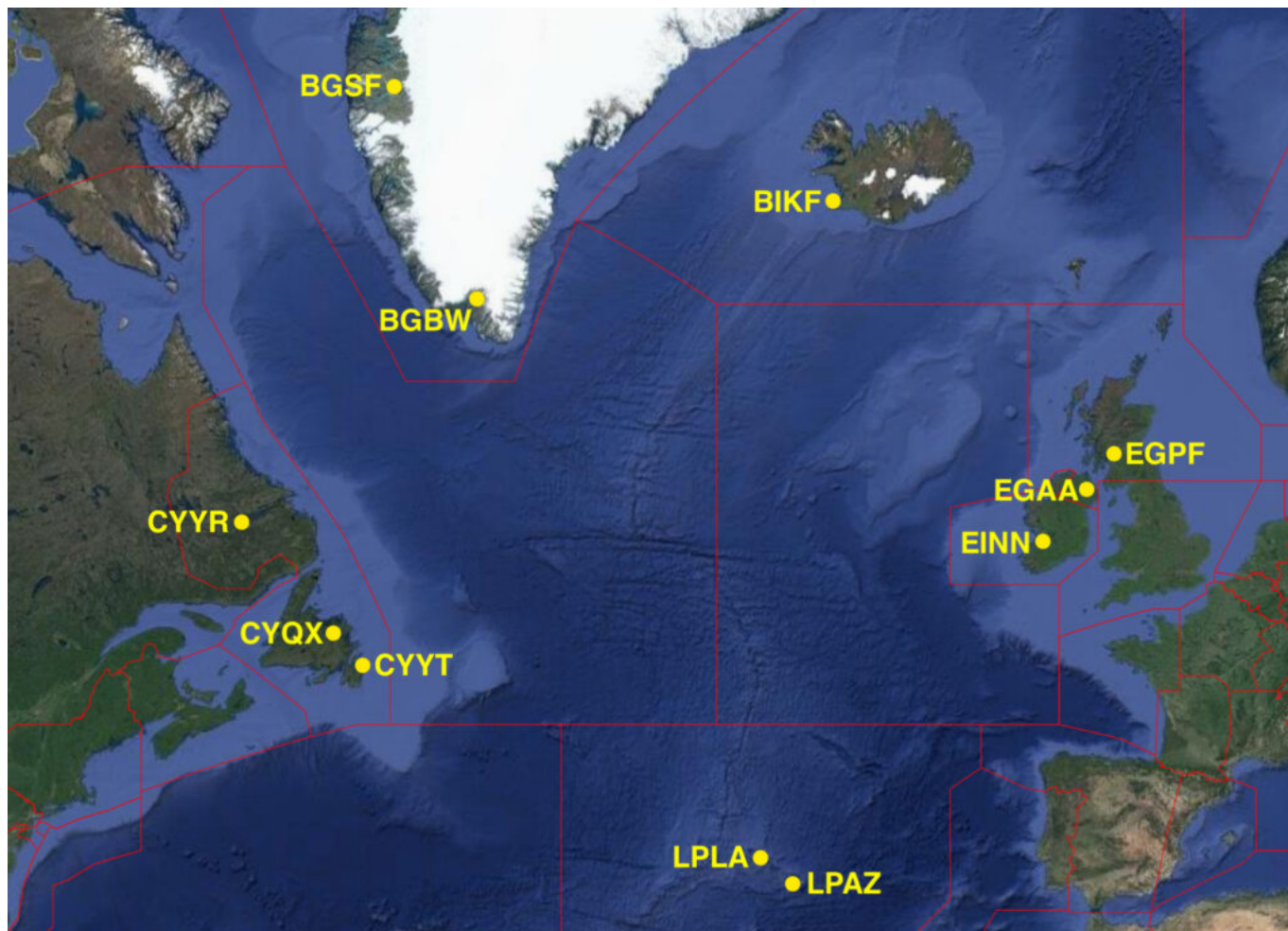
Here are the kinds of things we're interested in:

- Sufficient weather forecasting.
- ATC (or Flight Information Service) hours of operation.
- Runway availability.
- Instrument approach availability.
- Runway Lighting.
- Runway slope guidance (PAPI, VASI, Glideslope or similar).
- RFF (Rescue Fire) operational status.
- Status of facilities: refuelling, handling, parking bays etc.

During the course of the Covid-19 pandemic, a number of airports have used the lull in traffic to undertake work that can affect their operational status. As a result, these changes may create additional **operational issues for pilots and flight planners** seeking diversion alternates that meet their requirements.

Also, due to the general chaos of Covid-19, **many airports have limited staff** which has an effect on how your aircraft, passengers and crew will be handled on the ground if you do need to divert.

Here's a summary of **changes to operational status** of airports commonly used as diversion alternates for aircraft crossing the **North Atlantic**. (Unless stated otherwise, airports listed below are open H24 for emergency divers).



The Biggies

BGSF Kangerkussuaq Airport, Greenland – Airport is open 1000-1900z Monday to Saturday. Closed on Sundays. If you want them to stay open for you outside their opening times, you have to request it in advance – watch out for hefty fees if doing this, which get charged even if you don't end up actually diverting there. Same applies if you just casually list BGSF as an en-route alternate on your flight plan if operating out of hours. More info on that [here](#).

However, until at least June 10 the airport is classified as 'non-instrumental.' Effectively you can only use it during daylight hours in good conditions (NOTAM A0283/20 refers).

BGBW Narsarsuaq, Greenland – Similar deal to BGSF – airport is only open 1000-1900z Monday to Saturday, and closed on Sundays. And again, extra fees which get charged if filing BGBW as an en-route alternate on flight plans. RFF category 5, but grab a coffee because it requires 3 hour's notice (NOTAM A0098/20 refers). Officially, the current rules for Greenland are that crew and pax will not be allowed to disembark, not even for divers. Unofficially, the local handler says that if a divert was to happen, they'd "find a solution".

LPLA Lajes, Azores – Several restrictions apply due to Covid. Essentially you can go there if you really need somewhere to land but expect chaos once you do. The airport is currently closed to international arrivals unless it's an emergency. And even then you cannot disembark without permission and strict quarantine measures apply (NOTAM A1487/20 refers). Unscheduled arrivals of emergency aircraft can expect 'extensive handling delays' (NOTAM A1485/20 refers). All passengers and crew must wear face masks, and once you and your passengers leave the aircraft you will be quarantined in the local air force base (room service is unlikely).

LPAZ Santa Maria, Azores. If you have to divert there, no crew or pax are allowed to disembark. For

medical emergencies, they actually recommend you go to LPLA instead!

EINN Shannon, Ireland - Aerodrome is currently only operational from 0500-2100z due to the impact of Covid (NOTAM A1062/20 refers). The airport has confirmed they are not available outside of these hours for emergency divers - so if you're operating overnight, the nearest available H24 airports are EGAA/Belfast and EIDW/Dublin.

And watch out for these potential 'gotchas'

CYYR Goose Bay, Canada - Until June 29, runway 16/34 is closed. In strong northerly or southerly conditions, cross wind limitations may be reached - so keep an eye on your ETOPs alternate minima (NOTAM E3107/20 refers).

CYQX Gander, Canada - In case of divert, crew/pax all need to fill out a Government Declaration COVID form to stay overnight, and need to have proper PPR (Masks, Gloves and Sanitary Cleaner). RFF category 5 which requires at least 30 minutes notice.

BIKF Keflavik, Iceland - RFF category 8 from 0500-1900z, RFF category 7 from 1900-0500z (NOTAM A0123/20 refers).

EGAA Belfast, Ireland - Until June 13, RFF category 6 overnight between 1800-0600z (NOTAM A1968/20 refers). And until June 11, this is reduced to just RFF cat 4 between the daytime hours of 0600-1800z (NOTAM A1993/20 refers).

EGPF Glasgow, Scotland. Until June 16, available RFF category is 6 for the majority of the day due to staffing issues caused by Covid (NOTAM A1983/20 refers).

In other NAT-related news, the datalink mandate rules have been relaxed until the end of June, due to the fact that there's now significantly less traffic because of all the COVID restrictions. **Non-datalink mandate compliant aircraft may therefore flight plan and operate between FL290-410 until June 30.** ICAO are saying that due to the decrease in traffic, there is a significantly higher chance of flights being cleared as requested, and are encouraging operators to file and request their optimal profiles at all stages of the flight. More info on the NAT Datalink Mandate can be found [here](#).