# Venezuela issues another surprise ban on GA/BA Flights

David Mumford
15 November, 2019


**On Nov 15, authorities in Venezuela issued a Notam immediately suspending all GA/BA flights from operating to airports in the country. The ban was due to remain in place until 2359z on Nov 20, but got cancelled on Nov 18.**

Here was the Notam, issued by the SVZM/Maiquetia FIR:

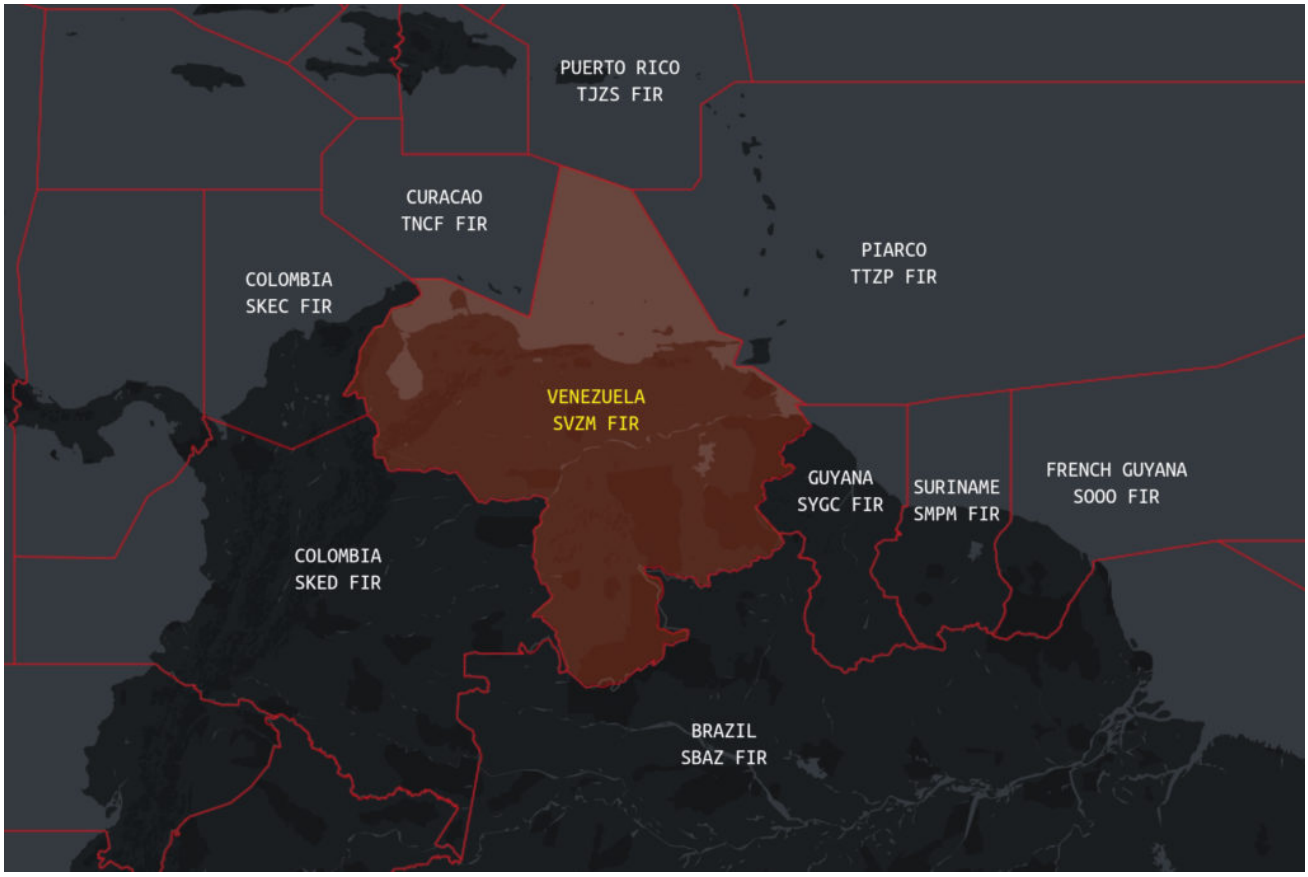
***A0842/19*** *– GENERAL AND PRIVATE AVIATION OPS INCLUDING REMOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM (RPAS) ARE SUSPENDED. OVERFLIGHTS CROSSING SVZM / FIR ARE ALLOWED. 15 NOV 10:00 2019 UNTIL 20 NOV 23:59 2019. CREATED: 15 NOV 04:01 2019*

The last time the Venezuelan government issued a ban like this was back in Feb 2019, which seemed to be related to wider attempts by the government to limit the travel of opposition politicians. This latest ban probably had similar motivations – with Venezuela's President Maduro calling for government supporters to march and rally across the country on Nov 16 to counter protests called for by oppposition leader Juan Guaidó in Caracas on the same date.

U.S. operators have been prohibited from operating to Venezuelan airports — and from overflying the country below FL260 — ever since 1st May 2019 when the US FAA issued a "Do Not Fly" instruction. Two weeks after that, the U.S. ordered the suspension of all commercial passenger and cargo flights between the U.S. and Venezuela, and this applies to both U.S. and foreign registered carriers.

Our advice remains the same: **you don't want to go to Venezuela at the moment**. The official advice of both the US and Canada couldn't be clearer, they both say the same thing: **do not travel to Venezuela** due to risks posed by the ongoing unstable political and economic situations and the significant levels of violent crime.

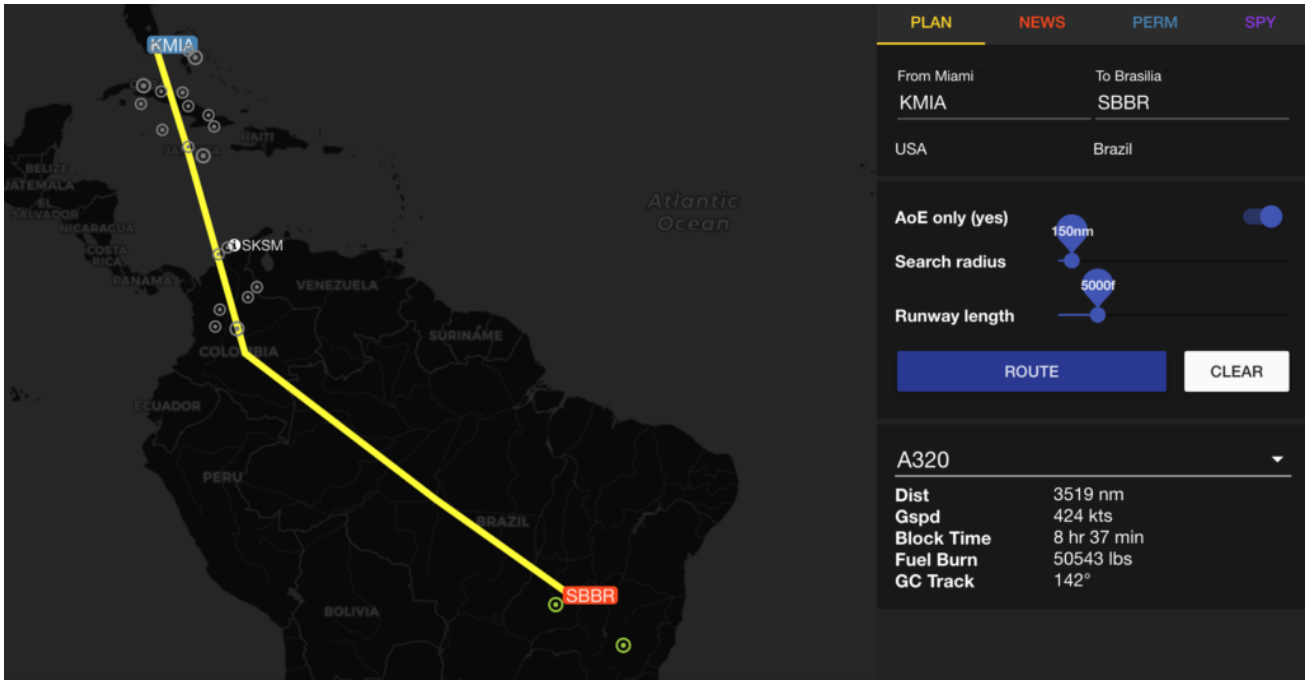
For overflights, here's what we suggest…




To the **WEST**
– via Colombia (SKED/Bogota FIR) – **permit required** for all overflights.
Note: watch out if planning a flight through the TNCF/Curacao FIR – although a permit to overfly is not required here, you will need to prepay for navigation fees in advance. More on that here.

To the **EAST**
– via Guyana (SYGC/Georgetown FIR) – **permit not required**
– via Suriname (SMPM/Paramaribio FIR) – **permit required**
– via French Guyana (SOOO/Rochambeau FIR) – **permit required** unless operating a GA aircraft under 12.5k lbs.

If you need a tech stop and previously used/considered SVMI, then look at alternatives like TNCC, TTPP, SBEG, SMJP. Use OpsGroup's GoCrow planning map to figure your best alternate options:

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# New Procedures at Nice: Beware the Big CDM Computer

David Mumford
15 November, 2019


**Nice Airport will launch Airport Collaborative Decision Making (A-CDM) on Nov 25.** The main impact to operators will basically be that **strict timings will have to be adhered-to for the entire start-up process**: flight clearance, engines start-up approval and parking off-block will all have to be done within strict timeframes, otherwise your flight will drop out of the CDM system and you'll likely get hit with a **significant delay.**

**Top tips** from local handler Swissport are as follows (we've paraphrased slightly):

**Flight dispatch:**

- It is now compulsory to file the flight plan so that it exactly matches the Airport Slot booked by your ground handler. If the flight plan and the Airport Slot timings are not exactly the same, **the Big CDM Computer** at the airport will get terribly confused, your flight plan will get rejected, and you won't be flying anywhere.
- As a consequence, any time you want to change your schedule you must let your handler know first! They get a new Airport Slot for you first, **then** enter your flight into the CDM system, and **then** you can change your flight plan.

**Flight deck crew:**

- **Strict timings** will have to be respected for the start-up process : flight clearance, engines start-up approval and parking off-block will have to be performed in due time, otherwise the flight will be *SEQUENCE OUT* and the CDM process will have to be reset, resulting in significant delays.
- **The TSAT** (Target Start-up Approval Time) is the key timing since all the departure process is based on it. Your ground handler can provide you with your TSAT, and it can also be monitored directly by the crew on the CDM website (see the attachments below on how to do that).
- The transponder is part of the process for the validation of some CDM milestones.
  **The transponder should be switched on before taxiing and switched off once on-block.**
  Switching the transponder on/off during taxiing generates wrong timings in the whole process management, and the Big CDM Computer doesn't like that.

Bottom line, just make sure you **keep talking with your ground handler** throughout the whole departure process, so they can manage all these times for you in the system.

Swissport has provided a **handy guide for operators** on what to expect (click the image below to open the full version!):


**Other things worth knowing at LFMN/Nice:**

- With the change to **RNP approaches only** (i.e. what would be known in the U.S. as RNAV GPS approaches), the airport is filing **violation reports** even if you request and get cleared for any other type of approach. The tip is to **double check your FMS database** before you fly to confirm all approaches are loaded, especially the RWY 04 RNAV-A and RWY 22 RNAV-D. See Airport Spy reports on LFMN for full reports.
- From March 2019, any **schedule change** (ETA, ETD, flight number, provenance or destination airport) will generate a **new PPR number** – now called “Slot ID” – that will have to be updated in the FPL, still in field 18. Bear in mind that this process will take at least 10-15 minutes to have the new schedule validated by the airport and get the new Slot ID.
- France has started a thing called CASH – Collaborative Aerodrome Safety Highlights. It’s basically a selection of **briefing packages** for certain airports, drawn from information supplied by airlines, operators, and ATC. So far, they’ve published ones for LFBK/Bastia, LFOB/Beauvais, LFKC/Calvi, LFPB/Paris Le Bourget, LFPG/Paris Charles De Gaulle, LFMN/Nice, and LFBO/Toulouse. More info

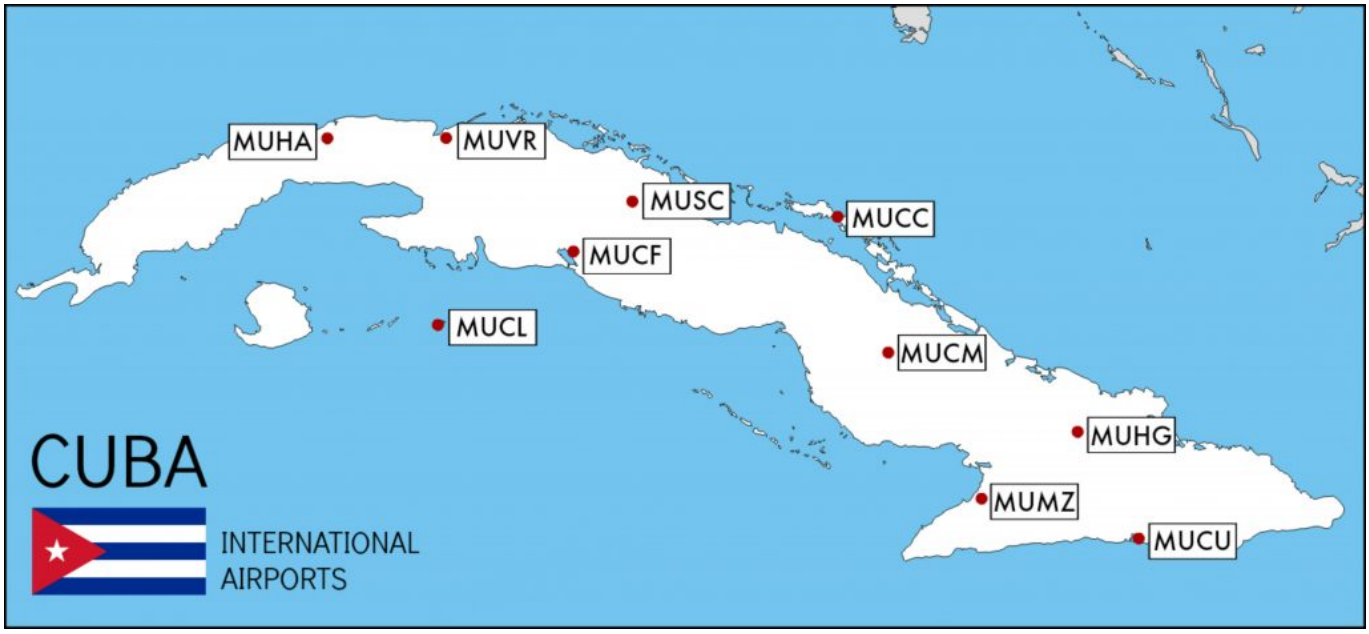
# U.S. cracks down on scheduled flights to Cuba

David Mumford
15 November, 2019


The U.S. has announced it will **suspend scheduled flights to all airports in Cuba except for MUHA/Havana**, in another attempt to limit cash flows going to the Cuban government. The affected airlines, including American, Delta and JetBlue, now have 45 days to wrap up their operations to those other destinations in Cuba, before **the ban goes into effect on Dec 10**.

**This does not apply to Part 135 non-scheduled charter flights** – these are still allowed to operate from the U.S. to any international airport in Cuba. However, it's still a tricky business to operate these flights and stay within the rules. Policies introduced by the Office of Foreign Asset Control (OFAC) in 2017 mean that there are only a handful of **categories of permitted travel** between the US and Cuba.

As for **Part 91 private flights** from the U.S. to Cuba, these have been **completely banned** since June 2019. This was a policy introduced by the US Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS), which meant that U.S. operators could no longer operate an N-reg aircraft privately to Cuba for any reason – it doesn't matter if your passengers meet OFAC's "permitted categories of travel" or not, **it's a no-go**.




For **non-U.S. operators** traveling to Cuba from anywhere other than U.S. territory, it should be a doddle. Get a landing permit, arrange your ground handling, file your flight plan, and off you go. Check out our article for more info.

If you're headed to Cuba — even to MUHA/Havana — you should double-check with your **insurance** provider about your **coverage**. We received the following report, which suggests that with the new U.S. sanctions, **many U.S. operators may no longer be covered**:

*"Being the insurance director of an Airline, I'm having the dilemma whether the insurance would cover any damages/losses/injuries may have occurred during Cuba flights. Because, when I raised the question, insurers simply replied with an aviation clause called AVN111/AVN111(R) which says insurers would verify each individual case with relevant sanction authority (in this case, OFAC) and do their best to grant permission to reimburse the losses. It can easily take years to get resolved which essentially means there is no actual protection against losses"...*

In principle, U.S. operators with an insurance policy from a **non-U.S. based insurer** can get insurance cover for Cuban ops. However, in practice it may not be possible to even purchase this, as lots of these policies are underwritten by U.S. based insurers – especially for higher policy limits.

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# Escape From New York: How To Get In & Out of Teterboro (2019)

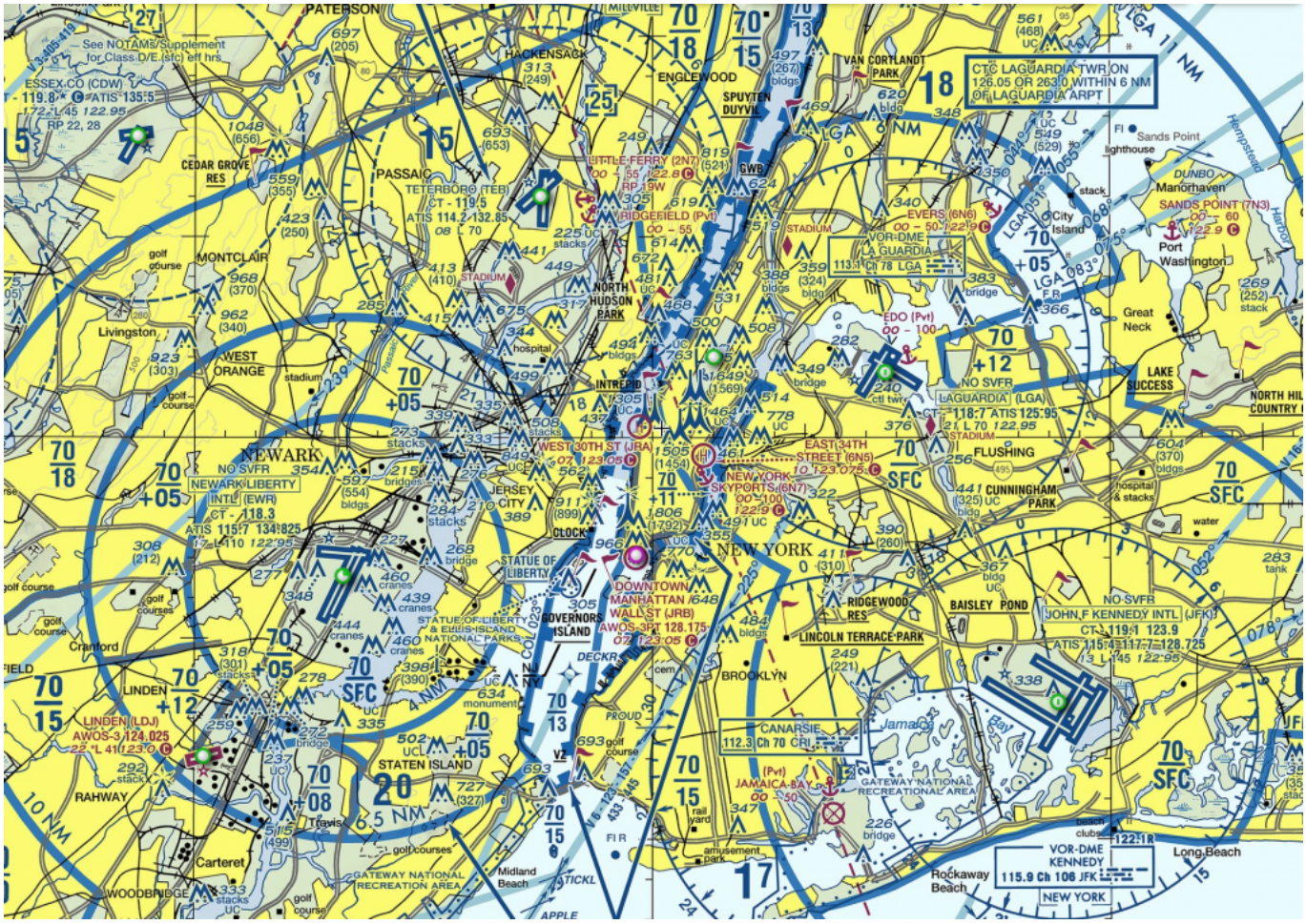
Chris Shieff
15 November, 2019

There's nothing that will drain a smartphone battery quicker than a **ground delay in Teterboro**. Preflight complete, flight plan loaded, passengers onboard (they were actually on time for a change), engines started and – wait for it – you are instructed to contact "ground metering." The word itself can make the stomach drop.

Yes, a line of thunderstorms is moving in, but it's not quite solid. Most of my route does not look affected, but far better minds than mine have determined that diverting traffic require them to **close my entry gate**, as well as most of the surrounding ones. I receive an Expect Departure Clearance Time (EDCT) of **over three and a half hours away!**

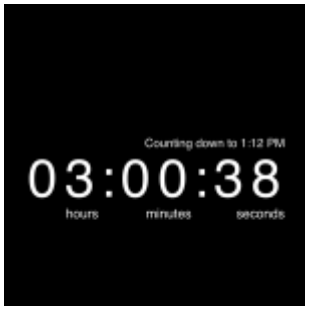
Normally I make it as far as taxiing just short of TEB's RWY 24 before the controllers present me with such a lovely ground delay and instruct me to park in the **"penalty box."** This time I hadn't even left the chocks (I wasn't even actually supposed to start the engines before contacting "metering", but of course I didn't admit that mistake to the controller).

Ground delays due to weather or traffic saturation are **not uncommon in Teterboro**. We have to hand it to the Teterboro ATC staff for efficiently controlling one of the busiest GA airports in the world (about 174,000 arrivals a year). They not only deal with all the complications that come with being located under some of the most congested airspace in the world, they patiently work everyday with a bunch of A-list pilot personalities that think their schedules are more important than any delays. **Well done, you ninjas of New Jersey!**



Weather, traffic and pilots aren't the only issues they've been dealing with lately. Improvement projects have been steadily grinding along for the past year and a half. And guess what? There's even more to come!

 So, after I inform my passengers of this delay, allow me to hop back up in the cockpit and let's discuss some Teterboro info with the help from our good friend Dave Belastock, President of the Teterboro User Group. Perhaps you heard him speak on the latest OpsChat, but, if not, we're going to dive in a little deeper.Oh, by the way, don't be offended while I analyze my fantasy football scores on my phone; I'm a multi-tasker, and we've got three and half hours – well three now – to go and I've got 85% battery life on my phone left.



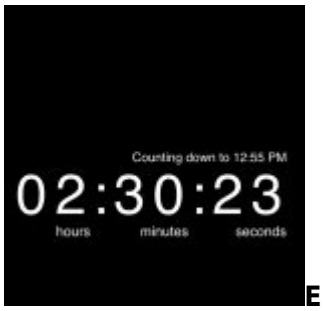

**EDCT**: T minus 3:00, battery 85%

**The Entry**

Getting into Teterboro can often be a **frustrating game**. When calling for a clearance at your departure airport, wagers can be made that an EDCT will be issued. Gone are the days in which operators would **file a nearby airport** (KMMU/Morristown, KHPN/White Plains, etc.) and change the destination to TEB enroute to avoid such ground delays. I've never tried it, but I did witness a former chief pilot broach the subject with clearance delivery at a Midwestern airport about attempting this. "If you to try that stunt, I'll route you through Florida," was the controller's response.

But getting the heads-up on delays may depend upon early filing. The FAA's Traffic Management Unit coordinates the flow programs into airports experiencing delays. According to one TMU official, "Get your flight plan filed prior to program implementation (at least a day in advance) and try not to change that proposal time. The command center 'optimizer' computer will issue releases/slots based on those times. And your flight plan won't drop out of the system until 2 hours after your EDCT."

I've had service providers tell me that **the earlier you file, the higher up you are on the departure list**. I never knew if this was true or not, but it may look like it certainly has a partial effect.



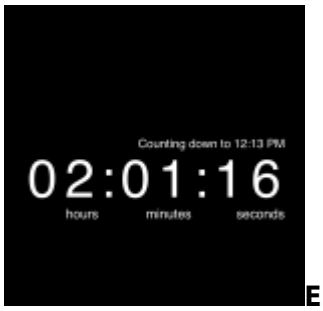
**EDCT**: T minus 2 hrs 30 mins, battery 67%.

Upon arrival into Teterboro, you will watch your TCAS light up like a Galactica arcade game, especially on a clear day. Glider activity near the MUGZY waypoint on the LVZ STAR to the northwest and GA traffic from multiple small airports flock below you. And the question usually comes up once you are beneath Newark's Class B airspace: **"What speed should we be going?"**

The answer is of course 200 knots. But more than once I have been angrily asked by a controller what my speed was and, after answering 200 knots, speed reductions were quickly mandated to traffic following behind me. Thus, there was a perception that NY Tracon needed you to keep your speed up into TEB. But no controller may authorize an aircraft to exceed 200kts under Class B. If it makes you feel better to report your speed reduction, be my guest. But the answer is 200kts.

Those familiar with TEB approaches understand that you must certainly be on your game and brief your approach. The ILS RWY 6, including the circle to land RWY 1, has a mandatory altitude of 1500 feet at DANDY that **pilots are still not making** before intercepting the glide slope. The circle procedure can be tricky, especially with a tall antennae to the south of the airport. And if winds are gusty from the northwest

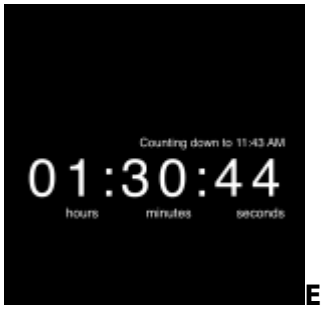
expect turbulence from the distant hills. In 2017, a Learjet became unstable during this approach, stalled and crashed as the crew were unprepared for the approach. Early briefing and proficient monitoring will ensure a safe and simple approach.



**EDCT**: T minus 2 hrs, battery 50%.

Belastock mentions that a new RNAV GPS RWY 19 with LPV mins is expected to be published in December. Some aircraft flying a coupled ILS RWY 19 with the localizer captured at 2000 feet have experienced an **uncommanded climb** due to a false glide slide capture. This glide slope perturbation is triggered by aircraft moving on taxiway Q across RWY 19 and passing in front of the glide slope antennae, which briefly deflects the signal downward enough to satisfy capture parameters. Once the taxiing aircraft has cleared the glide slope critical area, the beam returns to its proper angle. If you have Approach mode armed, the autopilot may grab the temporarily deflected glide slope and then pitch up when the signal returns to normal. Close monitoring and quick action are required to prevent an altitude deviation. The GPS approach would circumnavigate this potential issue.

And speaking of that turn between UNVIL and TUGGZ to intercept the final approach course, you could very well see VFR aircraft just below you. You are outside Class D airspace at that point so separation requirements aren't necessary. While other NY area airports have communication requirements for VFR traffic transitioning near congested airspace, **TEB has none**. TUG is currently working with the FAA to create a Class D transition area to the north to require communication. Fingers crossed.



**EDCT**: T minus 1hr 30 mins, battery 42%.

**The Escape**

RWY 6-24 is going to see substantial improvement in 2020. Currently, the plan is to **close the runway several evenings through the summer**, starting the day after Memorial Day through Labor Day. "Port Authority of NY and NJ staff have worked diligently to create a schedule that would least affect operators," explained Belastock. "We are anticipating RWY 6-24 to close from 10pm Saturday nights until noon on Sundays. And then there will be two 24-hour closures beginning at 10pm Friday through Saturday night at dates to be determined."

This will inevitably switch up the normal departure procedures. Whereas the RUUDY RNAV departure (we'll discuss good ol' RUUDY in a second) is the traditional departure, the alternative will be the DALTON 2 departure.

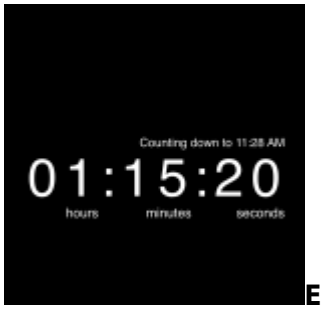
“Do you ever wonder why you have to hold short of RWY 24 for an extended period of time waiting for an IFR release?” asks Belastock. “That’s because NY Tracon requires a 10nm separation between you and the overflying Newark traffic.” The Dalton departure, however, is a VFR-IFR departure.

VFR? Really?

Yep, just as the instrument departure plate reads, aircraft depart VFR – 3 sm visibility and 3000’ ceilings are required – and when handed over to the departure controller, the IFR flight plan is activated. Theoretically there is **no gap required** between the VFR Teterboro departures and IFR Newark arrivals. But consideration was taken between all stakeholders, and a 5nm gap between TEB and EWR traffic was agreed upon. “TEB clearance can’t solicit the departure. You must request it and have a published departure plate available in the cockpit,” said Belastock.

Though this could mean a reduction in release time, if there is a delay in progress controllers can only offer an **“indefinite delay”** for traffic or weather issues, whereas they can give you a set time if using the other IFR departures. “Actually, NY Tracon is encouraging it. They want pilots and controllers comfortable with it,” said Belastock.

As for the RUUDY RNAV departure, good news! Pilot deviations are decreasing. Belastock and TUG worked closely with training facilities as well as OPSGROUP to get the word out. I even noticed the RUDDY departure was included in my latest recurrent simulator training. With the altitude restriction and noise abatement restrictions pilots need to be extremely situationally aware. “We don’t want to tell pilots how to fly their aircraft,” said Belastock. “But we need them to be fully aware of how the departure operates.”



**EDCT**: T minus 1:15, battery 37%.

**The Window of Opportunit**y

My eyes are burning a bit from so much screen time on my phone. I query Gate Hold again – just like the other 73 pilots that are trying to chime in. Yep, that’s me you’re rolling your eyes at.  My EDCT time is actually extended further even though the weather is past my entry gate. “Is there anything we can do to get out of here,” I reply with a frustration.

“Can you fly a final altitude of 14,000 feet?”

Confusion mixes with a sense of impending opportunity. “Standby,” I answer. I always take extra fuel out of TEB, but I’m sure there cannot be enough to fly that low. I run the numbers…and, I’ll be damned, we can make the destination with a safe fuel reserve.

“Actually, yes we can,” I reply excitedly. “Start your engines and contact ground control,” comes the reply. As I taxi past all the other waiting aircraft, I couldn’t help but feel a sense of guilt…and some pleasure as well.

We departed on the RUUDY departure, flew west while climbing to 14,000 feet talking to NY Center and several approach controllers. When we were handed off to Cleveland Center, we requested a more appropriate cruising altitude and given it without question.

I later called TEB tower to see how this “gift” actually occurred. “It doesn’t happen often. But since your entry gate and route were getting so saturated with diverting traffic, you couldn’t fly it at your filed altitude. But this wasn’t the case for the lower altitudes,” explained the controller. “**I can’t offer it unless you specifically ask.** But even then it probably won’t be granted.”

I’ve been flying in and out of TEB for 15 years, and I’m still often learning new details about its operation. Perhaps I’ll keep this tool in my back pocket for the next great escape.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# Mexico’s revamped CAA to make permit applications even tougher

Chris Shieff
15 November, 2019


If you thought that applying for Mexican landing permits couldn’t possibly get any more complicated, then think again!

On 16th Oct 2019, the Civil Aviation Authority in Mexico (DGAC) became the Civil Aviation Federal Agency

(AFAC), and it sounds like they mean business. Local handlers are saying that policies and procedures that were typically overlooked or handled with lax criteria in the past are now expected to be more strictly enforced.

*The following changes apply to **Part 135 commercial operators** looking to obtain Mexico landing permits. (For Part 91 private operators, no changes to the current rules and requirements are expected at present).*

### Insurance Policies

It's long been the case that you need two insurance policies for ops to Mexico: your standard worldwide one, and a specific Mexican one issued by a Mexican company.

Authorities are now saying that for both of these policies, **the original copies must be submitted in full**; with coverage details, proof of payment, and aircraft details clearly shown. Digital copies are not good enough, and there have been some cases reported where applications have been rejected due to seemingly trivial things such as the signatures being too blurry, or even the "courtesy translation" stamp being on top of a signature.

### Power of Attorney

To get a landing permit for Mexico, you need to nominate a local handling agent, sign a Power of Attorney saying that they are your legal rep there, and then the CAA will release the permit to them.

Previously, authorities were happy enough with a scanned copy of this Power of Attorney, but they are now saying this must be submitted as a notarized original with an Apostille. If you're applying for Single Landing Authorization (see below) for short notice operations, you will have to send a digital copy of this, and commit to follow-up by sending the original copy too once available.

### Single Landing Authorizations (one time shots):

The CAA traditionally allowed operators up to five Single Landing Authorizations before requiring an **Indefinite Blanket Permit** if operators continued flying into Mexico. The AFAC is now cracking down on this. So "one and done" will be the new rule with Single Landing Authorizations. After that, the Indefinite Blanket Permit must be applied for (although you should still be able to obtain SLA's on a case by case basis, once your application for the Blanket Permit is underway).

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Whether these implementations will continue to be enforced in the long-term remains to be seen. But for now, it looks like operators should prepare to apply for the Indefinite Blanket Permit if they are planning on doing more than just one flight to Mexico. Here is the original post on this topic by local Mexican agent Manny Aviation – we thank them for their help with alerting us to this!

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# Libya Airspace Update Oct 2019

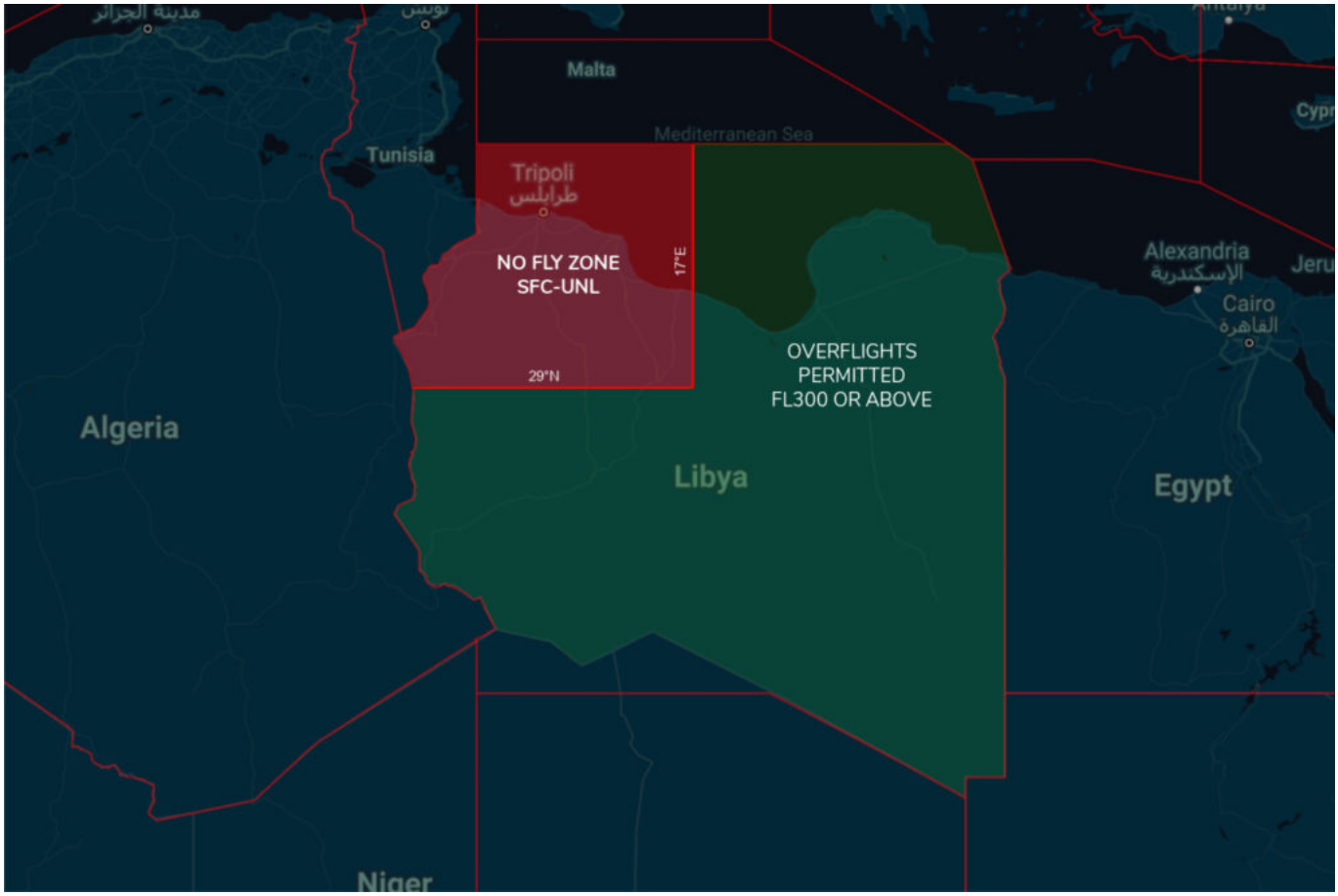
David Mumford
15 November, 2019


On 23rd Oct 2019, the US issued an emergency order **prohibiting U.S. operators from flying in Libyan airspace**. The guidance here is very clear: **do not operate anywhere in the HLLL/Tripoli FIR, at any flight level.**

This follows months of civil war in Libya, with militia from the east mounting a campaign to seize control of Tripoli, including HLLM airport, and threatening to shoot down aircraft operating in western Libya.

In recent months there have been a number of airstrikes targeting HLLM/Mitiga airport, the latest coming on Aug 15, which reportedly killed two people and forced the airport to close. There are videos on social media showing **planes landing at the airport as shells are falling** in the background.

Prior to yesterday's announcement, the U.S. guidance on Libya was that operators were allowed to overfly Libya at FL300 or above, except an area in the north-western part of the country over Tripoli, where all flights were prohibited. Here's what that looked like:




But this guidance is now defunct. The FAA website now shows the **updated guidance** for Libya – including the Background Notice.

**Germany** and **Malta** still have warnings in place which mirror the **old advice** of the U.S. – do not fly over the north-western part of Libya, but overflights of the rest of the country are permitted at the higher flight levels. **The UK** and **France** advise against all overflights. These warnings may be updated in the coming days, following the new advice from the U.S.

Libya remains politically unstable, with a fragile security situation across the country. In their SFAR issued back in March 2019, the U.S. said that the main threat to aviation at the lower flight levels stems from the widespread proliferation of man-portable air-defence systems (MANPADS) across the country:

***"Both GNA and advancing LNA forces have access to advanced man portable air defense systems (MANPADS) and likely anti-aircraft artillery. These ground-based weapon systems present a risk to aircraft, but only at altitudes below FL300. LNA forces have tactical aircraft capable of intercepting aircraft at altitudes at and above FL300 within the self-declared military zone in Western Libya, which may present an inadvertent risk to civil aviation operations in Western Libya. While the LNA tactical aircraft threat is likely intended for GNA military aircraft, an inadvertent risk remains for civil aviation at all altitudes due to potential miscalculation or misidentification."***

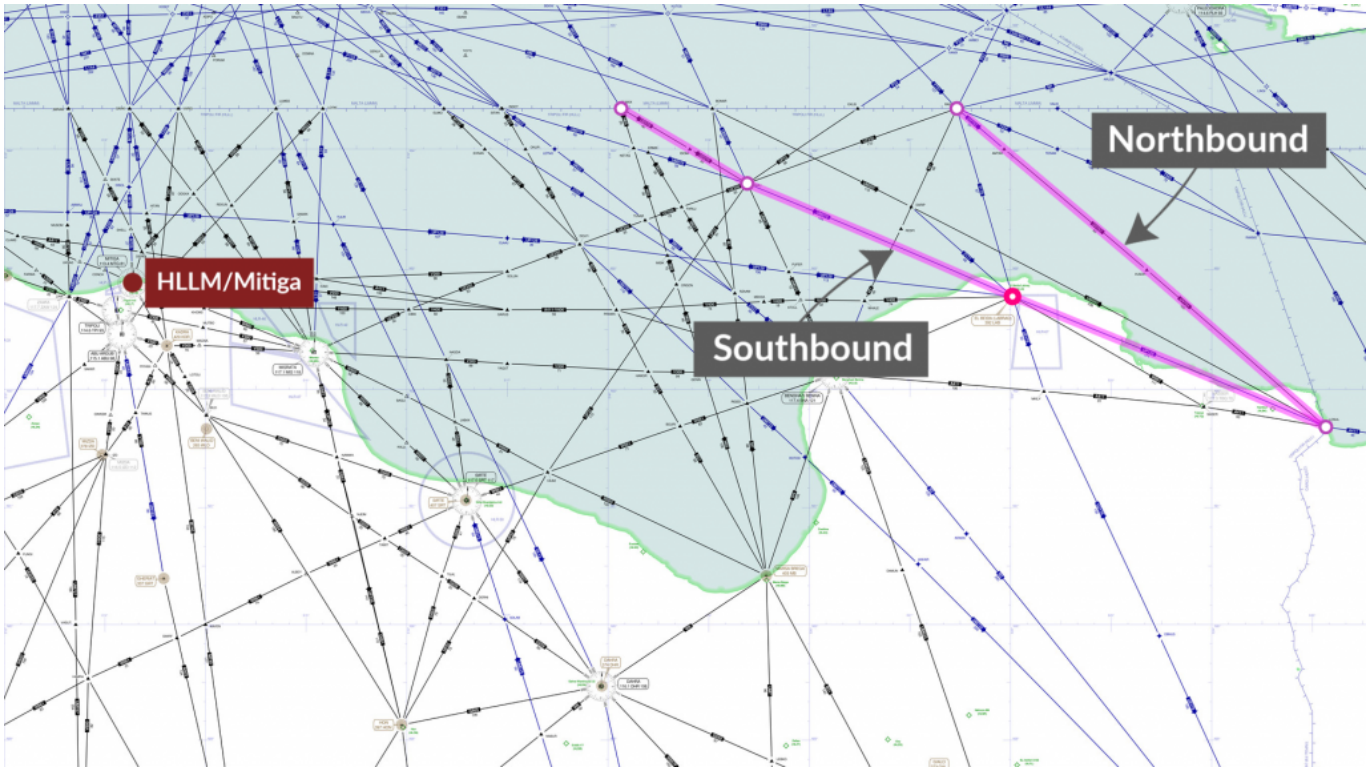
However, there are factions on the ground in Libya which possess weapons capable of targeting aircraft above FL300. The LNA is one of many armed groups in Libya which continues to use various rocket systems looted from Gaddafi's stockpiles at the end of the war in 2011. In May 2018, the LNA proudly displayed a refurbished Russian-made surface-to-air missile system at HLLB/Benina Airbase in Benghazi. This system has the capability to engage aircraft at altitudes up to FL450.

The opposing GNA forces have surface-to-air missile systems of their own. Some reports indicate that the GNA are in possession of the Russian-made SA-3 system, which has the capability to engage aircraft at altitudes over FL800.

With the current conflict between these and other rival factions on the ground in Libya now escalating, it's not clear what level of control the main players hold over their missile systems.

Bottom line, there's still a potential risk to aircraft **at all altitudes** and **across all parts** of Libya.

Even if you are allowed to overfly the country, there are only two approved routes available, in the far north-eastern corner of the country, as per HLLL Libyan Notam A0063/17:




***Northbound**: LOSUL UP128 LAB UM979 RAMLI UZ270 OLMAX (even levels)*
***Southbound**: RASNO UY751 LOSUL (odd levels)*

Even on these routes, reliable ATC services cannot be guaranteed. The past few years have seen regular ATS and radar outages across the HLLL FIR airspace, and severe limitations in VHF capability, with operators having to communicate with Malta ATC for guidance.

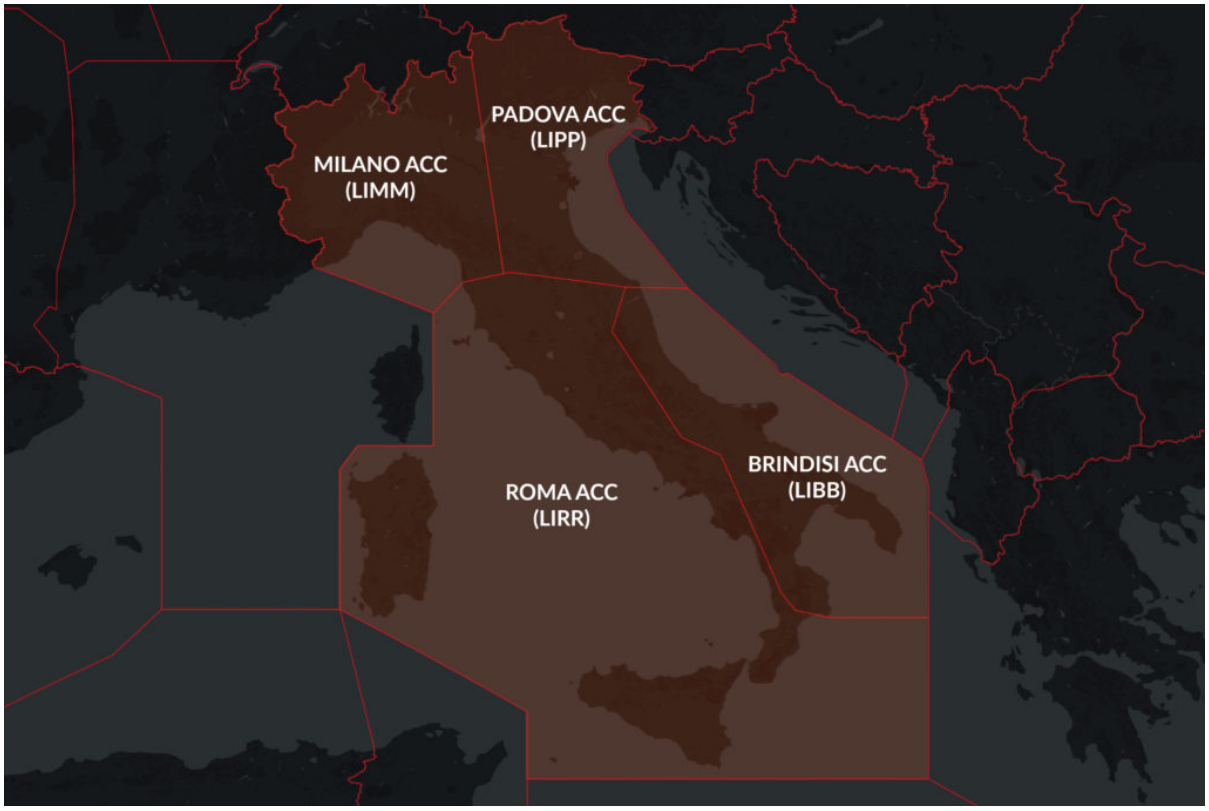
Given the current security concerns, we continue to list the entire country as **“Level 1 – Avoid”** at SafeAirspace.net

# Italy ATC strike on Oct 25

David Mumford
15 November, 2019

Notams have now been published advising of the planned **nationwide ATC strike on Friday Oct 25.**

The strike will happen between **13-17 local time** (11-15z), although it looks like the LIBB/Brindisi sector in the south-east of the country will run from 12-16 local time.




When these 4-hour strikes go ahead, overflights and "incoming intercontinental flights" (i.e. those from outside Europe) are normally **not significantly affected**, but there are often **big delays for flights**

**to/from Italian airports**.

**LIRZ/Perugia** airport has also announced a local ATC strike between 1300-1700 local time the same day. There may be more local airport-level ATC strikes announced in the coming days, so watch out for those too, as these are the airports which are **always worst affected** by delays.

You can see the full Notam for the nationwide strike here. For updates, keep an eye on the Eurocontrol NOP page on the day of the strike. Eurocontrol will be hosting a teleconference with more info on what to expect, on Thursday 24th Oct at 1200z; you can dial in on +44 2071 928000, and punch in the conference ID number 1581056.

**Further reading:**

- All the latest official information about Italy ATC strikes can be found here. Just make sure you have your Google Translate tool enabled on your browser!

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# London Luton now available for night flights again

OPSGROUP Team
15 November, 2019


**The summer ban on GA/BA night flights ended on Oct 1, and the airport is now available H24 again.**

Throughout last year's winter period there was a strict weekly quota on how many ad-hoc flights were allowed to operate at night, but this has been increased significantly this year, so there should be no problem getting night slots now.

The nighttime noise restrictions for **EGLL/Heathrow**, **EGKK/Gatwick**, and **EGSS/Stansted** are still in

place, making nighttime GA/BA operations to these airports limited.

**Here's a rundown of the current restrictions:**

- **EGMC/Southend** (40 miles from London) & **EGBB/Birmingham** (115 miles from London) are the **only** airports with **no restrictions** (thus far).
- **EGLL/Heathrow** & **EGGK/Gatwick**: Pretty much a no-go zone for business aviation these days
- **EGLC/London City**: closed from 1030pm to 0630am
- **EGWU/Northolt**: closed from 8pm to 8am on weekdays (although the airport is currently closed to all flights until mid-November for runway and apron refurbishments)
- **EGLF/Farnborough**: closed from 10pm to 7am on weekdays
- **EGKB/Biggin Hill**: closed from 11pm to 6.30am on weekdays, and 10pm to 8am on weekends

**Further Reading:**

- Luton Airport's policy on night noise disturbance
- Owners of Luton Airport want to build a second terminal and increase passenger numbers to 32 million a year by 2039.

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# Five months of misery at Mumbai

David Mumford
15 November, 2019

Airlines and operators are preparing for **major peak-hour disruption** at VABB/Mumbai Airport, on account of a **partial shutdown of the main runway** over the next five months.

The main runway will be closed for repairs from 4th Nov 2019 to 28th Mar 2020, between 0930-1730 local time, Mondays to Saturdays. The second runway will be operational during this time, but this can only handle 36 flights per hour – which is around 80% of the regular traffic.

The main runway will remain open on all the big festivals and holiday dates during this period: Dec 25, Jan 1 & 15, Feb 19 & 21, Mar 10 & 25.

This is the second time this year that Mumbai airport has enforced a partial runway shutdown. The first instance, which lasted from Feb 7 to March 30, was for repair works at the intersection of the two runways, which lead to peak hour closures.

This new closure has been announced through a combination of Notam (for Nov 4 to Nov 7), and AIP SUP (for Nov 7 to Mar 28).

**Other things worth knowing:**

- It's not showing on the Notams, but local handlers have confirmed that **VABB/Mumbai is closed to GA/BA flights daily** at the following local times: 0800-1000, 1730-1930, 2115-2315, 0320-0400.
- **VASU/Surat** airport may be a good alternate for VABB/Mumbai (120NM away). It became an international airport of entry in Feb 2019 and has a 2250 metre long runway with ILS. The next nearest airports are VOGO/Goa (230NM away), or VAAH/Ahmedabad (240NM away).
- The **ADS-B mandate** across Indian airspace outlined in AIP SUP 148/2018 that was due to take effect on 1st Jan 2019, has now been **delayed to 1st Jan 2020**. Confirmation of this can be found in Notam G1995/18 (issued for VABF VIDF VECF VOMF).
- Since India introduced **e-visas** back in Feb 2018, they have stopped issuing visas on arrival. **Crew must apply for the 'e-Business Visa'**, and passengers must apply for the 'e-Tourist Visa', on the government website: https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/

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# New North Atlantic Guides and Charts from OPSGROUP

Mark Zee
15 November, 2019


**New changes on the NAT!**

Just kidding, September has been quiet so far, there's nothing new this month. But, after the onslaught of change that 2019 has brought to pilots and operators traversing the great expanses of the North Atlantic, we thought it would be a good time to bring some **new NAT guides and charts** to you.

If you're an OPSGROUP Member, you'll find these in the Guides and Charts section of your Members Dashboard, **for free** (no need to purchase in the shop). And if you're not, then you can get your own copy in the OPSGROUP Shop.

## 1. The 2019 NAT Pack

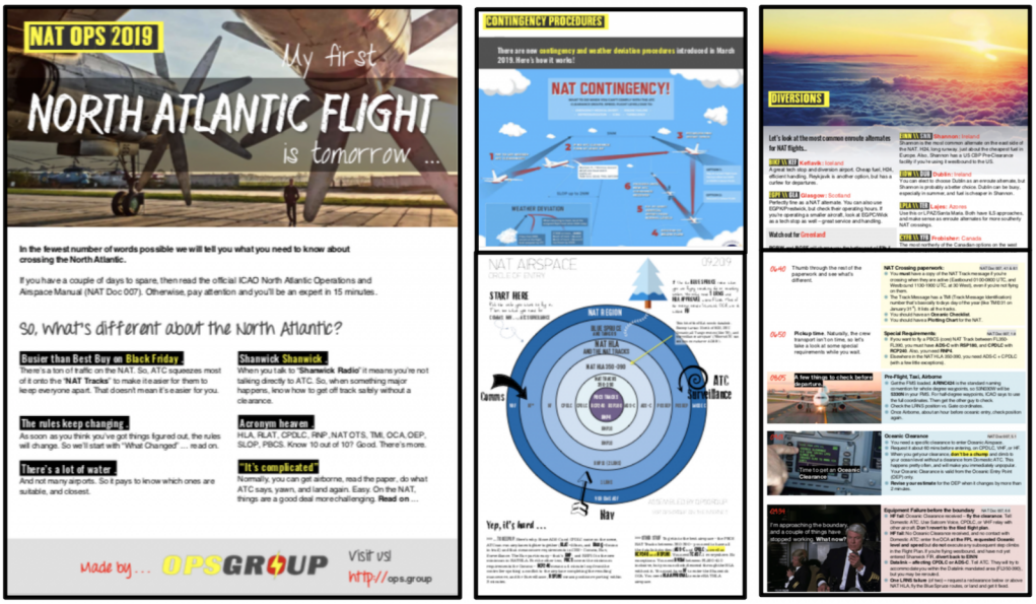

If you really need to know all there is to know about the North Atlantic right now, then the NAT Pack is your girl. You get:

– The current **North Atlantic Plotting Chart** ($35 value)
– The NAT Ops Guide "**My first North Atlantic Flight is tomorrow**" ($25 value)
– The Quick reference guide to the NAT "**Choose your own adventure**" ($15 value)
– The "**Circle of Entry**" showing Com, Nav, and ATC requirements for the different parts of the NAT region

You save $25 by selecting the NAT Pack instead of purchasing items individually.

**Members** – get your free copy here
**Non-members** – purchase here

## 2. The 2019 NAT Ops Guide "My First North Atlantic Flight is Tomorrow"




This NAT Ops Guidebook covers (we hope!) everything you need for both a routine crossing (but still complex), and non-routine (eg. No HF, No HLA, No RVSM) ferry flight. Read the latest 2019 changes, easy to read guidance, sample flights, Flight Planning codes, ATC contact numbers, Diversion airports guide, Blue Spruce routes, VHF coverage, non-standard overflight permits – all in one single guide. 19 pages in PDF format. Download, print, share.

Contents:

1. What's different about the NAT?

2. Changes in 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016.

3. Circle of Entry – a visual depiction of what equipment is needed to enter the different parts of the NAT region airspace.

4. NAT Quick Map – Gander boundary, Shanwick boundary

5. Routine Flight Example #1 – Brussels to JFK (up at 5.45am) – NAT HLA certification, Oceanic Paperwork, Special requirements, getting an Oceanic Clearance, Equipment failure, Weather deviation, and going off track.

6. Non Routine-Flights: No PBCS, No RVSM, No RNP4, No HF, 1 LRNS, No HLA, No ETOPS, No TCAS, No Datalink – what you can do and where you can go.

7. Diversion Airports guide: A couple of notes on each of the most popular diversion airports from Shannon to Goose Bay: What to expect.

8. Airport data: BGBW Narsarsuaq, BGSF Sondy, BIKF Keflavik, EGPF Glasgow, EGPK Prestwick, LPLA Lajes, LPAZ Santa Maria, EINN Shannon, EIDW Dublin, CYFB Fro Bay, CYYR Goose Bay, CYQX Gander, CYYT St. Johns, LPPR Porto, LPPT Lisbon, TXKF Bermuda.

9. Overflight permits – routine and special, non-standard airworthiness, how to get one.

10. Special NAT procedures: Mach number technique, SLOP, Comms, Oceanic Transition Areas, A successful exit, Screwing it up, Departing from Close Airports

11. North Atlantic ATC contacts – Shanwick, Gander, Iceland, Bodo, Santa Maria, New York – ATC Phone, Radio Station Phone, AFTN, Satcom, CPDLC Logon codes; and adjoining Domestic ATC units – US, Canada, Europe.

12. NAT FPL Codes and Flight Levels

13. The new 2019 contingency procedure – graphic.

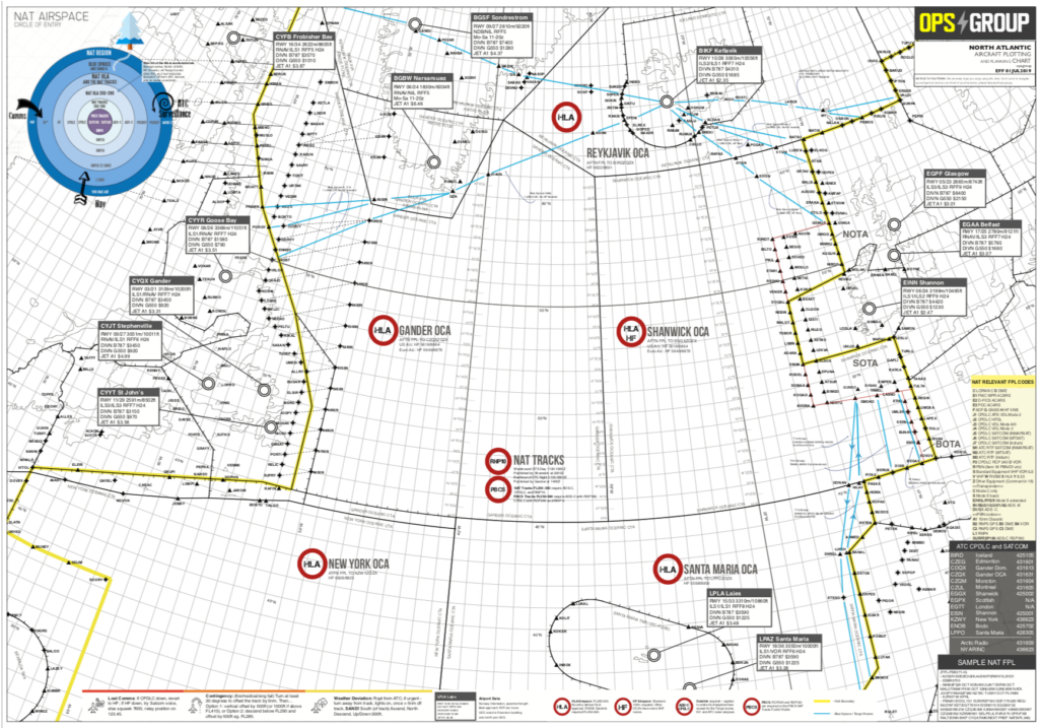
14. The big changes explained – OWAFS, ASEPS, Datalink Mandate 2020, Microslop.

15. Flight Plan Filing Addresses by FIR

16. Links, Questions, Guidance

**Members** – get your free copy here
**Non-members** – purchase here

## 3. The 2019 North Atlantic Plotting Chart




This is a Hi-Res North Atlantic Plotting and Planning Chart in PDF format showing North Atlantic Oceanic Airspace, Shanwick, Gander, Reykjavik, Bodo, New York, Santa Maria, and adjoining domestic airspace, with Airspace entry requirements, FPL codes, Airport data and pricing.

**Members** – get your free copy here

**Non-members** – purchase here

## 4. The 2019 NAT ops Quick Reference Guide


Quick Reference Guide – airspace entry:
– If you have No RVSM – where can you go, and where must you avoid
– Same for No CPDLC, No ADS-C, No Transponder, No full LRNS, TCAS, ETOPS, RNP4, RNP10, HF, SELCAL, PBCS
– Alternative options for routings
– The NAT Circle of Entry showing what you need for Comms, Nav and Surveillance for each part of the NAT: The entire NAT region, just the HLA, the HLA on the NAT Tracks, and the NAT Tracks at 350-390, and PBCS airspace.
– Reference and further reading links from OPSGROUP

**Members** – get your free copy here
**Non-members** – purchase here

We hope you enjoy these guides and resources!

You have **four options** to get these North Atlantic Guides:

1. Get everything above by purchasing the NAT Pack 2019
2. **Pick and choose** individual items in the OPSGROUP Shop
3. Skip the queue and **get everything for free** with any OPSGROUP membership – see the options here and **choose a plan**.
4. If you're already a member, get them in your Dashboard

Safe flying.

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# New procedures at Toronto

David Mumford
15 November, 2019


The airport launched an Airport Collaborative Decision Making (A-CDM) trial on Sep 16 which will continue until Spring 2020. In theory you should see faster turnaround and taxi times, but there are **two key requirements** to be aware of:

1. Make sure you've got **slots** approved in advance for arrival and departure.
2. For departure, you'll get a **Target off Block Time (TOBT)**, which you'll need to update with ATC if you think you're going to exceed it by 5 minutes or more.

The airport started requiring GA/BA flights to obtain slots back in February 2019. After a few teething problems, they decided to start allowing local handlers to arrange these on behalf of operators. If you get a local handler to do this for you, you can book slots up to 30 days in advance – Skycharter & Signature provide this service.

If you do want to arrange slots yourself, that's still an option, but you will only be able to request these 3 days in advance. Various flight planning providers have said they can arrange slots for operators too, but they all seem to be restricted to 3 days as well. Toronto is a busy airport, and this restriction may mean that you won't be able to get the arrival/departure times that you want.

Once you have your slots, your aircraft then gets automatically entered into the A-CDM system. For departure, you will get a **Target off Block Time (TOBT)**, and pilots will need to update this with ATC if they think they are going to exceed it by 5 minutes or more – getting your handler to update your slot reservation at this stage won't work! Once you get within 10 minutes of the TOBT, you can only update it 2 more times. If a third TOBT update is required, you'll need to contact the Airport Flow Manager for

instructions (+1-416-776-2236).

The airport has published this A-CDM quick reference guide for operators:


### Deicing
Deicing for an aircraft is available from OCT 1 to APR 30. The aircraft operator or flight crew must request deicing at Clearance Delivery. In situations where a deicing request must be made after Clearance Delivery, the flight crew must contact the Apron Coordinator with the request.

### Target Off-Block Time (TOBT)
TOBT is a reference time which indicates when an aircraft is expected to be ready to leave its stand. It is kept up-to-date by the aircraft operator or ground handler to an accuracy of +/- 5 minutes to provide a reliable estimate of when the aircraft is ready to be off-blocks, and must be updated if it is different from the previous TOBT by 5 minutes or more. The TOBT is displayed on an Advanced Visual Display Guidance System (AVDGS) at the stand, or communicated by the airline or ground handler where an AVDGS is not present.

### Target Start-Up Approval Time (TSAT)
TSAT represents the time an aircraft can expect to receive start-up and pushback approval. The TSAT takes into account the actual TOBT, variable taxi times to the runway, expected deicing time, applicable CTOT, and other real-time capacity and demand constraints at the airport. The TSAT is displayed on an AVDGS at the stand, or communicated by the airline or ground handler where an AVDGS is not present.

### Target Take Off Time (TTOT)
TTOT is the time at which an aircraft is expected to be on the runway. It is based on the TOBT plus the estimated taxi time to the assigned runway.

### Calculated Take Off Time (CTOT)
CTOT is a planned departure time assigned to a trajectory by the ATC (NAV CANADA) when certain restrictions exist. The aircraft must depart from the runway at this time, or the flight crew must contact the airline if this time cannot be met.

### Call Ready
Call Ready is an indication from the flight crew to the Apron Coordinator to signify that the aircraft is ready for pushback. All doors must be closed with boarding bridges removed and the aircraft ready to depart from the stand.

Call Ready must be made within +/- 5 minutes of TOBT. If the aircraft is not ready at this time, the flight crew must contact the airline to update TOBT.

### Pushback / Start-up approval
The Pre-departure sequence for aircraft is determined by the TSAT. Start-up approval will only be issued if the TSAT is valid. Pushback/taxi instructions are transmitted to the flight crew from North or South Apron. The flight crew must ensure that the flight is ready to pushback within +/- 5 minutes of TSAT.

### Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| A-CDM | Airport Collaborative Decision Making |
| ARDT | Actual Ready Time |
| AVDGS | Advanced Visual Docking Guidance System |
| CTOT | Calculated Take Off Time |
| EOBT | Estimated Off-Block Time |
| EXOT | Estimated Taxi-Out Time |
| SOBT | Scheduled Off-Block Time |
| TOBT | Target Off-Block Time |
| TSAT | Target Start-Up Approval Time |
| TTOT | Target Take Off Time |
| VTT | Variable Taxi Time |

**Contact Us**
Manager of Operations, Airport Flow
**Phone:** 416-776-ACDM (2236)
**Email:** manageroperationsairportflow@gtaa.com
**Web:** torontopearson.com/acdm

**Frequencies:**
Apron Coordinator 122.875
South Apron 122.075
North Apron 122.275

A-CDM AT TORONTO PEARSON
3111 Convair Drive
Toronto AMF, Ontario, Canada
L5P 1B2

Toronto Pearson

**Other useful stuff to know about CYYZ/Toronto:**

- Toronto still has a **night curfew** between the hours of 0030-0630L. If you need to arrive between those hours, you need to contact the after-hours slot team (+1-416-776-3480), who will consider your request. But watch out! For ops approved during the curfew hours they usually charge you around 20 times the landing fee!
- All the approach charts now make reference to a new procedure, implemented in Feb 2019, called **Continuous Descent Operations** (Jepp chart 10-2). This is designed to help reduce airport noise levels, and involves aircraft flying a continuous descent in the lowest power and drag configuration possible. ATC may instruct pilots to do this during daytime and evening periods when traffic is relatively light. More info
- Updated advice has been issued about the **runway selection criteria** at Pearson. When the

> north-south runways are in use (RWY 15/33) the airport sees an arrival capacity reduction of around 40%. So crosswind component guidelines have been included in AIC 12/19 for dry, wet and contaminated runways.

If you have further info to report, please do! Email us at news@ops.group

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# Bahamas Relief Flights – here's what happened in the first five days

Mark Zee
15 November, 2019

Hello all,

We're standing down. The purpose of our involvement in the Bahamas Relief effort was twofold – to provide an accurate information flow from an aviation perspective, and to help coordinate in some way the massive amount of civil aircraft that started taking part last Thursday.

Once the winds had died down on Thursday morning, and it became safe for aircaft to start operations, what we initially saw was a void of information on the situation – which airports were available, and what the approval process from Bahamas CAA/NEMA was and how that worked. Nobody was quite sure. But hundreds wanted to help. So, we made contact with many of the pilots and operators, and Bahamas ATC, to get accurate status reports from Nassau, Freeport, Treasure Cay, Marsh Harbour, and Sandy Point – the five locations where the relief efforts were focused at the end of last week, and got that information out in a twice daily briefing. We also worked with the Bahamas CAA approvals team to get word out on how to apply, and what that process looked like.

The response from Business and General Aviation was overwhelming to say the least. Hundreds of flights were flown on Thursday and Friday bringing in much needed first-response supplies. The initial situation was challenging – airports had not been secured and there was a rush to get relief items arriving, creating

an unsafe security situation for crews in some locations. Nonetheless, efforts continued. It quickly reached a saturation point. There was no ATC, and the entire Abaco area was on one Unicom frequency. Airports that normally have a few movements per hour were seeing in excess of 60 aircraft per hour at times. Some were operating without transponder and radio calls.

On Friday evening, it showed no sign of abating, and airspace safety was now the primary concern. We worked with AOPA and NBAA ATS in an effort to reduce the level of GA traffic, especially as larger aircraft were now coming on scene and could do more to help. Saturday proved to be another exceptionally busy day, and we coordinated with Miami Center to get routes in place to manage that flow of traffic, and get word out to use those routes. Freeport opened up, with limited ATC.

Finally, by Sunday afternoon, there was some respite in the traffic, and the picture of airport status was clear, but there was still a need for coordination among the many separate organizations, and individual operators, conducting relief flights. We worked with Odyssey, Aerobridge, Operation Airdrop, Banyan, numerous FBO's, the US Coast Guard, and probably 150 individual pilots, all part of the flotilla of floatplanes, helicopters, business jets, and private aircraft helping to bring relief. At the same time, airlines and military were now providing larger aircraft for the mass evacuations from Abaco that we saw Sunday and Monday. The marine relief effort was even bigger.

Throughout, we were in contact with the NEMA coordinator, UN OCHA, Bahamas CAA and ATC – and later, NGO's – who all did an exceptional job given the extreme circumstances. The geography of the Bahamas was the biggest challenge – scores of tiny Cay's, and with bridges out and roads washed away, there were – and still are – many pockets of cut-off communities, all needing help.

On Thursday night I started a Facebook group to bring as much information into one place for the operators and pilots involved as we could. It's been a tremendous success. Thanks to all the volunteers participating, we've had a steady stream of updated information on airports and airspace, and more importantly, we've been able to coordinate everything from Search and Rescue helilifts, flights for teams of Doctors, medication transport, evacuation flights, and determine very specific locations to bring aid to.

And now? The presence of the UN, the USAF, International Navy vessels, and upwards of 50 NGO's, all at full tilt, means that the vast majority of relief efforts are being taken care of on a larger scale.

Make no mistake. The situation is still dire. People still need help, in a massive way. Whole towns are gone. The death toll is much higher than than the small numbers first reported. Individual flights can and will continue to make a difference. We'll keep this group open and running, so you can post and share info. I and the OPSGROUP team will get back to work on what we normally do, but we'll keep an eye here to help out where we can.

So – a big THANK YOU to every single one of you that has been part of this effort. None of us have slept much in the last five days, and it's been heartwarming to see the massive generosity of time, effort, aircraft, pilots, and supplies, and help. Simply amazing. Much love to you all!

Mark.

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# Operational Summary – Relief flights to the

# Bahamas

Mark Zee
15 November, 2019


## Bahamas Relief Flights – Operational Summary

***Updated Tuesday 9.30am ET***

## SITUATION UPDATE – 0930 ET Tuesday

Hello all,

We're standing down. The purpose of our involvement in the Bahamas Relief effort was twofold – to provide an accurate information flow from an aviation perspective, and to help coordinate in some way the massive amount of civil aircraft that started taking part last Thursday.

Once the winds had died down on Thursday morning, and it became safe for aircraft to start operations, what we initially saw was a void of information on the situation – which airports were available, and what the approval process from Bahamas CAA/NEMA was and how that worked. Nobody was quite sure. But hundreds wanted to help. So, we made contact with many of the pilots and operators, and Bahamas ATC, to get accurate status reports from Nassau, Freeport, Treasure Cay, Marsh Harbour, and Sandy Point – the five locations where the relief efforts were focused at the end of last week, and got that information out in a twice daily briefing. We also worked with the Bahamas CAA approvals team to get word out on how to apply, and what that process looked like.

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Mark.

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## Earlier updates

Hello all,

If you are involved in the relief effort, planning to fly, or have information to share, please join:

FB group: Bahamas Relief Air Coordination


**Much of the evacuation effort has been completed. Airports and airspace is now less crowded**. SAR efforts continue. The flight of 'general' supplies in from GA is winding down. Some communities have made the decision not to be evacuated, and these will need resources. There is still an unfolding humanitarian crisis. We know that the death toll will rise significantly.

We now move to more specific tasked requests for aviation help. There are swarms of NGO and Relief Agencies in Nassau and the islands. Many need very specific help with things, and it's clear from this evenings NEMA meeting and NGO coordination meetings, that support from the GA community, and private operators, will continue to be extremely useful.

It's been a real challenge here for us to strike a balance between getting help where it's needed, and not having too many respond to the same airports, which created the unsafe airspace situation we saw over the weekend.

We'll continue to work on getting latest info out, so that from an air ops perspective you have the current status. With that, we'll also continue to work with the NGO's and NEMA to bring in private air support wherever we can. Please continue the great work here! Well done everyone.

**A new TFR** has been issued Sunday morning restricting flights – see below.

There is very clear risk in too many aircraft operating here. Please share this, and get the word out as best you can. This is an exceptional situation, and if you can get this message to anyone thinking of flying, please do.

The operational situation in the northern Bahamas is still **complex and changing continuously**.

We've monitored the situation continuously, and have discussed with and received intel from many agencies including Bahamas and US ATC, FAA, BCAA, NEMA, USCG, Military, the NBAA, as well as a number of pilots that are currently operating there in a government and recon capacity.

## New TFR for the Bahamas – Sunday

There is a new TFR (Restricted Airspace) issued early Sunday morning for the Bahamas, valid through until 1st Oct.

Key points:
– New TFR issued Sunday am
– Restricted area boundaries changes
– Surface to 6000 feet.
– Daytime VFR ops allowed only, no night ops or IFR.


Full Text – original TFR here

## Overall picture

There are two primary areas where relief operations are currently happening – **Abaco** and **Grand Bahama**. Large parts of the islands have been wiped out, much flooding remains, roads are out, and the situation on the ground is very challenging. **The focus at the moment is on evacuation** – getting people out. The airspace picture is worrying. We've received reports of aircraft operating at low level without transponder (presumably because they don't have approval to be there), creating a collision concern. There are many more aircraft than usual in Abaco, meaning the airspace is crowded in places, and there is no ATC. There is a TFR active, approval is required from NEMA, see below.

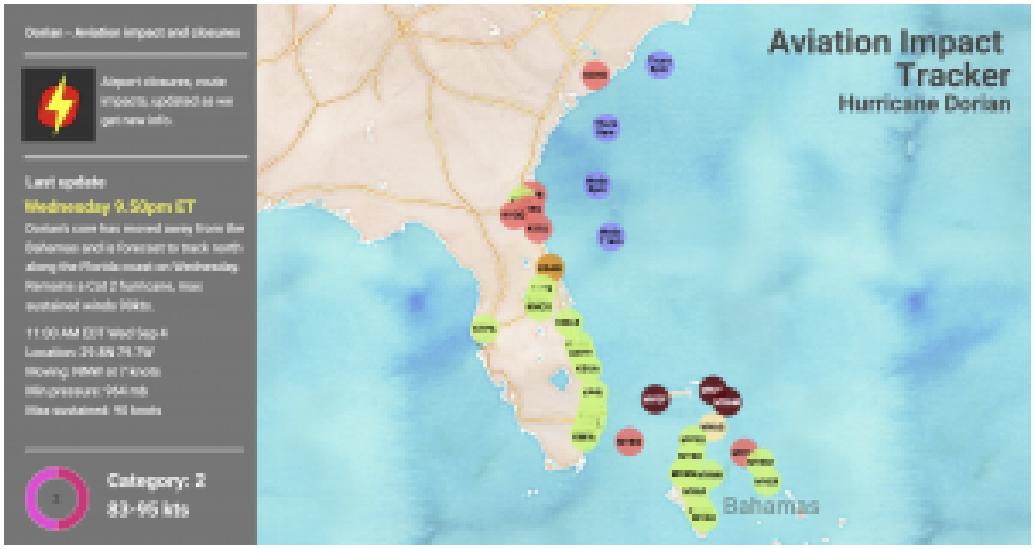
## Before you go

Please consider the following carefully:

1. **The airspace in Abaco is already overcrowded**. The US Coast Guard, government aircraft, and approved relief flights are all operating to, from, and over the island. There are many more helicopters and fixed wing aircraft here than usual.
2. **Some aircraft are operating without transponders**, and may not be making radio calls, to avoid being pinged for operating without approvals.
3. Help is needed, but it **has to be delivered sensibly**. If you are going to go, you must request permission from NEMA/The Bahamas CAA. See below for contact details. Consider the safety of your own aircraft and pilots first, then others, and only operate with permission – or you are likely to jeopardize the relief effort as a whole.
4. **There is a TFR for the entire Northern Bahamas**. All aircraft require approval from NEMA. See below.
5. **The situation changes hour by hour**.
6. **Miami ATC have published very specific preferred VFR and IFR routes**. Check them carefully. See below for details. Especially if you are IFR, make sure to file the correct route – not doing so is creating issues for Miami.
7. **Read** these tips on Relief flying from the NBAA, and if you haven't already, sign up for the Hero Database. Better to work with a larger organisation with coordinated relief efforts than trying to fly a single mission on your own.

## Current Operational Information

All the information that we have on Bahamas airfield status, permissions, fuel, customs, and general situation is at the Aviation Impact Tracker.




## Getting permission to go

**NEMA approval is necessary** for operations to Abaco and Grand Bahama. It's being managed by the Bahamas CAA.

**Situation:**
– The CAA and NEMA Teams are still at capacity trying to handle relief flights, but the essential ones are getting approvals. There is a team of 3 working right now through all requests.
– The airspace, particularly GB and Abaco area, is very busy. There are many aircraft operating on humanitarian relief missions.
– They ask that we get the word out that following the procedure, step by step, is the best way to help right now.

**Procedure:**
– **All relief flights must request approval**
– If you are planning a flight to the Bahamas, plan to fly to Nassau first. Clear customs there. If you are given approval to fly onwards, then do so from there. Only exceptional cases will be allowed to operate direct to GB and Abaco from outside the country.
– Complete the TFR Emergency Approval form, with the requested attachments (Pilot license, medical, insurance)
– Use email as the first method of communication, rather than phoning them. Email the form to them with the first request.
*tamiko.johnson@bcaa.gov.bs, Ladario.Brown@bcaa.gov.bs, Juliea.Brathwaite@bcaa.gov.bs*
– **If approved, you will get a TFR Number.** Put this in your Flight Plan.
– Bahamas CAA are present at the out islands. Do not try to fly direct without authorization, do not operate without a transponder, or without radio calls. This seems obvious but some are doing this.

**Reminders:**

– There are MANY relief operations happening right now. Before adding your aircraft to this, consider

whether it may be more helpful to send your load via a larger operation, or boat. Each additional aircraft increases the complexity.

## Bahamas airports – current status

MYNN/Nassau is operational, but seeing increased traffic from the relief operation, including a lot of helicopters – not the norm for the Bahamas. Bear that in mind. Coordinate with the airport before you depart.

For the current status of Abaco and Grand Bahama airports, please check the Impact Tracker.

Most of the other unaffected airports are now operational, with the exception of Bimini, which is, we believe, planning to open Thursday morning.

See the latest on the Impact Tracker.

## Routes to the Bahamas

**Miami ATC are very up to speed on the whole situation, and have published some Preferred Routes** (including which way to fly around the islands), as per the map here. The routes are being issued by Notam (KZMA is the identifier), and although the current set have been issued through to 4th Dec, these may change – so keep an eye on the Notams.

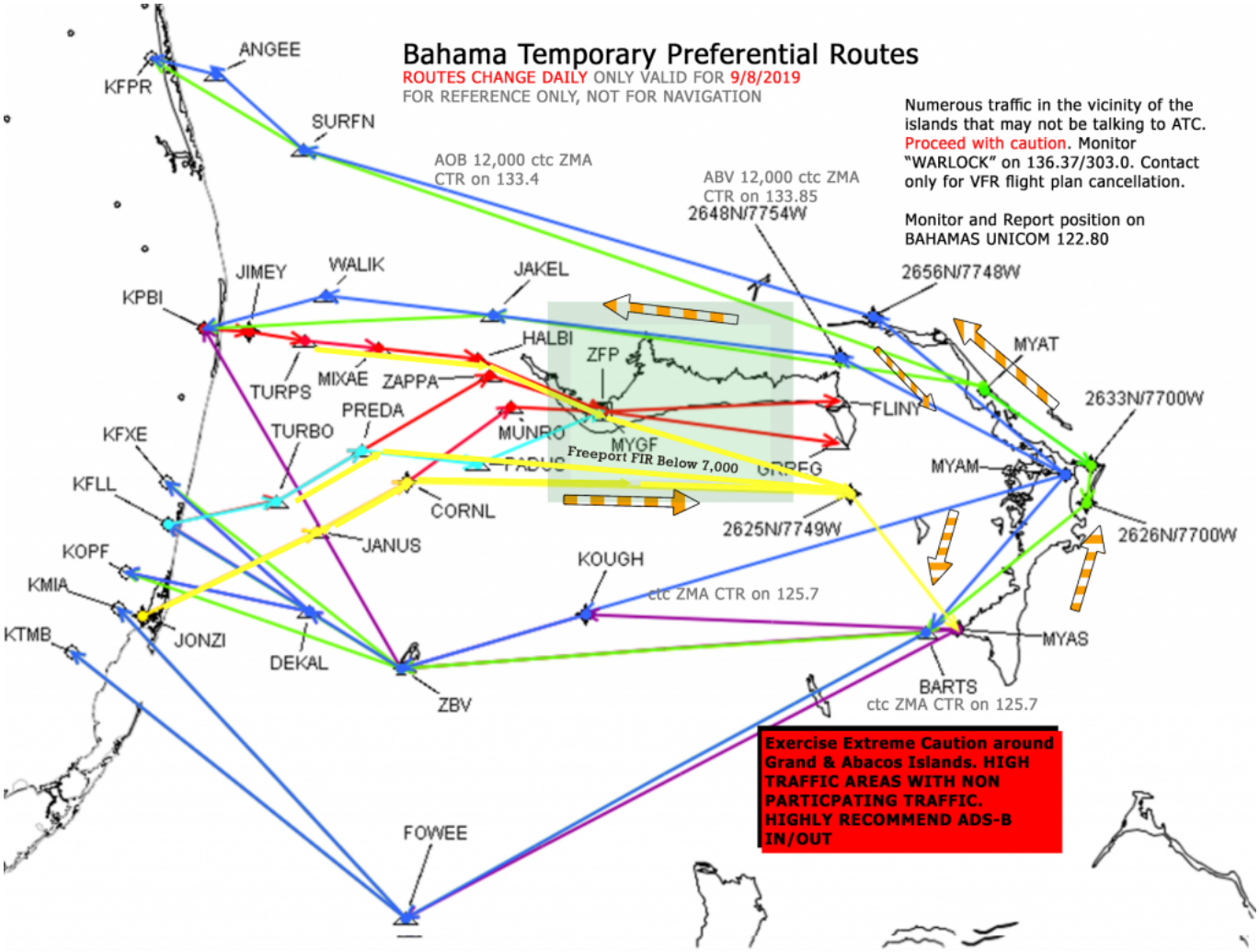
Please get the word out to IFR departures from Florida FILE AND FLY THE CORRECT ROUTE out to the Bahamas. There is a large volume of traffic and not filing/flying the correct route is creating a big issue.

**From Miami Center**: All aircraft arriving Bahamas must be at or above 7,000 FT. VFR aircraft should be +500 feet and proper altitude for direction of flight. If an aircraft cannot climb above 7,000 ft, they will be asked to hold and for pilot's intentions prior to entering MYGF approach. Due to limited radar coverage northeast of ZFP ALL MYAT/MYAS/MYAM bound aircraft must be above 9,000 until clear of Freeport FIR.

Aircraft unable to maintain 9,000 can expect 7,000 feet will be terminated and handed off to Freeport approach, traffic permitting. Limited radio and radar coverage North and East of Freeport. Limited radio and radar coverage over Abaco Islands.

Aircraft may be instructed to monitor "WARLOCK" frequencies 136.37/303.0. Contact only for cancellation of VFR flight plan. The Bahamas Unicom frequency is 122.80, monitor this frequency and report positions.

**This is the map for routes on Sunday Sept 8th**. Routes for Monday and the week may be different, so check that Notam carefully!




### Inaccurate CNN Reports

Many of you will have seen the reports from CNN, which have now been spread widely on Social Media, declaring that Freeport Airport is "gone". **This is not true**. The CNN report was filmed in the Western Air terminal, not the main airport. The damage shown was to that facility. Although the airport terminal has been partly damaged, runways are OK, and the airport is open.

### If we can help

Please just email us at team@ops.group and we'll do our best to answer questions or point you in the right direction. There are **a lot** of relief efforts happening, and we're doing our best to provide coordinated, useful, and accurate information for you.

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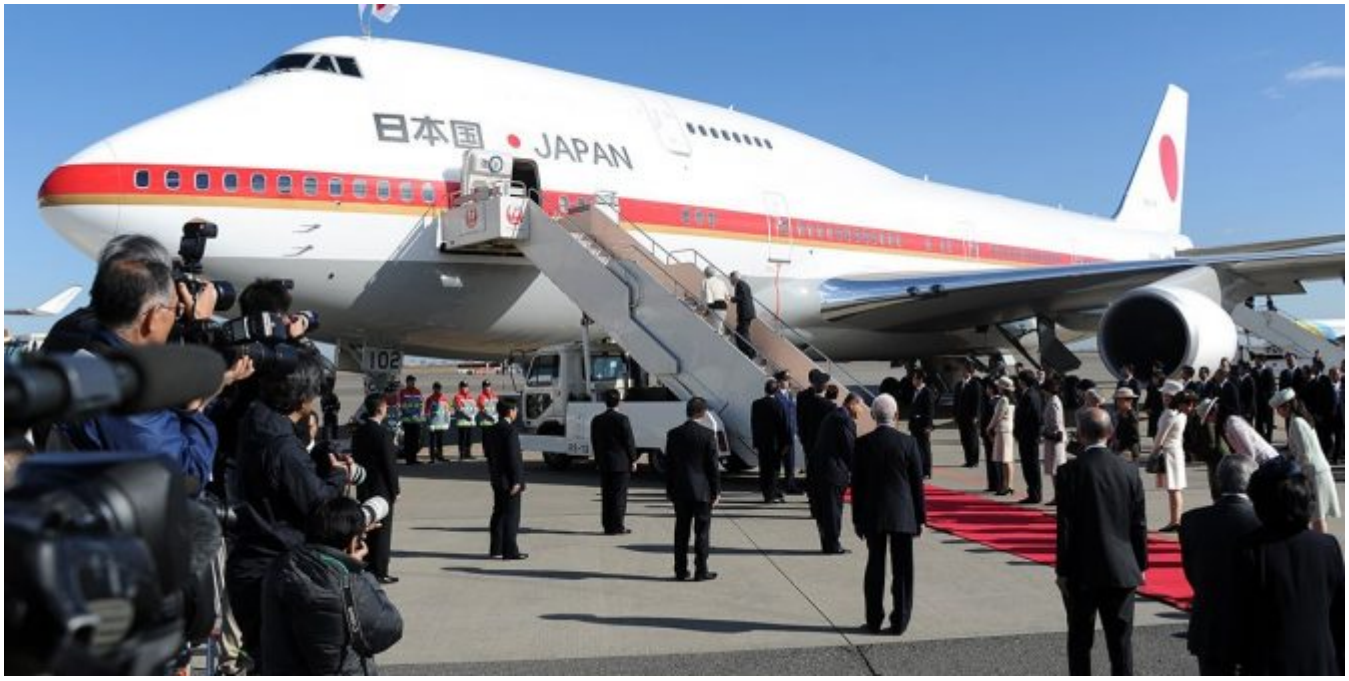
# Tokyo airports set to ban GA/BA ops for a week

David Mumford
15 November, 2019




Plans are afoot for the big event happening in Tokyo in October – the enthronement of the new emperor!

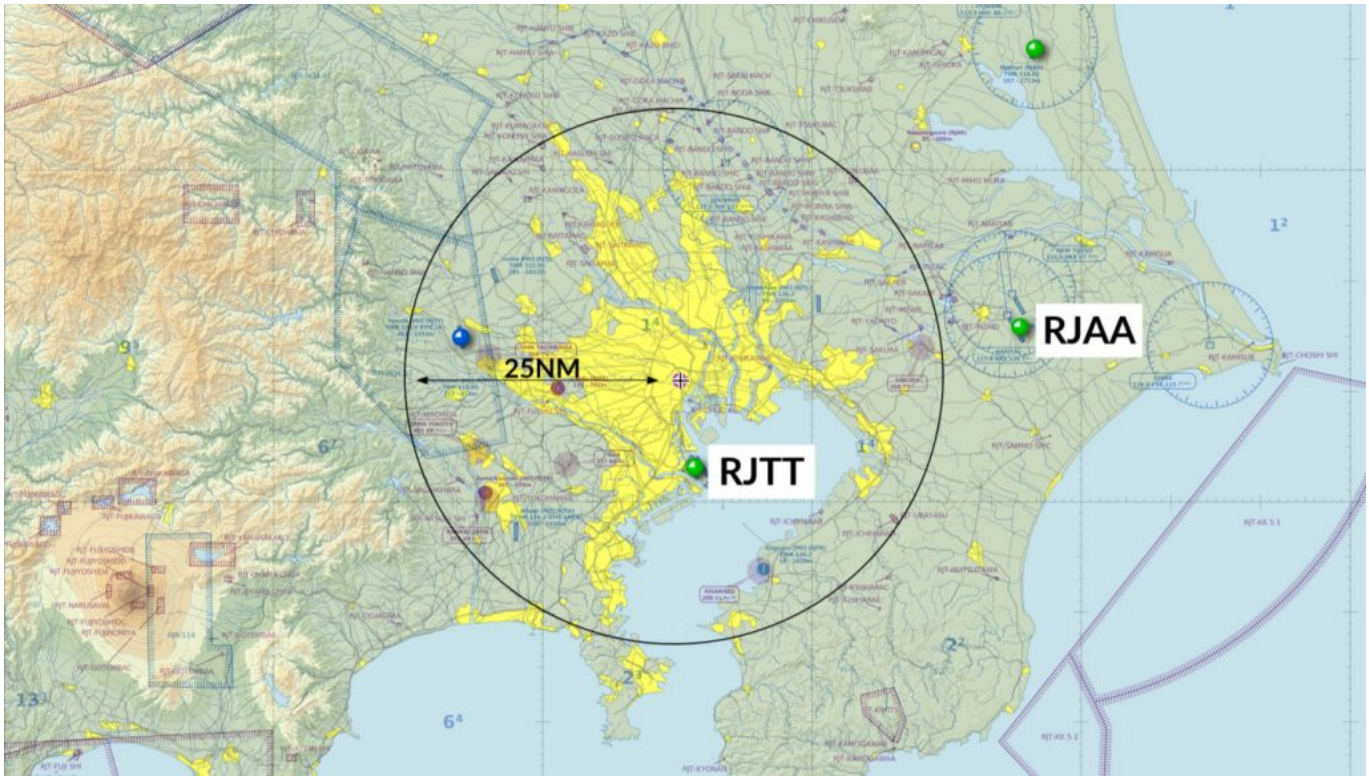
**The bad news for operators – authorities are now telling local handlers that GA/BA will be completely prohibited from both RJAA/Narita and RJTT/Haneda airports in Tokyo from 19-26 Oct**.

The only flights that will be considered are those carrying official delegations – but even most of those will have to find parking elsewhere. Japan Civil Aviation Bureau (JCAB) anticipates around 150 official delegation flights will visit Japan for the event, but with the Tokyo airports only having space for around 50 aircraft between then, the remaining 100 or so aircraft will be forced to reposition elsewhere.

So far, the only advisory JCAB have officially published on this is here – a vague warning that basically says head of state flights will be given priority at the Tokyo airports, and to expect congestion at all the other main international airports across the country. Local handlers expect RJGG/Nagoya, RJBB/Osaka, and RJSS/Sendai to be worst affected.

### Airspace Restrictions

JCAB have published these already, available here. Ultimately, between Oct 21-25, SFC-UNL, no one will be allowed to fly within 25NM of the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, unless they have special approval from ATC.




We will keep this page updated with further restrictions and announcements as we get them. If you have any news to share, please email us at news@ops.group

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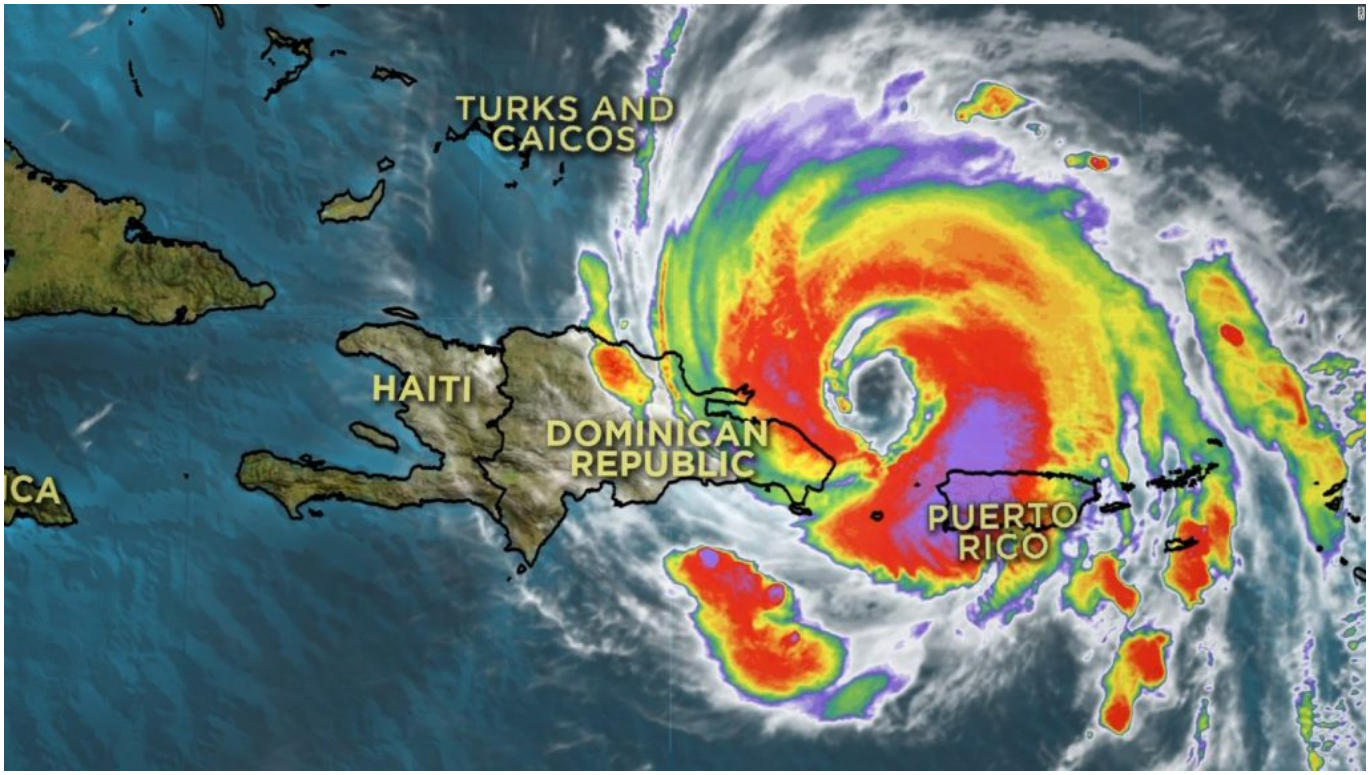
# The Changing Face of Disaster Relief Flying – How General Aviation (and Social Media) is Making A Huge Impact

Chris Shieff
15 November, 2019

Approximately 200 miles east of Puerto Rico at Flight Level 390, a Miami Center air traffic controller beckoned us on the radio and commanded, **“Descend to 17,500 or below and squawk VFR. Good luck.”** Hurricane Maria had made land fall over Puerto Rico not even 48 hours prior, and, without power on the island, there were no San Juan Center air traffic controllers to coordinate aircraft flying through their large parcel of airspace.




This was our flight department’s first attempt at delivering humanitarian aid into a natural disaster zone so we expected some unknowns, but this directive was a bit unnerving. We had just begun our trip only hours earlier out of Ft. Lauderdale and now ATC wanted us to fly VFR over the ocean, 200 miles off the coast of our destination? Unknowns are one of many issues flight crews face on a constant basis, but being unprepared is quite another dreaded beast. Were we in over our heads?

## A Burgeoning Resource

“Before Hurricane Katrina and the earthquake in Haiti, it was rare for Part 91 and 135 operators to partake in disaster relief,” explained Robin Eissler, the founder of PALS, Patient Airlift Services. “The past 14 years have seen so much change.”

When Katrina struck, Eissler began working with other flight department managers and dispatchers through the NBAA’s Airmail system to figure out a way to coordinate a general aviation response to the disaster. This would eventually become the building blocks for the HERO (Humanitarian Emergency Response Operator) Database, the NBAA’s registry for flight departments seeking to assist in such emergencies. “In terms of our HERO Database, we help to connect the aviation resource (airplane or other individual volunteer) with the relief organization best able to utilize that asset,” said Douglas Carr, Vice President, Regulatory and International Affairs of the NBAA. “Business aircraft can fly on short notice into airfields in which many airliners and cargo planes cannot.” The HERO program works closely with many humanitarian groups, especially Eissler’s PALS.

Shortly after Eissler formed PALS, the earthquake in Haiti struck. She described the general aviation humanitarian response as the grand experiment, “The government response was limited initially. The airlines shut down, and, other than military aircraft, corporate aircraft became a major source of delivering aid. We had over 1,000 flights for food and medical supply drops as well to evacuate the injured.”

In those early trials of PALS and the HERO Database, social media was a major asset. “We had a 13-year old girl in Haiti hit by a bus just after the earthquake and doctors said she needed an immediate evac,” recalled Eissler. “There were strict slots to get into Port Au Prince, and we had a G5 in Connecticut set to depart to get her when it had an engine issue. We immediately posted a need for help on our registry but also on Facebook. Five minutes later a Pilatus pilot just getting ready to leave Haiti posted that he had some room on the aircraft for her. She was delivered to the plane in critical condition laying in the bed of a pickup truck. But she’s alive and well today. Many might think social media is silly, but it can save lives.”

Now that the registries have been tested through further natural disasters, pilots and dispatchers can easily log-in and quickly see what requests have been posted and what missions might match their departments’ capabilities.

Haiti also played a major role in the creation of LIFT, a not-for-profit logistics provider for other NGO's. It's founder, Michael Rettig, spent over 30 years in the freight forwarding business. As he assisted in Haiti's humanitarian response he saw what potential general aviation aircraft had to offer to such a response but also witnessed the lack of organization and preparation.

Rettig thrives on the efficiency of the supply chain and now applies his logistics experience to disaster relief through his organization. "60%-80% of every dollar spent on humanitarian aid used to be spent on logistics. That was way too inefficient," he explained. "There's a need for general aviation in humanitarian relief but there was a lack of coordination."

Large transportation companies like UPS, FedEx and Maersk formed LET's, Logistics Emergency Teams, to coordinate disaster relief. But general aviation was lacking such coordination. FEMA's National Response Coordination Center was willing to listen to GA advocates but there needed to be more preemptive coordination. "Too many general aviation aircraft were showing up with aid that wasn't necessarily what was needed," Rettig said. "Flying in a G5 filled with Fiji water is a waste of money and resources. I much rather see medications like insulin or advanced communication system components and specialized technicians that can set them up being flown in. Corporate aircraft plug into the overall response framework by delivering high value, high impact aid." Rettig and Eissler are very familiar with each other as their organizations work hand in hand during these responses. The required aid – whether it be medical or tech oriented – can be flown in and then medical patients can be flown out.

## Planning Ahead

As we flew through the Wild West of uncontrolled airspace towards Puerto Rico, talking over a common radio frequency to the aircraft both ahead of and behind us as we obsessively monitored their positions on our Traffic Collision Avoidance System, we finally entered the traffic pattern over a small satellite airport in San Juan. After landing, we tried to maneuver down a taxiway with overturned Cessnas, mangled helicopters, obliterated hangars and even a pit bull limping down the tarmac. This was definitely unexpected.


Thankfully we had one of our maintenance technicians along with us who go out of the plane and guided us safely around the strewn debris. Surface conditions of the airfield are of a primary concern when entering a disaster zone, and without power and phone communications, there may not be much information available. Having a dedicated operator on the ground is so much more helpful in determining the safety of an airfield than putting all your trust in an email from an FBO employee or a flyover to check for debris.

Zac Clancy is Vice President of Global DIRT (Disaster Immediate Response Team), a nonprofit organization made up of prior military personnel who immediately arrive in disaster zones and even pre-position themselves in areas prior to a hurricane's arrival. "We have multiple responsibilities from restoring communication connectivity to securing and transporting aid." Once aircraft drop off the aid, what exactly happens to it? "We've seen cargo planes drop off tons of humanitarian aid on the tarmac and then leave. No one takes responsibility for it, no one protects it. We unload it, take legal responsibility for it and then work with other NGO's to deliver it," Clancy explained. Global DIRT employees also work directly with airport tower controllers in these affected areas on getting ATC slots and clearances for GA operators. "It's interesting, in many cases I simply walk up to the control tower, knock on the door and speak directly with the controller," said Clancy.

“We’ll assist you once you get here, but I highly suggest that all operators have a plan in place prior to any type of natural disaster response,” said Clancy.

As we unloaded boxes upon boxes of aid in the blistering afternoon air, we started to reexamine our original “plan”. Our dispatcher had worked tirelessly without rest since the hurricane hit to organize the flights as this type of mission was new to all of us, and she was learning on the go. “It’s the little things you don’t think of that you need to have already planned for. What are you willing and not willing to pack on the airplane? What company personnel should be permitted to go? Even, what type of packaging should be used?! Misunderstandings and miscommunications like these cause delays and headaches,” she explained. “What an aircraft owner or a corporation’s executive team may assume is possible, may not be so. Prior understanding is a key. And their understanding of the risks involved are necessary as well.” Eissler agreed, saying, “Corporate flight departments can get nervous once you start talking about safety and security and all the logistics on the ground. Working with us offers that extra layer of liability protection.” Rettig added – “If I can advise one thing, it’s to partner with a vetted organization that deals with these things. Don’t show up unannounced. No one wants disaster tourism.”

As we prepped our aircraft for departure, the skies over the small executive airport began to get congested with business jets transporting their own aid. A few go-arounds occurred and some aircraft exited the traffic pattern to manoeuvre back around to re-enter. Clear and detailed communications between flight crews were essential for safety.

As for communications on the ground, we were thankful to have a satellite phone to speak to our point of contact in the city that was delivering the aid by truck. ETA updates were necessary as NOTAM’s spelled out that all aircraft must depart the island by sundown or be stuck overnight. Thankfully, our maintenance technician had just finished dealing with an issue with our ELT as we didn’t even want to even consider the possibility of getting stuck overnight.

As we taxied to depart from our first disaster aid drop we were somewhat disappointed. We had planned on making two drops that day but delays in ATC letting us depart Ft. Lauderdale as well as delays in the actual delivering of the aid took much longer than we expected and there would be no way to make another round trip before nightfall. There was also a sense of guilt at having empty seats in the aircraft as

we flew back to the mainland. Clancy couldn't iterate enough, "The return legs of the relief flights are often under-utilized. While there is the need for aid coming in, often times there's a need for things to go out as well: people highly in need of medical care, stranded citizens, and returning aid workers. Unfortunately, these flights back are empty because the planning wasn't in place to know of such need." In our situation, that would be the last time we would fly back with an empty aircraft.

### Coordination

At the hotel that night, I began posting on OpsGroup about what we had witnessed, what we had learned, and what some of our concerns and misunderstandings were. The response was relieving as other operators and OpsGroup personnel chimed in with much needed info and support for the continuing flights.

Our dispatcher took her job to the next strata, and, in the ensuing days, we had much more structured missions. She coordinated with LIFT to send our own company's disaster relief aid over in a cargo plane; no more strategic packing of goods in our corporate jet and no leaving behind of aid that was too big to fit in our plane. Whatever we needed to get over to the island could go. In exchange, Rettig coordinated a flight in which we flew technicians from a large tech company into a decommissioned naval airfield to begin fixing a specialized communication system to bring back cell coverage across the island.

There were no instrument approaches, just a government issued airport diagram. But a surprise radio contact from a Marine Corps air traffic controller aligned with a battalion sheltering in one of the decrepit hangars offered much appreciated assistance. Once again, the unexpected! As the technicians and engineers worked through the day, we could sense that this mission, which our aircraft was well suited for, may offer much more to the overall disaster response than the general aid we had delivered the day before.

The following day we flew in security and NGO personnel set up by ALANAid, American Logistics Aid Network, which works closely with LIFT, into San Juan International Airport, by then fully operational. Upon return, PALS filled the aircraft with sick and elderly personnel.

Again, we were a bit weary of what to expect as far as handling those in medical need. "As for planning, a flight department should know how they want to deal with the sick and elderly," said Eissler. "We have you covered liability-wise, but departments have some small decisions to make beforehand – like, if they want passengers sitting up or laying down. What food, drink or medications you may want onboard. Many

people don’t think of these things prior to picking up these passengers. But we point them in the right direction.”

Once we met our passengers, though, all weariness evaporated. Just witnessing their appreciation for simply taking them out of the sweltering FBO and into our aircraft’s air conditioning was heartwarming. And that would pale in comparison to witnessing them being reunited with family on the mainland.

The response in Puerto Rico made clear that there are a number of organizations that can assist a flight department in delivering disaster relief. Yet it seems to be a very small circle. They all seem to know each other, work with each other… and, more importantly, respect each other.

It makes sense, considering the reason many of these people do this type of purposeful work. Before Katrina, Eissler was overseeing an aircraft management company.  A few years later after creating PALS, she would be getting calls from the military. “I’ve ordered an Air National Guard commander where to send his aircraft while standing in my kitchen on the phone. I’ve yelled at a commander for landing his C130’s on a runway that couldn’t support its weight. I’ve called in for a King Air to fly over a runway to check its integrity for other aircraft. And here I am – a mom in Texas and I’m making these calls!”

Rettig took a similar path; before Haiti he was working for a large shipping corporation but after coordinating a small aid flight in a friend’s PC12 to Haiti he found a passion. Now he’s handling transportation in all forms and sizes to assist NGO’s with humanitarian aid logistics across the globe. That passion underlies how many of these organizations can help general aviation departments in their effort to deliver humanitarian aid.

We continued flying into Puerto Rico for a few more days. Each day the mission changed but the logistics of the flights got easier as basic services began coming back on line. On our last flight back to the mainland to drop off passengers in Ft. Lauderdale, I walked an elderly woman with kidney failure into the FBO. After her awaiting family celebrated her arrival she hugged me with a tear smeared face. She then proceeded to FaceTime with her niece, an unmarried nurse in NYC. While holding me in the in frame of the phone’s video feed, she asked if I was married and if I’d like to meet her niece. More of the unexpected! Her hearty laugh was a great ending note on what was such a meaningful – and adrenaline filled – week of flying.

That year we would respond to hurricane aftermaths in Texas, Florida and North Carolina. And though we hope for no more natural disasters, we know better. And we look forward to helping in any way we can when they do happen. In normal operations we focus on service to ensure safe and successful business operations, the importance of which cannot be overstated. But when disaster relief becomes the business at hand, one cannot help to feel an even greater sense of purpose. Though achieving that goal can be daunting and anxiety-ridden, there are dedicated people out there to help in succeeding in that mission. And all who take part just may find enjoyment in the experience, even in the unexpected.

### Resources

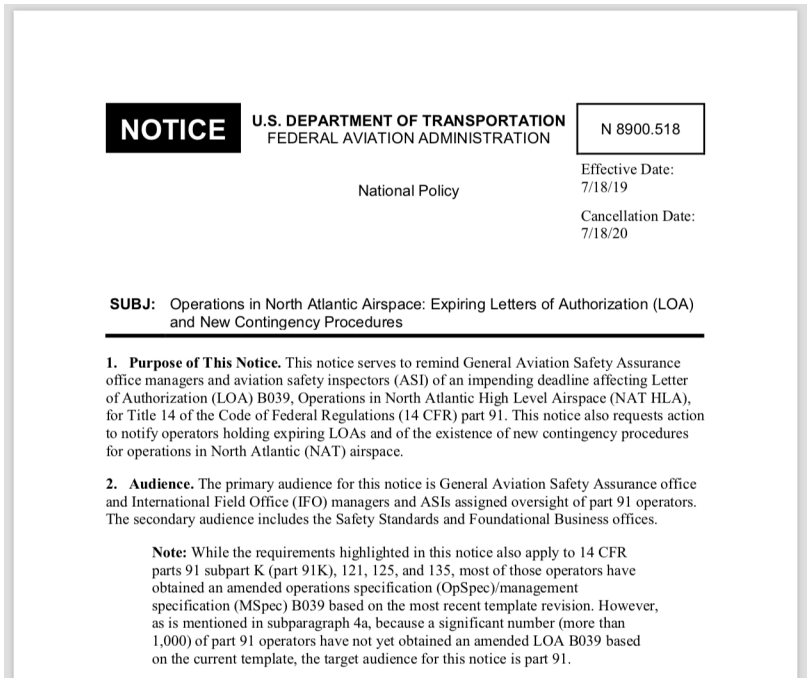
- NBAA Humanitarian Emergency Response Operator (HERO) Database
- Patient Airlift Services
- LIFT
- ALANaid
- Global Disaster Immediate Response Team

# Your MNPS approval is about to expire (so don’t get banned from the NAT)

David Mumford
15 November, 2019


**U.S. operators with the old MNPS approvals issued before 2016 have until 31 Dec 2019 to get these updated if they want to keep flying on the North Atlantic!**

The FAA issued new guidance on this on 18 July 2019:



NOTICE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

N 8900.518

National Policy

Effective Date:
7/18/19

Cancellation Date:
7/18/20

**SUBJ:** Operations in North Atlantic Airspace: Expiring Letters of Authorization (LOA) and New Contingency Procedures

**1. Purpose of This Notice.** This notice serves to remind General Aviation Safety Assurance office managers and aviation safety inspectors (ASI) of an impending deadline affecting Letter of Authorization (LOA) B039, Operations in North Atlantic High Level Airspace (NAT HLA), for Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 91. This notice also requests action to notify operators holding expiring LOAs and of the existence of new contingency procedures for operations in North Atlantic (NAT) airspace.

**2. Audience.** The primary audience for this notice is General Aviation Safety Assurance office and International Field Office (IFO) managers and ASIs assigned oversight of part 91 operators. The secondary audience includes the Safety Standards and Foundational Business offices.

**Note:** While the requirements highlighted in this notice also apply to 14 CFR parts 91 subpart K (part 91K), 121, 125, and 135, most of those operators have obtained an amended operations specification (OpSpec)/management specification (MSpec) B039 based on the most recent template revision. However, as is mentioned in subparagraph 4a, because a significant number (more than 1,000) of part 91 operators have not yet obtained an amended LOA B039 based on the current template, the target audience for this notice is part 91.

They say that there could be more than **1,000 GA operators** who still have old NAT MNPS approvals, and

all these operators will need to get new B039 LOAs to be able to continue flying on the North Atlantic beyond 31 Dec 2019.

The new **B039 LOA** is for “Operations in the North Atlantic High Level Airspace”. To get it, operators need to provide evidence of compliance with the NAT HLA requirements particularly in regard to RNP 10 equipage, flight crew training (including the new contingency procedures), and have operating procedures in place.

Operators will also need to make sure they have an **B036 LOA** for “Oceanic and Remote Continental Navigation Using Multiple Long-Range Navigation Systems”.

Here’s the lowdown: If you have an old MNPS approval, you need to apply for the B039 LOA very, very soon! The closer we get to the Dec 31 deadline, the stronger the chance that it will take longer for the FAA to process yours, and this means that 2020 will not get off to a good start when you have to explain **why you’ve been banned from the NAT**! Help yourself, and the FAA, get through this by applying for it as soon as possible.

*Mitch Launius is an International Procedures Instructor Pilot with 30West IP and can be contacted through his website: www.30westip.com*

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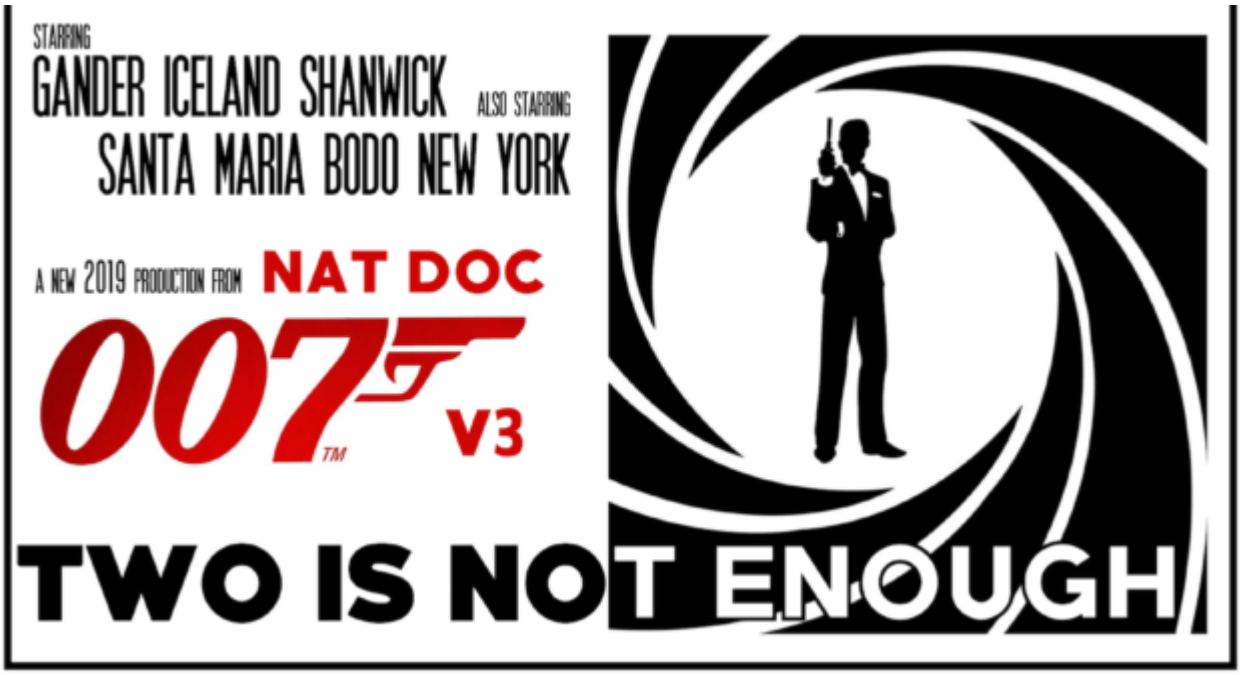
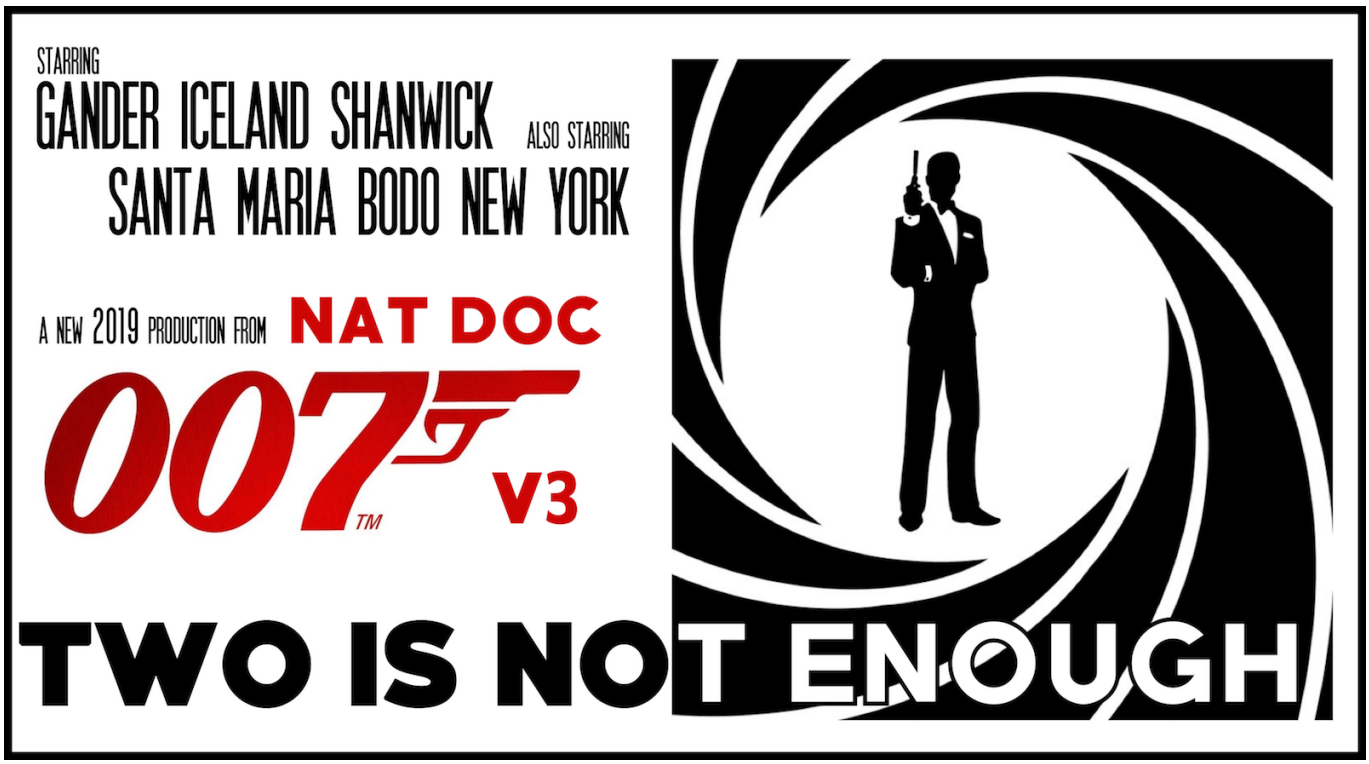
# Two is Not Enough: New NAT Doc 007 (Version 3) – August 2019

Mark Zee
15 November, 2019




NAT Doc 007 is the Bible of the North Atlantic. It’s full of NAT goodness – all the specifics about how to operate your aircraft safely through the complex airspace of the region is here.

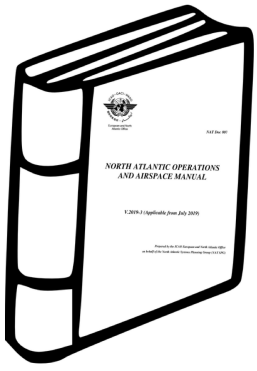
**And there’s another new edition!**




The NAT changes over the last few years have been coming thicker and faster than the sandwiches at Katz's Deli on the Lower East Side. And now, there's more. **Effective August 7th, 2019, NAT Doc 007, Version 3**, is the latest tome to digest. As aviation documents go, it's written in pretty digestible language. There's just a lot in it. But this is the first time we've had 3 editions of this in one year.

So, we're going to start naming them after 007 Movies to keep track of them all. This is the "**Two is Not Enough**" edition.

**NAT Doc 007, Version 3, 2019**:
Download the full NAT Doc 007.




### So, here are the three things that have changed this time:

1. **We got new SLOP rules!** This is a biggie. Instead of the three previous choices (0, 1, or 2nm), we now have **Twenty One choices!** More on this below.

2. **99 problems and Datalink is one**. The short version: check that you've got the latest software update for your datalink.

3. **The next datalink mandate (2C) is capped at FL410**. This comes in January 30th next year. And so, the Checklist for Dispatchers is updated.

### The new SLOP rules

Now, let's take a closer look at the big change – SLOP (Strategic Lateral Offset Procedure). To get up to speed, check out our full article on SLOP – the how, and why (and where).

The change here is that instead of just being able to SLOP 1 or 2 nm right of track, (or fly the centreline), you go from these three choices to twenty one – you can use any one of 21 **Micro-SLOP** offsets. Specifically: 0.0 nm, 0.1 nm, 0.2 nm …. OK, you get it. All the way up to 2.0 nm Right of track.

### Simple, right?

Not quite. It's not yet fully clear which of the OCA's have given the green light for this, even though NAT Doc 007 now says you **should** Micro-SLOP if you can.

But, phoning around the Oceanic Houses, we've got this to tell you:

1. **Gander** – you can micro-SLOP right now! An AIP amendment will follow soon.
2. **Shanwick** – you can micro-SLOP right now! A Notam will be published soon, and the AIP will be updated in Dec 2019.
3. **New York** – they will allow micro-SLOP from 12th Sept 2019, and will update the AIP in Jan 2020.
4. **Santa Maria** – you can micro-SLOP right now! Nothing published officially yet, but that's what the good people from the oceanic control centre have told us.
5. **Iceland** – just like New York, they will allow micro-SLOP here from 12th Sept 2019 as well. When that happens, you will still not be allowed to SLOP below FL285 within the Reykjavik CTA (that's the domestic part over Iceland, and the airspace over Greenland above FL195). We asked them to publish a Notam about this – and they actually did!! Check it out!
6. **Bodo** – Nothing official yet, but ATC say they "have no objections" to operators micro-SLOPing right now. (Currently, SLOP is only allowed here above FL285 within the OCA.)

That's the current picture as of 1100z on Monday 19th Aug.

We will **update** this as soon as we get more info. Got something for us? Email us!

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# Good news from Australia – the TSP just got easier

Mark Zee
15 November, 2019


If you're amongst the many international aircraft operators stung by the lengthy and document-heavy process to obtain an Australian Transport Security Program approval, good news has reached OPSGROUP HQ – there is a new **TSP-Lite** version that you can apply for.

The Dept. of Home Affairs has created what they call a "*Secretary-Issued TSP* … a new simplified way for operators who meet certain criteria to apply for a TSP". They tell us "This application is much shorter than the standard TSP application".

### Do you qualify for the new TSP-Lite?

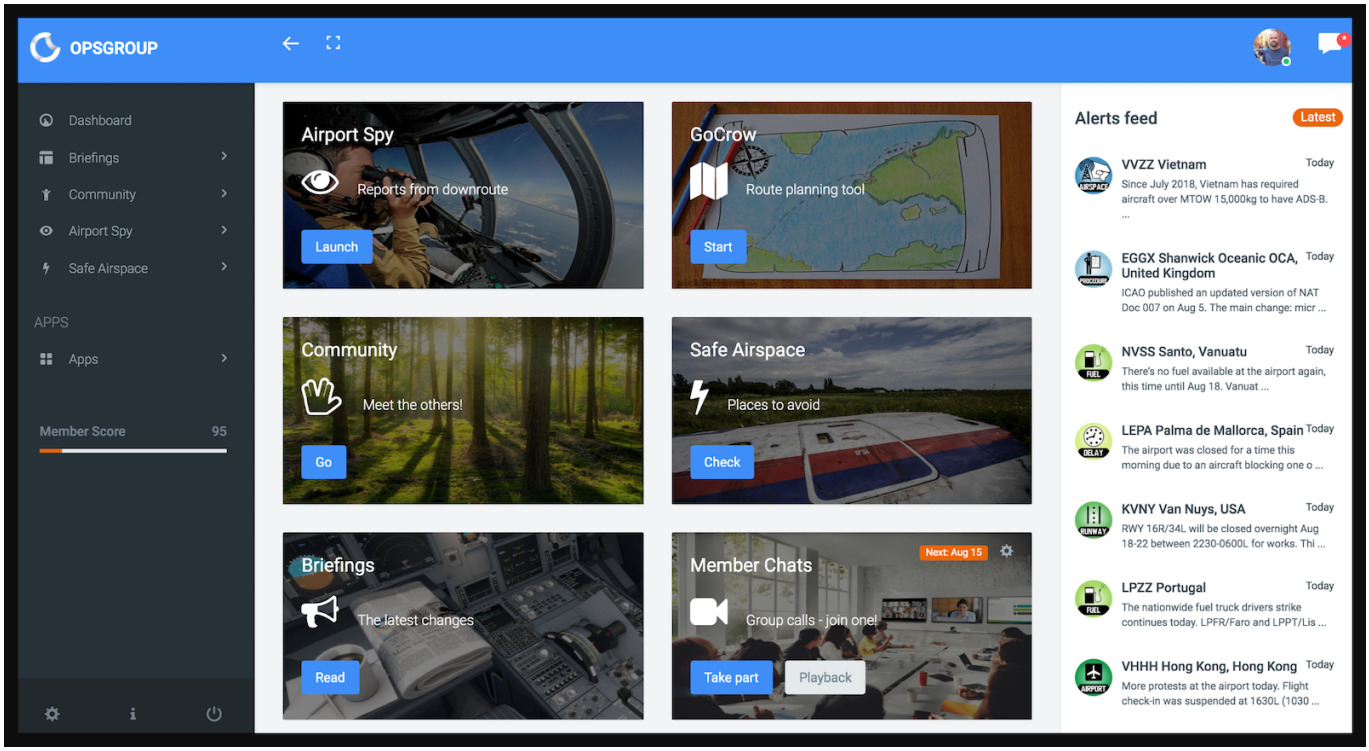
Yes, if you can answer YES to all of these questions (the first two are the big ones):

1. Your flights are private or charter operations and **not operated on a fixed schedule or route**; and
2. You **do not have temporary or permanent operational facilities** in Australia; and
3. You do not allow passengers or aircraft operator staff to enter the landside security zone (sterile area) of a security controlled airport; and
4. You do not allow passengers or aircraft operator staff to mix with other passengers of prescribed air services in airside areas; and
5. You do not transport persons in custody.

The Dept also told us that "Under our legislation there is still the same maximum decision making time for a Secretary-Issued TSP, however in practice, the intent is that we will be able to review and approve these applications much faster."

Crack open a slab of VB! This is great news. Now, this has just started up, so it remains to be seen how it works in practice.

For more on how to apply for a normal TSP, the new TSP-lite, and to trade intel with other operators, jump into the TSP Victim Support Group in the Members Dashboard, login below.

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# Why, How and Where should you SLOP?

OPSGROUP Team
15 November, 2019

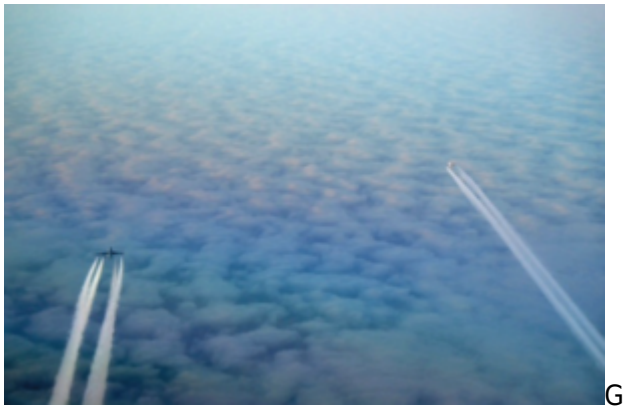

**In Short:** Strategic Lateral Offset Procedures (SLOP) costs nothing and increases flight safety. If the airspace permits it, you should be "randomly" offsetting, especially across the North Atlantic. **Left is for losers** – don't SLOP left of track.

**Update**: August 2019 – you can now "MicroSLOP" in the NAT. Check out the changes.

We had a discussion in OpsGroup recently about SLOP (Strategic Lateral Offset Procedures) and it elicited some interesting responses, as well as some confusion.

**So – Why, How and Where should you SLOP?**

## Why?

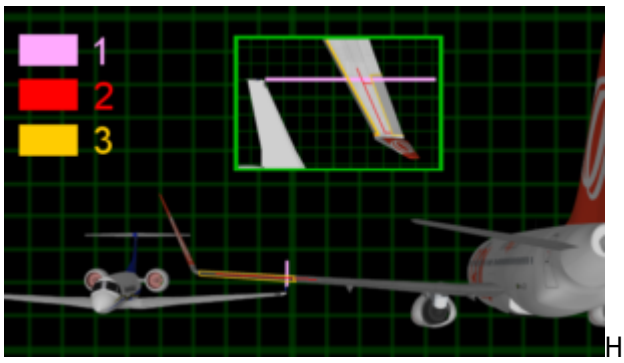


GPS technology allows modern jets to fly very accurately, too accurately it turns out sometimes! Aircraft can now essentially fly EXACTLY over an airway/track laterally (think less than 0.05NM), separated only by 1000FT vertically. A risk mitigation strategy was proposed over non-radar airspace to allow pilots to fly 1-2 nautical miles laterally offset from their track, **randomly**, to increase flight safety in case of any vertical separation breakdown.

How did we get here?

### Navigation paradox

What we just described is known as the navigation paradox. The research shows that **"increases in navigational precision" actually increases the collision risk** – huh?

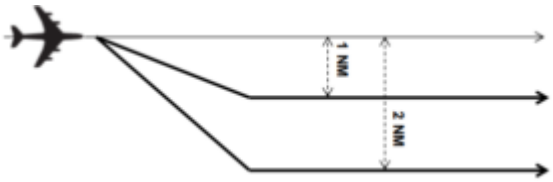



Here are some interesting stats to consider:

- In a simulation, aircraft cruising at **random** altitudes have **five** times **fewer** collisions.
- During a 2000 study, it was shown that hemispherical cruising altitude rules resulted in **six times more mid-air collisions** than random cruising altitude non compliance.
- If more **randomness** was applied to the hemispherical cruising level model, the navigational paradox risk could have been largely reduced and **up to 30 midair collisions avoided** (up to 2006). Including the tragic GOL 2006 accident.

So we get it; the rules of the air, sometimes inject risk to flight safety due to their lack of randomness.

### A way to reduce risk and inject randomness?




It was 2004 when SLOP was adopted in the most congested non-radar airspace in the world, namely the North Atlantic.

Although the **Navigation Paradox** is the reason SLOP was introduced and continues to be implemented, there are some nice risk mitigation side-effects too: wake turbulence reduction (at times), contingency buffers if you experience severe turbulence and can't maintain altitude ("level busts"), etc.

SLOP therefore reduces the risk between traffic which is not operating in accordance with the correct air traffic control clearance or where an error has been made in the issue of an air traffic control clearance.

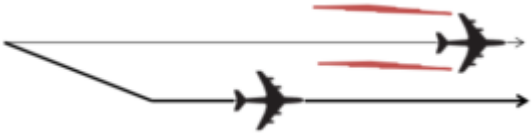
Still, there is a large number (>40%) of aircraft not adopting these procedures even though they are now mandatory on the NAT.

If >40% of pilots are using **SLOP 0** (meaning no offset at all), what does that matter? That means half the flights are operating over the same lateral paths and all it takes is one minor vertical deviation for there to be a significant loss of separation.

The daily NAT track message always reminds pilots to employ SLOP procedures:

```
FOR STRATEGIC LATERAL OFFSET AND CONTINGENCY PROCEDURES FOR OPS IN
NAT FLOW REFER TO NAT PROGRAMME COORDINATION WEBSITE
WWW.PARIS.ICAO.INT.
SLOP SHOULD BE STANDARD PROCEDURE, NOT JUST FOR AVOIDING WX/TURB.
```

### How should you SLOP?



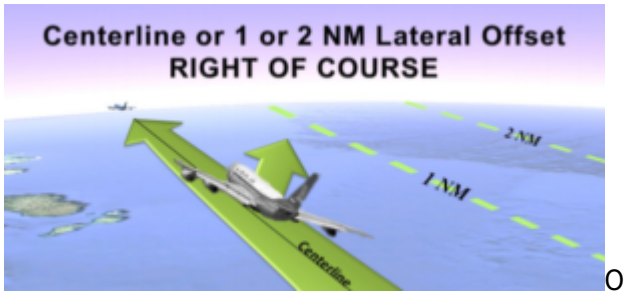
Consider some best practice advice:

- **LEFT IS FOR LOSERS** – **never offset LEFT.** On bi-directional routes a LEFT offset will **INCREASE collision risk** rather than decrease it. There are areas in the NAT Region where bi-directional traffic flows are routinely used. And there are times when opposite direction traffic may be encountered in any part of the Region. Once upon a time (between introduction of RVSM and pre-SLOP, it was ok to go LEFT, not anymore!)The only exception would be in certain airspace where **ATC request you** to SLOP LEFT (e.g. China).
- The system works best when **every 2 out of 3 crossings you fly, you apply an offset**. Shanwick says this generally means at least 1 out of 3 aircraft are *slopping*.
- You don't need to ask ATC for approval; **you can SLOP from the NAT entry point to the NAT exit point**.
- Only offset if your FMC has the function to do so – **do not do it manually**.
- **Good airmanship applies** here. What's happening around you? Who is above, below and near

you on the same track. Co-ordinate on **123.45** if needed.

- **2nm RIGHT** is the **maximum** approved SLOP.
- **Flip a coin** to decide like some do! Captain is PF? 1R going west; First Officer 2R going east etc. Studies show that on the NAT, 40% do 1R and only 20% go 2R. Don't be afraid to go the full 2R!
- **If you are overtaking** someone, the ICAO guidance in NAT DOC 007 is to **apply SLOP** so as to create the "least amount of wake turbulence for the aircraft being overtaken".

**Where though?**



Our friend Eddie at Code 7700 gave a great comprehensive list so here it is verbatim.

- **Africa**, almost all remote locations employ SLOP. Check the Jeppesen Airways Manual / Air Traffic Control / State Rules and Procedures – Africa) to be sure. Rule of thumb: if you are in radar contact, you probably should not SLOP.
    - One notable exception where they don't want you to SLOP is in the **HKNA/Nairobi** FIR. The AIP states: "*SLOP is not applicable in the Nairobi FIR due to efficient surveillance and communication systems.*" (We do remind you however that recently in the Nairobi FIR, a 767 and 737, both at FL370 came a little too close for comfort).
- **Australia** is another special case. You may only offset in the **OCA**, and, if you're still on radar, then you need to tell ATC, both when starting the offset, or changing it. Within domestic CTA airspace, you must fly centerline. (According to Australian guidance in Jeppesen Pages).
- **China**, on routes **A1, L642, M771, and N892** (according to China guidance in Jeppesen Pages). In some areas they employ their unique SLOP offsets, but do allow the standard 1 nm and 2 nm offsets.
- **New York, Oakland and Anchorage Oceanic FIRs** (according to U.S. FAA guidance).
- **Oceanic airspace** in the **San Juan FIR** (according to U.S. FAA guidance).
- **North Atlantic Track Region: SLOP is mandatory** (according to the North Atlantic Operations and Airspace Manual).
- **The Pacific** (including the NOPAC, Central East Pacific (CEP) and Pacific Organized Track System (PACOTS) (according to U.S. FAA guidance).
- **South Pacific** airspaces (according to U.S. FAA guidance).

**FAQ:**

- ***Should I SLOP crossing the Atlantic even if I'm on a random route or above the published NAT FL's?***

Yes! You should especially do it then. There is a higher chance of opposite direction traffic. That extra mile or two (randomly selected of course) could be a life saver!

- ***What about micro-slop?***

That is lateral offsets between 0 and 1 nm (0.1 etc). ICAO mentions *"LOP provisions as specified in ICAO PANS-ATM Doc.4444 were amended 13 November 2014 to include the use of "micro-offsets" of 0.1 Nms for those aircraft with this FMS capability. Appropriate guidance for the use of this amended procedure in the North Atlantic is under study and hence pending."*

And now, since August 2019, this is beginning to be approved for operations on the NAT. Read the update!

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We might have missed something or maybe we didn't cover your specific question?

Drop us a line and will do our best to answer.

**Bottom line, SLOP costs nothing but increases flight safety.**

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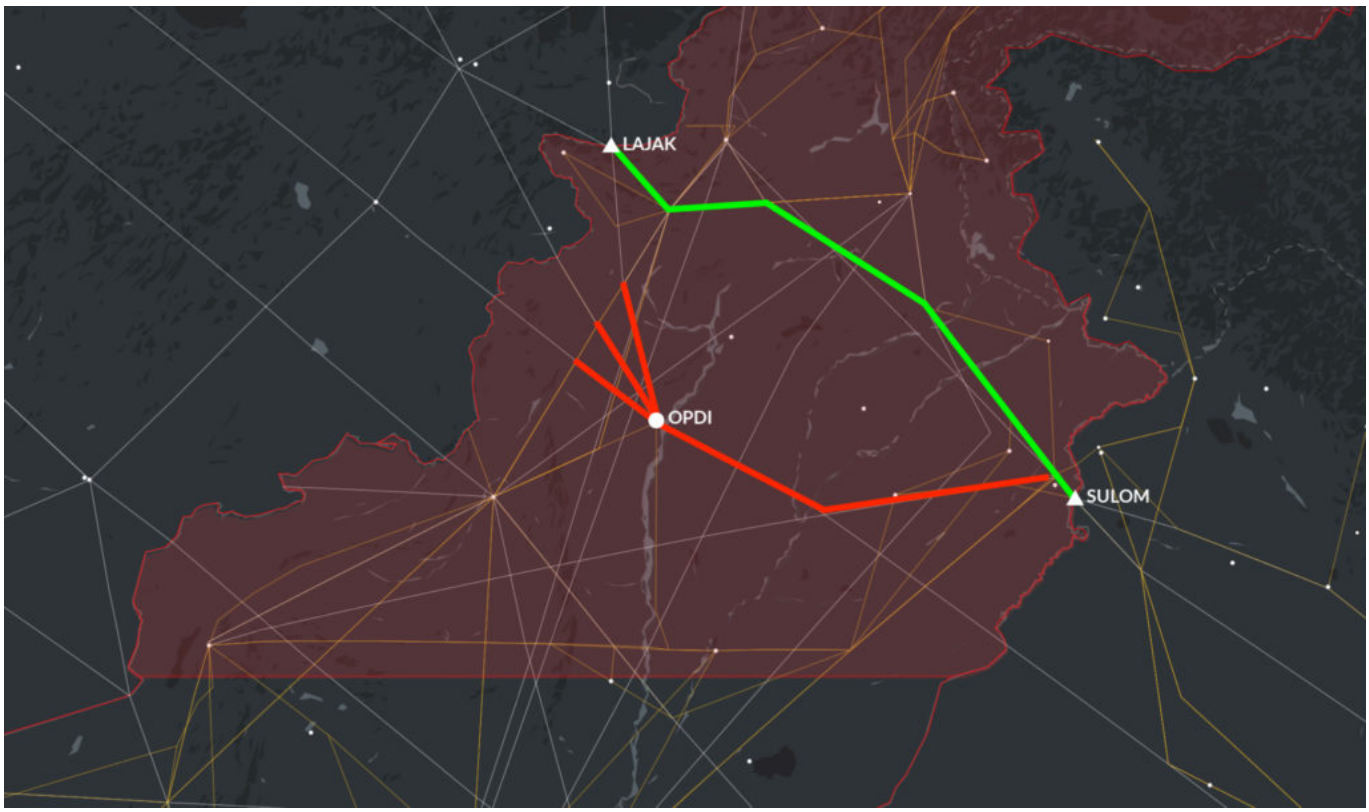
# No, Pakistan's airspace is not closed

David Mumford
15 November, 2019

Several reports have emerged in the media over the past few days claiming Pakistan has closed a number of airways to Indian carriers, linking these closures to the rising tensions between the two countries over the disputed Kashmir region.

But these reports are not strictly accurate. Pakistan **has partially closed** some airways in the north of the country used for overflights between India and Afghanistan, which pass over OPDI/Dera Ismail Khan airport – but these particular airway closures have been ongoing since 23rd July. Local agents say these closures are simply due to operational reasons, and not related to the current political situation.




**Here's the Notam which has caused all the fuss:**

OPLR NOTAM A0785/19
FLW RTE SEGMENTS OF INTL ATS RTE WI LAHORE FIR WILL NOT BE AVBL
AT OR BELOW FL460 DUE OPS REASONS.

INTL ATS RTE RTE SEGMENT
========== ==========
A466 SAKUV-SAJAN
N644 REGET-D.I.KHAN
P500/M881 LAKRA-D.I.KHAN

ALTN RTE SEGMENT AVBL FOR TRANSITS AT OR ABOVE FL300:
SULOM / LA – INDEK DCT NONIB – HANGU – LAJAK / SITAX (VIA SAJAN) / DOBAT (VIA REGET) AND VICE VERSA.
NOTE: FLT BELOW FL300 TO OPR VIA INDEK DCT 3333N07251E (BTR VOR 114.6 MHZ) DCT KALMI NONIB AND
VICE VERSA.

GND – FL460, FM 06TH AUG TO 05TH SEP 2019 BTN 0245-1100 DLY (EXCLUDING SUNDAYS),
06 AUG 12:30 2019 UNTIL 05 SEP 11:00 2019.
CREATED: 06 AUG 12:43 2019.

So these airways will be closed between 0245-1100z daily (except Sundays) until Sep 5. And there's an **alternate route** for operators to use, from SULOM on the Indian FIR boundary, to LAJAK on the Afghanistan FIR boundary. Hardly a big deal.

The rest of Pakistan's airspace remains **open to overflights**.

It is true that this week has seen a **worsening of diplomatic ties** between India and Pakistan with regards to the disputed Kashmir region.

Indian-administered Kashmir has been on **lockdown** since 5th August, when the Indian government decided to take back control of the region by stripping it of its special constitutional status.

Authorities in Pakistan are not too happy about this, and have responded by downgrading their diplomatic ties with India and suspended trade between the countries. Both countries' air forces are now on high alert, and there has been **daily artillery shelling** along the Line of Control by both sides.

But for now, most of the airspace over Pakistan remains open to overflights.

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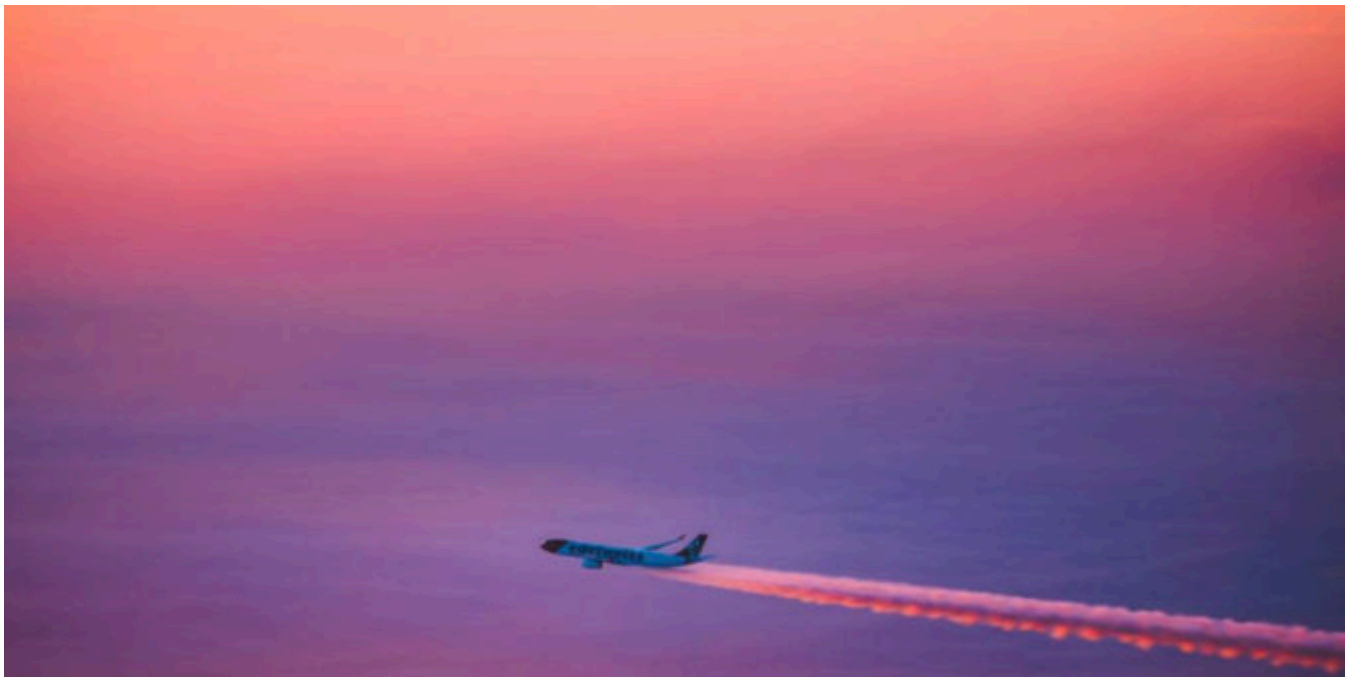
# NOTAMs: Creating the solution through community collaboration

Mark Zee
15 November, 2019



Update: *November 1st, 2019*: **The Notam Team is up and running** – we're fixing Notams. Follow our progress at fixingnotams.org.


There cannot be a more agreed upon problem in aviation. **Every single airline, every single flight: the most critical information about that flight is passed to the pilots in the style of a Telegram from the early 1900's**. Coded, abbreviated, often undecipherable, upper case chunks of text: the least human-friendly format imaginable.

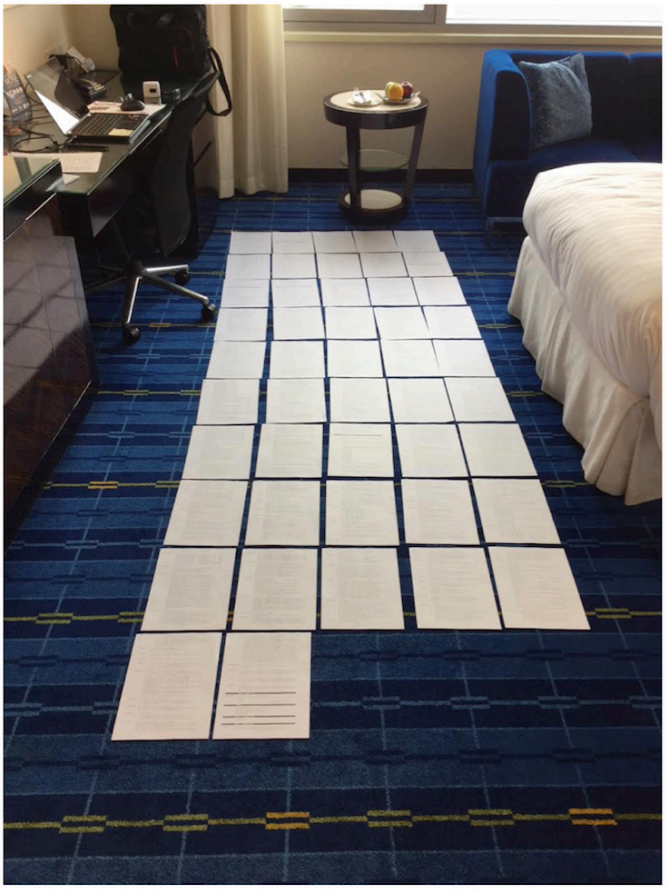
A news story in 2013 declared "**Plug pulled on the world's last commercial electric telegraph system**".

Shhh. Don't tell them. Not true. Our NOTAM system is still proudly flying the flag. We use the ITA-2 International Telegraph Alphabet character set from 1924, instead of ASCII, which the rest of the world switched to in 1963. Ever wonder why Notams are all upper case? That's why. We use Q-codes (from 1909) to categorize the message. We use abbreviations heavily, because it costs more money to send messages in plain text format. Wait, scratch that – that logic ended in the 90's because, well, the internet.

And so, while the passenger is choosing emojis for their last What'sApp message before the aircraft doors close, in the cockpit the pilot is deciphering what the impact of this Telegram might be □♀:

```
A4732/19 NOTAMN Q) LIMM/QOBCE/IV/M/A/000/999/4526N00916E005 A) LIML B)
1907040000 C) 1907172359 E) REF AIP AD 2 LIML 3-3 NEW OBST ERECTED TWO
CRANE RWY35 PSN 5943.8M AFTER THR35 AND 172.1M RIGHT RCL ON TAKE OFF
DIRECTION COORD (WGS-84): 453022.0N 0091555.0E MAX ELEV AGL 69.2M/227.0FT
MAX ELEV AMSL 185.7M/609.3FT ROTATING JIB 77M ICAO SIGNAL UNPROVIDED.
```

□. If that seems tough to get through, now consider what 50 pages of it looks like:



That is the average size of the Notam Briefing package that each crew is given. And so, your job as a pilot at briefing time, is to **find the one Notam that will end your career or endanger the aircraft**, in a package the same size as a short novel. Buried deep in Birds of Bangkok, War and Peace by Greece and Turkey, Unlighted Tiny Obstacles, Goat grazing times, Grass cutting timetables – is a runway closed, a diversion airport unavailable, a decision height changed. And you'll miss it.

Air Canada 759 missed the one telling them that 28R was closed in San Fransisco, so they tried to land on the taxiway. Only an alert United crew prevented the worst crash in American history, and then only by 14 feet, or 1 second. That led to the NTSB to declare "*Notams are Garbage*".

From the Final NTSB Report: *"Concerns about legal liability rather than operational necessity, drive the current system to list every possible Notice to Airmen (Notam) that could, even under the most unlikely circumstance, affect a flight. The current system prioritizes protecting the regulatory authorities and airports.* ***It lays an impossibly heavy burden on individual pilots, crews and dispatchers*** *to sort through literally dozens of irrelevant items to find the critical or merely important ones. When one is invariably missed, and a violation or incident occurs, the pilot is blamed for not finding the needle in the haystack!"*

Thank you, Robert Sumwalt, for calling the problem out.

It's not just the volume, or readability – it's the **Mensa-level problem solving skills** required to parse the contents. Answer this question: If you're on Parking Stand 505 Right, can someone else use Stand 503 Left?

```
ZLXY/XIANYANG L0090/17 WHEN STAND NR.501 BE USED, STAND NR.502, 503,
503L, 503R CAN NOT BE USED SIMULTANEOUSLY. WHEN STAND NR.503L OR NR.503R
BE USED, STAND NR.501, 503 CAN NOT BE USED SIMULTANEOUSLY. WHEN STAND
NR.503 BE USED, STAND NR.501, 503L, 503R CAN NOT BE USED SIMULTANEOUSLY.
WHEN STAND NR.505R BE USED, STAND NR.505 CAN NOT BE USED SIMULTANEOUSLY.
WHEN STAND NR.505 BE USED, STAND NR.505L, 505R CAN NOT BE USED
SIMULTANEOUSLY. WHEN STAND NR.505L BE USED, STAND NR.505, 506, 508 CAN
NOT BE USED SIMULTANEOUSLY.
```

If you did figure it out, how long did it take? Now multiply that time by 250, a straw-poll average number of Notams in a briefing. Think this is manageable in the 20 minutes the crew have to brief the flight?

In 2007, the annual count of Notams reached 500,000. This year, 2019, we are on track for 2 million Notams. The problem is intensifying, and rapidly. **We are drowning in the data, but missing the message**. Every change imaginable is stuffed into the system:

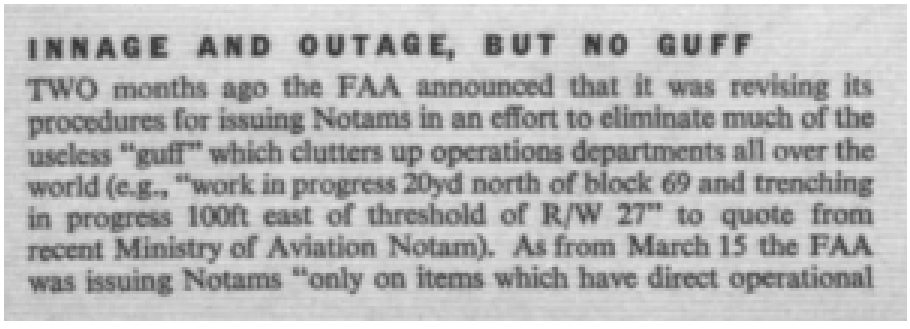
```
FTTA A1219/16 PASSENGER FACILITIES READ 2 HOTELS AND 4 INNS IN THE CITY
INSTEAD OF 1 HOTEL AND 4 INNS IN THE CITY ASECNA AIP MODIFY AIP 14AD2.3-
02. 13 JUN 10:05 2016 UNTIL PERM.
```

And this Chinese entry is the best one of 2019 so far …

```
F2298/19 NOTAMN Q) ZSHA/QXXXX/IV/NBO/A/000/999/3014N12026E005 A) ZSHC B)
1905050852 C) PERM E) REF AIP CHINA SUP15/18(2018-5-15)ZSHC AD2.24 -20G,
MORSE CODE OF IXX CHANGE FM 'DOT,DOT','DASH,DOT,DOT, DASH', 'DOT,DOT,DOT'
TO 'DOT,DOT', 'DASH,DOT,DOT, DASH', 'DASH,DOT,DOT, DASH', OTHERS REMAIN.
```

Say it out loud.

In 1964, Flight International published a snippet from the FAA, declaring that the Notam system was being revamped, and from March 15th that year only essential, critical Notams would be allowed to remain. **That was 55 years ago**. We've tried, and we've failed, many, many times, to solve the problem.



**INNAGE AND OUTAGE, BUT NO GUFF**

TWO months ago the FAA announced that it was revising its procedures for issuing Notams in an effort to eliminate much of the useless "guff" which clutters up operations departments all over the world (e.g., "work in progress 20yd north of block 69 and trenching in progress 100ft east of threshold of R/W 27" to quote from recent Ministry of Aviation Notam). As from March 15 the FAA was issuing Notams "only on items which have direct operational

But – enough about the problem. If you are a pilot, dispatcher, or controller, you know only too well the problem, and its impact.

## How about we talk about how we find the solution instead?

Let’s start here.


**I’m gathering a team of people that understand the problem from the user perspective**. A team of pilots, dispatchers, controllers, and anyone else that wants to help. A team of people that care about solving the problem because of how it affects us every day, and because we know that one day, we’ll be bitten by it. A team motivated by a desire to make this better for our colleagues, and those that will follow us.

We’re not fixing it because we have to, but because we want to.

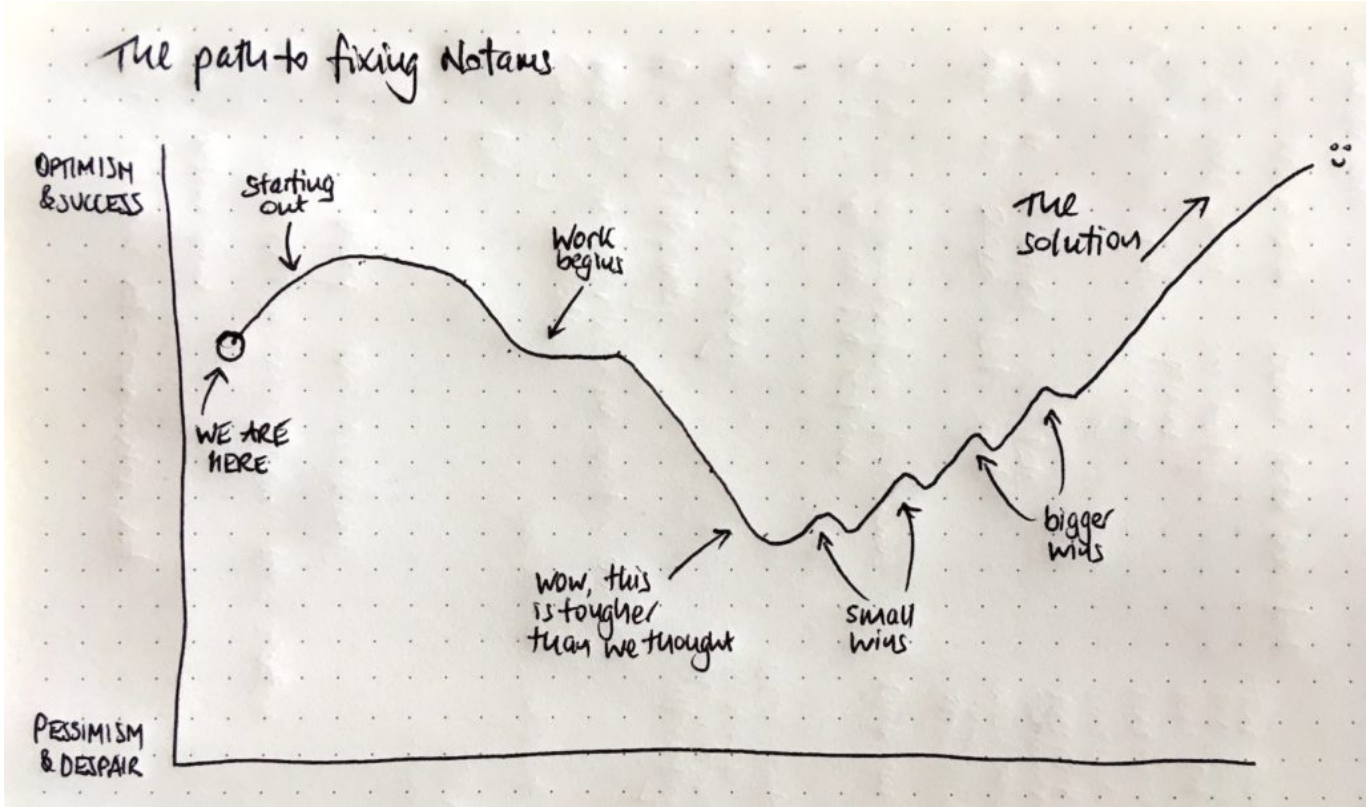
We’re not fixing it to make a profit, or because it enhances the bottom line somewhere. We’re fixing it because we want it to change.

Most importantly, we’re fixing it as a community, collaborating to create the space to allow the solution to come.

Zooming out a little, if we look at this as not an aviation problem, but a communication problem, it becomes less unique, less challenging. Many bigger problems have been solved by looking at them differently.

So we’re going to collaborate with smart thinkers, problem solvers, designers, coders, creatives. We’re going to work together as people, rather than agencies or companies. We’re going to jump into a process that might be messy, challenging, difficult, and will often seem impossible.

As per this handy graph I’ve drawn:




Don’t join us to force change – this is the change. Don’t join us to shout louder – this problem is bigger than any one agency or organization. Don’t join us if you think this is someone else’s problem to fix – **it’s our problem, and we’ll fix it together**.

The first step is creating the space for this magic to happen. Join us if you have no idea how to solve it yet, but you have positive energy to contribute.

**The Notam Team needs you!** We start July 1st (yep, you’re already late, so jump in). We have set a lifespan of 9 months – do, or die.

The first part of the process is the gathering, the coming together. Once we’ve all said hello and had a look around, we’ll start with the first and most important step – creating that space for the solution. Figuring out how best to collaborate, invite creativity in, think differently. Then, the research – the science, the data, the hard facts. Identify the problem, and the impact. And from there … well, it’s unwritten. Not knowing is part of the approach. Oh, and we’re going to have fun. There’s no creativity without fun.

I believe the problem is eminently solvable, but only as a community. And I hope you’ll join us! If you’re in – just write to me at mark.z@ops.group.

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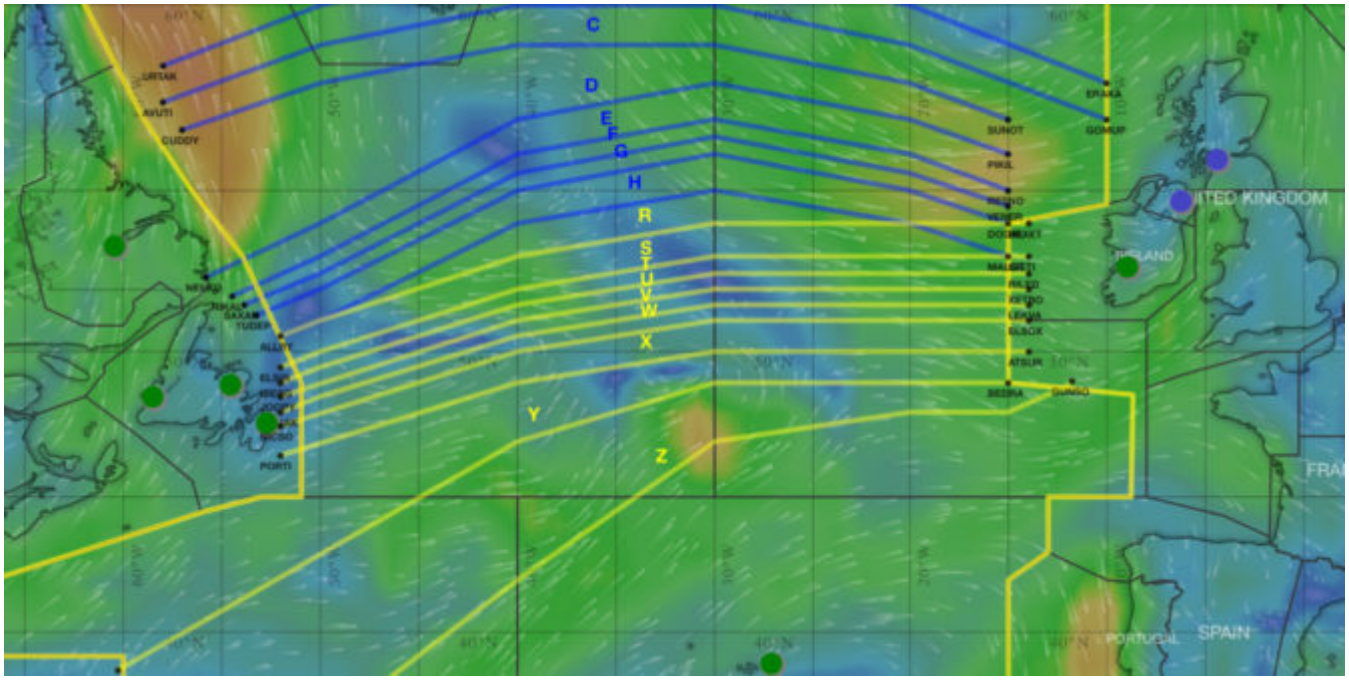
# July 2019 North Atlantic Update

David Mumford
15 November, 2019




There are **four new things** to tell you about the North Atlantic, following the flurry of new and updated NAT Bulletins that ICAO issued last week. Get ready for some acronyms! Here's a summary:

## 1. OWAFS

*Operations Without an Assigned Fixed Speed*
ICAO NAT Bulletin 2019_001

We wrote about this before. This Bulletin just formalises the practice that has already been in place since April 2019 in the Shanwick, Santa Maria, and New York Oceanic FIRs (not WATRS).

**Here's how it works:** You'll get a normal oceanic clearance, with a fixed Mach Number, like you always did. But then somewhere after the Oceanic Entry Point, you may get a CPDLC message saying **RESUME NORMAL SPEED**. You should reply with **WILCO**. What that means is: **Fly ECON, or a Cost Index with Variable Mach**. You can fly within 0.01 up or down of your cleared Mach, but if it varies by 0.02 or more you must advise ATC.

## 2. ASEPS

*Advanced Surveillance Enhanced Procedural Separation*
ICAO NAT Bulletin 2019_002

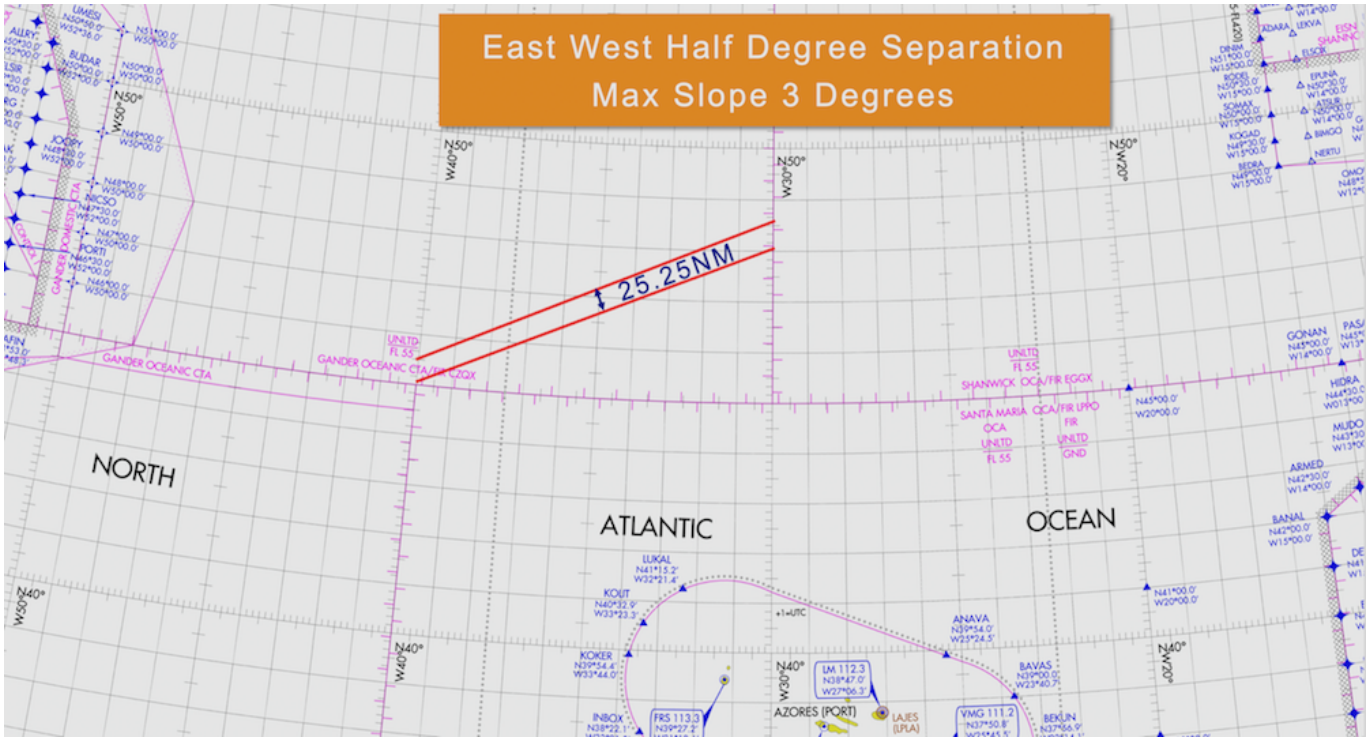
ASEPS was another trial that started in April 2019 – this time in the Shanwick, Gander and Santa Maria FIRs.

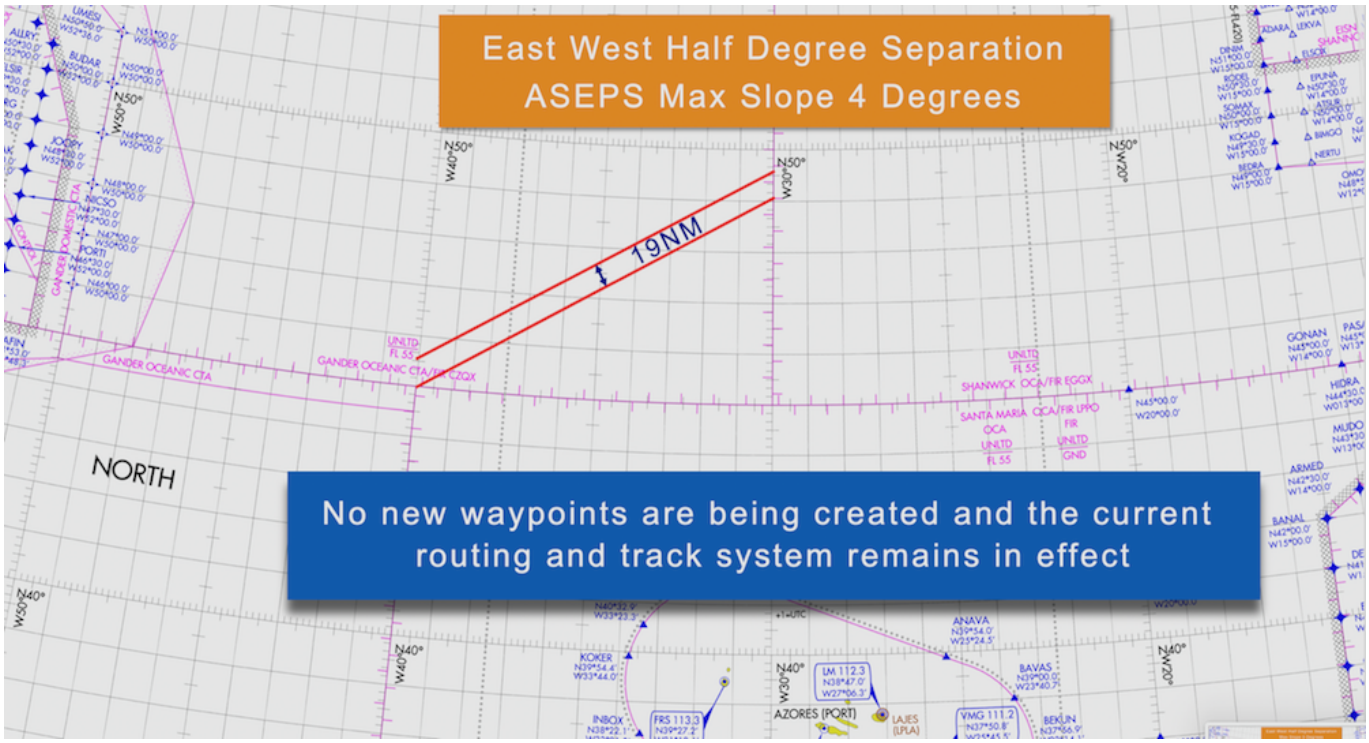
So far it has only been for **longitudinal separation**, which can be brought down to as close as **14NM** for compliant aircraft (RVSM/HLA approval, ADS-B, and fully PBCS compliant – which means meeting the specifications of RNP4, RCP240 and RSP180).

But in the new Bulletin, from October 2019 they plan to reduce **lateral separation** for compliant aircraft as well – down to **19NM** from the previous limit of 25NM.

There are no plans to change the design of the NAT Tracks, which will continue to be spaced 25NM apart. The initial benefit of the 19NM lateral separation will basically just be that steeper route angles will now be

available for pairs of aircraft flying parallel routes outside of the NAT Track system – the current “gentle sloping turn” limitation is 3 degrees latitude between 10 degrees of longitude, but on 10th October 2019 that will change to a limitation of 4 degrees latitude between 10 degrees of longitude. The result of this will be a lateral separation of 19NM on the steeper turning routes.




*Images courtesy of 30WestIP*

### 3. Data Link Performance Improvement Options

ICAO NAT Bulletin 2019_003

Nothing to worry about, this is just a list of common datalink errors and what to do about them.

**Two key take-aways:**

1. Update your aircraft avionics software as soon as updates are available.
2. Answer your messages within 60 seconds or send a Standby message (recent data indicates Business Aviation operators are very bad at this).

### 4. NAT DLM – The North Atlantic Data Link Mandate

ICAO NAT Bulletin 2017_001_Revision 04

This one is just a slight revision to the plans for the datalink mandate. Datalink is currently required between **FL350-390** in the NAT region, and from 30th Jan 2020 this mandate will be extended to between **FL290-410.**

So with this revised Bulletin, the **change** is that they have decided they will **cap it at FL410** – whereas previously there were no plans for any upper limit at all. This will basically match the NAT HLA and RVSM vertical limits and makes sense. This will allow non-compliant aircraft to continue to operate at FL430 and above – mostly GA/BA operators.

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**Further reading:**

- **OPSGROUP members** can watch the replay of Member Chat #9, where we discuss all these changes in more detail.
- The last round of important changes on the NAT went into effect on 29th March 2019: the PBCS tracks were expanded; real-time Space-Based ADS-B surveillance and reduced longitudinal separation standards were introduced; and the contingency and weather deviation procedures were changed.
- Check out our NAT Plotting & Planning Chart – updated for July 2019.

*Special thanks to Mitch Launius at **30WestIP.com** for help with this post. For assistance with international procedures training for business aviation crews worldwide, check out the website.*

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# Africa: Hajj 2019 routes in operation

David Mumford
15 November, 2019

The Hajj routes for 2019 will take effect from 18 Jul through to 9 Oct.

**What are Hajj routes**?
Every year, millions of pilgrims travel to Mecca and other sites in Saudi Arabia – and this changes the predominant traffic flow over the African continent. ATC in the FIRs most affected put in place standard routings to help flow that traffic.

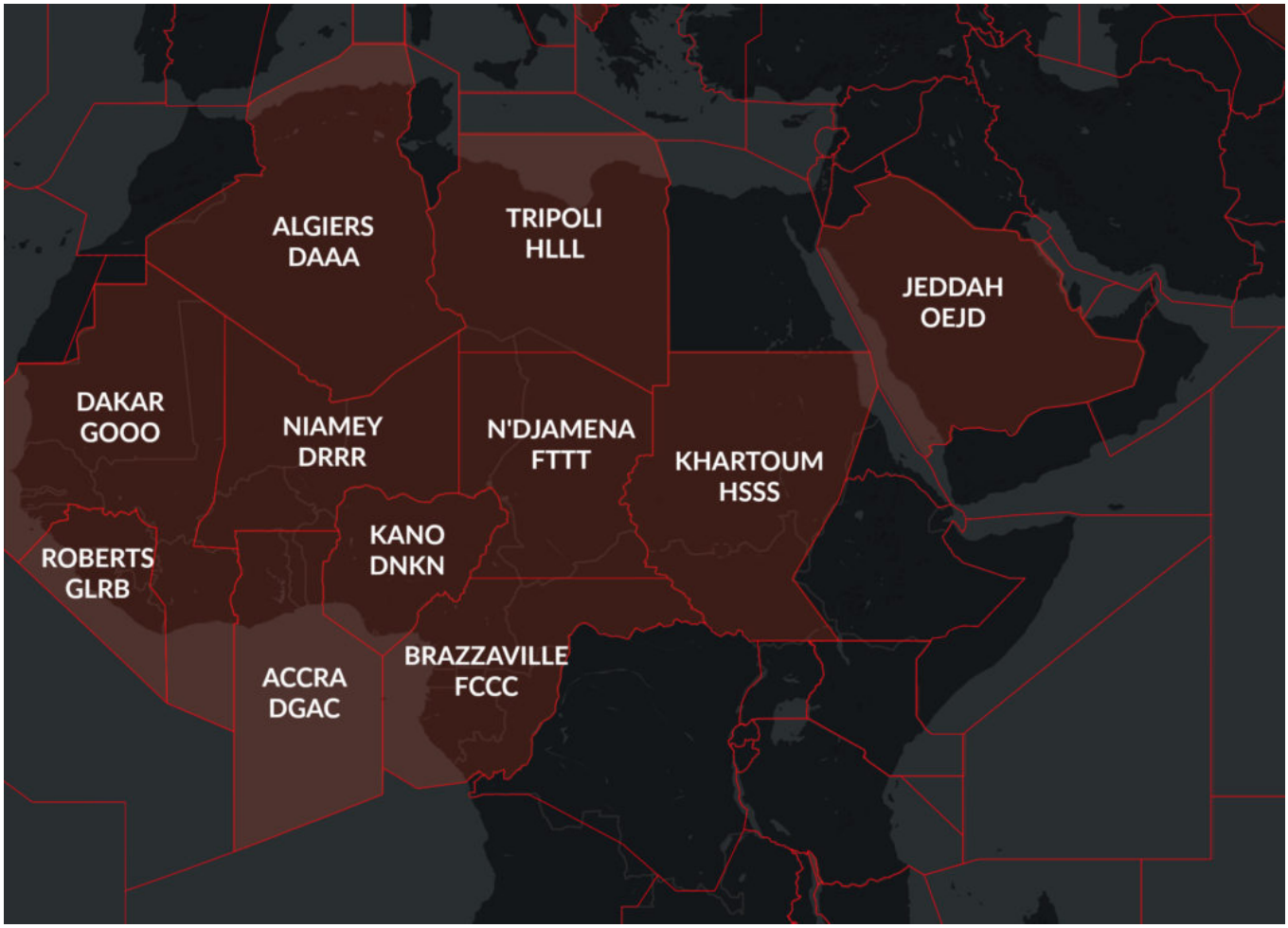
Normally, traffic is very much north-south predominant, with Europe-Africa flights being the main flow. When Hajj operations start up, a good amount of traffic starts operating east-west (ie. Africa-Saudi Arabia and vice versa), and this is something to be aware of when cruising along at FL330 with spotty HF comms.

So, in addition to the normal IFBP belt and braces on 126.9, keep an eye out for a much higher amount of crossing traffic during the coming months.

The FIR's affected are: Algiers, Accra, Brazzaville, Dakar, Jeddah, Kano, Khartoum, N'Djamena, Niamey, Roberts, and Tripoli.

Of these, **watch out for Tripoli** – risk remains high across Libyan airspace at all flight levels, and multiple countries have **"do not fly"** warnings in place. There are **daily airstrikes** taking place, severe limitations in ATC services, and massive areas of the FIR are without surveillance and communications capabilities. **Malta FIR** is currently managing all east-west routes in this airspace, and operators can contact them for additional information on email: airspace.cell@maltats.com

The Hajj routings are contained in this **ASECNA AIP Supplement**.




**Further reading:**

- Read IFALPA's information on recommended procedures when operating in the African region **here**.

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# At long last, Pakistan declares airspace fully open again

Mark Zee
15 November, 2019


**Pakistan airspace is open!** In a clearly written, yet quietly announced in-the-dead-of-night Notam, Pakistan has today declared the entirety of its airspace fully open and available for all overflights.

This is very welcome news for long-haul airlines and operators transiting the Middle East and Asia, where finding a usable and safe route route through the region has become akin to navigating a level of Pac-Man with few escape options left.

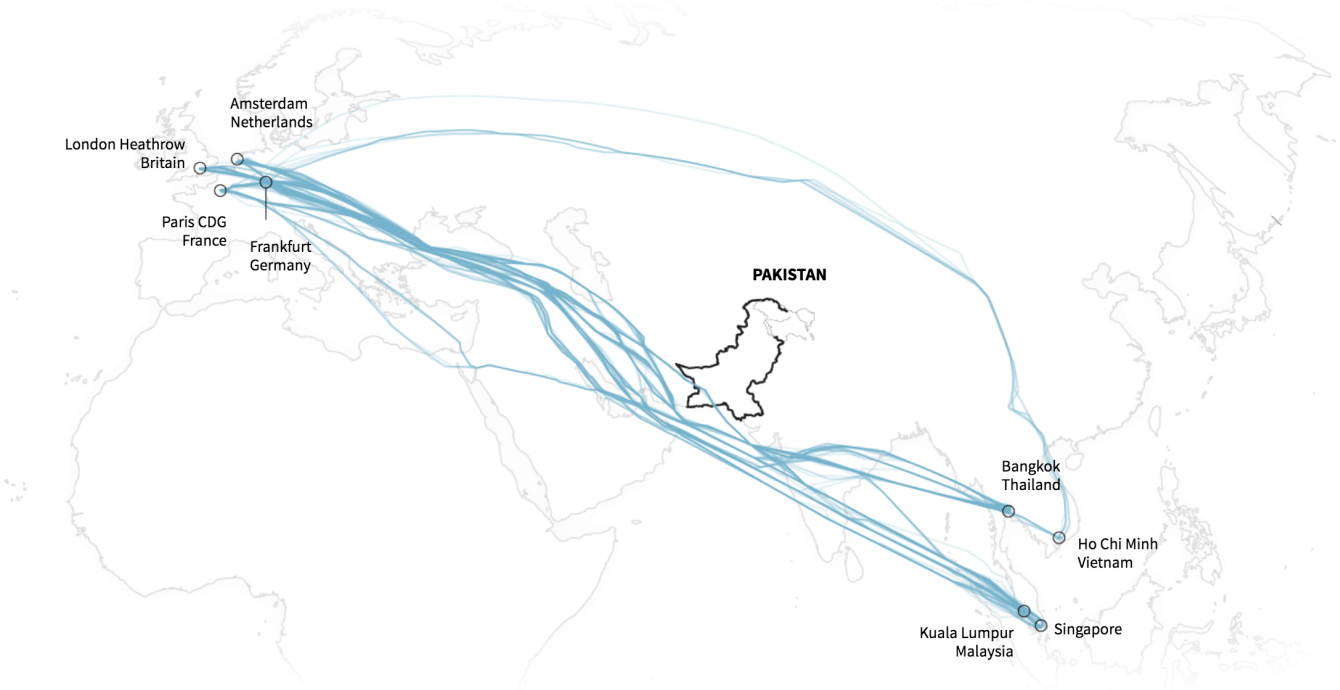
Pakistan being open again makes the traditional and preferred Europe-Asia route through Afghanistan, Pakistan, and onwards to India available again, and means that city pairs abandoned after the February shutdown will likely be restarted.

The good-news Notam was issued around midnight Pakistan time:

A0710/19 NOTAMN
Q) OPXX/QARXX///E/000/999/
A) OPKR OPLR
B) 1907151908 C) PERM
E) WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT PAKISTAN AIRSPACE IS OPEN FOR
ALL TYPE OF CIVIL TRAFFIC ON PUBLISHED ATS ROUTES

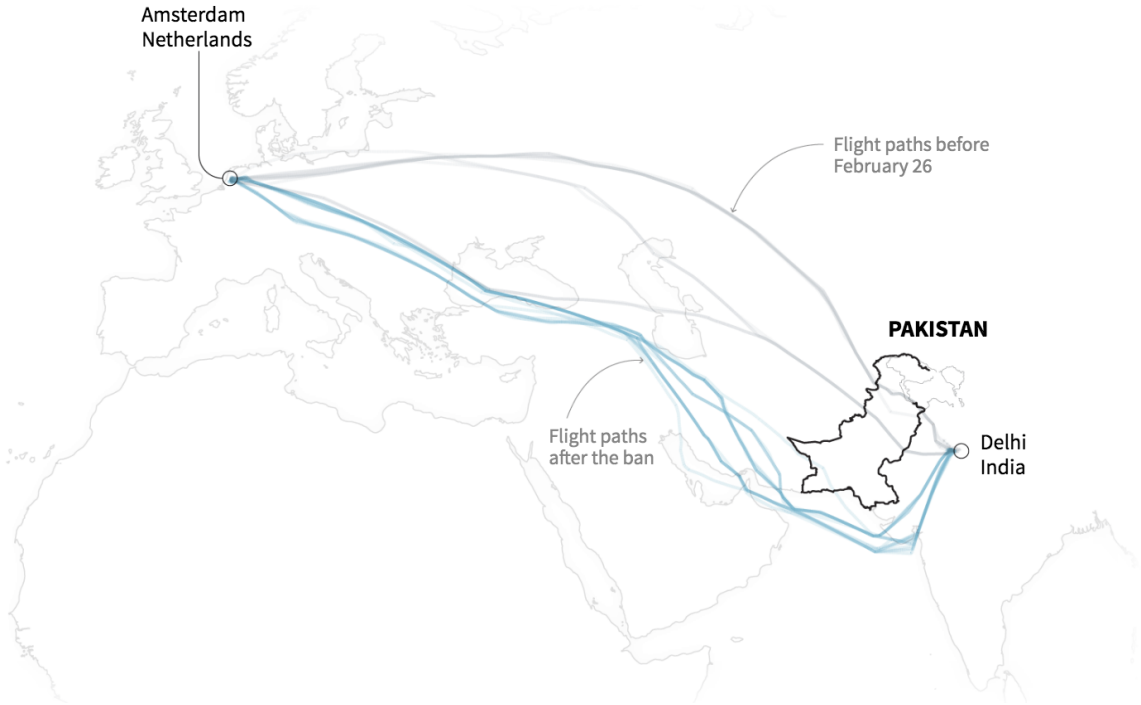
### So, what does this mean?

In recent months, operators have had to avoid Pakistan and route much further south, as this graphic from an article we worked on with Reuters in April shows:

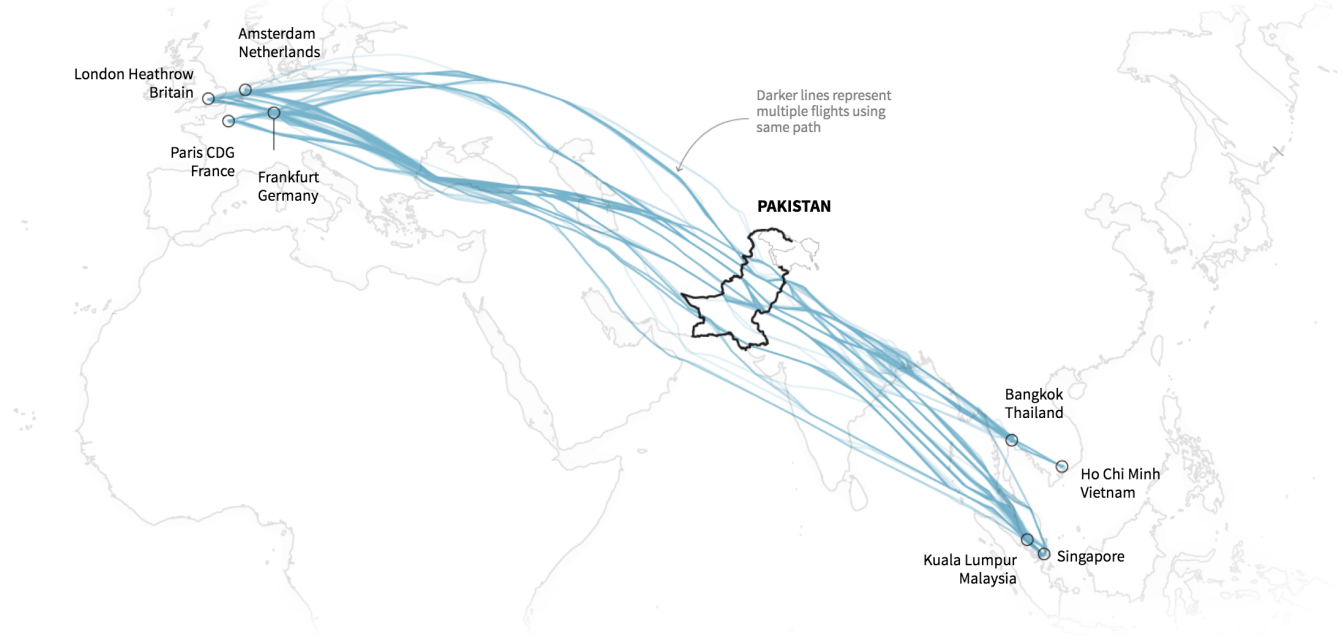



The impact has been significant. Avoiding Pakistan has meant up to an additional 410 miles, or an hours flying time, for Europe-Asia flights.

For many long-haul operators trying to get to India, the dog-leg around Pakistan made the trip unworkable, either because of fuel endurance, or crew hours. Many operators cancelled flights to Delhi, the worst located airport in terms of the airspace closure.




Now, with this reopening, we have the ability to fly closer to optimum routings once again.




So, good news for airlines and long-haul operators.

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# Incredible people making aviation a force for good, and how you can help

Mark Zee
15 November, 2019

**What does your overnight look like when you are downroute?** After you've checked in to the hotel,

and maybe had a quick nap, what's on your list of things to pass the time? Maybe you'll swap your pilot uniform for a tourist t-shirt, head into the city, and explore a little. Perhaps you'll have arranged a coffee with an old friend or colleague. Or, maybe just hang out at the crew hotel and relax.

Not Kimberly Perkins.  There's something more rewarding to be done.

Through her non-profit organization **Aviation for Humanity**, Kimberly will be heading to the local school, shelter, or orphanage, to meet the children and present them with backpacks and school supplies. She's not alone. Having started the mission in 2016, they've already helped hundreds of people in places like Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mongolia, Nigeria, and Puerto Rico – and closer to home, in Hawaii – where kids in need in Kona received supplies over several visits.

If you're like me, aviation has given you a lot – not just a career, but a lifetime of wonder, beauty, excitement, and joy. Aviation is special – that's why we're in it. And it's no secret that we're going through a tough time right now in the eyes of the public. So, when I see **aviation giving back** – doing something for the world – it's important to highlight and bring attention to that. We need more of this.

This is why I want to celebrate and share the work that Kimberly, and the many volunteers, are doing. So, how does it work? Pretty simple:

1. You contact Aviation for Humanity, and tell them where you're going
2. They will locate an underfunded school or orphanage for you to visit, and arrange for the supplies.
3. You go, and share the story of the journey back with Aviation for Humanity.

Imagine using your trip abroad to make a difference in the world – just one short visit, and you can give an entire school or orphanage much needed supplies.

Running a non-profit isn't easy, and there's **another way** you can help right now. Kimberly needs a volunteer Executive Director –  to manage coordination with volunteers, logistics for shelter visits, managing social media, fundraising, writing articles, and other things that move the mission forward. Is that you? Maybe you've recently retired and are looking for a way to contribute back to aviation? Maybe you've got extra time on your hands, or you know someone that this might be suited to? 2-6 hours a week will get you started.

I love seeing the work that OPSGROUP members are doing individually. As I was 'wow-ing' my way through the work that Kimberly does, I found **another group member** featured on an Aviation for Humanity trip – namely **Cheryl Pitzer**. Cheryl was on our Member Chat a few weeks ago (#7, see it here in the dashboard).


Cheryl, pictured right, flies the MD-10 “Flying Eye Hospital” for Orbis International – an amazing airplane that is part of the Orbis mission of bringing people together to fight avoidable blindness. On that call, Cheryl told us about the work Orbis does, the challenges of operating the airplane internationally, and the reward of using aviation as an agent for good in the world. This is another incredible cause that you too can get involved in.

Kimberly and Cheryl are true aviation pioneers, not just for the non-profit causes that they work so hard on, but also as pioneering women in aviation. It’s no secret that this beloved industry of ours has a massive imbalance of diversity. The numbers and statistics identify the issue  – averaging out the small amounts of data that are actually published on the subject, show that the **global percentage is around 5%** – that’s both the number of female pilots, and the number of women in top management positions at airlines.

Changing those numbers – attracting more women to aviation – is just part of the issue. What is life like if you are one of the 5%? From an interview that I read in another publication, Kimberly said “*As I moved through my flying career, I was never lucky enough to encounter a female manager mentor. As I looked up that corporate ladder, it was a sea of men. Such an environment can be lonely, unwelcoming and intimidating*“.

For me, right now, that is something that we can all do something about. What is the environment like at your airline or operation? Could you see how it could be **lonely, unwelcoming and intimidating**? How can you change that?

Just like the work that’s being done for the non-profits, you can do something to make a difference. That difference grows, it’s exponential. It starts with the realisation that you have the power to make things better for other people, **especially if you are in a leadership position**. A good place to start is by

realising that if you do have the power to make things better, but you don't, then you're simply part of the problem.

I certainly see some of the inherent aviation gender biases here in OPSGROUP. It's usually not intentional, nor anything usually deep rooted in opinion – it's just been built into the system over the last 80 years of how commercial aviation used to work.  Sometimes we have group calls that end with someone saying "Thank you Gentlemen".  The very term NOTAM is indicative of the problem – **Notice to (air) Men**.  I like to imagine what it would be like to turn up to work every day and read a flight briefing that is headed "**Notice to Women**". I certainly would feel excluded.

You might think that this is subtle, tiny, not important. But the things that create environments that are lonely, unwelcoming and intimidating are usually subtle and unintentional. Only by putting ourselves in the position of others, can we see the full impact.

It's a process of education that starts with the willingness to see things a little differently, and then making a decision to do something that changes things for the better. Just like Kimberly and Cheryl have done.