Flying within Russia just got tougher – leave your business jet at home

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



There's a new Customs procedure in Russia that we're trying to get to grips with. It's called "Import 53" (IM53), and it affects **foreign aircraft looking to do private flights on domestic legs within Russia**. It's a tricky one – so much so that some of the Customs authorities at the airports there in Russia don't even understand it themselves.

The standard block of text doing the rounds is this:

Please be aware cabotage flights are strictly prohibited in Russia. To perform flights inside Eurasian Economic Union(EAEU) by aircraft with foreign registration, customs clearance must be obtained by aircraft owner in accordance with the customs legislation. Import to the territory of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) of a foreign aircraft of business aviation with dry weight(BOF) less than 28 tons with the number of passenger seats less than 19 without payment of customs taxes is possible according to customs procedure called IM53(Import 53) which must be performed without commercial benefit by aircraft owner, authorized person or by customs broker. Otherwise, 3% of the amount of import customs duties and taxes would be applied upon the release of the aircraft for domestic consumption.

Most of the bigger handling agents at the major airports are sending this out. **But what does it mean?** We asked a dozen questions to try to get a clear answer, and it seems this is it:

Private flights: you **can** operate domestic legs in Russia if your aircraft is below 28 tonnes (62,000 lbs)

and less than 19 seats – by applying for IM53. If your aircraft busts either of those two metrics (above 28 tonnes, or 19 seats or more) you **can't** apply for IM53, and you therefore **can't** fly domestic legs in Russia.

And here's where it gets **super annoying** – to get IM53 approval, you have to request it direct with Customs **yourself**, or use a customs broker. From the handling agents we've spoken to, they are **not allowed** to help with this.

(Also watch out for the whole 'Eurasian Economic Union' thing – that includes: Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan. So watch out if you're planning on flying between Russia and any these other countries, as Customs will consider it to be a domestic flight!)

We have received reports from members saying that this new rule is already affecting some of their trips to Russia, and that some local Customs at smaller airports are as confused as everyone else about exactly how it interpret them:

Our local handler in [insert second tier Russian city] *advises us to cancel the trip there.*

The problem is that this Customs procedure, Import 53, is pretty new, and very complicated. It must be opened first in the airport of entry, then closed in the last airport of EAU. Their Customs officers don't know how to interpret the new rules (probably afraid, who knows?), and refuse to do this.

The last client who arrived to [insert second tier Russian city] *had to delay the departure for 6 hours due to the new Customs procedure, and our handler says it is a very good result, and they were lucky.*

Our handler cannot guarantee that everything will go well in [insert second tier Russian city]*, the situation could become worse any time, and there is nothing we can do with Customs. If the customer still wants to go there, it will be at their own risk.*

With the new IM53 rule, the authorities seem to be attempting to establish a standard rule for foreign aircraft operating domestic legs in Russia. Have you been to Russia recently and tried to do a domestic leg? How did it go? Let us know, and help us get the word out.

Rockwell GPS fix coming soon

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



A large number of operators have been affected this week by a software glitch in some Rockwell Collins GPS receivers. After a few days of head-scratching, the cause of the problem was tracked back to the receivers' failure to compensate for the "leap second" event which happens once every 2.5 years when the US Government update their satellites – which they did on 9th June.

This meant that certain aircraft equipped with the affected GPS receivers suddenly started getting 'ADS-B fail' messages, which initially led to groundings of aircraft which did not have GPS on their minimum equipment lists (MEL).

In a note from Rockwell on Monday 10th June, they advise that the next scheduled update by the U.S. Government to the GPS constellation is set for Sunday 16th June at 0000Z. **This is when things should start working again, but they are not guaranteeing this will definitely fix the issue.** Rockwell told OPSGROUP it's a **'wait and see'** situation.

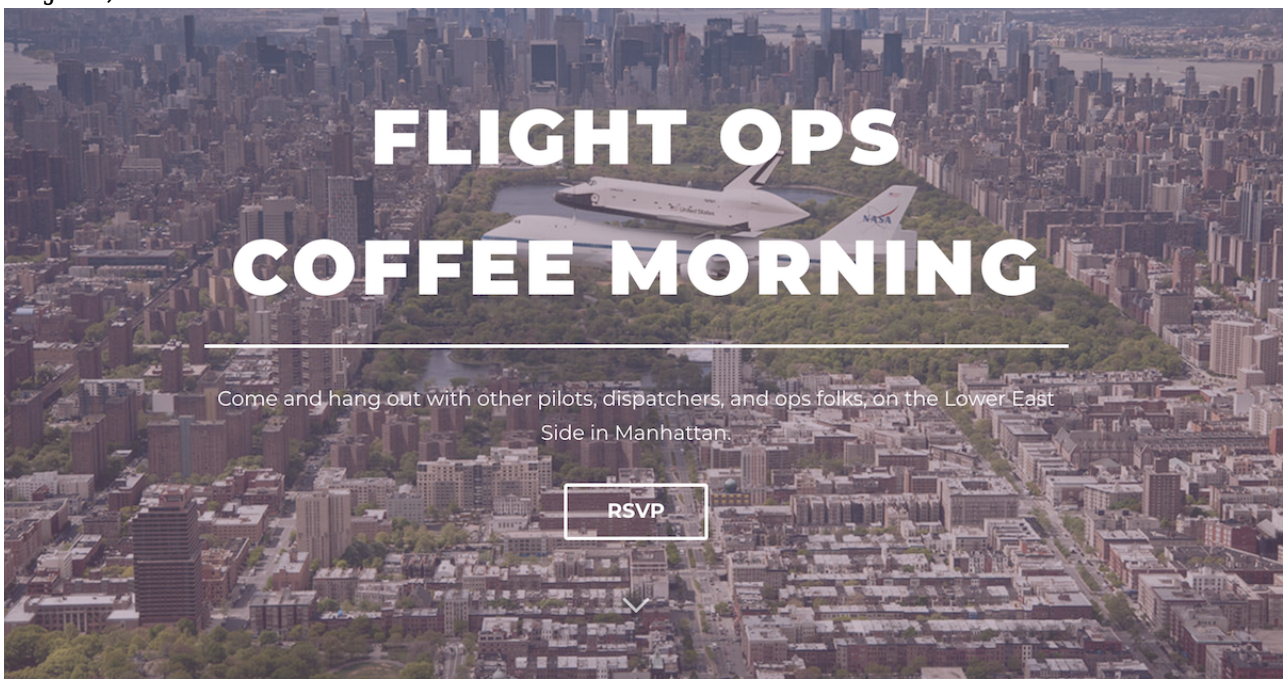
In the meantime, it seems as though all the affected aircraft have been identified, and you should know at this stage if yours is working or not. Some aircraft remain grounded because there is no MEL relief. Rockwell are advising those who have not powered on their GPS units since the 9th June should leave them switched off. Make sure to check the advice from your OEM – some are advising to pull the GPS circuit breakers to prevent further issues.

Until the issue is fixed, many aircraft will be forced to fly non-RNP routes below FL280 and navigate VOR-VOR, or else remain on the ground.

For more on this, or if you have something to share, head over to the OPSGROUP forum.

FOCM: Flight Operations Coffee Morning

Mark Zee
14 June, 2019



OPSGROUP is hosting the first FOCM in New York City on June12th, and we'd love you to come along.

FOCM – Flight Operations Coffee Morning – is an OPSGROUP event where you can meet other pilots, dispatchers, controllers, and Ops specialists, hang out, have a coffee, and talk flight ops.

Dave and Mark from OPSGROUP, will host a quick Q&A about **International Flight Ops**, and our work as a group. We'll talk NAT Tracks, Ramp Checks, Flight planning, Airspace Risk, Notams, the latest challenges – and what we can do to make things better.

And you get to meet and connect with other people working in Flight Ops in New York, New Jersey, and beyond. We'll have A380 Captains and Gulfstream FO's, Corporate dispatchers, New York ATC, and a bunch of other good people.

OPSGROUP is a collective of 5000 pilots, dispatchers, controllers, and ops specialists that work together to share information and resources, making flight ops simpler and safer. We're hosting this because we love connecting people. It's totally free.

Event details

When: Tuesday June 12th, 2019
Where: Lower East Side, NYC – address on RSVP
Cost: None!
RSVP here: https://focm.splashthat.com/



PDF Flyer – Print it out!

Total ban on US private flights to Cuba

Mark Zee
14 June, 2019



Effective today, June 5th, no US private aircraft will be allowed to travel to Cuba. The rule comes from the BIS – the US Bureau of Industry and Security, part of a further clampdown on Cuba policy by the US government.

We spent the day here in OPSGROUP clarifying the new rules and what it means for US operators.

What happened? BIS issued a new rule today, **June 5** called “Restricting the Temporary Sojourn of Aircraft and Vessels to Cuba”. [official copy here] [Guidance here].

This is tough to read and understand. Nothing new about that. So, we asked OPSGROUP, discussed it with a whole bunch of members, got some legal interpretation, and got some great help from the NBAA.

Here’s the plain English wrap up:

- **US Part 91 private flights**: Effective June 5, you cannot operate an N-reg aircraft privately to Cuba for any reason. This includes Corporate. It doesn’t matter if your passengers meet the “category requirements (see later)”, it’s a no go.
- **Part 135 Air Ambulance**: You can go, and you don’t need a license. From the rules: “Air ambulances operating under 14 CFR part 135, may depart from the United States under its own power for any destination”. “Air ambulances will remain eligible for the license exception when destined to Cuba”.
- **Part 135 Charter:** This was unclear because of the wording of the new rules. **But you can go**. We asked BIS specifically about this, and the wording of the new paragraph is meant to be read as a series of options that allow you to go to Cuba – 135 is covered under the “AOC holder” bit.
- **Part 129:** You can go. Part 129 is foreign operators. An example would be Air Canada doing a charter from JFK-HAV. That’s allowed.
- **Part 121:** No changes. Airlines can operate.

BIS vs OFAC

The first gatekeeper of Cuba rules is BIS. If they don’t prohibit your operation, eg. Part 91 – then you proceed to the second gatekeeper – OFAC, and look into whether you need a license, and what category your passengers are travelling under.

Categories of allowed travel

There were 12 categories – or “reasons” to be allowed to go to Cuba. There are now 11. The one removed was known as “People to people”. These are set by OFAC.

What does Cuba say?

Thanks to one of our members who called the **Cuba CAA** this morning, and got this:
"*In our country there is no regulation in this regard. They can fly over and land registrations of any nationality without any distinction provided they meet the requirements requested and that you know all right*."

As we would expect, none of the restrictions come from the Cuba side. So everyone continues to be welcome in Havana, it's just the US government that is restricting matters for US operators.

A super simple FAQ

Can I fly my private C172 to Cuba?
No.

Can I fly my owner to Cuba in a G550, if he passes the 'category test'?
No. He can go, but has to go on a commercial service.

Can I operate a Corporate Jet to Havana, for business reasons?
No. Regardless of the reason the principles might want to go to Cuba, you cannot operate any aircraft under Part 91.

But I see in the rules that you can apply for an exemption from BIS?
Yeah, you can, but they will say no. "License applications for the temporary sojourn to Cuba of those vessels and aircraft are subject to a general policy of denial."

Can I operate a charter flight to Cuba?
Yes. BIS rules don't prohibit this. But you then need to look into the OFAC rules.

Can I go to Mexico first, and then to Cuba?
No. In their lengthy FAQ, "A license from the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) is required to fly private or corporate aircraft to Cuba, even if the aircraft stops in another country first.". And y'all ain't gettin' no license.

I am a Canadian operator. Can I operate to Cuba?
Yep. This is all about US operators being restricted. You can fly direct to Havana like you always did, and under the Part 129 bit in the new rule, you can also operate from the US to Cuba.

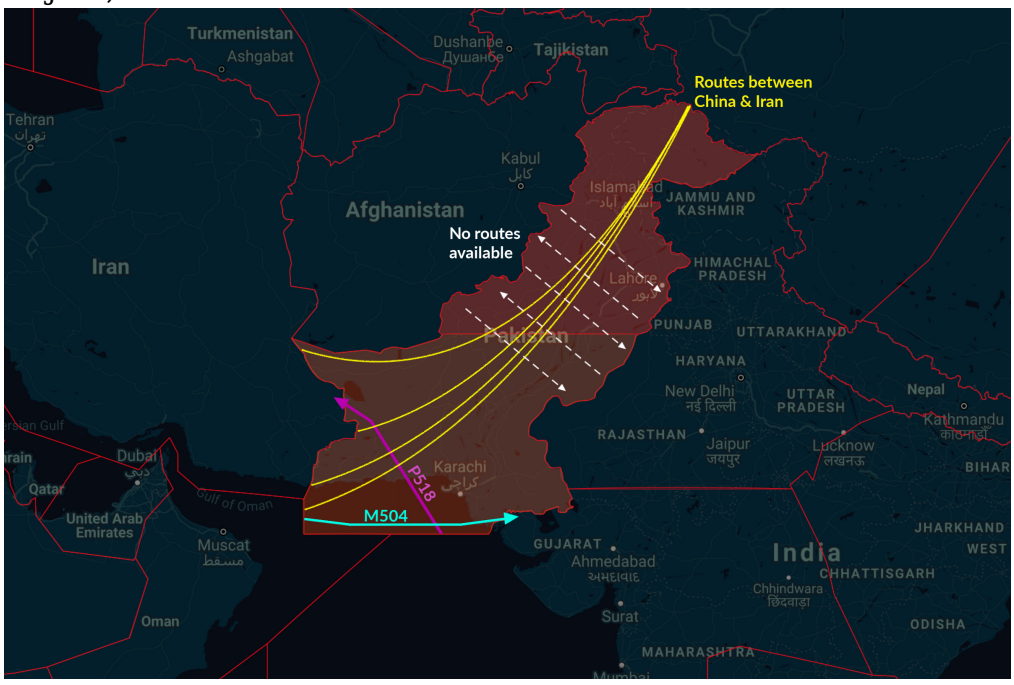
So, we think we have this all correct as the final version. If we don't hear any objections, we'll add this to the OPSGROUP databank, and make a blog post. From here, we will post this in the new Forum, and the discussion can continue there!

THANKS EVERYONE!

Great team effort today to get this into an understandable-by-humans format. Well done!

Another Pakistan overflight route reopens

David Mumford
14 June, 2019

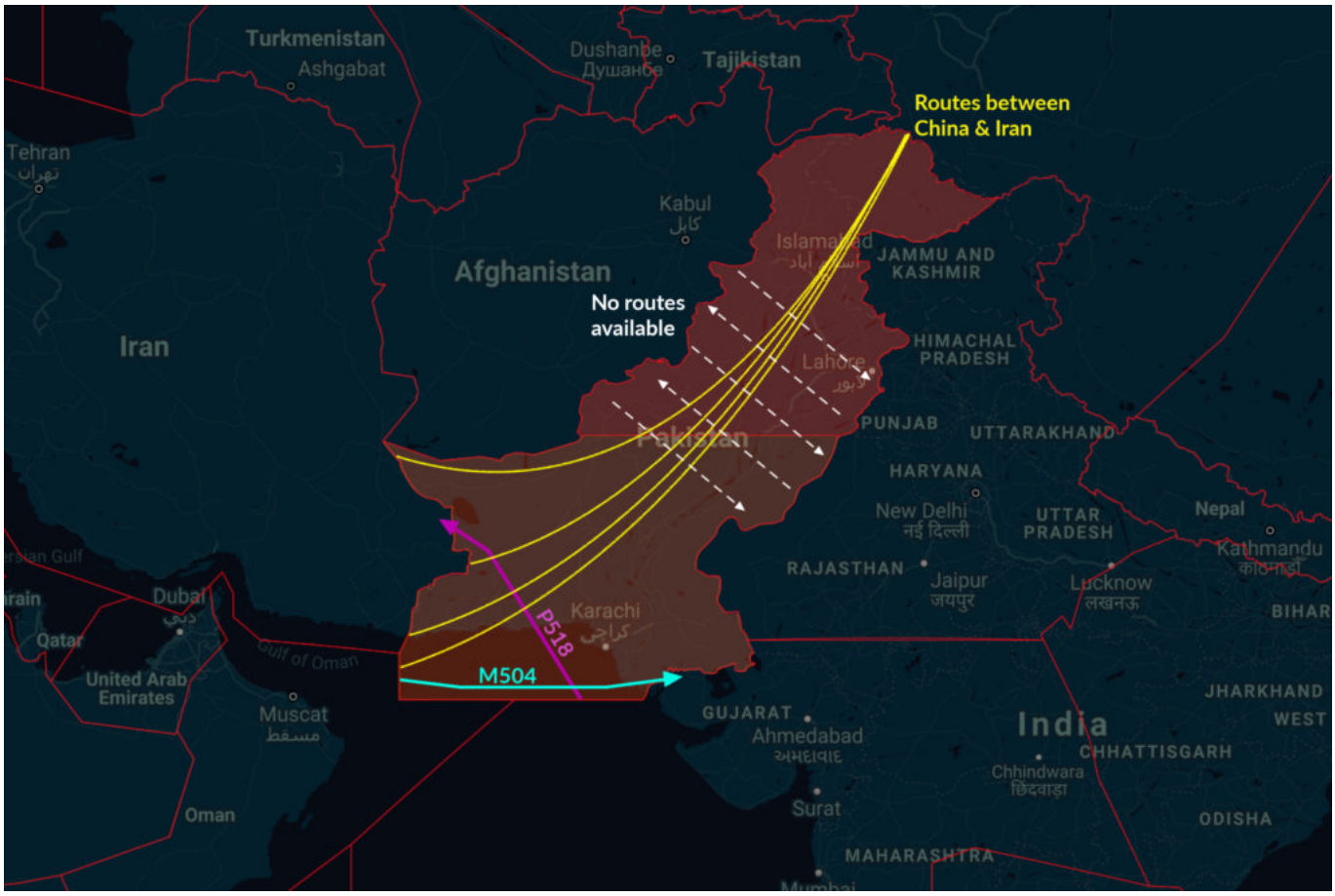


Three months since the Pakistan airspace closure began, there are now finally some options for overflights between Pakistan and India.

Since April, there has only been one airway available for flights between the two countries – airway **P518**, for **westbound flights only.**

At that time, Pakistan also published a bunch of Notams saying that they would allow **eastbound overflights** on a few airways which connect Oman and India through Pakistan's airspace over the Gulf of

Oman, but initially India did not authorise the use of these.

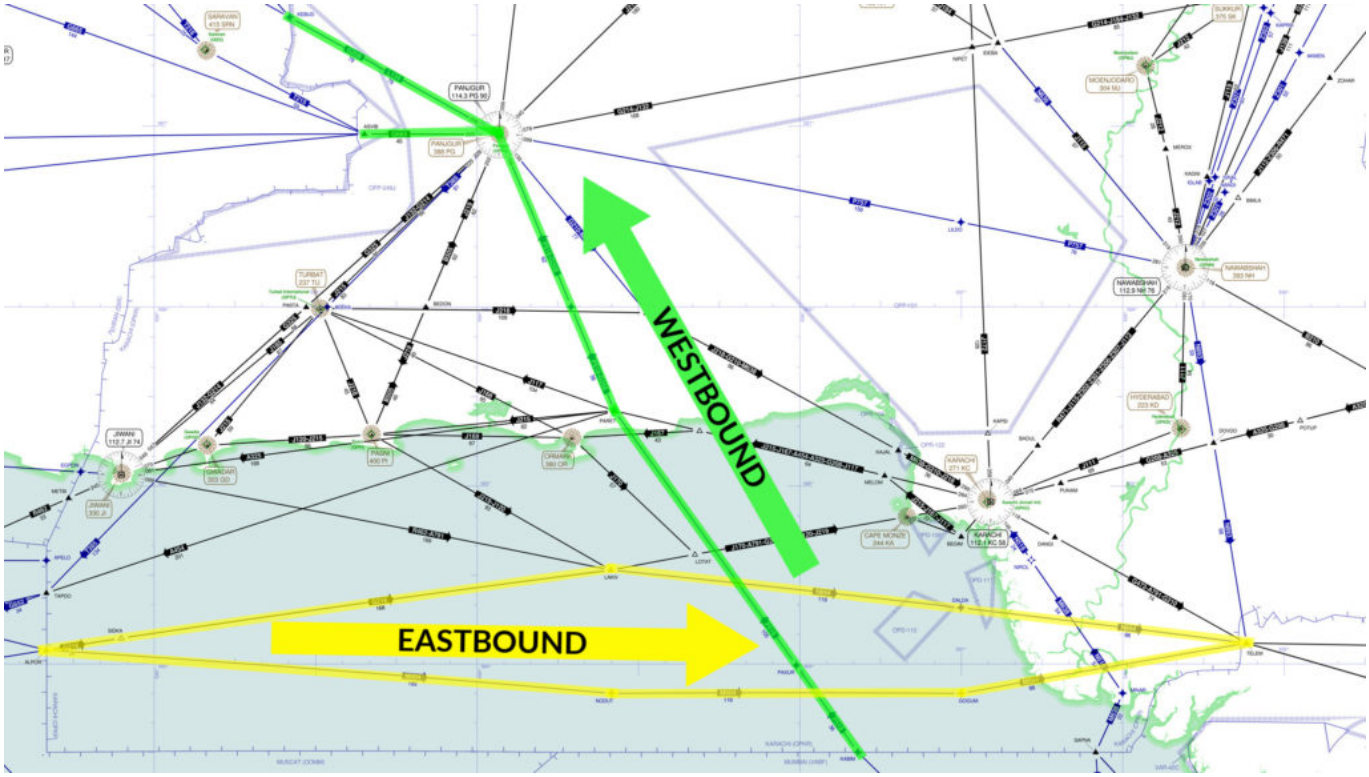


That changed on 2nd June, when India published a Notam saying they would allow eastbound flights to enter Indian airspace at waypoint TELEM.

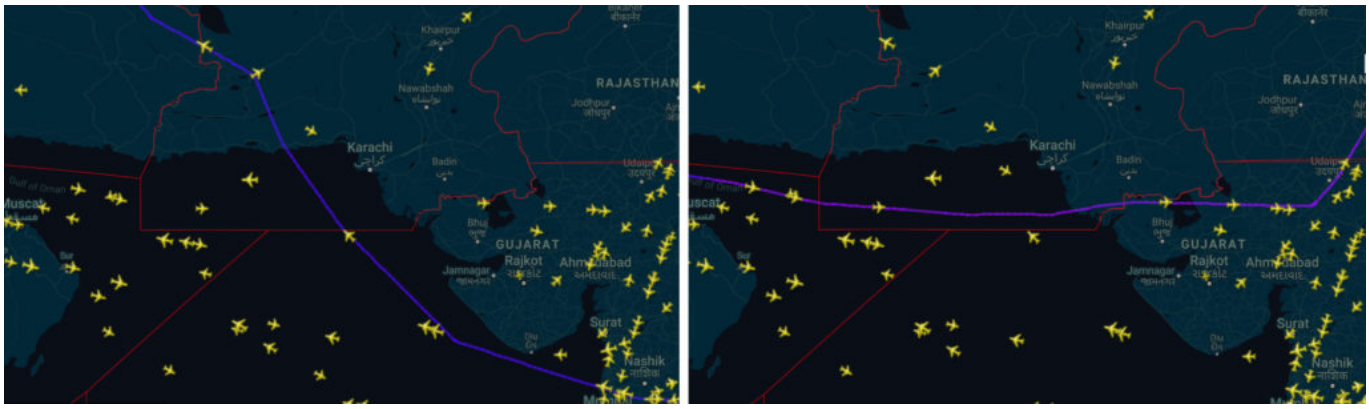
So now, piecing together the Notams issued by both countries, here are the options for overflights:

Westbound
Airway P518, from waypoint KABIM on the Pakistan/India border in the south, to either KEBUD or ASVIB on the the Pakistan/Iran border in the north.

Eastbound
Choice of two routes from waypoint ALPOR on the Oman/Pakistan border in the west, to waypoint TELEM on the Pakistan/India border in the east.



Some airlines have started using both these eastbound and westbound routes, although many continue to avoid Pakistan by routing south over the ocean instead.



India and Oman both therefore remain congested with extra flights – they have published Notams showing all the restrictions on the various different overflight routes, are advising operators to carry extra fuel, and to expect lower flights levels than requested.

Most of the Pakistan airspace restrictions which were introduced in Feb 2019 have been **extended to 27 July**: specific routes remain open for international flights to all the main airports in Pakistan, and for east-west overflights of the country (i.e. between China and Iran).

Why?

On Feb 26, Pakistan shot down an Indian military jet and captured a pilot in a major escalation between the two countries over disputed Kashmir. This came a day after India launched air strikes on militant bases across the border in Pakistan, which itself was a response to a deadly attack on Feb 14 when a militant killed more than 40 Indian troops in Kashmir. The captured pilot has since been returned to India, but tensions remain heightened between the two countries in wake of airstrikes by each side in areas in the border region.

Airspace warning
The US FAA has since updated its airspace warning for Pakistan, which now notes that military activity by Pakistan and India in the disputed Kashmir region poses a potential inadvertent risk to aviation at all altitudes. The US continues to warn against flying into or over Pakistan due to the risks posed by "extremist and militant activities", although it does not recommend any specific minimum safe altitude for overflights; other countries advise FL250 or above, but we think FL300 is more sensible. More info

If you have further ops info to report, please do! Email us at blog@ops.group, or comment below.

New rules for ops to Japan

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



Operators to all the main airports in Japan must now sign a statement saying they will take measures to ensure objects don't fall off the aircraft. The authorities also want you to agree to pay compensation for any incidents where damage is caused by falling objects – potentially also when the falling objects don't even come from your aircraft!

For the past ten years, Japan has required its own airlines to report any objects falling off aircraft during take-off or landing. But from March 2019, this applies to all foreign operators too.

Japan published **AIC 7/19** on 28 FEB 2019, which outlines the measures they require all crews to take when operating at Japan's airports. It comes with two attachments which both need to be signed and returned to the Japanese authorities **by post**, prior to ops.

Technically, you must send **hard copies** of these to **each airport** you will fly to in Japan. However, local handler Aeroworks has told us that operators can email them copies of everything by email, along with a power of attorney letter, and they are authorised to pass everything on to local authorities – they can provide this service for most airports in the country.

Attachment 1: This lists all the measures to take, including: completely draining the lav/waste pipes prior to take off to prevent ice blocks from forming, confirming all panel doors are closed, inspecting for leaks, removing rainwater or snow from cargo when loading.

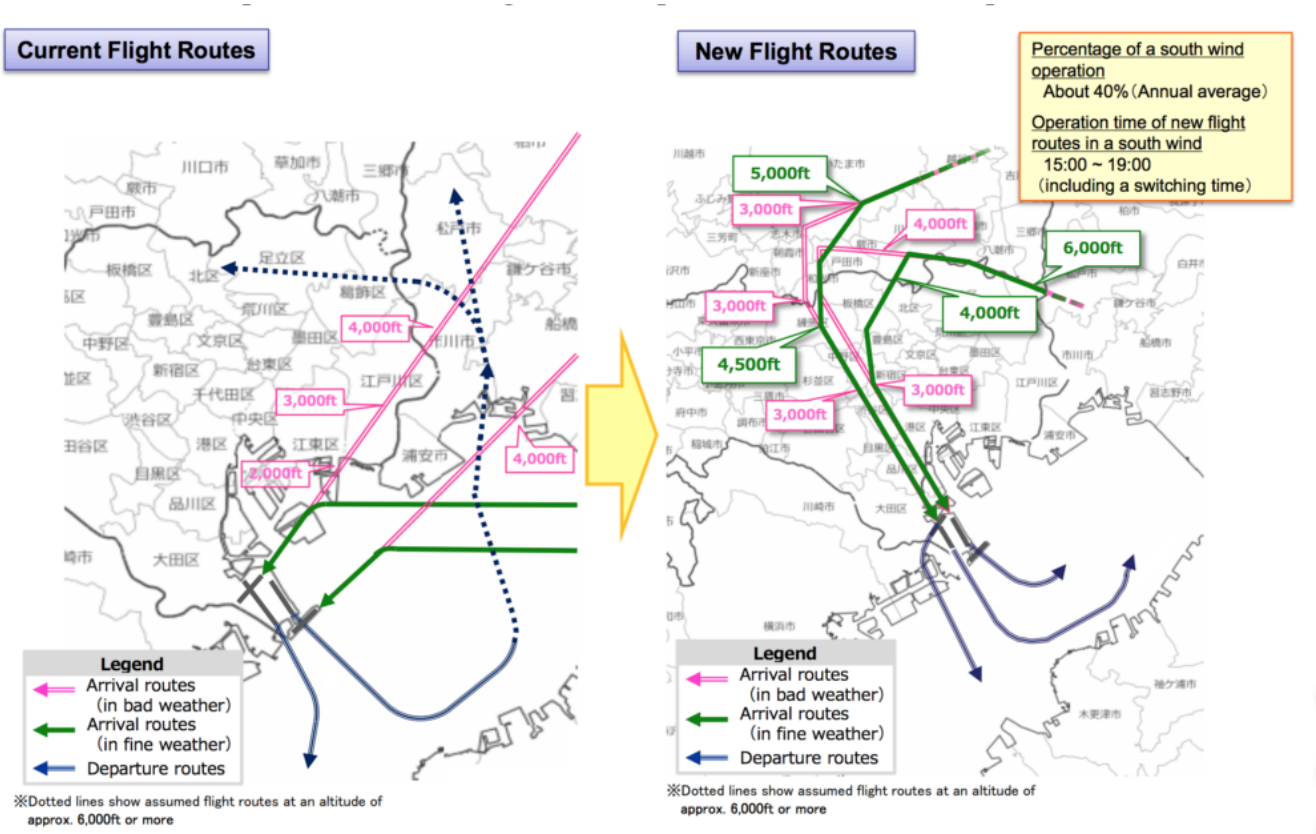
Attachment 2: This is a strange one. It says the following:

"In case that it is unable to identify one specific aircraft which caused the damage by falling objects from aircraft (hereinafter referred to as "the causing aircraft") and to identify a person responsible for the compensation of the damage, and if the Falling Object Confirmation Committee established in Regional Civil Aviation Bureaus of Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism determines a presumably causing aircraft (hereinafter referred to as "the acknowledged aircraft"), the operator of the acknowledged aircraft shall bear the amount of expenses for compensation of the damage, proportionally divided by the number of the acknowledged aircraft."

If we're reading that right, that basically means if something falls off a plane and causes damage, and they can't figure out which specific one it came from, whichever aircraft were in the area at the time may all be required to share the cost of paying for any compensation that may be due!

Over the past few years there have been a number of high-profile incidents in Japan where objects have fallen off aircraft. In September 2017, an aircraft panel fell onto a car driving on a busy street in Osaka; and in May 2018, a hospital in Kumamoto was sprayed with metal fragments from an aircraft that had suffered engine failure after taking off from RJFT/Kumamoto Airport.

With the Tokyo Olympic Games coming up in July 2020, local authorities are keen to ensure no such incidents occur here.



Change of Runway Operation and Flight Routes (South wind operation)

Airport authorities are looking at ways to increase slot capacity at Tokyo's airports, and one such measure will be to revise the arrival routes to RJTT/Tokyo Haneda, which will mean that flights will operate almost directly over the city centre – and these new rules regarding objects falling off planes have been implemented in response to this.

Further reading

– The presentation made by the Japanese delegation to ICAO's Air Navigation Oct 2018 Conference, regarding the various measures taken to prevent objects falling off airplanes in Japan. Check it out **here**.
– IFALPA has published a Safety Bulletin which provides some great info on the various different approaches that are available at RJTT/Tokyo Haneda, depending on the wind direction and the time of the day, with a focus on the reduced options available if operating overnight. Definitely worth a read if operating to RJTT. Check it out **here**.

Goose Bay: "Our runway is broken"

David Mumford
14 June, 2019

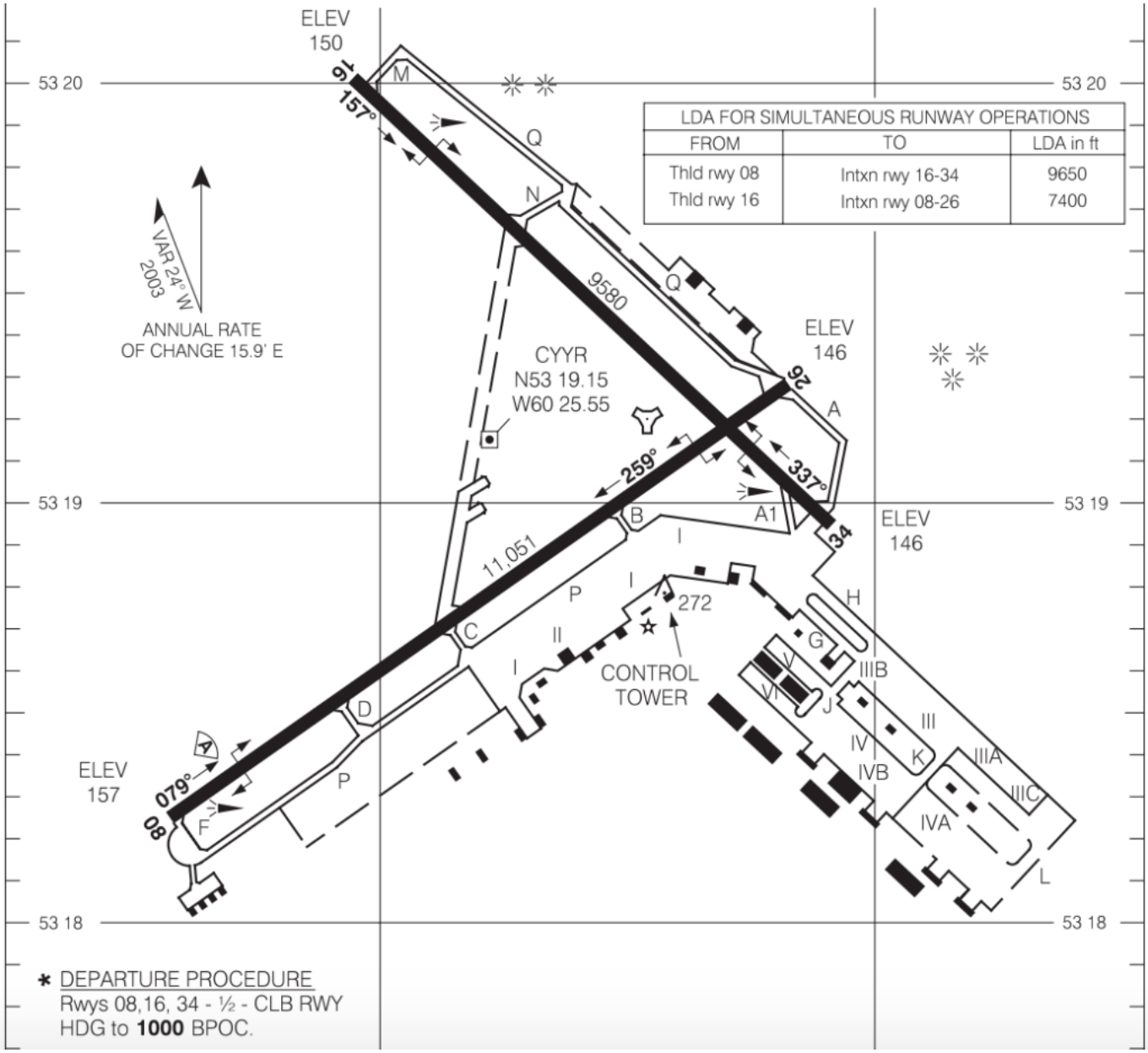


Larger jets will not be allowed to land on three out of four runways at Goose Bay for the next three months, as they've found cracks after the winter thaw.

The airport has settled on a final version of their "Our runway is broken" Notam, and it looks like this:

05/037 – CYYR RWY 08, 26 AND 34 NOT AVBL FOR ACFT WITH TIRE PRESSURE OF 1.0MPA (145 PSI) OR GREATER AND ACFT WITH ACN/PCN OF 40 OR GREATER, EXC MEDEVAC AND AVBL AS EXTENDED RANGE TWIN-ENGINE OPS (ETOPS) ALTERNATE.
21 MAY 14:01 2019 UNTIL 17 AUG 23:59 2019. CREATED: 21 MAY 14:06 2019

So not the most pilot-friendly piece of information! Unless you happen to know your tire pressure off-hand, best head for **RWY 16**, which is the only one that remains fully open and operational to all aircraft (the only reason RWY 34 is restricted is because aircraft using that runway touch-down on the intersection with RWY 08/26 – which is where some of the cracking damage has been found).



The Notam does state that the other three runways at CYYR **can still be used an ETOPS alternate**, meaning that you're allowed to divert there in an emergency regardless of size, weight, tire pressure, or ACN. However, with the deteriorating runway conditions they're also warning of possible aircraft damage due to loose sealant and asphalt:

05/038 (190206) – CYYR RWY 08/26 SFC IS DETERIORATING AND CRACKING AND MAY PRODUCE FOREIGN OBJECT DEBRIS (LOOSE SEALANT AND ASPHALT) ACFT DAMAGE MAY OCCUR. 23 MAY 18:20 2019 UNTIL 23 AUG 23:59 2019. CREATED: 23 MAY 18:24 2019

ACN vs PCN

The mention of "ACN/PCN" in Goose Bay's Notam made us close our eyes and try to imagine a world where Notams just made immediate sense.

Knowing your tire pressure is one thing, but trying to work out your **ACN number** is a much more tricky business, as it has to factor in the aircraft's maximum centre of gravity, maximum ramp weight, wheel spacing, tire pressure, and other factors. Your AFM should have a bunch of pages which tell you this (or you can have a quick look here instead).

Once you know your ACN number (or rather, 'numbers' – as there are different ACN numbers for each aircraft depending on the strength of the runway you'll be landing on), you can then check it against the runway **PCN number** – the number issued for each runway which tells you what kind of surface it is, how strong it is, and what level of stress it is able to withstand.

Ultimately, if your aircraft's ACN is equal to or less than the runway's PCN, you're good to go.

In the AIP, Goose Bay's runway PCN is **076FBXU**. The important bits here:

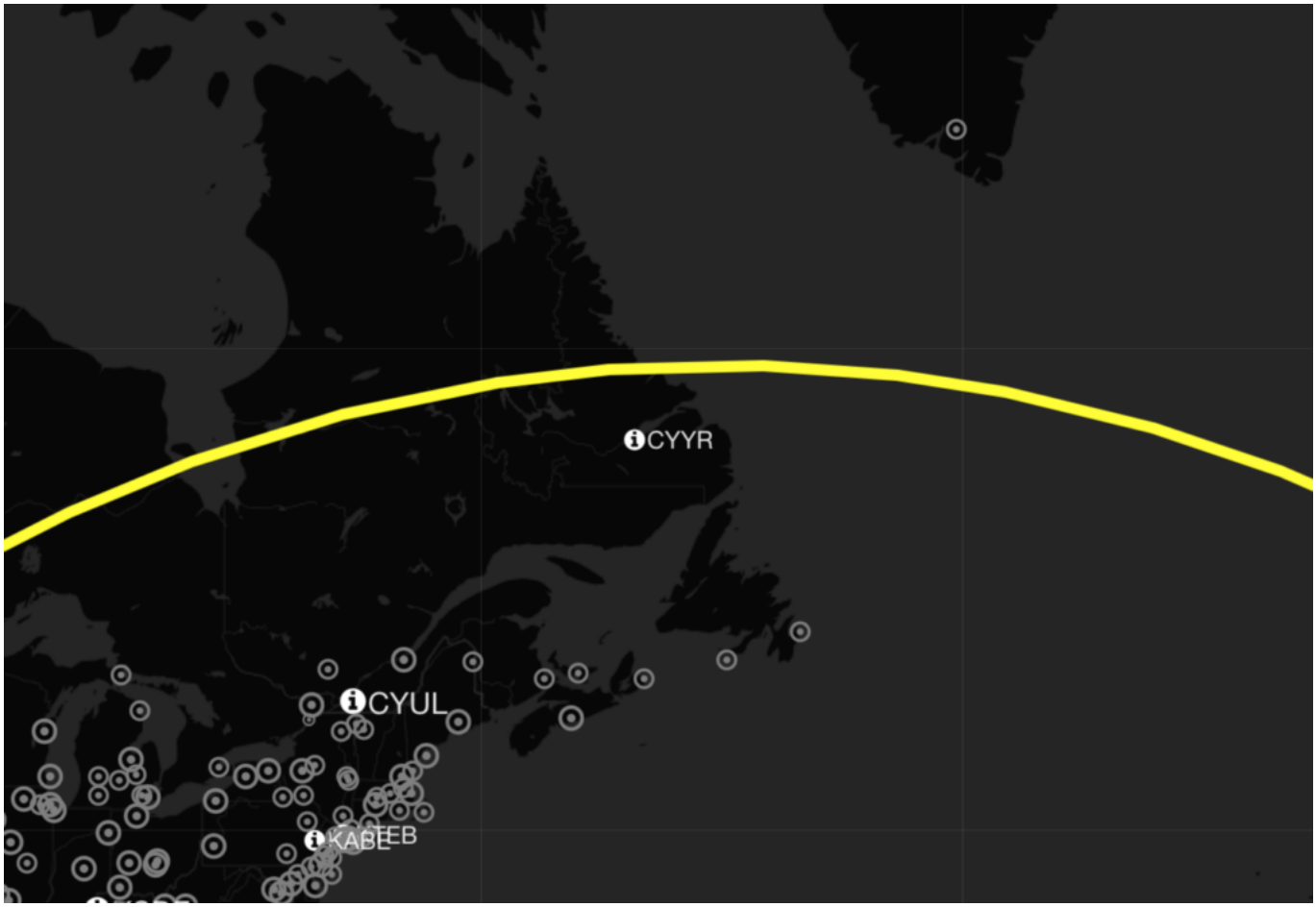
- the PCN number here is **76**
- the **F** means that the runway is 'Flexible' (i.e. made of asphalt rather than concrete)
- the **B** means it is of 'Medium' strength
- the **X** means it has maximum tire pressure of 1.75 MPa.

So, under normal circumstances, CYYR has a runway PCN of **76**, meaning most aircraft would be able to operate here:

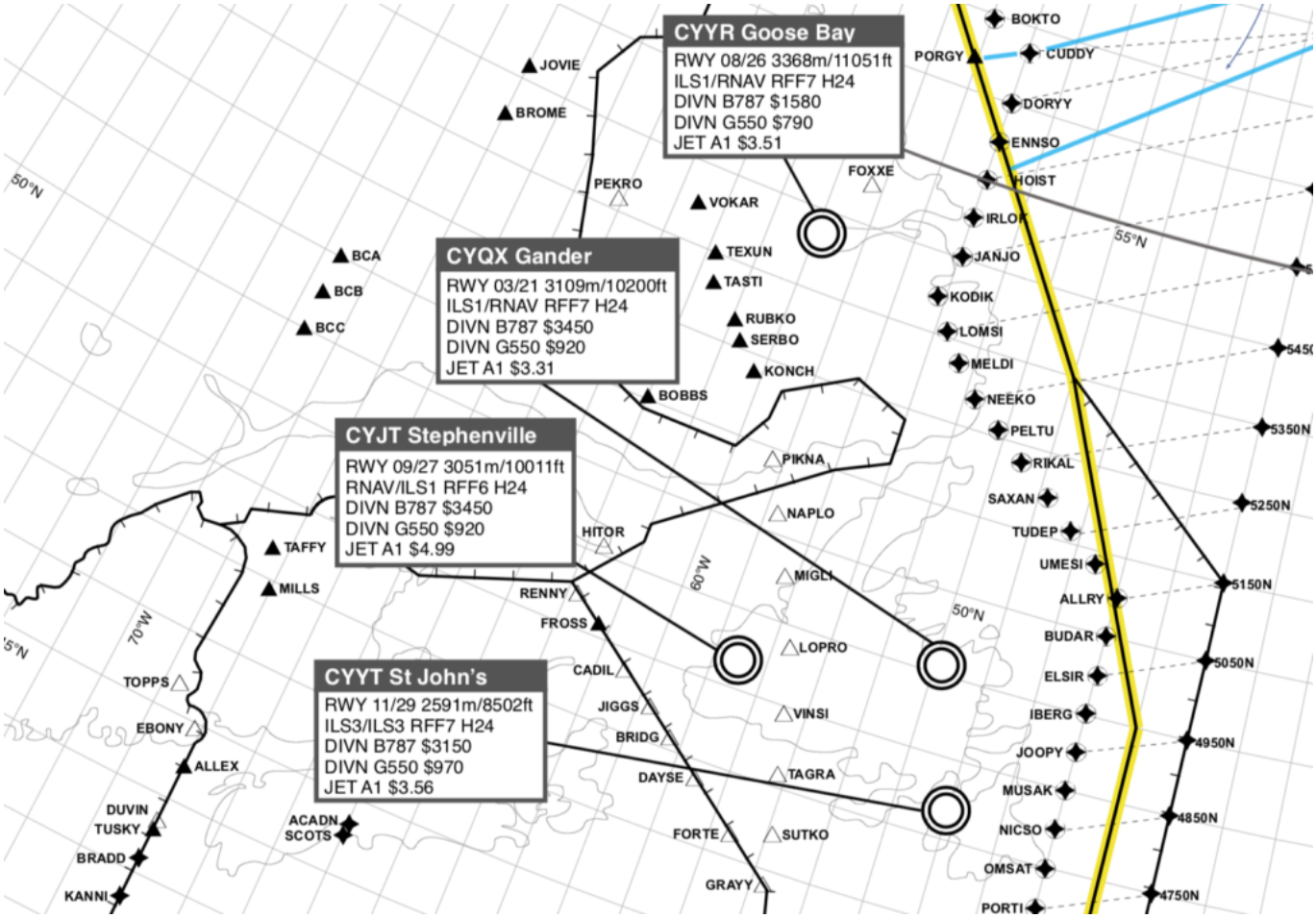
But with all the runway cracking that's been going on, Goose Bay's PCN number is no longer accurate. It's probably safer to assume the **B** is more like a **D** right now – runway strength 'Very low'. And the new CYYR Notam suggests the new PCN number is **40** (as aircraft with an ACN number higher than that are not allowed to go there).

Other NAT alternates?

A quick check on GoCrow shows us there's really nothing available to the north of CYYR:



But there are some decent options to the south:



This isn't the first time Goose Bay has had problems with its runways. In Nov 2017, the airport was closed due to **'sticky' runways** – during snow removal crack sealant was found on vehicles after they were used on the runways.

Further reading:

- United Airlines has downgraded Goose Bay Airport's suitability for diversions, after one of its flights with 250 passengers on board diverted there on 19th Jan 2019, and was then forced to spend 16 hours on the ground as there were not enough customs staff available to process everyone on board to enter Canada. Customs opening hours at the airport are 8am to midnight daily.

What's going on in the Strait of Hormuz?

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



Amid rising tensions between the US and Iran, on 16th May the US FAA issued a new Notam and Background Notice advising operators to exercise caution in the overwater airspace above the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman.

The US has deployed warships and planes to the region, and withdrawn embassy staff from Iraq in recent days, and Iran has allegedly placed missiles on boats in the Persian Gulf.

In their Background Notice, the US FAA say that **“Iran has publicly made threats to US military operations”**, and are concerned about **“a possible risk of miscalculation or misidentification, especially during periods of heightened political tension and rhetoric.”** They also warn of increased GPS jamming by Iran throughout this region.



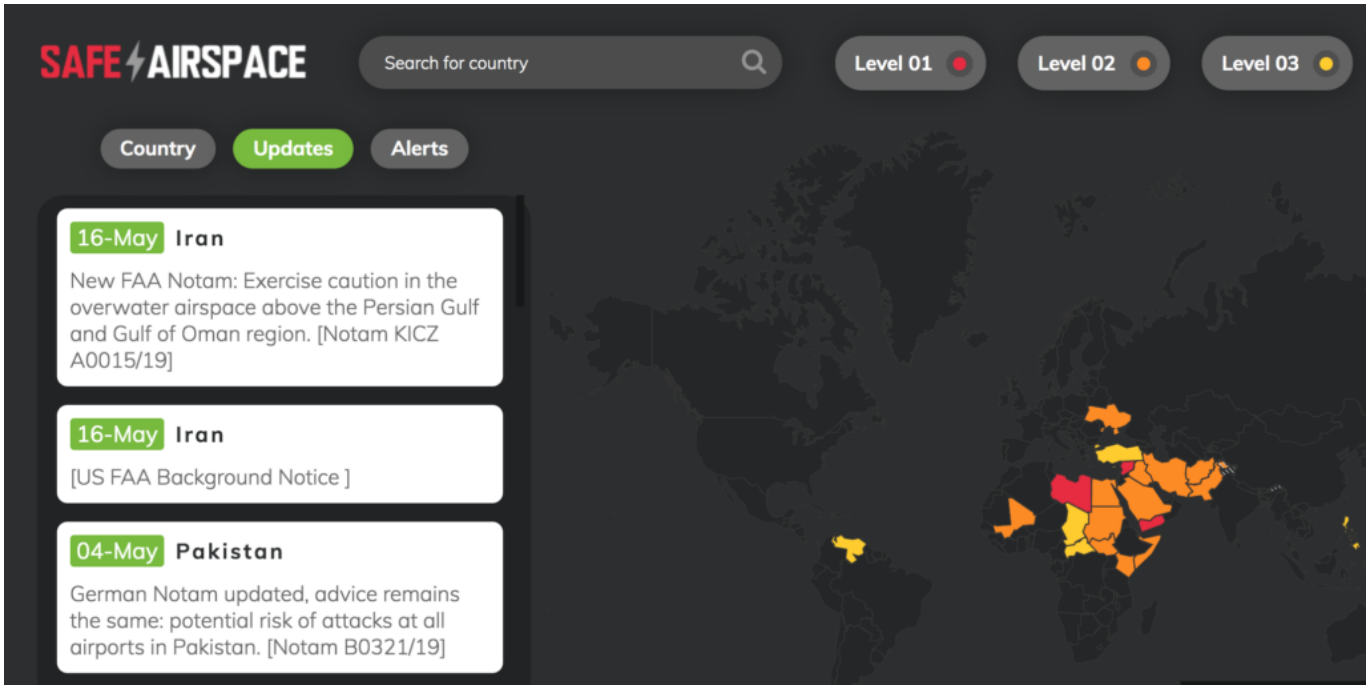
The US published another airspace warning for Iran back in September 2018, but that was mainly focussed on the risks of overflying Iran itself due to missiles fired from sites in the far west of the country against targets in Syria. That warning only made passing reference to the Gulf region – the only tangible risk at that time being due to Iran's "test launches" in the area between Iran and Dubai, where the Iranian military regularly fire missiles during drills to practise blockading the Strait of Hormuz.

In May 2018, the US pulled-out of the Iran nuclear deal, and re-imposed sanctions. Since then, the relationship between the two countries has rapidly gone downhill. This week, the White House Press Secretary said that Washington would continue its "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran, adding the US would like to see "behavioural change" from the country's leadership.

With the military build-up in the Gulf region, the US government has been quick to defend its actions, but the message seems to be clear: **we don't want war, but we're ready for one.**

As National Security Adviser John Bolton said in a statement this week: **"The United States is not seeking war with the Iranian regime… but we are fully prepared to respond to any attack, whether by proxy, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps or regular Iranian forces."**

The full FAA Notam and Background Notice text is below. SafeAirspace.net is now updated with the new information.



KICZ NOTAM A0015/19
SECURITY..UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ADVISORY FOR OVERWATER AIRSPACE ABOVE THE PERSIAN GULF AND GULF OF OMAN.

THOSE PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A BELOW SHOULD EXERCISE CAUTION WHEN OPERATING IN OVERWATER AIRSPACE ABOVE THE PERSIAN GULF AND THE GULF OF OMAN DUE TO HEIGHTENED MILITARY ACTIVITIES AND INCREASED POLITICAL TENSIONS IN THE REGION, WHICH PRESENT AN INCREASING INADVERTENT RISK TO U.S. CIVIL AVIATION OPERATIONS DUE TO THE POTENTIAL FOR MISCALCULATION OR MIS-IDENTIFICATION. ADDITIONALLY, AIRCRAFT OPERATING IN THE ABOVE-NAMED AREA MAY ENCOUNTER INADVERTENT GPS INTERFERENCE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS JAMMING, WHICH COULD OCCUR WITH LITTLE TO NO WARNING.

A. APPLICABILITY. THIS NOTAM APPLIES TO: ALL U.S. AIR CARRIERS AND COMMERCIAL OPERATORS; ALL PERSONS EXERCISING THE PRIVILEGES OF AN AIRMAN CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE FAA, EXCEPT SUCH PERSONS OPERATING U.S.-REGISTERED AIRCRAFT FOR A FOREIGN AIR CARRIER; AND ALL OPERATORS OF AIRCRAFT REGISTERED IN THE UNITED STATES, EXCEPT WHERE THE OPERATOR OF SUCH AIRCRAFT IS A FOREIGN AIR CARRIER.

B. PLANNING. THOSE PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A PLANNING TO OPERATE IN THE ABOVE-NAMED AREA MUST REVIEW CURRENT SECURITY/THREAT INFORMATION AND NOTAMS; COMPLY WITH ALL APPLICABLE FAA REGULATIONS, OPERATIONS SPECIFICATIONS, MANAGEMENT SPECIFICATIONS, AND LETTERS OF AUTHORIZATION, INCLUDING UPDATING B450.

C. OPERATIONS. EXERCISE CAUTION DURING FLIGHT OPERATIONS DUE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF INTERRUPTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAFFIC DUE TO HEIGHTENED MILITARY ACTIVITIES AND INCREASED POLITICAL TENSIONS IN THE REGION. POTENTIALLY AFFECTED OVERWATER AIRSPACE ABOVE THE PERSIAN GULF AND THE GULF OF OMAN INCLUDES PORTIONS OF THE TEHRAN FIR (OIIX), BAGHDAD FIR (ORBB), KUWAIT FIR (OKAC), JEDDAH FIR (OEJD) , BAHRAIN FIR (OBBB), EMIRATES FIR (OMAE), AND MUSCAT FIR (OOMM). THOSE PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A MUST REPORT SAFETY AND/OR SECURITY INCIDENTS TO THE FAA AT +1 202-267-3333.

SFC – UNL,16 MAY 23:11 2019 UNTIL PERM. CREATED: 16 MAY 23:17 2019

FAA Background Information Regarding U.S. Civil Aviation – For the Overwater Airspace Above the Persian Gulf and Gulf Of Oman Region.

Due to increased political tensions and heightened military activities in the region, there is an increasing inadvertent risk to U.S. civil aviation operating in overwater airspace above the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman. As a result, on 16 May 2019, the FAA issued Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) KICZ A0015/19, advising U.S. civil flight operations to exercise caution when operating in the above area.

Iran has publicly made threats to U.S. military operations in the Gulf region. In addition, Iran possesses a wide variety of anti-aircraft-capable weapons, including surface-to-air missile systems (SAMs), man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS) and fighter aircraft that are capable of conducting aircraft interception operations. Some of the anti-aircraft-capable weapons have ranges that encompass key international air routes over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. Additionally, Iran recently conducted a military exercise in the region, demonstrating their unmanned aircraft system (UAS) capabilities. Although Iran likely has no intention to target civil aircraft, the presence of multiple long-range, advanced anti-aircraftcapable weapons in a tense environment poses a possible risk of miscalculation or misidentification, especially during periods of heightened political tension and rhetoric.

There is also the potential for Iran to increase their use of Global Positioning System (GPS) jammers and other communication jamming capabilities, which may affect U.S. civil aviation operating in overwater airspace over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.

The FAA will continue to monitor the risk environment for U.S. civil aviation operating in the region and make adjustments, as necessary, to safeguard U.S. civil aviation.

No more slots misery at Toronto

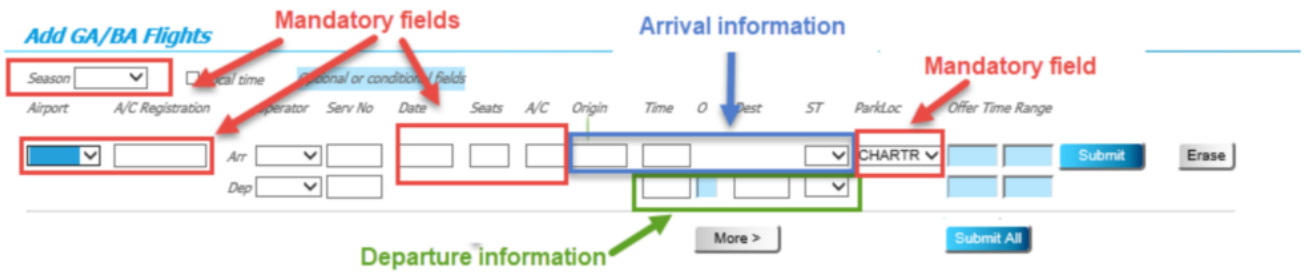
David Mumford
14 June, 2019



The ongoing slots-related misery at CYYZ/Toronto airport looks like it may be coming to an end.

The airport has always required GA/BA flights to obtain slots for flights operating overnight (0030-0630 local time), but in mid-Feb 2019 they made this a requirement for flights H24.

This was a new system, and there were a few teething problems, the main one being that operators had to do everything themselves, as local handlers were not allowed to arrange slots on their behalf. Added to that, unless you were a Toronto-based operator, you could only request slots 3 days in advance!



But the system has now changed, with the airport authority saying that **local handlers are now allowed to arrange slots on behalf of all operators**. Of those local handlers, Skyservice has decided not to provide this service, but Skycharter & Signature say they can arrange slots for operators **up to 30 days in advance**.

If you do want to arrange slots yourself instead of getting a local handler to do it for you, 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 these slots for operators too, but they all seem to be restricted to 3 days too. 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.

If you want to try doing it yourself, the official guidance is here. If you want an FBO to do it for you, get in touch with Skycharter or Signature, and spare yourself some misery.

One last thing to note: Toronto still has a 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!

If you have further info to report, please do! Email us at blog@ops.group, or comment below.

Other interesting stuff at CYYZ/Toronto:

- 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.

Beijing Airport is filling up fast

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



There always seems to be some kind of random event going on in Beijing making life hard for GA/BA ops. This month it's the Conference on Dialogue of Asian Civilizations, and already the parking situation for GA/BA is starting to look pretty bleak.

ZBAA/Beijing

There are two main periods with heavy restrictions:

0800L on 13 May to 0800L on 17 May
0800L on 21 May to 0800L on 24 May

(Beijing local time is UTC+8, so you can read those times as 0000z).

During these periods, only one slot will be made available per hour for aircraft not connected with the event, and no overnight parking will be allowed. So that means short turnarounds might be possible, but you'll be lucky to get a slot.

Plus there's the other standard ongoing rule at ZBAA to keep in mind:

Daily between 0900-2200L, GA/BA can only make one movement per aircraft.

So this means that if you arrive during this period you then have to wait til 2200L before you're allowed to depart again! Confusing? You bet.

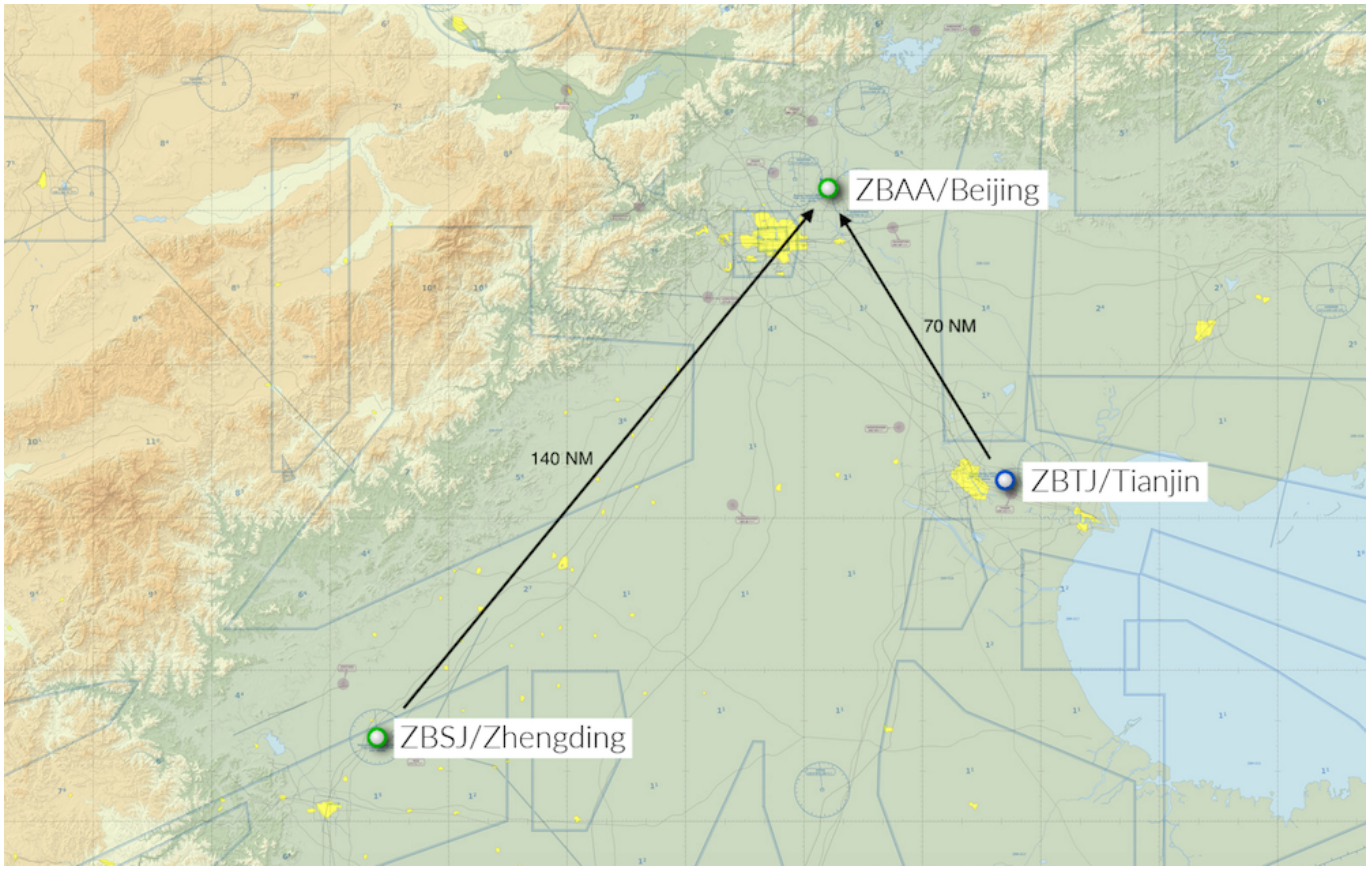
ZBTJ/Tianjin

Many operators like to use cheeky ZBTJ/Tianjin as an alternative to ZBAA/Beijing, but it's now getting busy here too. Local handlers here are saying that ZBTJ is not allowing any overnight parking for GA/BA at all right now, and even some requests for short-term parking are being denied as well.

This is related to ongoing construction work planned through to the end of June, which means a bunch of stands are closed, and with an influx of aircraft shifting over from ZBAA, there's less space all round.

ZBSJ/Zhengding

Where?? Fair question. We had to find it on a map. Zhending! Home to… well, not very much, by the looks of it. Unless temples, towers, and Olympic table tennis training centres are your thing.



But the good news is that the airport currently has no restrictions on GA/BA flights. Although they don't have an FBO or VIP lounge here (#notsurprised), the airport has a nice long 11,000ft runway, and is open H24. You can get in touch with Mainland GroundExpress to arrange handling here.

Fly it like you stole it – free speed on the NAT

Mark Zee
14 June, 2019



This is a new one, and it's a good one for pilots! Being introduced slowly is a new flexibility – flying without a fixed Mach speed. In simple terms, you get to decide how fast you fly.

Like all new things on the NAT, we have an acronym. This one is **OWAFS**. *Operations Without an Assigned Fixed Speed*. But you'll also see it as referred to as "Variable Mach", and "Resume Normal Speed".

When does this start?

It already has! It's starting out as a trial (everything on the NAT starts out as a trial), and some members are already reporting getting "RESUME NORMAL SPEED" messages from Shanwick. The official start date is April 8, 2019. Three OACC's are doing this – Shanwick, Santa Maria, and New York Oceanic (not WATRS).



For no good reason, here's a picture of the Shanwick Oceanic control room in 1989. Much has changed since!

How does it work?

You'll get a normal oceanic clearance, with a fixed Mach Number, like you always did. Somewhere after the Oceanic Entry Point, if you are selected for the trial, you'll 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**.

So, once I get that, no restrictions on speed?

Correct! But, ATC will expect you to fly ECON/Cost Index, and normally, that should be pretty close to your cleared Mach (within 0.01 up or down). If you're doing something different, tell them. If the resulting speed differs from your Oceanic Clearance Mach by **0.02**, or more, you must tell ATC.

Rules for Shanwick (Don't ask for it)

• Flight must be data link connected to EGGX
• Flight must be eastbound and operating solely in Shanwick Oceanic airspace and exiting into UK/Ireland/Continental European airspace
• Flight cannot exit into Santa Maria
• RESUME NORMAL SPEED will be offered on a "manual" tactical basis
• **Do not request** RESUME NORMAL SPEED

Rules for New York and Santa Maria (You can ask)

• Flight must be data link connected to LPPO or KZWY
• Flights must be wholly within Santa Maria and New York East Oceanic airspace and not enter Gander or Shanwick airspace
• Flights can enter New York East Oceanic airspace or Santa Maria airspace from Gander airspace or Shanwick airspace and receive RESUME NORMAL SPEED uplink message
• New York West (WATRS airspace) is excluded
• RESUME NORMAL SPEED **can be requested** if not offered

Background and History

(Thanks, Jeff Miller @IATA, for this and the condensed info above!)

Both Airbus and Boeing advocate cost index (ECON) as the most efficient way to fly. Operators use cost index (ECON) globally, except for the North Atlantic (NAT) where flights are assigned a fixed Mach by ATC and flight crews are required to fly the assigned Mach. Depending on the distance from the departure airport to the oceanic entry, most operators flight plan the aircraft with cost index to the oceanic entry point and again after oceanic exit. Flight crews use the desired fixed Mach number from the computer flight plan that is generated by the cost index, as the requested Mach number for the crossing. It is possible the flight crew may request a Mach greater than or less than the flight plan Mach to improve scheduled arrival time. IATA led the ICAO NAT, Operations Without an Assigned Fixed Speed (OWAFS) project team to enable the use of a variable Mach in the NAT. The North Atlantic Systems Planning Group (NAT SPG) is expected to fully endorse OWAFS late June 2019 for an official implementation in late 2019 for all NAT OCAs. Full automation for all Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) is expected by Q1 2020.

So I can use this for turbulence speed changes?

Yep, but remember, if you're slowing down or speeding up significantly (0.02 or more), tell ATC your new speed.

Anything else?

That's it for now. Remember, it's a trial – later in the year full implementation is expected. Don't ask for it if you aren't offered, unless you're in New York or Santa Maria airspace. Tell ATC if you're changing by 0.02 or more from the Oceanic Clearance.

And most importantly, keep us posted on your experiences with this!

“THIS NOTAM IS AN EMERGENCY ORDER” – FAA on Venezuela

Mark Zee
14 June, 2019



At 8.30pm tonight, the FAA issued a new “**Do Not Fly**” instruction to US operators, barring all operations into or over Venezuela, unless operating at or above FL260, and giving a **window of 48 hours** to leave the country.

The order comes on a day of an information battle waged between Maduro and Guaidó, and although the coup status is uncertain, one thing is clear: taking your aircraft to Venezuela is not a good idea.

The new Notam, KICZ A0013/19, has as postscript: “THIS NOTAM IS AN EMERGENCY ORDER ISSUED UNDER 49 USC 40113(A) AND 46105(C).” **It gives US operators 48 hours to leave Venezuela**.

Over the past year, the situation in Venezuela has steadily declined, and in OPSGROUP we have issued multiple alerts and warnings, most recently today, on the back of several member reports:

FSB News APP 7:38 PM

SVZZ/ Venezuela - Risk SVZZ/Venezuela A coup may be happening right now, but even if it doesn't work, the situation remains dicey. Member report from their flight last night: National Guard inspects all aircraft in and out. Taxiway and runway conditions worsening. Many areas of missing asphalt and uneven surfaces. Hazardous to tires.

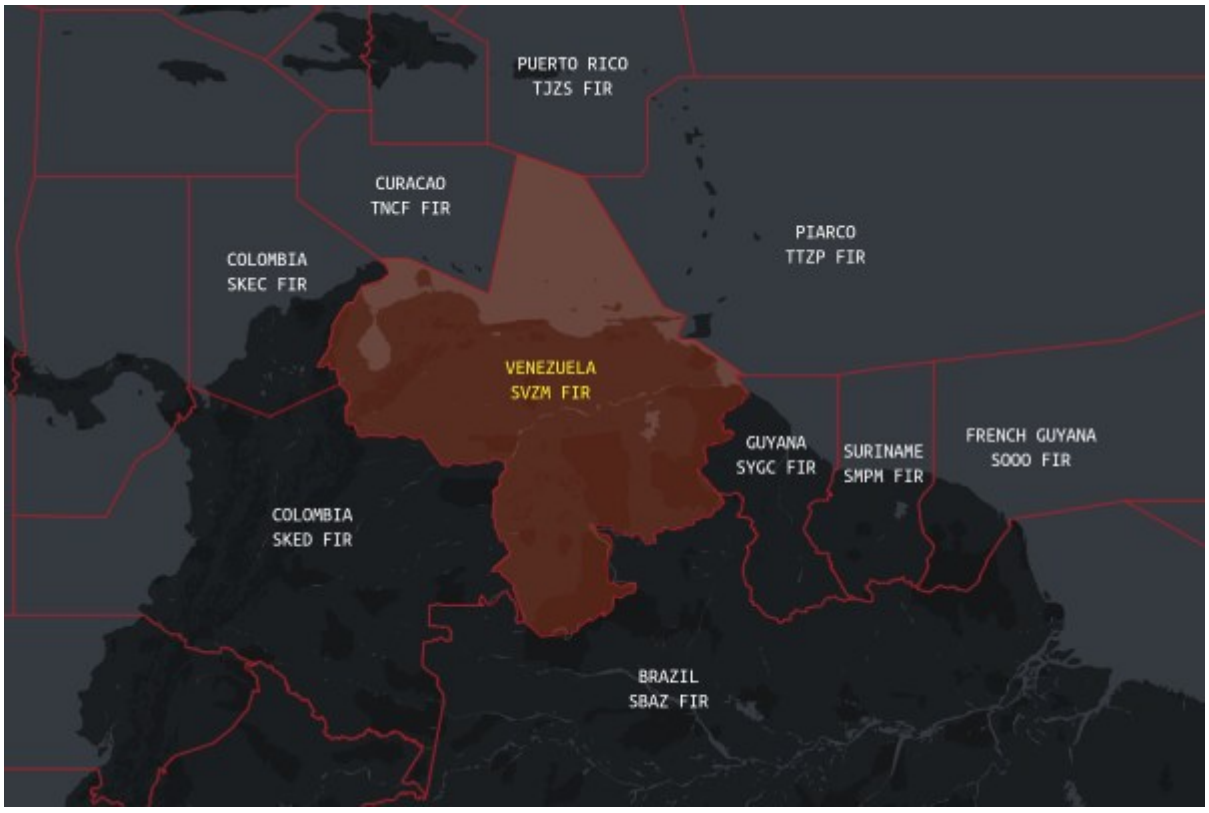
The Venezuelan authorities had also published a Notam on 30 APR banning all GA/BA flights from operating to/from airports in the country, but this has since been cancelled.

The new FAA Notam leads with:

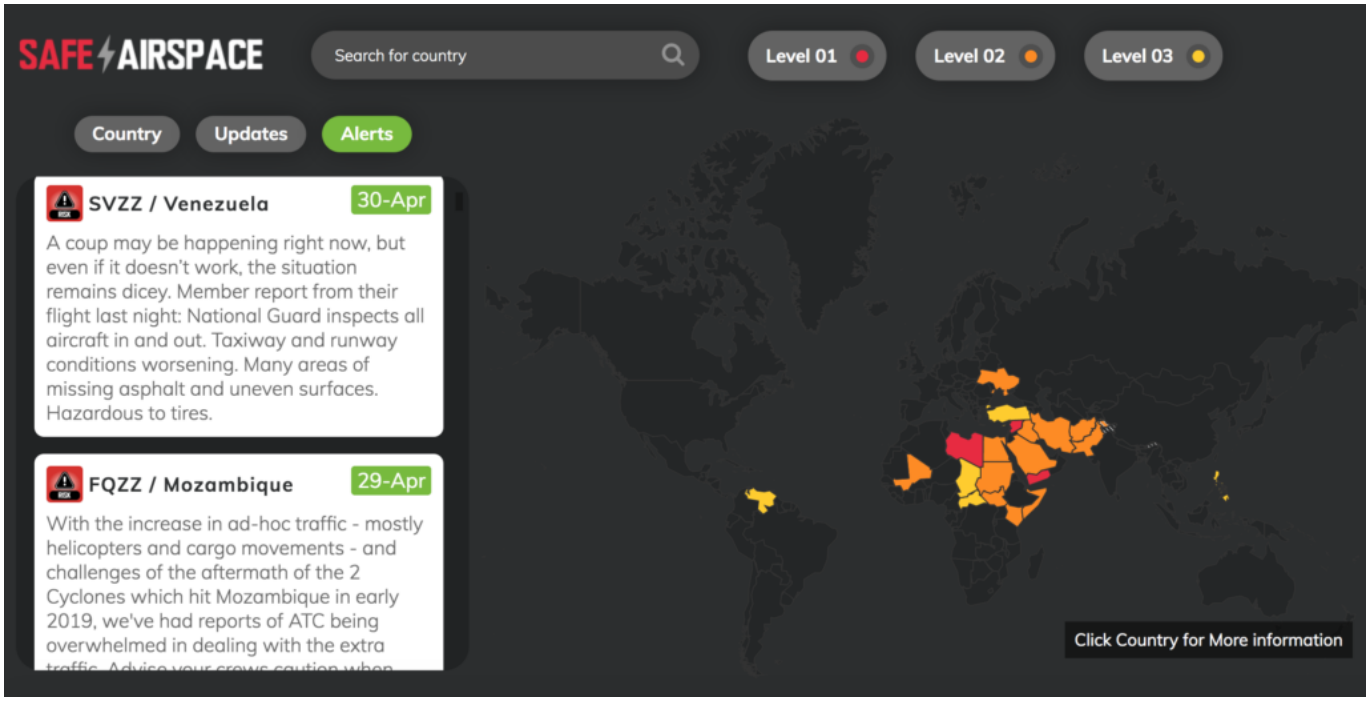
"ALL FLIGHT OPERATIONS IN THE TERRITORY AND AIRSPACE OF VENEZUELA AT ALTITUDES **BELOW FL 260** BY THE PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A BELOW ARE **PROHIBITED UNTIL FURTHER ADVISED** DUE TO INCREASING POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND TENSIONS IN VENEZUELA AND THE ASSOCIATED INADVERTENT RISK TO FLIGHT OPERATIONS."

and is issued as a Permanent Notam with no expiration date.

Rerouting options for overflights choosing to avoid, would be either west via Colombia, or east via Guyana and Piarco.



The full FAA Notam text is below. SafeAirspace.net is now updated with the new information.



FAA Notam KICZ A0013/19 issued May 1st, 2019, 0025Z.:

KICZ A0013/19 – SECURITY..UNITED STATES OF AMERICA PROHIBITION FOR VENEZUELA

ALL FLIGHT OPERATIONS IN THE TERRITORY AND AIRSPACE OF VENEZUELA AT ALTITUDES BELOW FL 260 BY THE PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A BELOW ARE PROHIBITED UNTIL FURTHER ADVISED DUE TO INCREASING POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND TENSIONS IN VENEZUELA AND THE ASSOCIATED INADVERTENT RISK TO FLIGHT OPERATIONS.

A. APPLICABILITY. THIS NOTAM APPLIES TO: ALL U.S. AIR CARRIERS AND COMMERCIAL OPERATORS; ALL PERSONS EXERCISING THE PRIVILEGES OF AN AIRMAN CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE FAA, EXCEPT SUCH PERSONS OPERATING U.S.-REGISTERED AIRCRAFT FOR A FOREIGN AIR CARRIER; AND ALL OPERATORS OF AIRCRAFT REGISTERED IN THE UNITED STATES, EXCEPT WHERE THE OPERATOR OF SUCH AIRCRAFT IS A FOREIGN AIR CARRIER.

B. PERMITTED OPERATIONS. THIS NOTAM DOES NOT PROHIBIT PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A (APPLICABILITY) FROM CONDUCTING FLIGHT OPERATIONS IN THE ABOVE-NAMED AREA WHEN SUCH OPERATIONS ARE AUTHORIZED EITHER BY ANOTHER AGENCY OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE FAA OR BY A DEVIATION, EXEMPTION, OR OTHER AUTHORIZATION ISSUED BY THE FAA ADMINISTRATOR. OPERATORS MUST CALL THE FAA WASHINGTON OPERATIONS CENTER AT 202-267-3333 TO INITIATE COORDINATION FOR FAA AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT OPERATIONS.

C. ALLOWANCES. PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A ABOVE WHO ARE IN THE TERRITORY AND

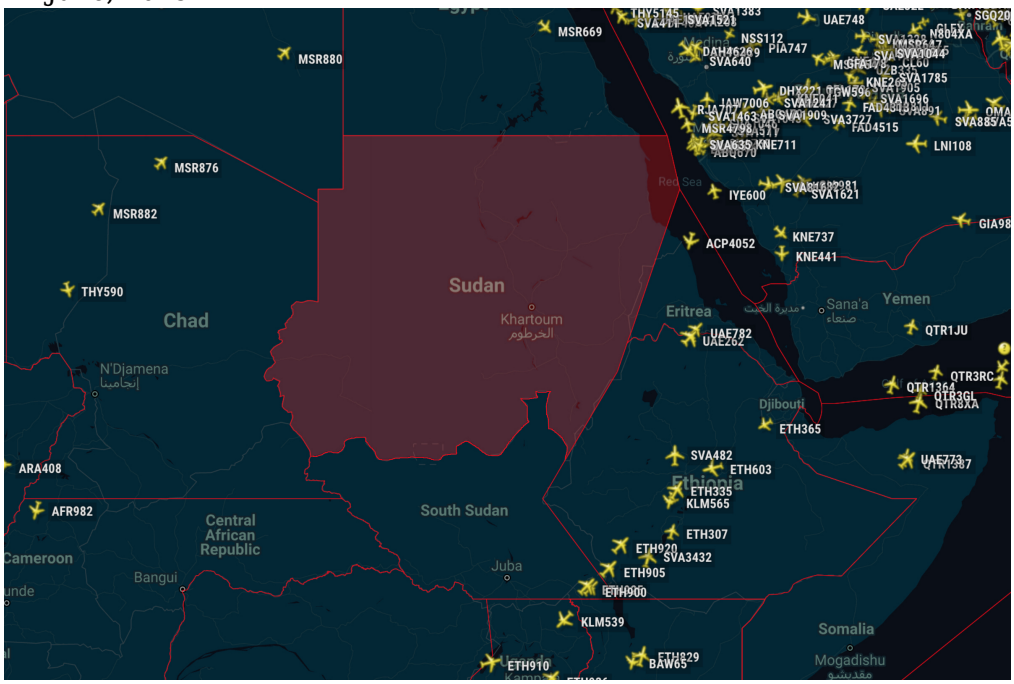
AIRSPACE OF VENEZUELA AT THE TIME THIS NOTAM IS ISSUED MAY DEPART THE TERRITORY AND AIRSPACE OF VENEZUELA BY THE MOST EXPEDITIOUS POSSIBLE ROUTE WITHIN 48 HOURS FROM THE TIME THIS NOTAM IS ISSUED, IF THE PILOT IN COMMAND DETERMINES THAT THE OPERATION CAN BE CONDUCTED SAFELY.

D. EMERGENCY SITUATIONS. IN AN EMERGENCY THAT REQUIRES IMMEDIATE DECISION AND ACTION FOR THE SAFETY OF THE FLIGHT, THE PILOT IN COMMAND OF AN AIRCRAFT MAY DEVIATE FROM THIS NOTAM TO THE EXTENT REQUIRED BY THAT EMERGENCY.

THIS NOTAM IS AN EMERGENCY ORDER ISSUED UNDER 49 USC 40113(A) AND 46105(C).
SFC – FL259; 01 MAY 00:25 2019 UNTIL PERM. CREATED: 01 MAY 00:28 2019

Sudan airspace reopens

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



Sudan airspace reopened at 1200Z on Apr 12, having been closed for 24hrs following a military coup.

So the HSSS FIR is now once again open for overflights. As for flights to HSSS/Khartoum Airport, all the airlines who were forced to cancel flights during the airspace closure have now resumed operations, and Opsgroup members have reported receiving landing permissions from the authorities again. Local handlers have told us: “The airport is now functioning normally with more security support”.

The military has declared a three month state of emergency, and has deployed soldiers to secure key sites around Khartoum, with armoured vehicles and tanks parked in the streets. Protests against the new military government are still ongoing, although there have not been many reports of any violence. A nightly curfew was introduced on 11 APR for Khartoum between the hours of 10pm and 4am, but this was later lifted.

In response to the military coup, the U.S. has now issued an updated Travel Advisory for Sudan and raised its level of advice from “Level 3: Reconsider Travel” to “Level 4: Do Not Travel.”

Despite all this, still only one international airspace warning exists for Sudan, which was issued by France last year and modified in Jan 2019, recommending **overflight above FL200** in the country’s **southern edge** (where Sudan borders with South Sudan) and **western edge** (where Sudan borders with Central African Republic and Chad). France’s warning for **South Sudan** remains the same: overflights should be at FL240 or above. More info at Safeairspace.

Algeria lifts ban on GA/BA flights

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



Amid ongoing anti-government protests, authorities published a Notam on Apr 2 banning all GA/BA flights from operating at airports across the country. But following the resignation of Algeria’s President Bouteflika, this ban was cancelled on Apr 4, and replaced with the following restriction:

A1058/19 – AIRCRAFT REGISTERED IN ALGERIA AND ABROAD OPERATED FOR PRIVATE PURPOSES ARE

SUBJECT TO ISSUANCE OF AN AUTHORIZATION TO OVERFLY AND/OR LANDING THE NATIONAL TERRITORY BY THE ALGERIAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY. 04 APR 19:10 2019 UNTIL 30 APR 12:00 2019 ESTIMATED. CREATED: 04 APR 19:09 2019

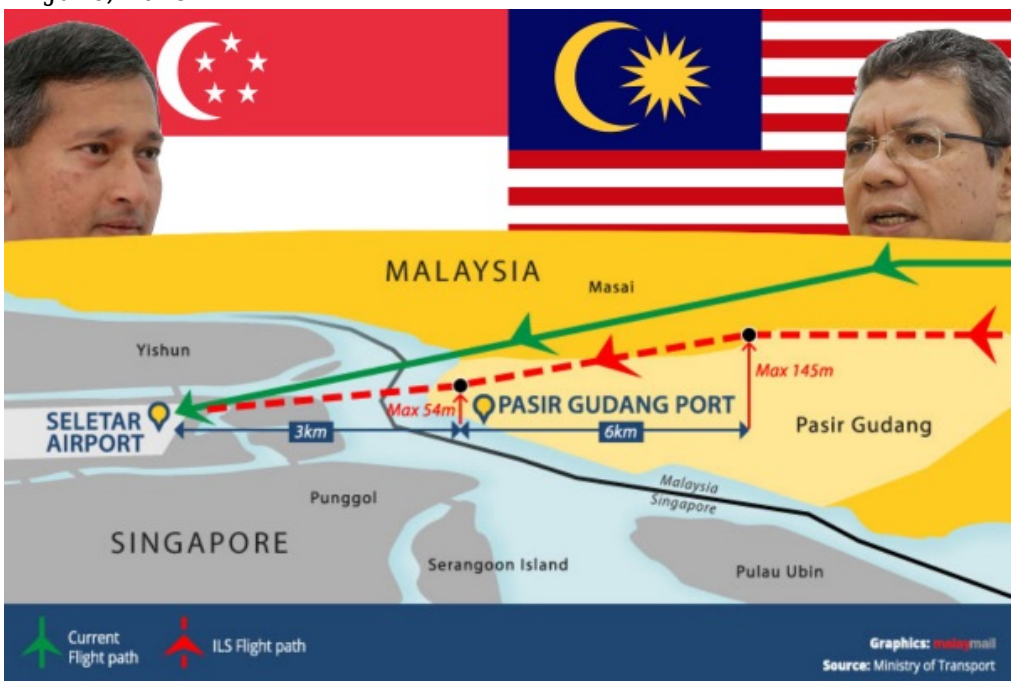
So that effectively means the situation has returned to normal: for landings and overflights, you will need a permit.

Algerian media reported the initial decision to ban GA/BA flights was most likely aimed at “stopping certain prominent individuals from fleeing abroad” – after a businessman affiliated with the President was arrested as he tried to cross the border into neighbouring Tunisia.

Although anti-government protests still continue, there is no longer any significant impact to flight operations.

Malaysia and Singapore agree truce over Seletar airspace closure

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



Update Apr 6: The Malaysian authorities have now lifted the airspace closure north of Seletar again, and in return Singapore will abandon plans for ILS at the airport – and will now draw up plans for GPS approaches instead. The new agreement brings an end to days of disruption, with operators having to take off and circle overhead to 6000ft before being

cleared enroute; it will also allow Malaysian airline Firefly to commence planned flights to Singapore, which had been postponed since Dec 2018 due to the dispute.

The new ILS approach on RWY 21 at WSSL/Seletar airport was due to take effect on 3rd Jan 2019, but Malaysia effectively killed it.

They claimed that the ILS approach –most of which lies within Malaysia's airspace to the north of the airport– would impose height restrictions around the Pasir Gudang industrial area, and would stunt growth in the area.



Malaysia decided to create a no-fly-zone across an entire chunk of airspace just across the border from Singapore, up to 6000ft. **This ultimately would have made RWY 21 ILS approaches at WSSL/Seletar impossible.**

Singapore and Malaysia's foreign ministers have met multiple times this year to discuss the issue, eventually resulting in Malaysia agreeing to cancel the restricted airspace they imposed, and in return Singapore agreeing to abandon the ILS procedures.

Discussions are set to continue regarding a wider ongoing dispute over airspace sovereignty, with Malaysia saying it wants to take back airspace delegated to Singapore under an agreement in 1974.

In other news: The night curfew at Seletar is now in effect. AIP SUP 86/2018 confirms that with effect from 1st Jan 2019, the airport will be closed to all flights (except medevac and emergency diverts) nightly from 22-07 local time.

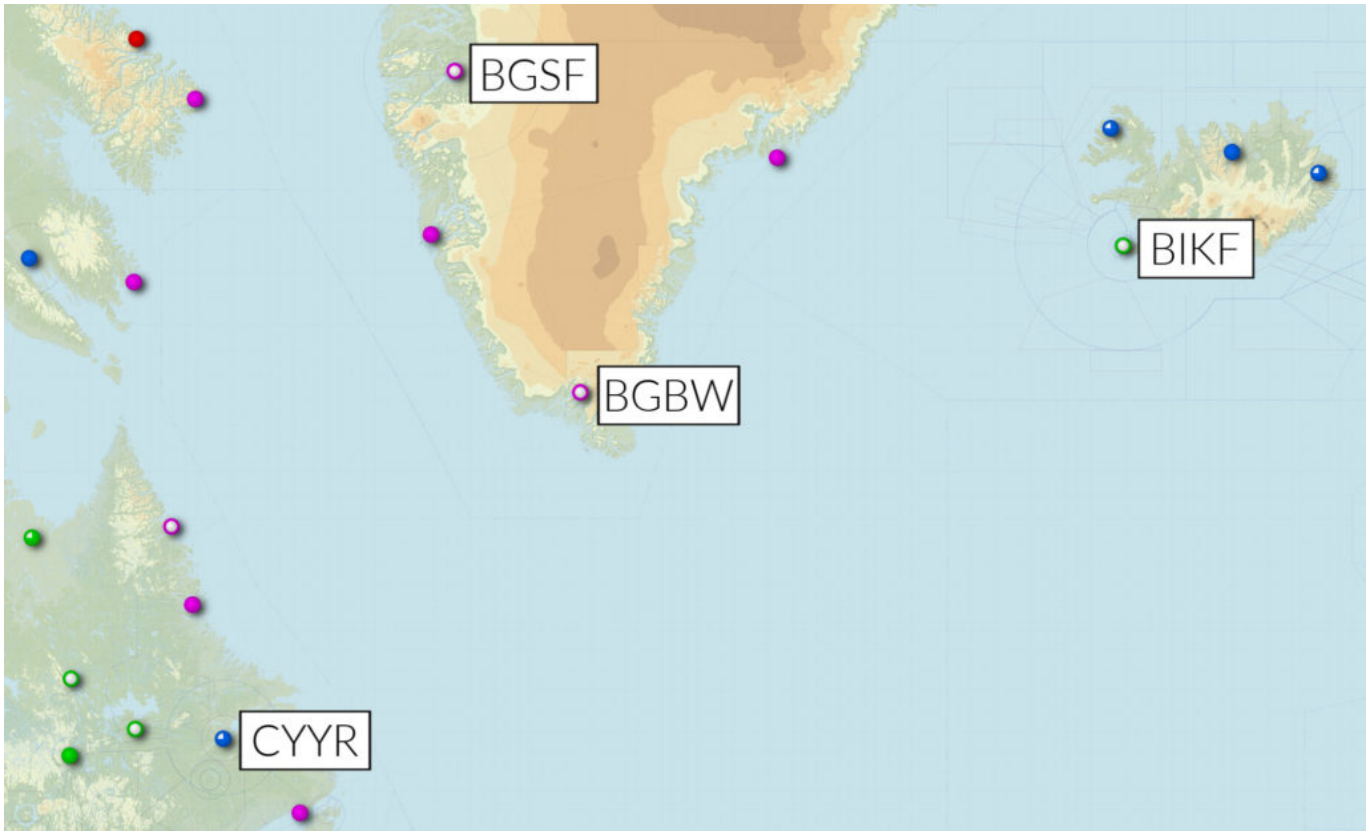
Greenbacks and Greenland – $3000 to file as an alternate

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



Trans-atlantic operators who have been putting **RALT/BGBW** or **RALT/BGSF** on their flight plans have been receiving **hefty invoices post-flight.**

Both BGBW/Narsarsuaq and BGSF/Kangerlussuaq are popular airports to use in flight planning as an emergency divert and for ETOPS, as they are perfectly positioned right in the middle of the big empty chunk of nothing that exists between the east coast of Canada and Iceland.



Both airports are open Mon-Sat 11-20z (8am-5pm local time), and completely closed on Sundays and on public holidays (watch out for these sneaky ones!).

So if you file a flight plan with either as alternates from Mon-Sat 11-20z, you won't get charged.

But outside these hours, you **will** get charged. It gets slightly complicated here: the charges in the box below apply when they stay open for you to use as an ETOPS alternate at any time that they are **closed** (which is between 20-11z), but there's an extra 10% charge on top of that for any time they are **closed and fast asleep in bed**, (which is between 00-08z). Got it?

F. Openings in connection with ETOP operations:	Scheduled Flights	Non-Scheduled Flights
f.1. 1 May – 30 September, for every hour commenced	-	4.440,00 kr.
However minimum	-	13.320,00 kr.
f.2. 1 October – 30 April, for every hour commenced	-	5.290,00 kr.
However minimum	-	15.870,00 kr.

Important to note: these get charged even if you don't actually divert to BGBW/BGSF. 15,870 Danish Krone equates to $2585 USD!

If you want them to stay open for you to use as an ETOPS alternate, you need to put RALT/BGBW or RALT/BGSF in your flight plan – they'll see it, and will stay open for at the times you need. But bear in mind that if they're closed already at the time you file your flight plan, they won't see it! So they prefer you to do it properly and arrange everything in advance by email: get in touch with them at PPR@mit.gl

If you get an invoice from a company called Global Aviation Data A/S, unfortunately it's not a scam email – they are the guys who work with Greenland Airports to collect the monies owed when operators request these airports to stay open for them.

The really interesting thing is this – if more than one operator asks BGBW/BGSF to stay open for them **at the same time**, the costs are **not shared** between these operators – they both have to pay the standard fees! That's great news for the Government of Greenland, who will be getting paid multiple times by different operators for BGBW/BGSF to stay open at the same time!

Fiji ATC operations return to normal

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



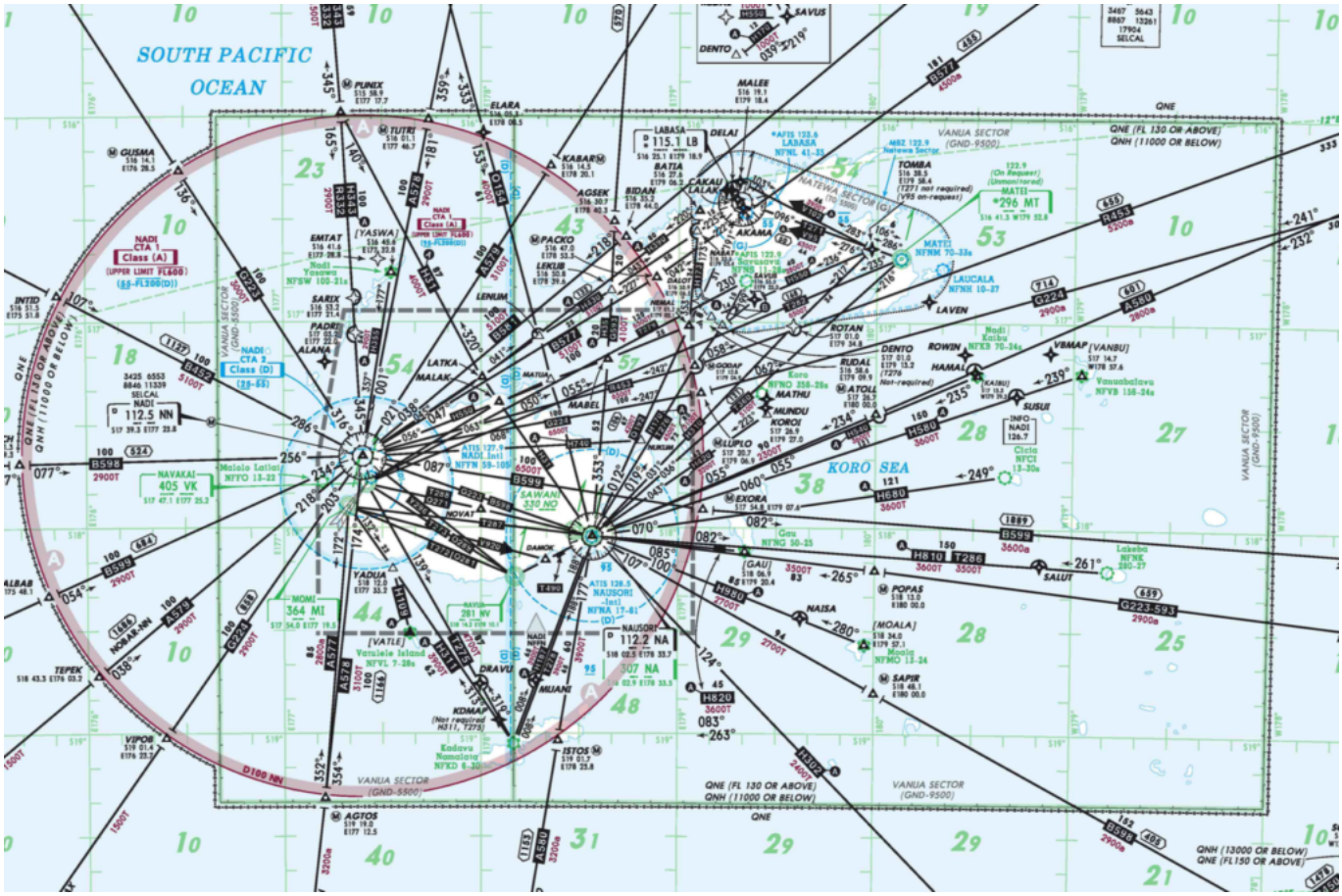
Update Apr 2: ATC operations have returned to normal across Fiji, following last week's strike by air traffic controllers. On Fri Mar 29, an Arbitration Court ordered they return to work, although some workers remain suspended. Over the weekend, there were Notams in place for NFFN/Nadi and NFNA/Nausori which warned of no ATC services overnight, but these have since been cancelled.

During the ATC workers strike, the response by the authorities was to publish Notams advising that the airspace around the country's two main airports, NFFN/Nadi and NFNA/Nausori, was "Class G" airspace, with "TIBA" procedures in effect.

Both of these are bad news – they basically mean that the airspace is uncontrolled, and pilots have to separate themselves from each other during arrival and departure phases.

TIBA stands for 'Traffic Information Broadcasts by Aircraft'. ICAO Annex 11 states that TIBAs "should be made only when necessary and only as a temporary measure".

TIBA procedures are normally only ever implemented in areas where there are light general aviation movements, in uncontrolled airspace, or during large scale emergencies or natural disasters; it's very unusual to see them being implemented around big international airports such as Nadi and Nausori.



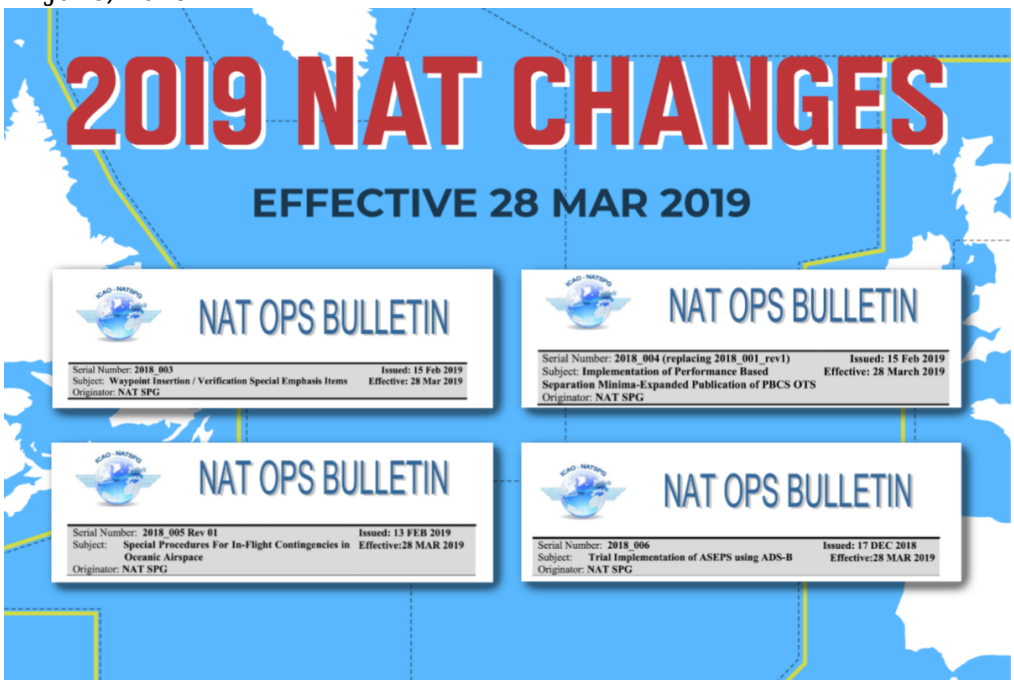
With less ATC staff available to work due to the strike, it seems the authorities implemented these measures as a way of reducing normal workloads for the controllers who were not on strike and remained on shift.

Further reading

- Tell us anything additional we should know – news@ops.group
- Monitor #ops-alerts in your member Dashboard, and Slack.

2019 North Atlantic changes

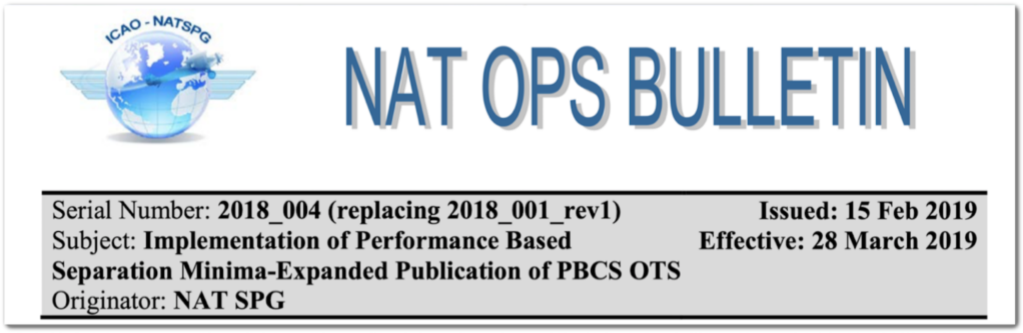
David Mumford
14 June, 2019



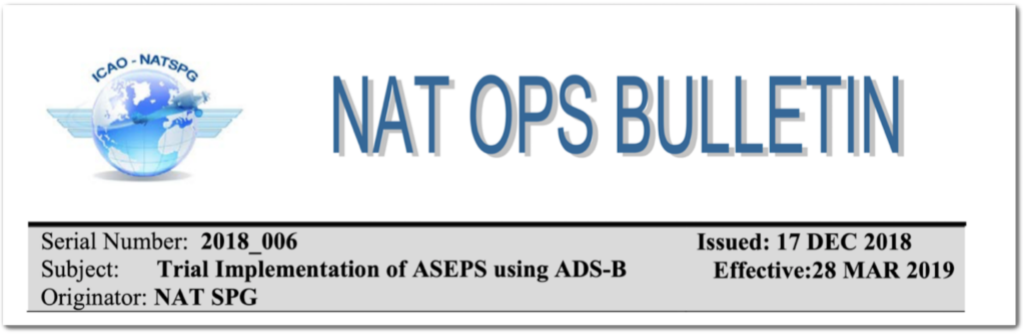
There are four ICAO NAT Ops Bulletins due to go into effect on March 28th, 2019. The PBCS tracks will be expanded, real-time Space-Based ADS-B surveillance and reduced separation standards will be introduced, and the regional contingency and weather deviation procedures will be changed.

You can click on each one, and read them in full:









We have had a good look at each of them. Here's the lowdown:

ICAO NAT Ops Bulletin 2018_03: Waypoint Insertion / Verification Special Emphasis Items
Lowdown: There are some specific procedures that need to be incorporated into Pilot and Dispatcher training programs. The bulletin details proper waypoint insertion and verification procedures. Operators must ensure their training programs, appropriate manuals, and SOP's incorporate these special emphasis items and that their dispatchers and flight crews employ them. This is considered a critical method of mitigating the risk associated the rapidly changing procedures (contingency) as well as reduced separation operations (ASEPS and PBCS) within the North Atlantic.

ICAO NAT Ops Bulletin 2018_04: Implementation of Performance Based Separation Minima-Expanded Publication of PBCS OTS
Lowdown: Performance Based Communication and Surveillance (PBCS) tracks may be extended beyond the current three track maximum. They will continue to be identified in each track message and may vary day to day as traffic requires. They will continue to be only FL350 to FL390 inclusive and only on the designated tracks during the period the tracks are in effect. There may be days where there are no PBCS

tracks, 3 PBCS tracks, 5 PBCS tracks, potentially even all the tracks.

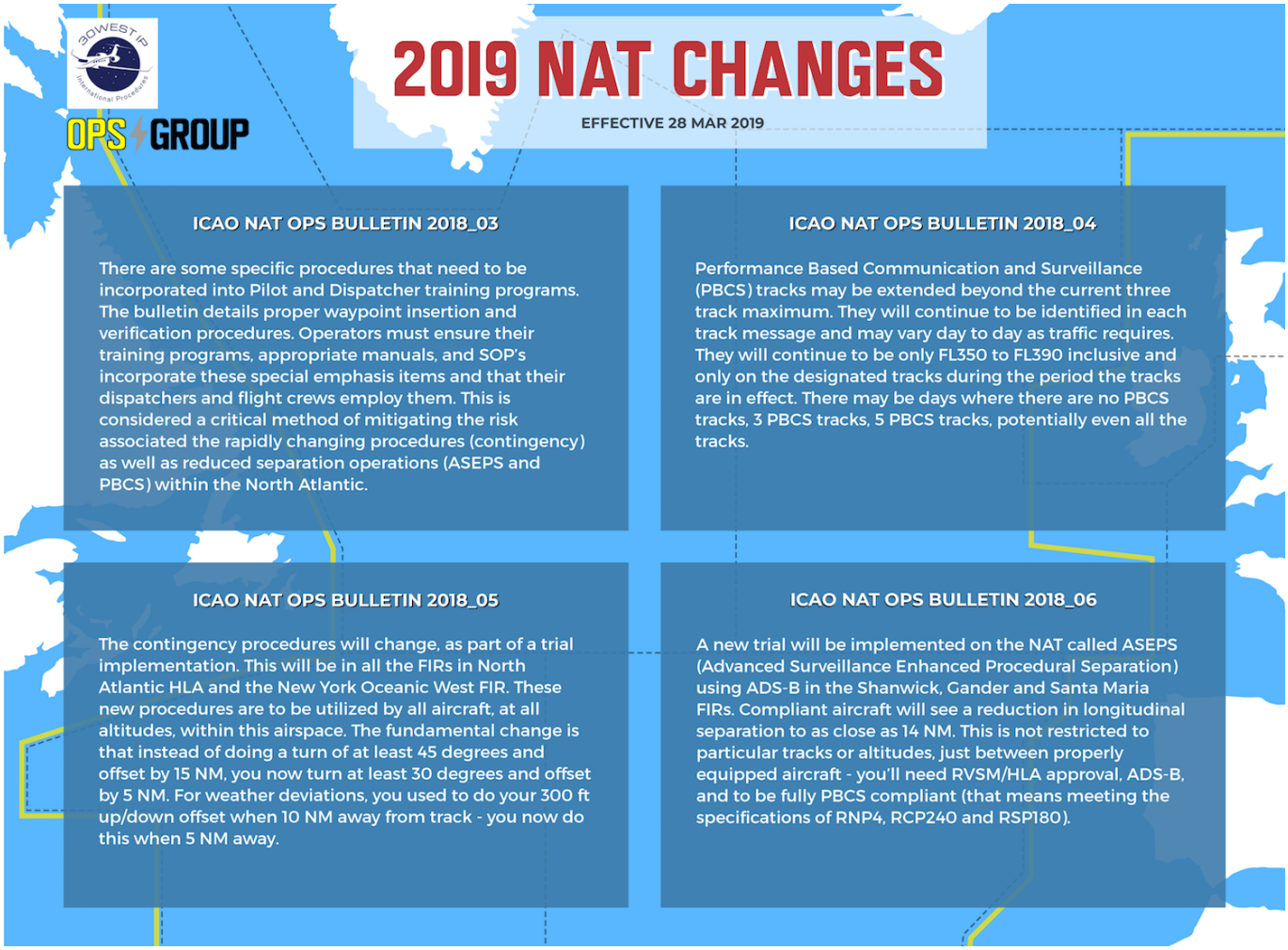
ICAO NAT Ops Bulletin 2018_05: Special Procedures For In-Flight Contingencies in Oceanic Airspace

Lowdown: The contingency procedures will change, as part of a trial implementation. This will be in all the FIRs in the NAT Region and the New York Oceanic West FIR. These new procedures are to be utilized by all aircraft, at all altitudes, within this airspace. The fundamental change is that instead of doing a turn of at least 45 degrees and offset by 15 NM, you now turn at least 30 degrees and offset by 5 NM. For weather deviations, you used to do your 300 ft up/down offset when 10 NM away from track – you now do this when 5 NM away. For more info on this, read our article.

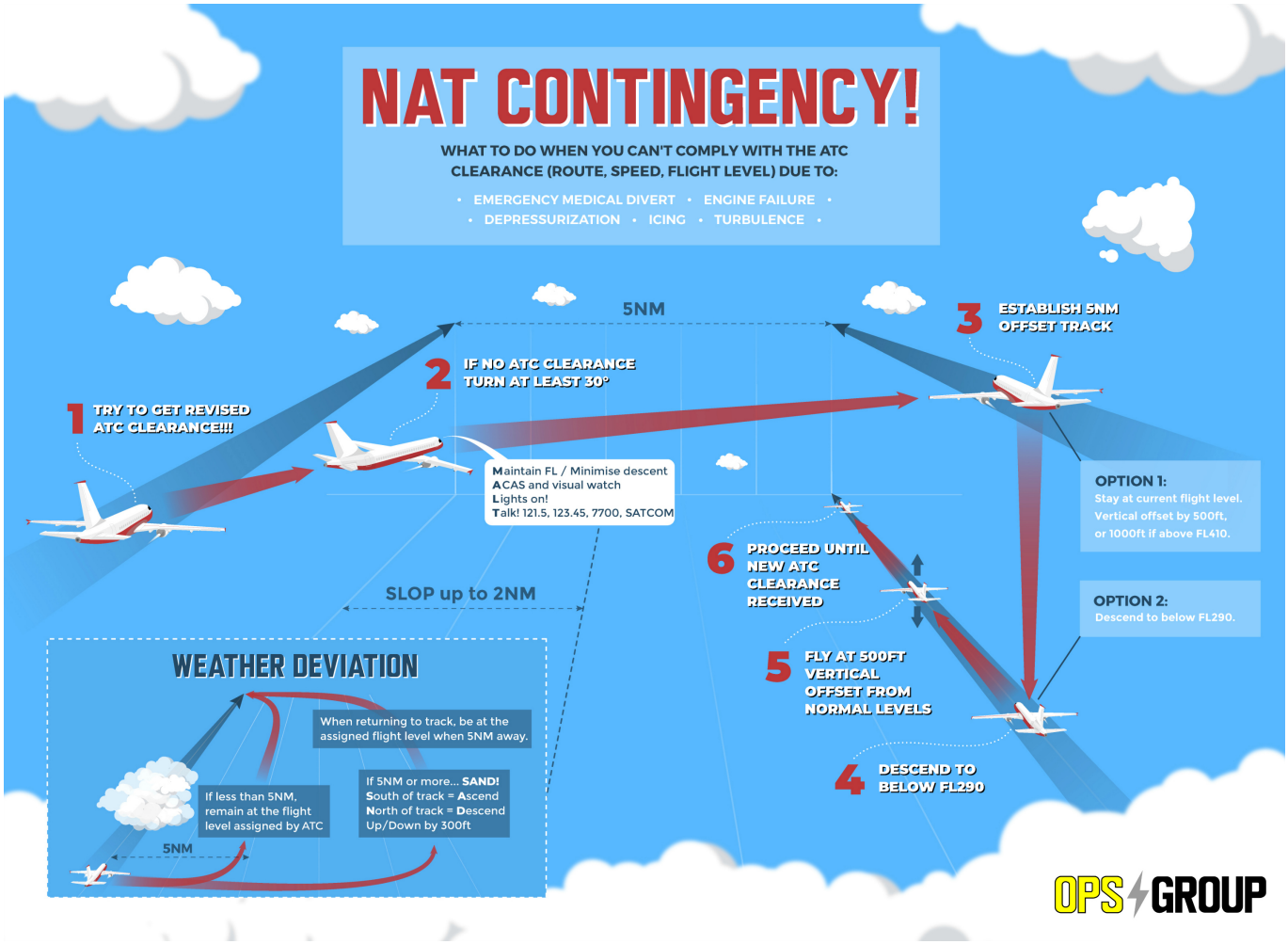
ICAO NAT Ops Bulletin 2018_06: Trial Implementation of ASEPS using ADS-B

Lowdown: A new trial will be implemented on the NAT called ASEPS (Advanced Surveillance Enhanced Procedural Separation) using ADS-B in the Shanwick, Gander and Santa Maria FIRs. Compliant aircraft will see a reduction in longitudinal separation to as close as 14 NM. This is not restricted to particular tracks or altitudes, just between properly equipped aircraft – you'll need RVSM/HLA approval, ADS-B, and to be fully PBCS compliant (that means meeting the specifications of RNP4, RCP240 and RSP180).

So there you have it. We made a couple of handy graphics for all this. Print them out and sellotape them to your cockpit. (If you actually do this, please send us a photo!)



click on the image to open larger version



click on the image to open larger version

For a bit more of an in-depth look at the contingency and weather deviation procedures as shown in the image above, read our article.

And if you're still hungry for more NAT info, we highly recommend you check out the replay of the webinar hosted by Mitch from 30WestIP, titled: **'A North Atlantic Game Changer, 4 NAT OPS Bulletins all go into effect in one day'**. This really breaks down each of the four new Bulletins which take effect from 28th March 2019 – essential viewing if you operate over the North Atlantic! View it here.

Further reading:

- On 1st Nov 2018 we had **a call with 140 OPSGROUP members about upcoming changes on the NAT in 2019**, and how we can effect change. OPSGROUP members can find the PDF notes of this in your Dashboard.
- A big thing driving the ASEPS trial is the **rollout of Space-based ADS-B**, which is scheduled to complete its deployment by 30 Dec 2018, giving us worldwide, pole-to-pole surveillance of aircraft. For more on that, and how it will affect operations on the NAT specifically, read the article by Mitch Launius here.

- Use our quick guide to **figure out where you are welcome on the NAT**, depending on what equipment and training you have.

Venezuela: do not travel

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



Amid an **escalating crisis in Venezuela**, on Mar 11, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced via Twitter that the U.S. Embassy in Caracas will be withdrawing all of its remaining diplomatic personnel from Venezuela by Mar 16, citing the "deteriorating situation."

Power outages continue in at least 16 states across the country. The opposition says there has been **sporadic looting**, and at least 17 people have died as a result of the blackout.

On Mar 9, there was an **attempted armed robbery of Air Europa airline crew**. Armed assailants on motorbikes chased the vehicle of the crew from the airport to their hotel, where they engaged in a shoot-out with hotel security staff before escaping. None of the crew was injured, but refused to stay at the hotel, and instead were escorted back to the airport by police convoy and returned on the flight back to Madrid. Air Europa has reportedly now decided to add a stopover to its Caracas service and crew will now layover in Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic.

On Feb 21, the barely-still-president Mr Maduro banned **all general and private aviation.** But reports from Opsgroup members on Feb 28 suggest that this has now been cancelled (although the ban on flights to/from the islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, as published by Notam, still stands). One member reported: "Our permit to operate in and out of SVMI/Caracas next week was approved. However, I would still NOT recommend any crew remain there overnight."

Local handling agents we have spoken to in Venezuela have also said that the country's airspace is open again, although nothing has officially been published to confirm this.

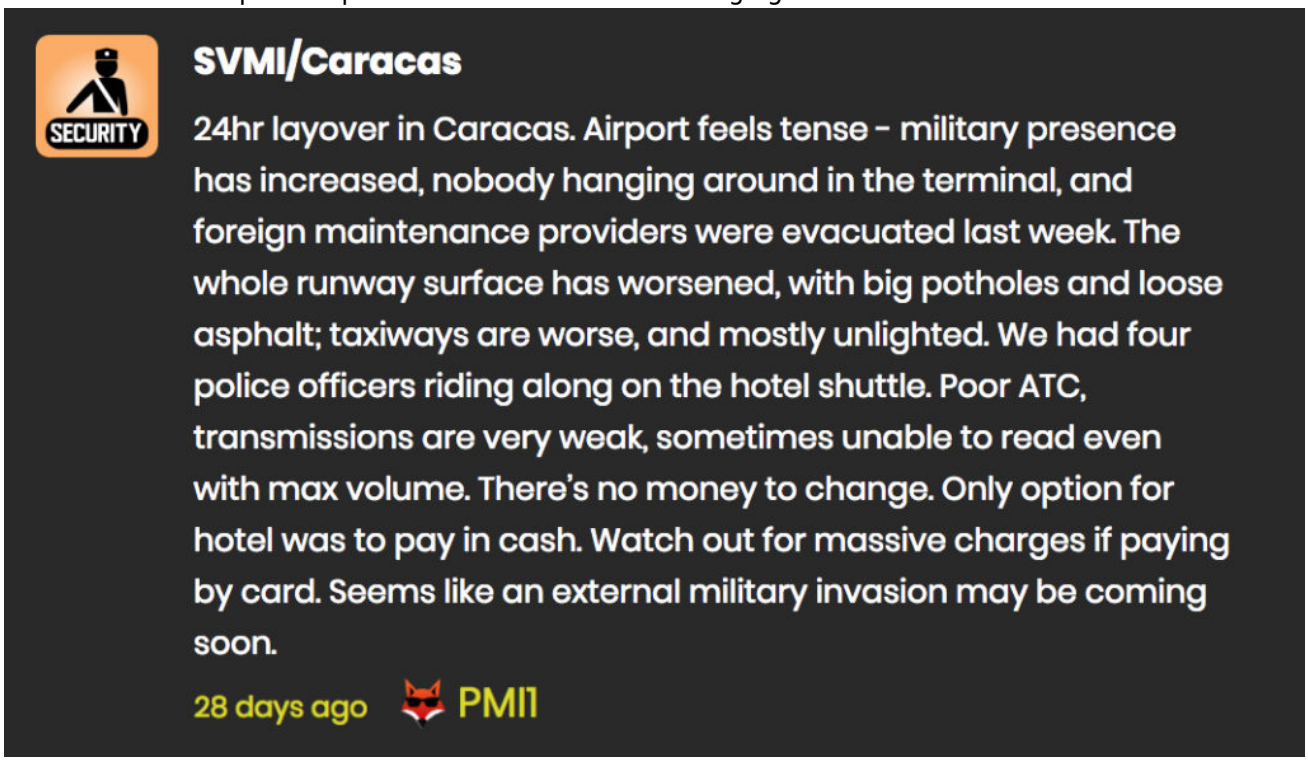
Our advice remains the same: **you don't want to go to Venezuela at the moment**. The official advice of both the US and Canada couldn't be clearer, they both say the same thing: **do not travel to Venezuela** due to risks posed by the ongoing unstable political and economic situations and the significant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

The Maduro government has closed Venezuela's borders with Colombia and Brazil, and has reportedly positioned one of its air defense missile system near the border with Brazil – within range of Brazil's **SBBV/Boa Vista airport**, as well as overflights of most of **Guyana's airspace** (SYGC/Georgetown FIR).

The US FAA has also published a new Notam and Background Notice warning operators to **exercise caution when operating in the SVZM FIR below FL260** due to potential hazards to aviation associated with ongoing political instability in Venezuela.

Background info on SVMI/Caracas Airport

The most recent Opsfox reports for SVMI are not encouraging:



- The airport is located in an extremely high-risk area for armed robbery and kidnappings. Before suspending all flights to Venezuela in Aug 2017, Avianca hired bodyguards after shots were fired during a robbery of a bus carrying its crew. Some other carriers took to flying crew to spend the night in neighbouring countries, rather than risk staying overnight anywhere in Caracas.

- On Aug 8, 2017, a Venezuelan lawyer was shot dead at a ticket counter at SVMI/Caracas airport. In 2016, an Egyptian visitor was killed walking outside the airport between terminals after arriving on a flight from Germany.
- In Feb 2018, Ecuadorian state airline Tame joined Avianca in a long list of airlines that no longer operate to the country, including: Aerolineas Airlines, United Airlines,

Aeromexico, Lufthansa, Alitalia and Air Canada. Most reports estimate that international traffic in Venezuela has dropped by around 65-75% since its peak in 2013.

- Colombia's pilots' association says its members who have flown to Venezuela have had to deal with contaminated fuel and hours-long delays as the National Guard pulls suitcases off flights to loot them. More info.

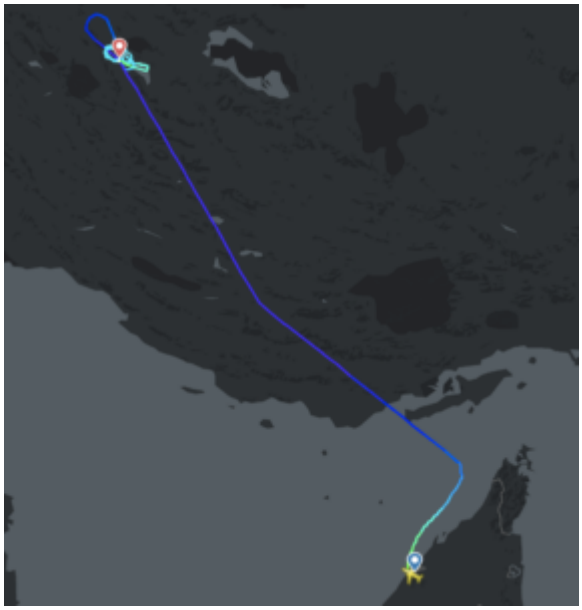
Stuck in Iran for over 2 months

OPSGROUP Team
14 June, 2019



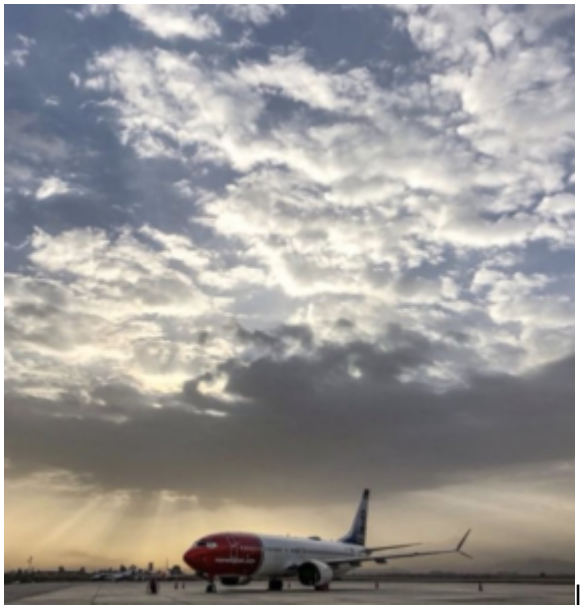
On Feb 23, the Norwegian B737 which had been stuck in Iran for two months after an in-flight diversion finally departed OISS/Shiraz, and landed back at Stockholm's ESSA/Arlanda airport.

The brand new Norwegian Boeing 737 MAX8 was flying from Dubai to Oslo on Dec 14 when it encountered engine problems that necessitated a diversion to Shiraz.



With the U.S. sanctions currently in place against Iran, it made it very difficult to obtain approval to get the required spare parts over to Iran to fix the aircraft – Norwegian were only able to do so after negotiating a workaround with the U.S. Office of Foreign Asset Control.

The real complication here came from the fact that the aircraft needed a replacement LEAP-1B engine. The engine is a 50/50 ownership split between GE (USA) & Safran (France). The U.S. export restrictions apply to any company that wants to sell or resell goods to Iran that contain more than 10 percent aviation parts or technology from the United States.



In the end, the aircraft was out of service for over two months, no doubt costing the airline a fortune in lost revenue. It's unclear who will be picking up the bill for "extra" complications of getting the permits with Iran, but that will be a costly exercise also.

The lesson?

Consider your overflight diversion options. If a checklist calls for a diversion to the nearest suitable airport and that airport is in a country with limited diversion support or (in this case) complicated requirements for sourcing replacement parts – is it worth the risk?

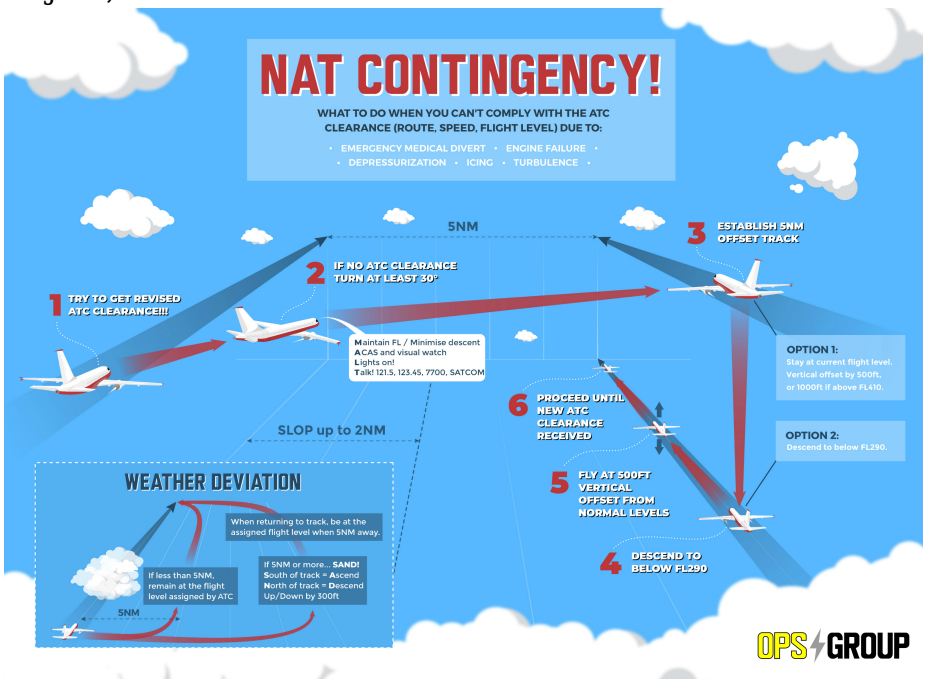
Have you operated to anywhere in Iran recently? Let us know how it went!

Further reading

- US issues new guidance on Iran overflight risk
- London to Dubai – which way is best?

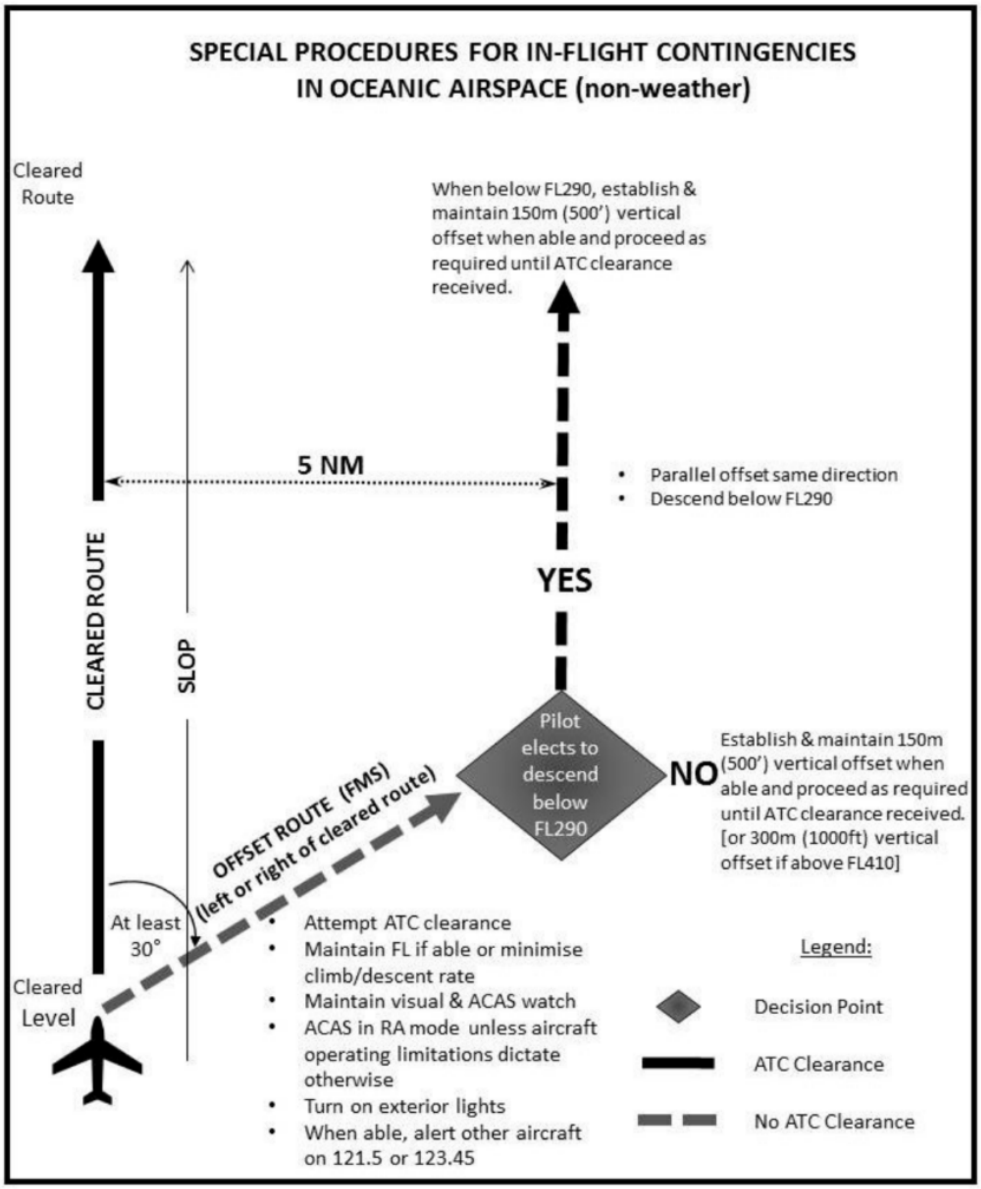
New NAT Contingency Procedures for 2019

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



Starting 28th March 2019, there will be some **changes to the contingency and weather deviation procedures on the NAT**. ICAO has published a new NAT Ops Bulletin with all the details.

Before, there was a lot of confusion around the wording of these two procedures – but ICAO has now made this much clearer, and they have even included a little graphic to help us understand how it will work.



Thing is, it's still a little clunky. So we decided to make our own version!

What's new?

The simple answer is this: **contingency offsets that previously were 15 NM with actions at 10 NM are basically now all 5 NM offsets with a turn of at least 30 degrees (not 45 degrees).**

Rarely do we see ICAO oceanic contingency procedures undergo a formal revision. The last time a major revision occurred was in 2006 when ICAO standardized a 15 NM offset executed with a turn of at least 45 degrees. Prior to that, the North Atlantic and the Pacific had used different offset distances and a 90 degree turn.

Where and when?

A trial implementation is scheduled to begin in the NAT Region and New York Oceanic West starting 28th March 2019. ICAO is expected to formally publish the Standard in an update to PANS-ATM (ICAO Doc 4444) on 5 November 2020.

Why?

To support reduced separation being implemented in conjunction with Advanced Surveillance Enhanced

Separation (ASEPS), Space Based ADS-B surveillance. The details for the ASEP trial can be found in NAT OPS Bulletin 2018-006 Trial Implementation of ASEPS using ADS-B.

Old version vs New version – full wording

Here's the **old version**, as per the latest version of the NAT Doc 007, paragraph 13.3. (Note – this will be valid **UNTIL** 27 March 2019):

The aircraft should leave its assigned route or track by initially turning at least 45° to the right or left whenever this is feasible.

An aircraft that is able to maintain its assigned flight level, after deviating 10 NM from its original cleared track centreline and therefore laterally clear of any potentially conflicting traffic above or below following the same track, should:
a) climb or descend 1000 ft if above FL410
b) climb or descend 500 ft when below FL410
c) climb 1000 ft or descend 500 ft if at FL410

An aircraft that is unable to maintain its assigned flight level (e.g due to power loss, pressurization problems, freezing fuel, etc.) should, whenever possible, initially minimise its rate of descent when leaving its original track centreline and then when expected to be clear of any possible traffic following the same track at lower levels and while subsequently maintaining a same direction 15 NM offset track, descend to an operationally feasible flight level, which differs from those normally used by 500 ft if below (or by 1000 ft if above FL410).

Before commencing any diversion across the flow of adjacent traffic or before initiating any turn-back (180°), aircraft should, while subsequently maintaining a same direction 15 NM offset track, expedite climb above or descent below the vast majority of NAT traffic (i.e. to a level above FL410 or below FL290), and then maintain a flight level which differs from those normally used: by 1000 ft if above FL410, or by 500 ft if below FL410. However, if the flight crew is unable or unwilling to carry out a major climb or descent, then any diversion or turn-back manoeuvre should be carried out at a level 500 ft different from those in use within the NAT HLA, until a new ATC clearance is obtained.

And here's the **new version**, as per the NAT OPS Bulletin 2018-005 Special Procedures for In-flight Contingencies in Oceanic Airspace (Note – this will be valid **FROM** 28 March 2019):

If prior clearance cannot be obtained, the following contingency procedures should be employed until a revised clearance is received:

Leave the cleared route or track by initially turning at least 30 degrees to the right or to the left, in order to intercept and maintain a parallel, direction track or route offset 9.3 km (5.0 NM).

Once established on a parallel, same direction track or route offset by 9.3 km (5.0 NM), either:
a) descend below FL 290, and establish a 150 m (500 ft) vertical offset from those flight levels normally used, and proceed as required by the operational situation or if an ATC clearance has been obtained, proceed in accordance with the clearance; or
b) establish a 150 m (500 ft) vertical offset (or 300 m (1000 ft) vertical offset if above FL 410) from those flight levels normally used, and proceed as required by the operational situation, or if an ATC clearance has been obtained, proceed in accordance with the clearance.

Note. — Descent below FL 290 is considered particularly applicable to operations where there is a predominant traffic flow (e.g. east-west) or parallel track system where the aircraft's diversion path will likely cross adjacent tracks or routes. A descent below FL 290 can decrease the likelihood of: conflict with other aircraft, ACAS RA events and delays in obtaining a revised ATC clearance.

So to reiterate, the important change is that contingency offsets that previously were 15 NM with actions at 10 NM are basically now all 5 NM offsets with a turn of at least 30 degrees (not 45 degrees).

Weather deviations

If you have to deviate from your assigned track due to anything weather-related, there's a whole different procedure to follow. Again, the NAT Ops Bulletin has all the details for this, but the bottom line seems to be:

For deviations of **less than 5 NM**, remain at the flight level assigned by ATC.

For deviations of **5 NM or more**, when you are at the 5 NM point initiate a change as follows:

If flying **EAST**, **descend** left by 300ft, or **climb** right by 300ft.

If flying **WEST**, **climb** left by 300ft, or **descend** right by 300ft.

In other words – **SAND!** (**S**outh of track = **A**scend, **N**orth of track = **D**escend; Up/Down by 300ft)

But remember, going right is probably better – it gets you out of the way of all the SLOP offset traffic that might be coming at you from the opposite direction!

Turnback procedure

In both the NAT Ops Bulletin and the new NAT Doc 007 which will take effect from 28 Mar 2019, ICAO has left out any specific reference to how to divert across the flow of traffic or turn-back procedure, and instead simplified it to just "proceed as required by the operational situation". Turning back would assume you either employ the 5NM offset as per the new contingency procedure, or else get a new revised clearance.

Bottom line

If you operate in the NAT HLA, we recommend you read and review the NAT Ops Bulletin in its entirety. It's relatively short but, beginning 28 March 2019, the procedures are expected to be implemented. You might want to prepare changes for your Ops Manuals and checklists too.

Make sure you stay tuned to OPSGROUP for changes that may occur as we approach 28 March 2019!

Further reading:

- On Nov 1st we had **a call with 140 OPSGROUP members about upcoming changes on the NAT in 2019**, and how we can effect change. OPSGROUP members can find the PDF notes of this in your Dashboard.
- A big thing driving the ASEPS trial is the **rollout of Space-based ADS-B**, which is scheduled to complete its deployment by 30 Dec 2018, giving us worldwide, pole-to-pole surveillance of aircraft. For more on that, and how it will affect operations on the NAT specifically, read the article by Mitch Launius here.
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Indonesia is intercepting aircraft – outside their airspace

David Mumford
14 June, 2019



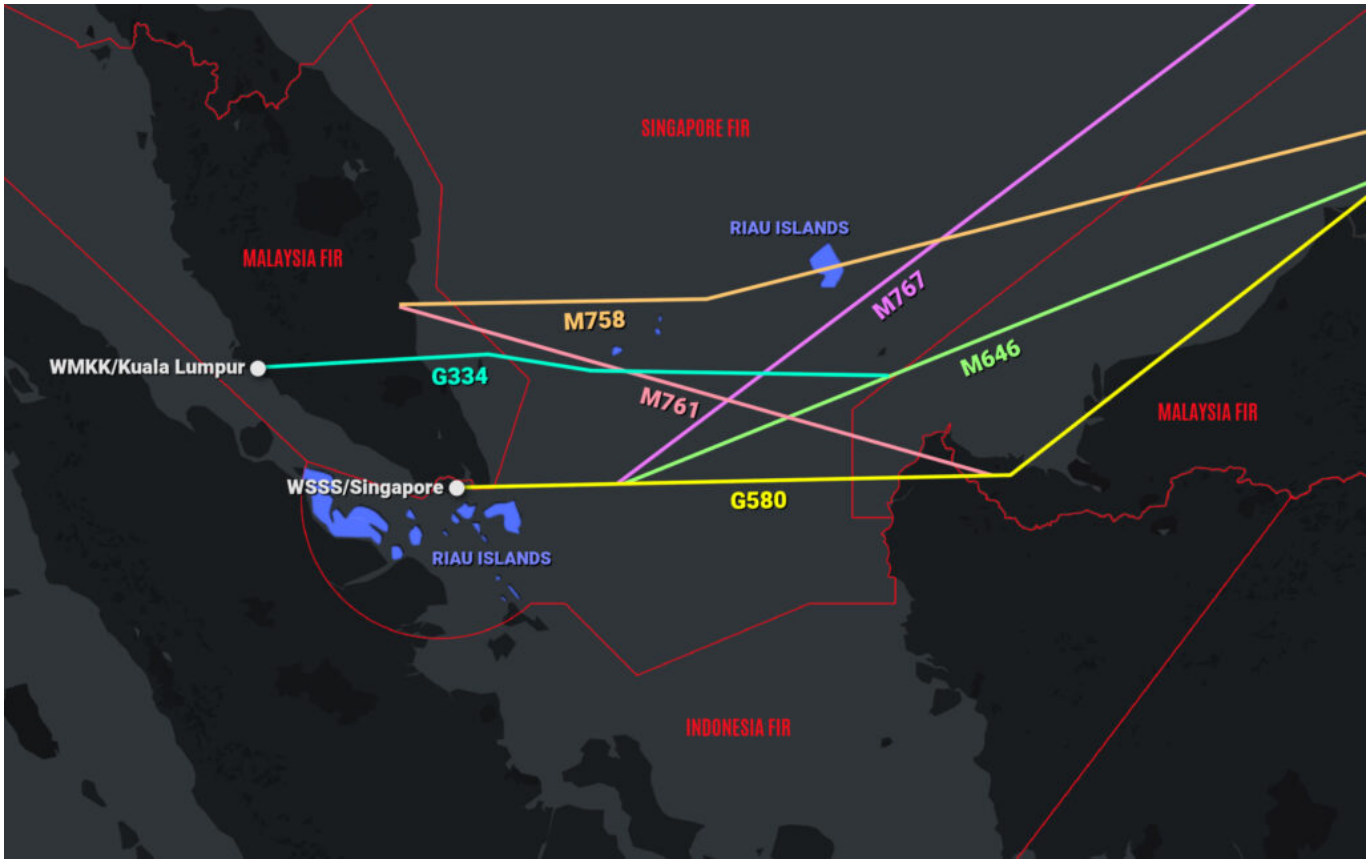
If you are operating in the Singapore FIR, consider this carefully: **you may be overflying Indonesia** without knowing it. Indonesia will know though, and they want you to have an overflight permit.

You will find out in one of three ways:

1. You'll be intercepted by two Indonesian Air Force fighter jets and brought to Indonesia
2. You'll receive a nastygram via your National Authority
3. You'll get a fine

2. and 3. are not cool, but 1. is something to avoid at all costs. The inside of military/police cells at outlying Indonesian Airports is not pretty.

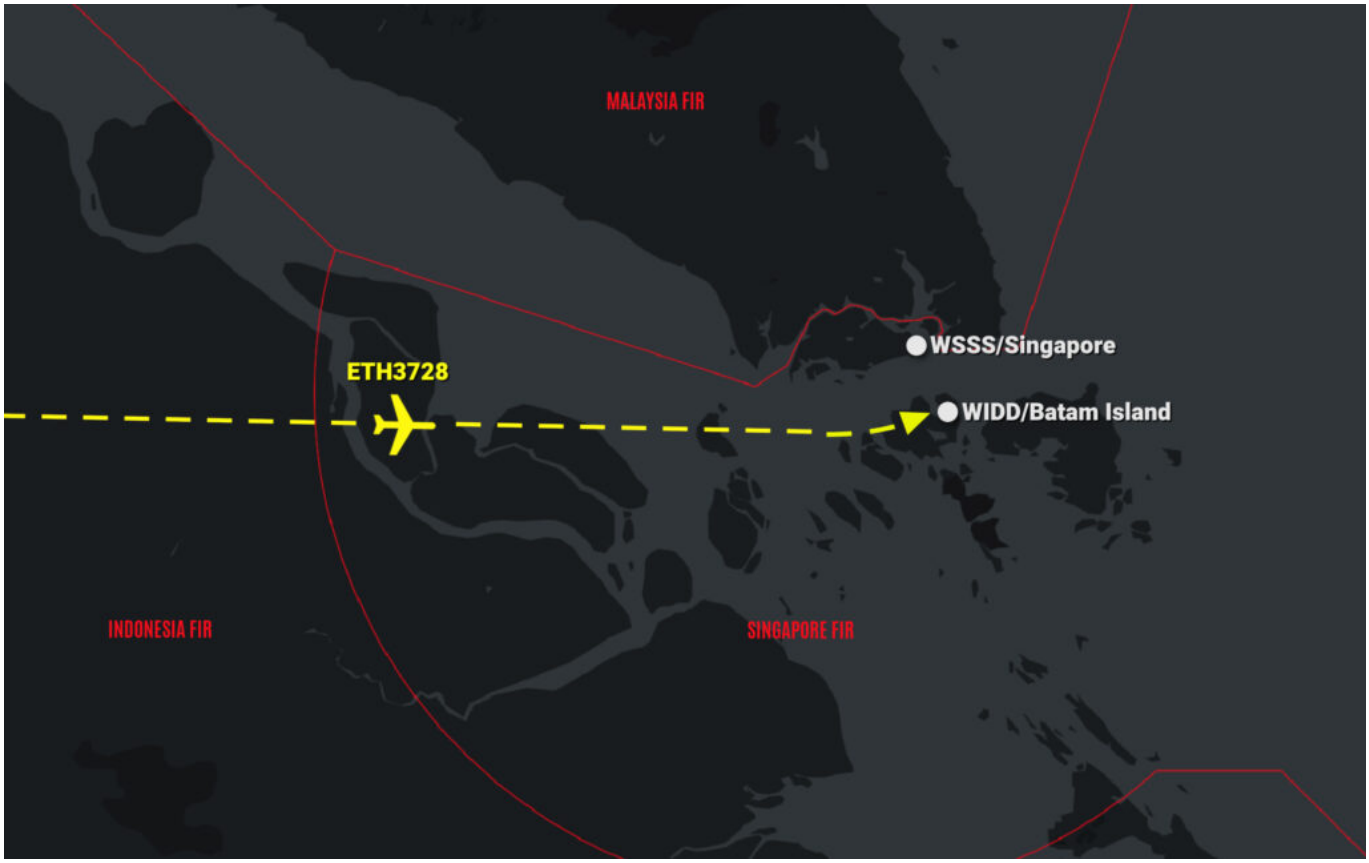
Watch out for the following airways – **M758, M646, M767, G334, M761, G580**. These all pass over Indonesian territory, even though the area is actually part of the Singapore and Malaysia FIRs.



Indonesia has a reputation for excessively strict enforcement of permit rules.

On 14 Jan 2019, two Indonesian F-16s intercepted an Ethiopian Airlines cargo flight ETH3728 for flying across Indonesian airspace without permission. The aircraft was initially supposed to operate from HAAB/Addis Ababa to VHHH/Hong Kong, but was modified at the last minute to route via WSSS/Singapore instead, to make a delivery of Rolls-Royce Trent 1000 engines.

The Ethiopian Airlines aircraft was intercepted forced to land at WIDD/Batam Island – which lies right in the middle of the chunk of airspace controlled by Singapore.



Another incident happened back in 2014, where a King Air plane en-route from WBGG/Kuching to WSSS/Singapore was intercepted by Indonesian fighter jets in the same airspace managed by Singapore, and forced to land at WIOO/Pontianak Airport in Indonesia.



The reason? Because they were overflying some Indonesian islands out in the ocean, the Indonesian Air Force claimed they were overflying Indonesia's sovereign skies – without a permit.

Indonesia still hasn’t updated its AIP, but the rules they enforce are clear: if you’re overflying any Indonesian territory, you must get an overflight permit, regardless of the flight level.

Here’s a nastygram to an OPSGROUP member, received in February 2017:

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA
SINGAPORE

[redacted]

The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia presents its compliments to the British High Commission in Singapore and has the honour to transmit a message from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia as follows:

- On [redacted] a [redacted] registered aircraft, call sign [redacted] enroute Kinabalu – Seletar has flown over Indonesia's territory. The said aircraft was detected over the Indonesian archipelagic waters and territorial sea in the vicinity of Riau Islands and Natuna Islands. The flight was conducted without valid flight clearance from the Government of the Republic of Indonesia.

- The aforementioned intrusion is a clear violation of Indonesian sovereignty and Indonesian law as well as international law. In accordance with Article 1 of the Chicago Convention 1944, Indonesia has the complete and exclusive sovereignty over the airspace above its territory. Furthermore, the Ministry would like to reiterate that foreign aircraft overflying Indonesia's territory must have a valid flight clearance issued by the Government of the Republic of Indonesia.

- In this connection, the provision of air traffic services by the Singapore Authority, in accordance with the rules of ICAO, cannot be interpreted that Singapore has the authority to issue the clearance to foreign aircrafts entering Indonesia's airspace.

- The Ministry would like to bring this issue to the attention of the relevant authorities of the Cayman Islands with a view to ensuring that similar occurrences of such territorial breach will not be repeated in the future.

With regards to the above, the Embassy has the honour of seeking the kind assistance of the British High Commission in Singapore to convey the Government of the Republic of Indonesia's concern to the relevant authorities of [redacted]

The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the British High Commission in Singapore the assurances of its highest consideration.

[redacted] February 2017

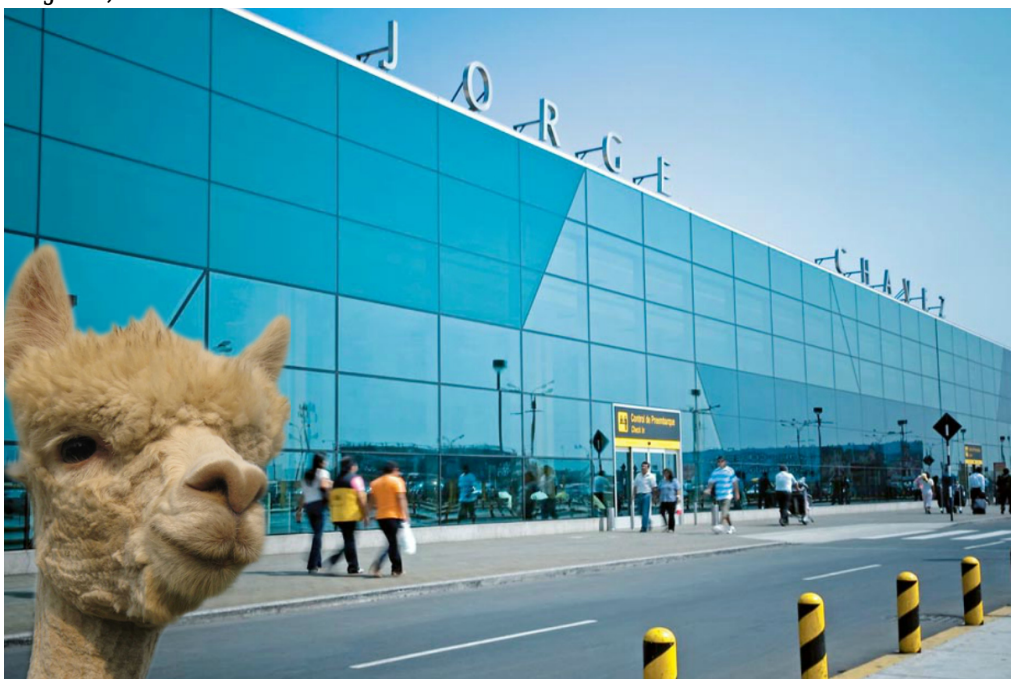
British High Commission
Singapore

KEDUTAAN BESAR REPUBLIK INDONESIA
02
SINGAPURA

Bottom line: check your airways carefully, and make sure there are no Indonesian Island underneath. **If there are, get a permit**.

Don’t alpaca your bags for Lima – tech stops forbidden!

OPSGROUP Team
14 June, 2019



For 10 years SPJC/Lima’s Jorge Chavez airport has been desperately waiting for a promised US$1.5bn expansion.

With the rapid growth in the airline industry in Peru over the past few years, it seems the airport authorities are starting to struggle to provide enough capacity, and they are now trying to make it as difficult as possible for anything other than the commercial airlines to operate there!

In AIC (10/18), which has been in effect since Aug 2018, the airport has said that **no more technical stops will be permitted** at the airport. It also outlines **significant slot/time restrictions for GA/BA operations**.

Why they are doing it?

According to the AIC:

> *“In order to optimize the use of airport resources, ensure the safe provision of air traffic services and ensure the balance between demand and available capacity, the DGAC has been implementing capacity management measures.”*

You can find the full information here but we have listed the main operational details below.

- **Tech stops are "forbidden"** for "commercial flights and general, national and international aviation" effective 15 August 18.
- **Maximum stay of 2 hours on the civil apron for GA/BA flights.** This is counted "from the time of placing chocks." After two hours, the aircraft must be transferred to another apron, parking area for aircraft or hangar, or must go to a suitable alternate airport. The recommended airport to re-position to is **SPSO/Pisco**. It has an ILS and a 9900'/3000m runway. It is 115nm away, and open H24.
- **General aviation flights are limited to two operating periods every day.** "Flights must perform their take-off and landing" between **0000L-0430L (0500UTC-0930UTC) or 1300L-1859L [1800UTC-2359UTC]**. The **2-hour maximum ground time still applies,** and coordination of ground services should be pre-planned in advance to comply.

For **non-scheduled flights**, they've issued a NOTAM restricting all ops to between **1100-2000L (1600-0100Z) or 2300-0800L (0400-1300Z)**:

> **A1822/19** – IN ORDER TO REDUCE TFC CONGESTION, NON-SCHEDULE FLIGHTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO ARRIVE IN SPJC DURING THIS BLOCK OF TIME. STS EMER,SAR,HUM,HOSP,MEDEVAC AND STATE ARE EXCLUDED. DLY BTN 0100-0400 AND 1300-1600, 04 APR 01:00 2019 UNTIL 31 JUL 16:00 2019 ESTIMATED. CREATED: 03 APR 23:28 2019

The authorities seem intent on enforcing these rules. One local handler has told us – "The Peruvian FAA is being very strict with the AIC. They are rejecting landing permit requests for fuel stops at SPJC."

If you have any further knowledge or recent experience to share, please **let us know**!

Extra Reading:

- Peru's Biggest Airport Continues Waiting for Long Overdue Expansion
- Lima airport expansion faces further delays
- CORPAC SA (AIP etc)

Istanbul Mega-Airport opening soon – but not for everyone

OPSGROUP Team
14 June, 2019



> **In Short**: The switch from **LTBA/Istanbul Ataturk** to **LTFM/Istanbul New Airport** has effectively been postponed until sometime in early March 2019 – although no official date has been given yet. LTFM *"officially"* opened on 29 Oct 2018, but since then it's only been available to Turkish Airlines – everyone else has to carry on using LTBA.

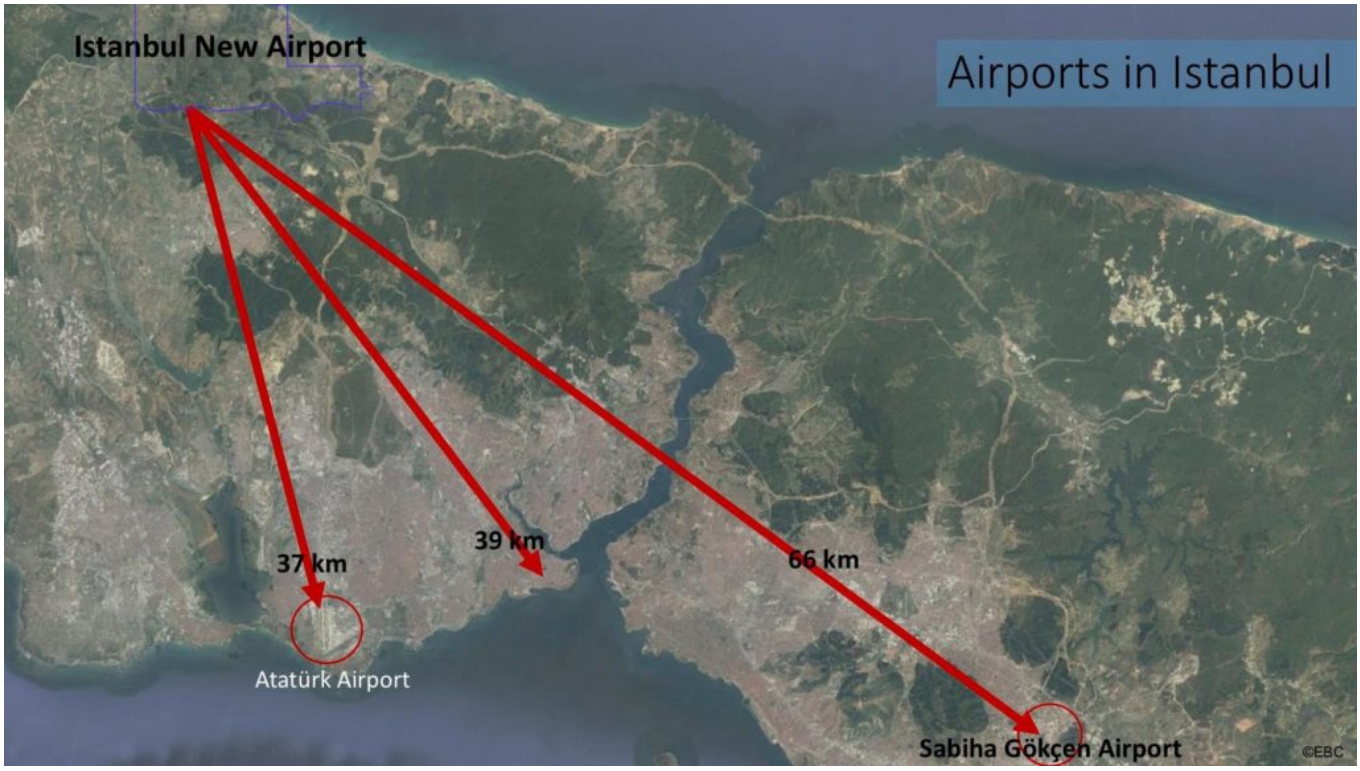
Istanbul's new mega-airport, which has been plagued by construction issues and delays, officially launched operations on 29 October 2018, to coincide with Turkish National Day celebrations – even though it wasn't completely ready in time.

Authorities initially said that all scheduled airline and charter flights would have to switch over from using LTBA/Istanbul Ataturk to LTFM/Istanbul New Airport on **29 October 2018**. Then they published AIC 07/18 which pushed that date back to **30 December 2018**. And then, in the week before that was due to happen, they published this Notam:

```
A7542/18
A PHASED TRANSFER FROM ISTANBUL ATATURK AIRPORT (LTBA) TO ISTANBUL AIRPORT
(LTFM) WILL TAKE PLACE. ISTANBUL AIRPORT (LTFM) WILL ONLY BE USED FOR PRE-
AUTHORIZED TURKISH AIRLINES FLIGHTS, UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE. 24 DEC 13:35 2018
UNTIL PERM. CREATED: 24 DEC 13:37 2018
```

So for now, only Turkish Airlines are allowed to operate to LTFM. Local reports suggest that it won't be until March 2019 before all the other airlines and charter operators can start using it too. When that happens, LTBA/Istanbul Atatürk will be **closed** to all scheduled airline and charter flights, but **will remain open for general aviation and business flights**.

So that's good news for GA/BA! There's nothing to say that you can't use the new airport, but it's quite a way out of town (39km/24 miles) when compared to the old one.

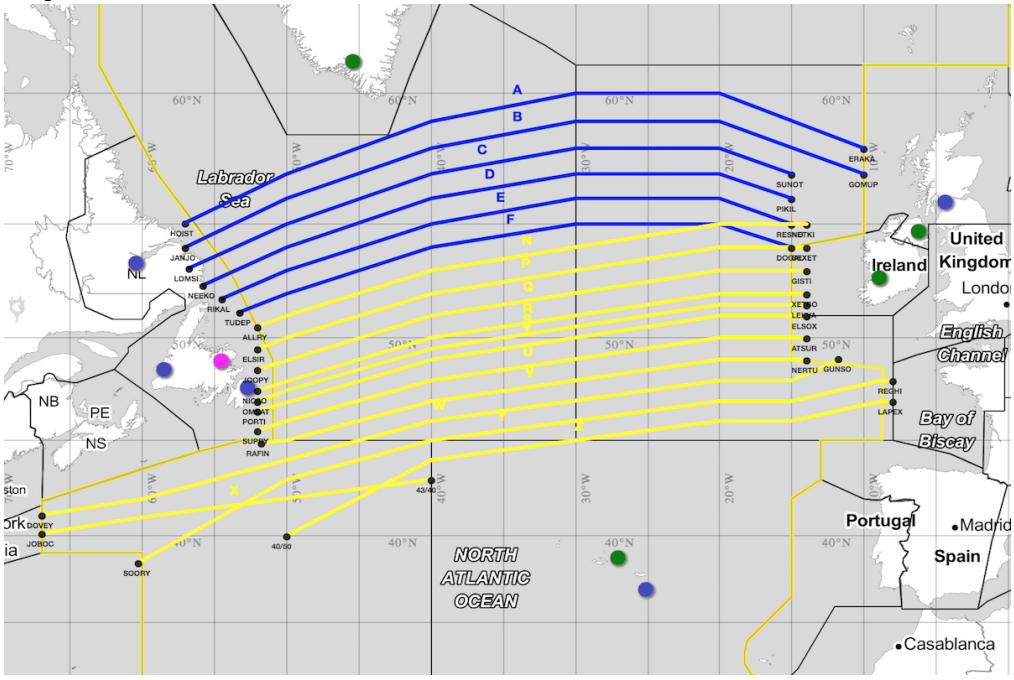


Into the future there is talk about the old airport becoming a park, but there are still no firm plans for that yet, according to the FBO reps we spoke to on the ground.

Do you know more? Let us know!

First look at NAT changes for 2019

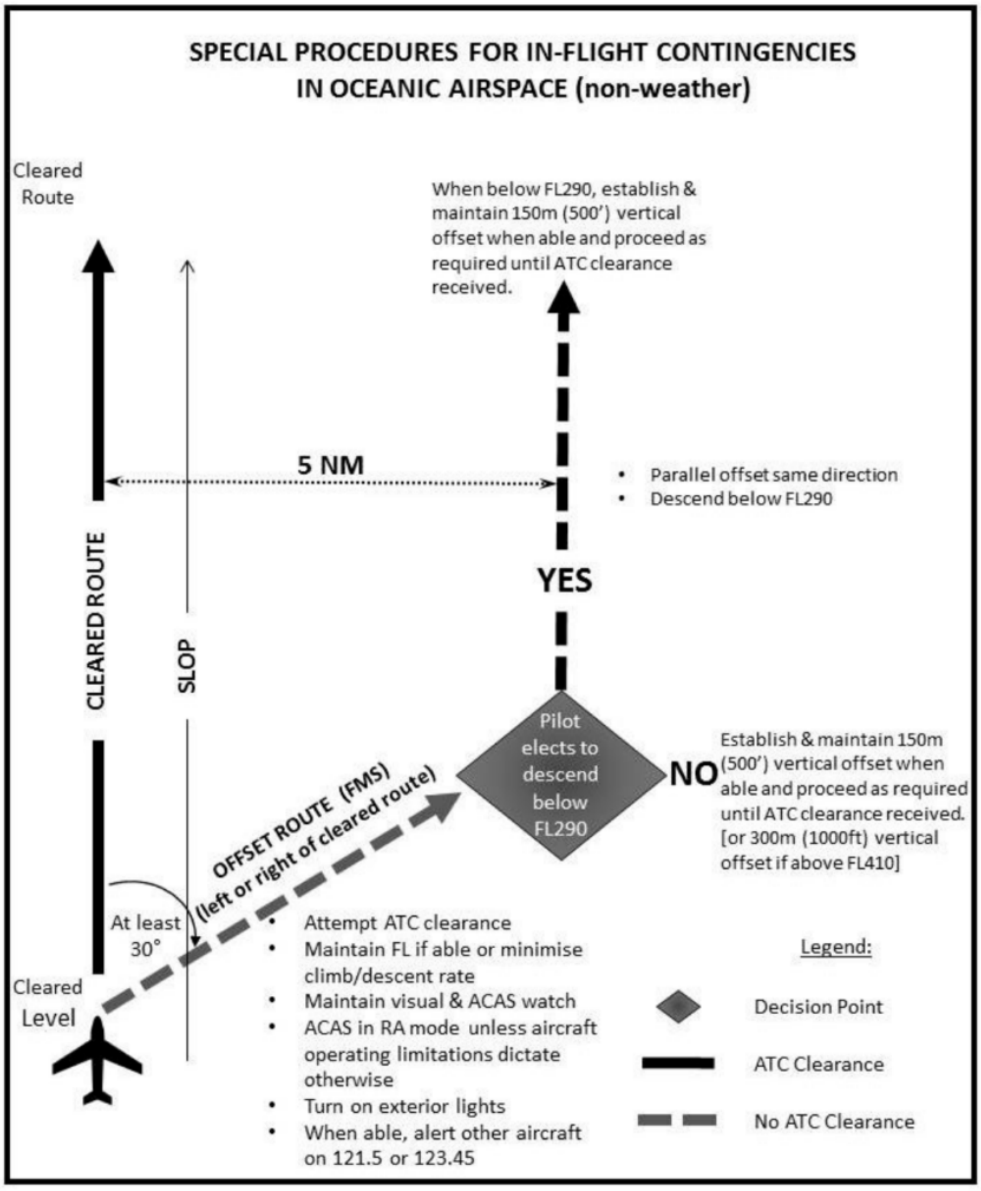
David Mumford
14 June, 2019



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When the ASEPS trial starts, there will also be some changes to the **contingency and weather deviation procedures**. Before, there was a lot of confusion around the wording of these two procedures – this has now been made much clearer, and they have even included a nice little graphic to help us understand what to do. Read this ICAO Bulletin for all the details.



ICAO have published all these changes in their updated NAT 007 Doc valid for 28th March 2019.

Further reading:

- On Nov 1st we had **a call with 140 Opsgroup members about upcoming changes on the NAT in 2019**, and how we can effect change. Opsgroup members can find the PDF notes of

this in your Dashboard.

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- Use our quick guide to **figure out where you are welcome on the NAT**, depending on what equipment and training you have.
- All the **big changes on the NAT in 2018** are covered on our page here.