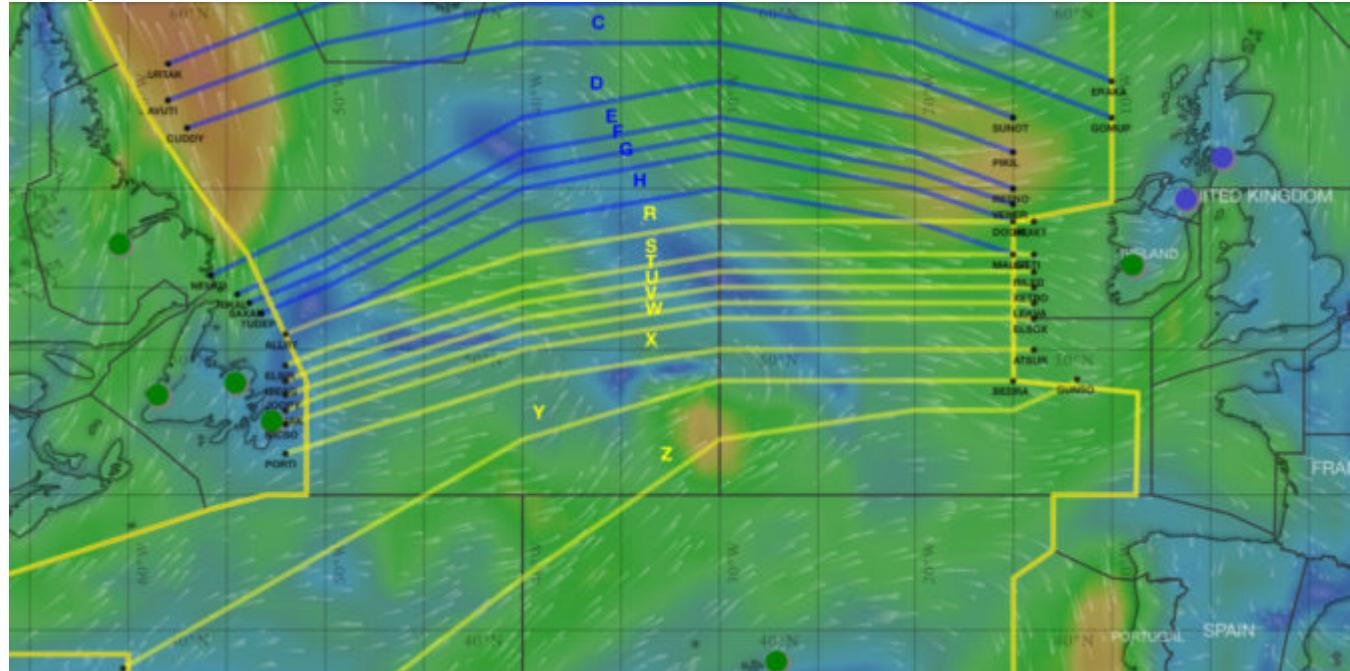


# July 2019 North Atlantic Update

David Mumford  
17 July, 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

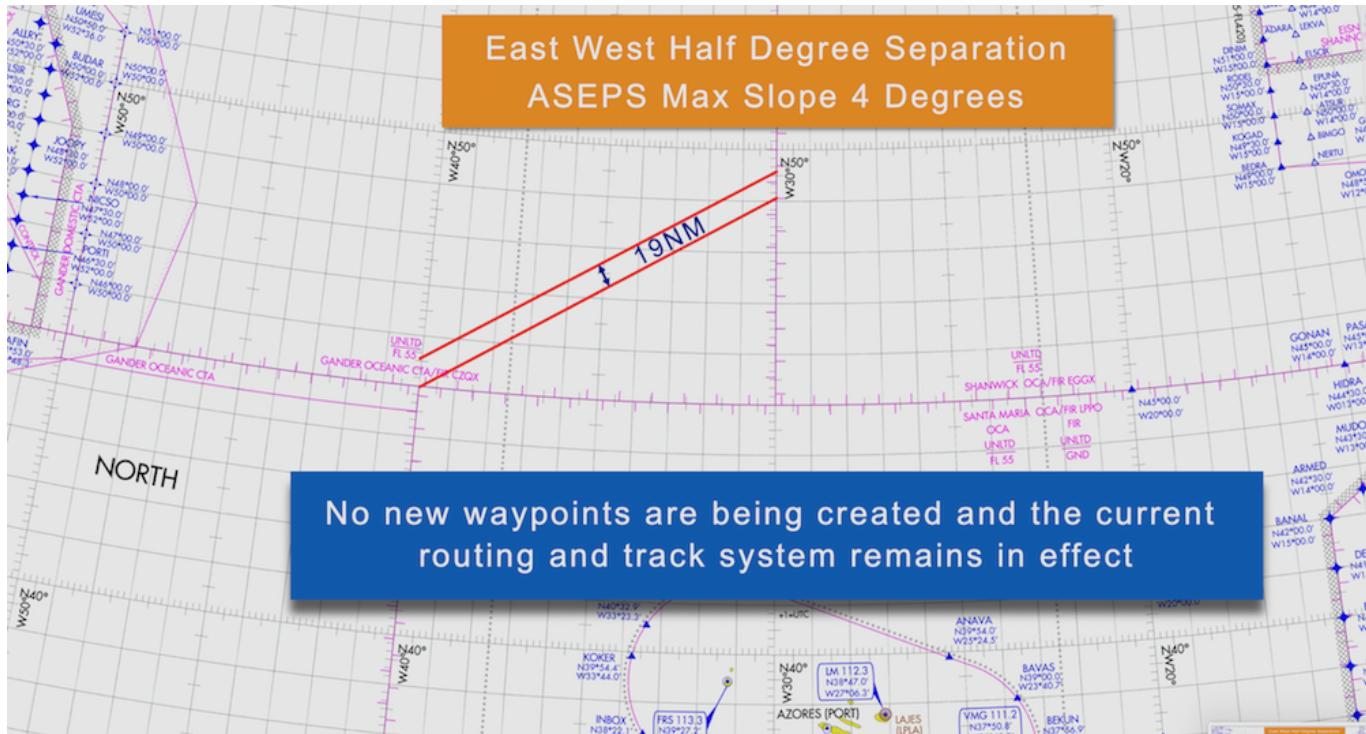
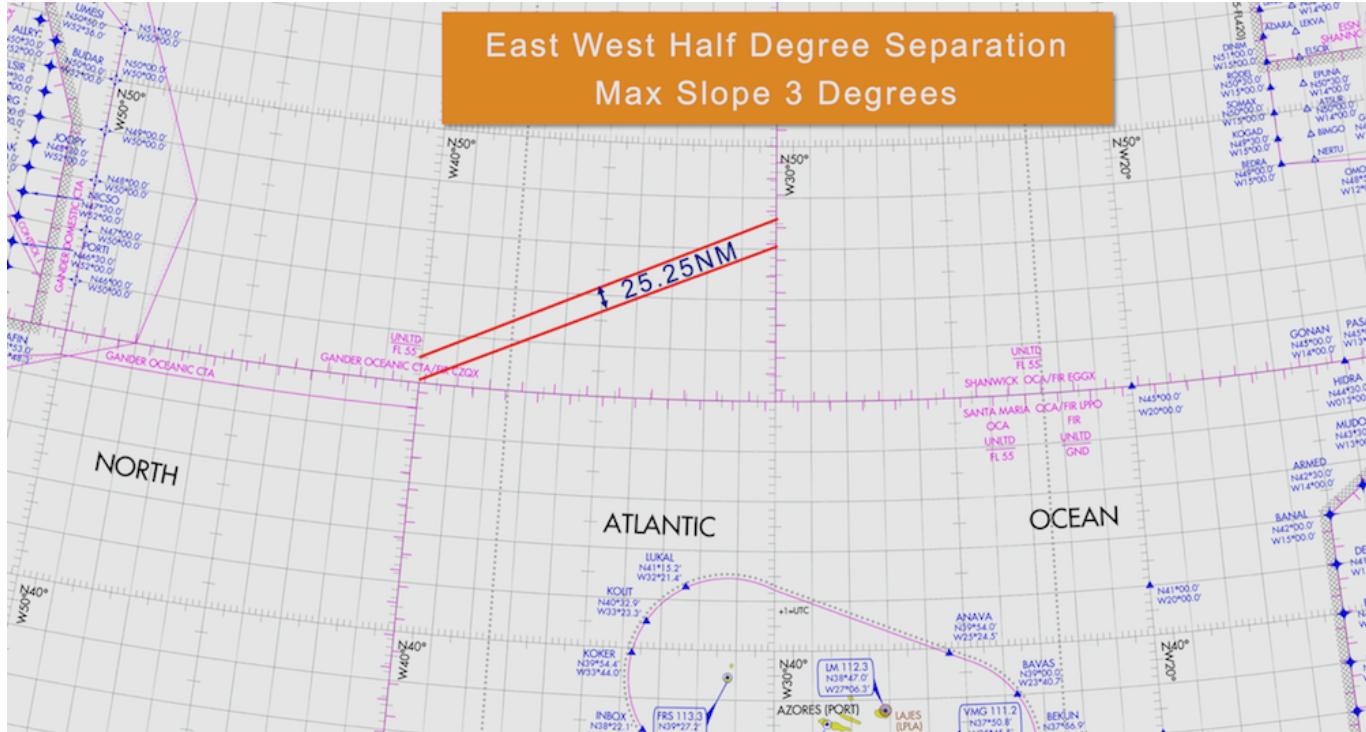
*Advanced Surveillance Enhanced Procedural Separation*  
ICAO NAT Bulletin 2019\_002

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:

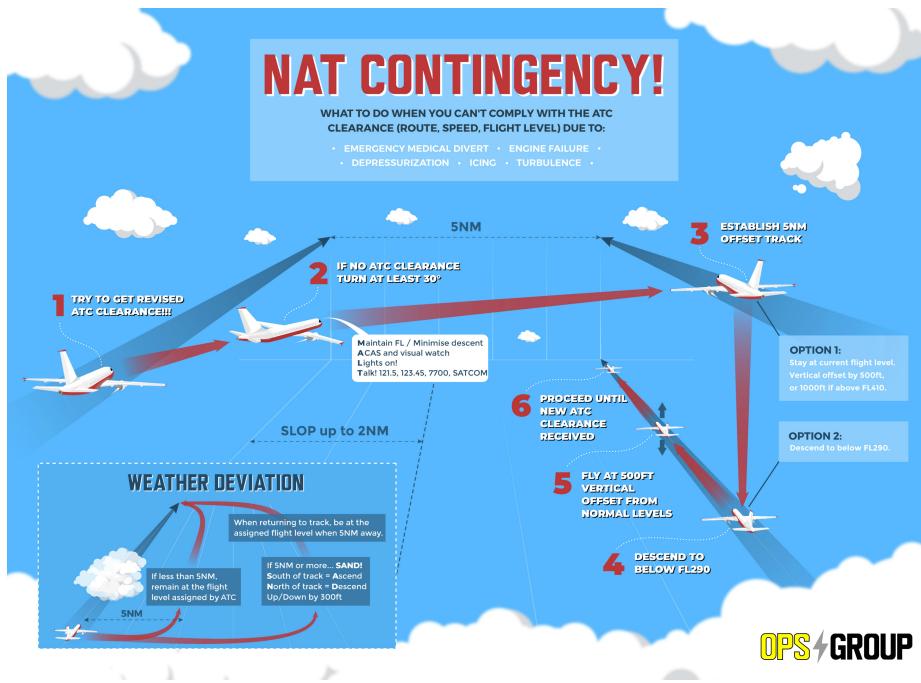
- **OPSGROUP members** can watch the replay of Member Chat #9, where we discuss all these changes in more detail.
- The last round of important changes on the NAT went into effect on 29th March 2019: the PBCS tracks were expanded; real-time Space-Based ADS-B surveillance and reduced longitudinal separation 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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## New NAT Contingency Procedures for 2019

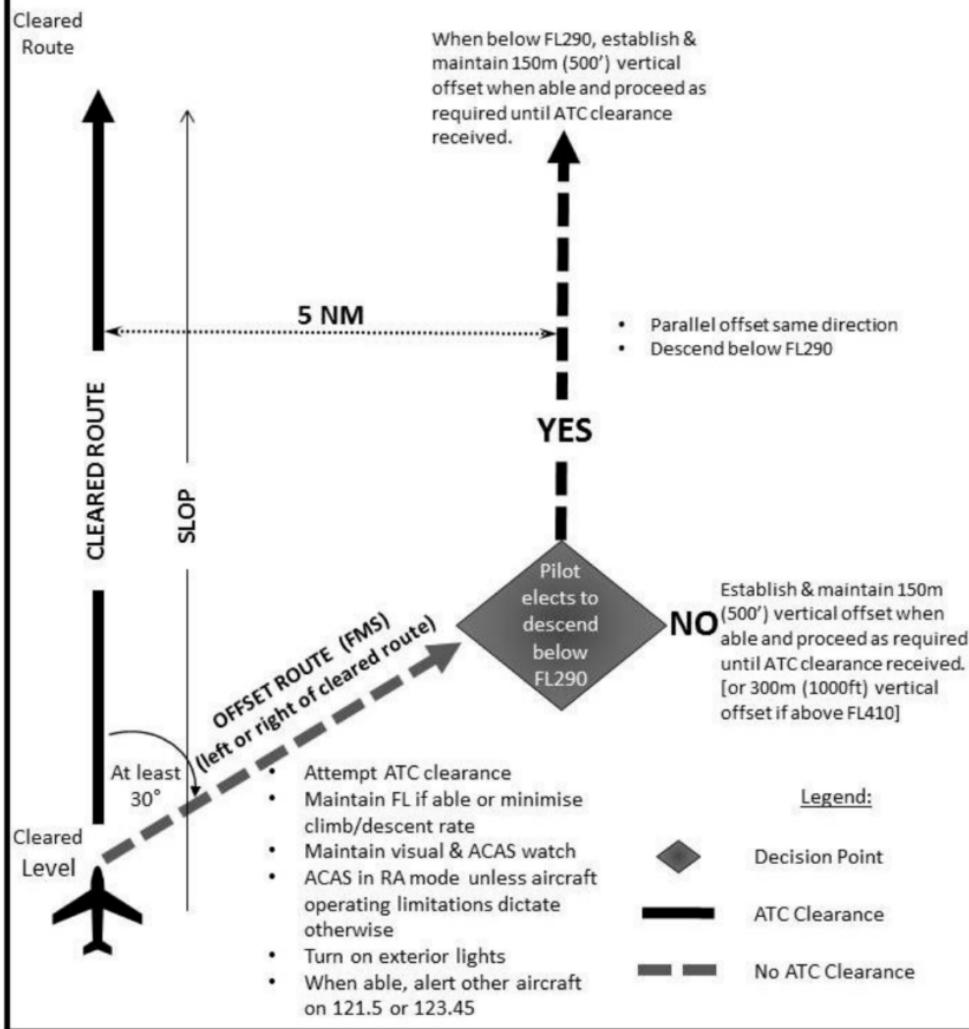
David Mumford  
17 July, 2019



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.

## SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR IN-FLIGHT CONTINGENCIES IN OCEANIC AIRSPACE (non-weather)



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!** (South of track = Ascend, North of track = Descend; 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!

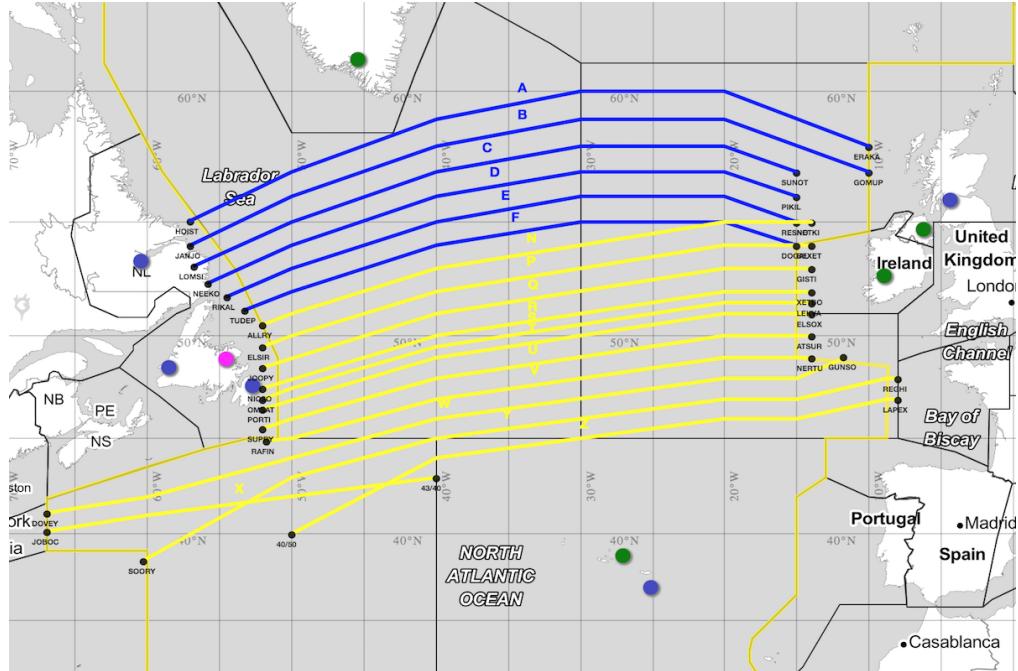
### **Further reading:**

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

# First look at NAT changes for 2019

David Mumford

17 July, 2019

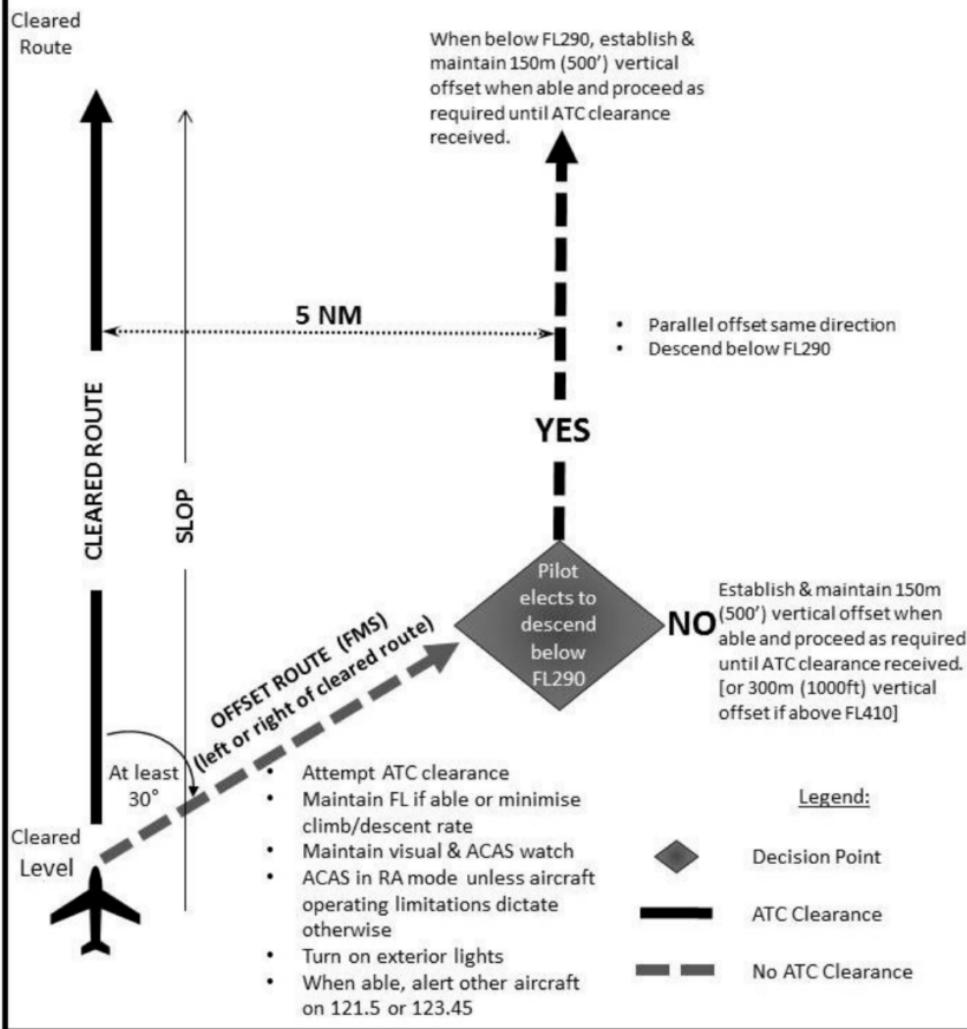


Starting 28th March 2019, a new trial will be implemented on the NAT called **ASEPS (Advanced Surveillance Enhanced Procedural Separation)** using ADS-B in the Shanwick, Gander and Santa Maria FIRs.

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). Read this ICAO Bulletin for all the details.

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.

**SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR IN-FLIGHT CONTINGENCIES  
IN OCEANIC AIRSPACE (non-weather)**



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](#).

# The Impact of Space-Based ADS-B on International Operations

David Mumford

17 July, 2019



I can distinctly remember the build up to and roll out of GPS navigation systems. Like so many of us, I was excited to see this new technology integrated into my cockpit. The idea that I would have the capability to accurately determine my position *anywhere in the world* was exciting!

It's hard to overstate the significance of GPS navigation on the international operation of aircraft, particularly when operating in oceanic airspace. Today we are about to reach a similar milestone that could be even more significant - the introduction of a Space-Based Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast (SB ADS-B) monitoring system.

When SB ADS-B completes its deployment (scheduled 30 December 2018), we will achieve worldwide, pole-to-pole surveillance of aircraft. This goes beyond a pilot knowing his or her own location. This opens up the ability for ATC to locate any ADS-B equipped aircraft anywhere in the world. With the US and EU ADS-B requirements approaching in 2020, aircraft that operate internationally will almost certainly be ADS-B equipped.

## A brief history of Space-Based ADS-B

SB ADS-B technology has been placed into service by a commercial company, Aireon, and not a governmental entity, which has enabled it to be brought to operational status in a much shorter timeline than most other government implementations.

Although Aireon was initially established in 2012 to provide civilian surveillance services, the disappearance of Malaysia Flight 370 changed the industry. The inability to locate the aircraft forced industry regulators to consider how improved aircraft tracking might have helped to resolve the location of the aircraft in distress and prevent a future disaster. In response to this concern, ICAO created a standard

for aircraft tracking designated as the Global Aeronautical Distress Safety System (GADSS). Aireon responded by creating a low-cost tracking solution based on aircraft ADS-B equipage utilizing the SB ADS-B network to meet that tracking requirement faster and cheaper than many of the alternatives.

This implementation takes advantage of the same ADS-B 1090ES systems already installed in most aircraft, not requiring any additional investment or modification from operators who currently comply with ICAO ADS-B approved 1090ES systems. Compare this to the evolving and evasive FANS 1/A+ requirements that have placed many operators in the position of having to upgrade aircraft (at great expense) only to find they are not PBCS and/or U.S. domestic compliant. Quite a contrast.

### **What are the benefits?**

The primary advantage of the introduction of surveillance into oceanic operations will be a reduction in separation. Initially, this will be applied to in-trail spacing (longitudinal separation) and potentially reduce that separation to as close as 14 Nautical Miles (NM). The current longitudinal standard for data link approved aircraft is 5 minutes or approximately 50NM. The introduction would significantly increase the capacity of the most fuel-efficient routes and altitudes. The trial implementation is not expected to be restricted to specified tracks or altitudes, just between properly equipped aircraft.

Another key advantage of SB ADS-B is that the system is based on an active constellation of 66 low earth orbit satellites with geo-synchronous orbits that provide worldwide coverage. The system will also have 9 backup satellites available in orbit as well. The information on worldwide aircraft location will be in the system, it's just a matter of having it sent to ATC control panels that are properly equipped to display the information. The SB ADS-B system operates independently from the ADS-B ground stations and can provide a direct data feed to air navigation service providers (ANSPs).

The primary targets for Aireon SB ADS-B services are ANSPs such as the FAA, EASA, Africa's ASECNA, South Africa, New Zealand, Singapore, etc. This brings tremendous value to areas like Africa and Southeast Asia where ANSP's face unique challenges involving infrastructure. Placing a network of ground-based ADS-B receivers in remote areas can expose them to vandalism or theft. As an example, a recently installed ILS system in Benin, Nigeria was stolen!

### **What does my aircraft need to be compliant?**

In order for SB ADS-B separation reduction to be applied, aircraft will be required to be ADS-B **and** fully PBCS compliant. The controlling agency will determine eligibility based on the flight plan filing codes for ADS-B and PBCS. Let's recall that the PBCS requires FANS 1/A+ approval with RCP240, RSP180, and RNP 4 capabilities. Just add ADS-B, NAT HLA, and RVSM equipage and approval and you're ready! That is a lot of approvals, plus let's not forget, TCAS Version 7.1 and Enhanced Mode S Transponder equipage is required as well.

### **Where will it be implemented?**

Initial trial use of SB ADS-B for surveillance and separation will begin in Canada's Edmonton Flight Information Region (FIR) in the first quarter of 2019. This will be followed by a planned trial launch in the North Atlantic (NAT) on 29 March 2019. The NAT oceanic surveillance trial program will be employed in both in Gander and Shanwick's oceanic FIRs. Santa Maria will also introduce ADS-B separation standards, but that program will initially be limited to ground-based ADS-B operations.

We anticipate a mid-December 2018 release of a North Atlantic Ops Bulletin detailing the trial implementation which will be referred to as "Advanced Surveillance-Enhanced Procedural Separation" (ASEPS). This is to be followed by ICAO publishing the associated standards for ASEPS in a 5 November 2019 update to Procedures for Air Navigation Services - Air Traffic Management (PANS-ATM) Document 4444. This would move the ASEPS program beyond trial use and allow implementation of ASEPS based operations worldwide.

The final specifics involved in the trial program will be detailed in Canadian and United Kingdom Aeronautical Information Publications (AIPs), most likely involving a release of Aeronautical Information Circulars (AICs) to formally initiate the trial programs.

The NAT HLA does not anticipate requiring ADS-B for airspace entry but simply employing it as available. The impending U.S. and EU ADS-B requirements in 2020 will help ensure common equipage.

The introduction of ASEPS reduced separation standards in oceanic and remote regions will also impact contingency procedures for operators in the NAT HLA. To address this concern ICAO has created new contingency procedures for oceanic and remote operations which will also be identified in the November 2019 update to Procedures for Air Navigation Services - Air Traffic Management (PANS-ATM) Document 4444.

We expect the mid-December release of an additional North Atlantic Ops Bulletin detailing the trial implementation of these new contingency procedures in the NAT HLA airspace to be implemented with ASEPS. These new contingency procedures will initially only be used in the NAT HLA but, after the ICAO approval in November 2019, they may be implemented in other oceanic regions as well.

It would be important to note that the ASEPS target date for implementation, 29 March 2019, is also the target date for the expansion of the PBCS tracks in the North Atlantic Organized Track System. Add in the change in contingency procedures and that is a lot of moving parts, all happening at the same time, in the most congested oceanic airspace in the world.

One thing we don't anticipate changing on March 2019 is strategic lateral offset procedures (SLOP). Changes may follow down the road but it's not on the calendar now.

Let's all get ready for a busy spring in the North Atlantic!

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