Computer Says No: Why FAA RVSM Approvals Matter in Europe

Chris Shieff
12 December, 2023

An OPSGROUP member recently received the following message after their N-Reg flight plan was **rejected** by Eurocontrol:

Error from Eurocontrol;
(R)PROF204 RS: TRAFFIC VIA ED EK LF LG LU LE LS LM GM LO:F285..F415 IS ON FORBIDDEN ROUTE
REF:[EURORMA1A] NO RVSM APPROVAL STATUS HELD BY EURRMA

Or in other words **'computer says no – it seems you're not RVSM approved…'**

The issue stemmed from something called NAARMO – the North American Approvals Registry and Monitoring Organisation.

This is the agency responsible for monitoring the safe and proper use of RVSM throughout North American airspace including the US, Canada and Mexico. They maintain a list of **every US-registered commercial and turbine GA aircraft approved to operate in RVSM airspace.**

It may come as a surprise, but this same list is used across the pond by Eurocontrol (and its monitoring agency).

OPSGROUP has been advised that every three months, Eurocontrol carry out a flight plan audit using the FAA NAARMO list to identify **non-approved aircraft operating in RVSM airspace.**

If a registration is flagged, after further consultation, it may be added to a list of aircraft which will have their **flight plans rejected.** This was the case above.

Herein lies the problem: **if your aircraft's RVSM-status is recorded incorrectly on the US NAARMO list, you may find your flight plans getting bounced over in Europe.**

If this happens to you, here's how to fix it.

Contact NAARMO directly.

Yep, even though it's a problem in European airspace **the solution rests with NAARMO** back in the US.

You'll need to figure out why your aircraft doesn't appear on the FAA's database, and get that corrected first, before Eurocontrol can **remove your aircraft from their naughty list.** Once you get it corrected on the NAARMO database, they are apparently pretty good at sending Eurocontrol a specific notification so they can remove it from their list too (the day they receive the update, or the next working day).

You may not have been intentionally naughty either. There are some quite innocent reasons why this may be case – usually **missing information** related to airworthiness or other overlooked details.

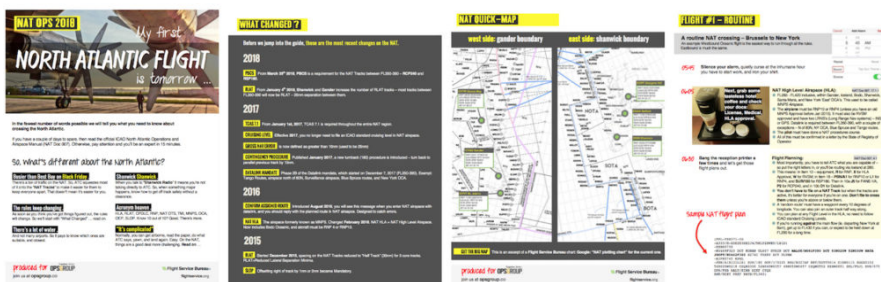To get in touch with NAARMO directly, use this form and email it to naarmo@faa.gov.

My first North Atlantic Flight is tomorrow – NAT Ops Guide (Updated 2018)
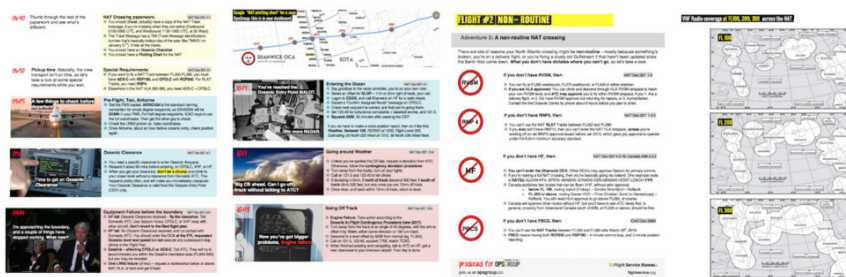
Declan Selleck
12 December, 2023

> For the **latest changes and updates on the North Atlantic**, including our most recent **Guides and Charts**, use our NAT reference page at **flightservicebureau.org/NAT**.

Of all the hundreds of questions we see in OPSGROUP, one region stands out as the most asked about – the NAT/North Atlantic. So, we made one of our legendary guides, to get everything into one PDF. It's called "My first North Atlantic Flight is tomorrow" – **and now we've updated it for 2018!**
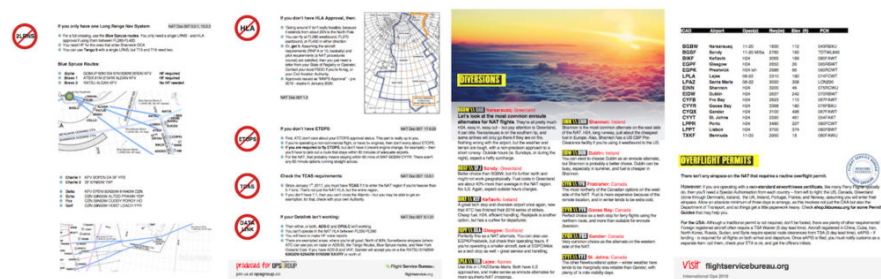
Contents:

– ATC Phone, Radio Station Phone, AFTN, Satcom, CPDLC Logon codes; and adjoining Domestic ATC units – US, Canada, Europe.

- 11. NAT **FPL Codes**

- 12. NAT **Flight Levels**

- 13. **Flight Plan Filing** Addresses by FIR

- 14. Links, Questions, Guidance
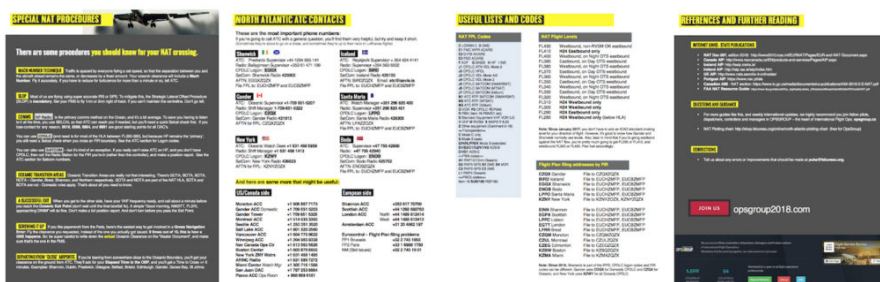
Excerpt from the Routine Flight #1:
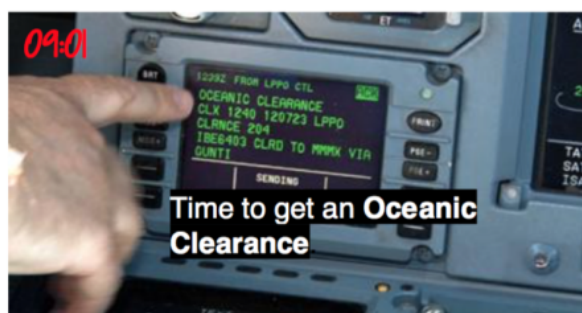
Oceanic Clearance   NAT Doc 007, 4.1

- You need a specific clearance to enter Oceanic Airspace.
- Request it about 60 mins before entering, on CPDLC, VHF, or HF.
- When you get your clearance, **don't be a chump** and climb to your ocean level *without* a clearance from Domestic ATC. This happens pretty often, and will make you immediately unpopular. Your Oceanic Clearance is valid from the Oceanic Entry Point (OEP) only.
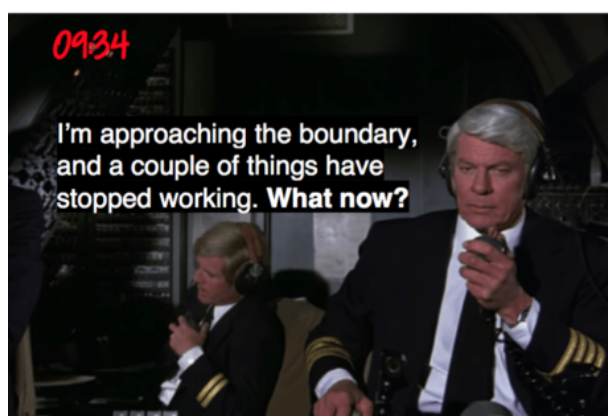
Equipment Failure before the boundary   NAT Doc 007, 6.6

- **HF fail**: Oceanic Clearance received – **fly the clearance**. Tell Domestic ATC. Use Satcom Voice, CPDLC, or VHF relay with other aircraft. **Don't revert to the filed flight plan**.
- **HF fail**: No Oceanic Clearance received, and no contact with Domestic ATC: You should enter the OCA **at the FPL requested Oceanic level and speed** but **not** execute any subsequent step climbs in the Flight Plan.
- **Datalink – affecting CPDLC or ADS-C**. Tell ATC. They will try to accommodate you within the Datalink mandated area (FL350-390), but you may be rerouted.
- **One LRNS failure** (of two) – request a reclearance below or above NAT HLA, or land and get it fixed.

Entering the Ocean — NAT Doc 007, 4.1
- Say goodbye to the radar controller, you're on your own now.
- Select an offset for **SLOP** – 1nm or 2nm right of track, your call.
- Logon to **EGGX**, and call Shanwick on HF for a radio check.
- Expect a "Confirm Assigned Route" message on CPDLC .
- Check next waypoint is correct, and that you're going there.
- Set 123.45 for turbulence complaints + baseball scores, and 121.5.
- **Squawk 2000**, 30 minutes after passing the OEP.

If you do have to make a voice position report, then do it like this:
Position, Swissair 100, RESNO at 1235, Flight Level 330,
Estimating 56 North 020 West at 1310, 56 North 030 West Next.
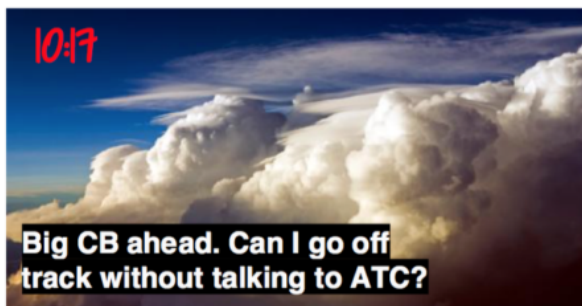
Going around Weather — NAT Doc 007, 13.4
- Unless you've spotted the CB late, request a deviation from ATC. Otherwise, follow the **contingency deviation procedure**:
- Turn away from the tracks, turn on your lights
- Call on 121.5 and 123.45 to tell others
- If deviating >10nm, if **north of track** descend 300 feet; if **south of track** climb 300 feet, but only once you are 10nm off track.
- Once clear, and back within 10nm of track, return to level.

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