

Shanwick's Tango Routes - 2021 changes

David Mumford

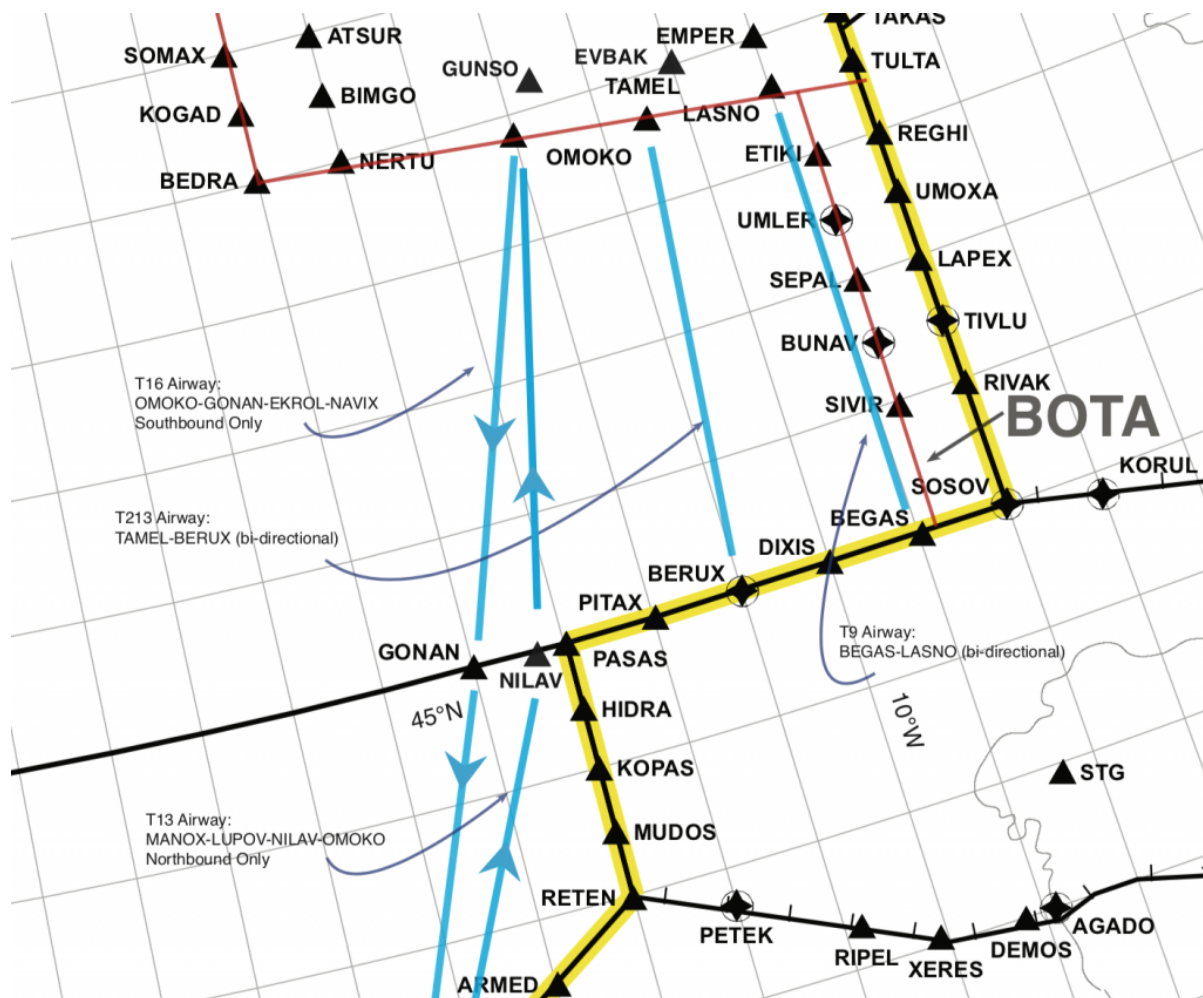
1 July, 2021



When the French Controllers go on strike, the airspace surrounding France becomes of high interest to international operators, especially the north-south Tango routes within Shanwick's airspace.

With Phase 2C of the North Atlantic Datalink Mandate effecting February 2021, **CPDLC is required between FL290-FL410 throughout the entire NAT region**. Some Tango routes stay exempt: **T9**, and a new route **T290**. The other Tango routes (**T213**, **T13**, **T16**) will all require datalink.

Map of the Tango Routes prior to 30 Jan 2020:



Tango 9 LASNO-BEGAS

The most popular of the Tango routes - often chock full of holiday traffic between Northern Europe and the Canaries. Requirements:

- **HF Radio.** One is sufficient.
- **An Oceanic Clearance.** Get it from Shanwick **at least** 30 minutes before you arrive at the boundary, 60 minutes is the best target time.
- At least **one** LRNS/Long Range Nav System
- **HLA Approval** if you want to fly above FL290 and above.

Tango 213 TAMEL-BERUX

- **HF Radio.** One is sufficient.
- **An Oceanic Clearance.** Get it from Shanwick **at least** 30 minutes before you arrive at the boundary, 60 minutes is the best target time.
- **Two** LRNS/Long Range Nav Systems
- **HLA Approval** if you want to fly above FL290 and above.

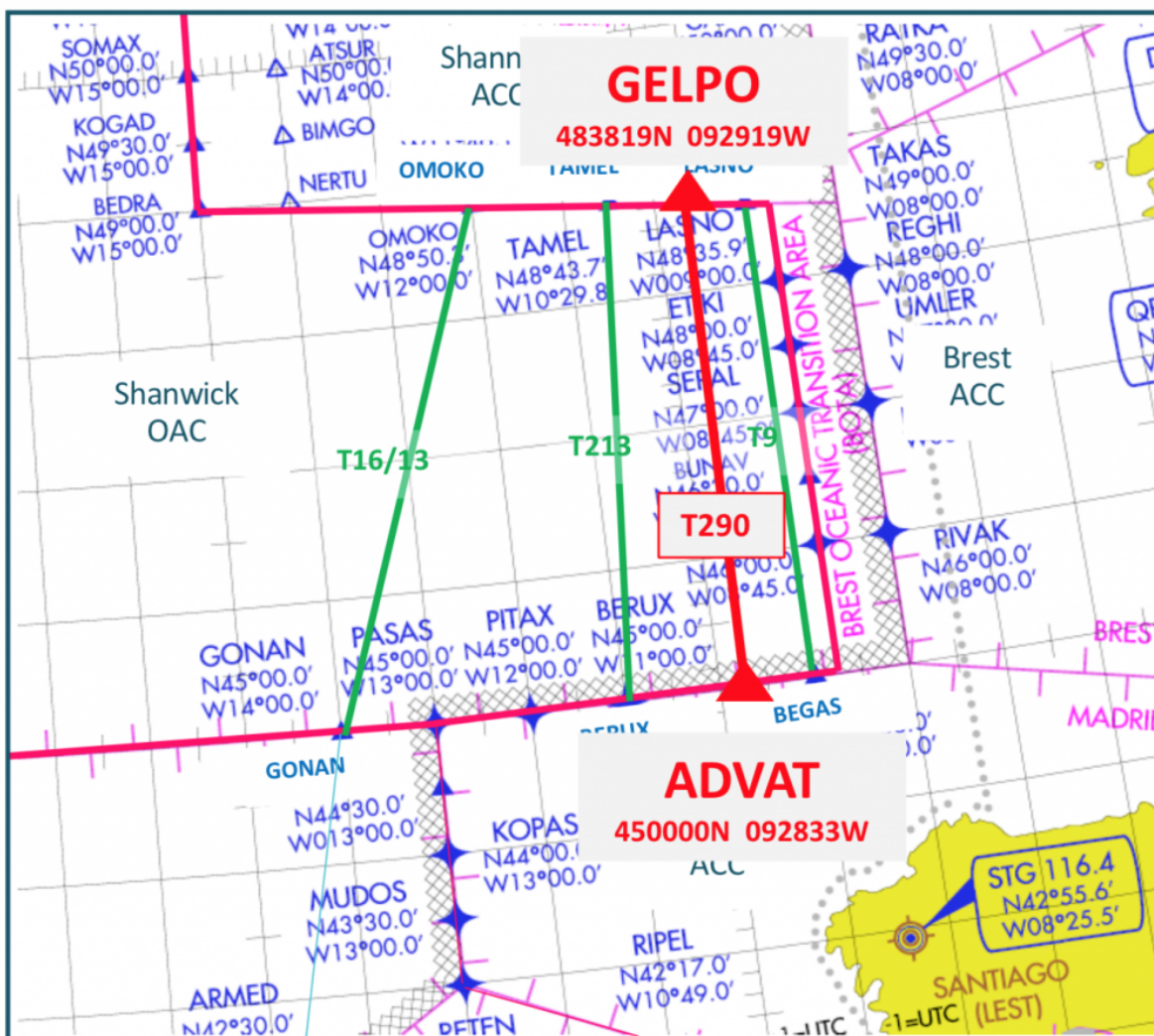
Tango 16 OMOKO-NAVIX

- **HF Radio.** One is sufficient.
- **An Oceanic Clearance.** Get it from Shanwick **at least** 30 minutes before you arrive at the boundary, 60 minutes is the best target time.
- **Two LRNS/Long Range Nav Systems**
- **HLA Approval** if you want to fly above FL290 and above.

Tango 13 MANOX-OMOKO

- **HF Radio.** One is sufficient.
- **An Oceanic Clearance.** Get it from Santa Maria **at least** 30 minutes before you arrive at the boundary, 60 minutes is the best target time.
- **Two LRNS/Long Range Nav Systems**
- **HLA Approval** if you want to fly FL290 and above.

T290 to be added from 30 Jan 2020:



Key Points:

- T290 will be 20NM to the west of T9, in order to support the NAT Contingency 5NM offset procedure. T290 will go from new boundary points GELPO in the north to ADVAT in the south.
- Both T9 and T290 will be classed as RNP2 continental offshore routes (the UK AIP says to make sure you include NAV/RNP2 in Field 18 of your FPL). Both will require: 1 LRNS, 1 HF, and ADS-B. The other Tango routes (T213, T13, T16) will all require datalink between FL290-410.
- T9 will become southbound only, even levels between FL300-400. T290 will be northbound only, odd levels from FL290-410.
- For T9 and T290, there will be a new VHF frequency: 128.360, which will be introduced on 30 Sep 2019. Pilots must monitor this frequency, but it's only to be used for intervention and emergency - in other words, don't use it unless something's going badly wrong! You'll still need to monitor and broadcast on 121.5 for in-flight contingencies.
- For more info on the Tango routes, check out the UK AIP ENR 3.5 due to take effect from Jan 30.
- You need a HF radio to enter Shanwick FIR, period. There are no exceptions.
- You need HLA Approval to use any of the Tango routes at FL290 and above.

Operating Tips

- You probably won't get the level that you want - either because the airway itself is busy, or because you're crossing a bunch of East-West NAT Traffic. If the rest of your Flight Plan shows FL380, plan FL320 for most of the Tango portion - especially T9.
- You can make an Oceanic request by Data-link (ACARS), Clearance delivery - 127.65 VHF, 123.95 VHF or via HF (Frequencies vary on the day, but 5598 is normally a safe bet).
- If you get a low Flight Level for the Oceanic Route, Shanwick are happy for you to check in again closer to the boundary and see if higher is now available.
- Entering the Oceanic Airspace, make a full position report: Position and time / Flight level / Next position and estimate for that point / Following position.
- Don't make a full exit position report when you enter domestic airspace, just callsign and "Approaching LASNO, FL370". Exception: Santa Maria likes one.
- No contact on HF? Relay on 123.45, or Sat Phone EGGX 423201 or EIAA 425002.

NAT HLA Approvals

- If you have an existing MNPS approval, it's good until 2020.
- If you need a new HLA approval, then you'll need RNP4/RNP10.
- Individual Crew need training in international procedures and HLA, as part of the process.

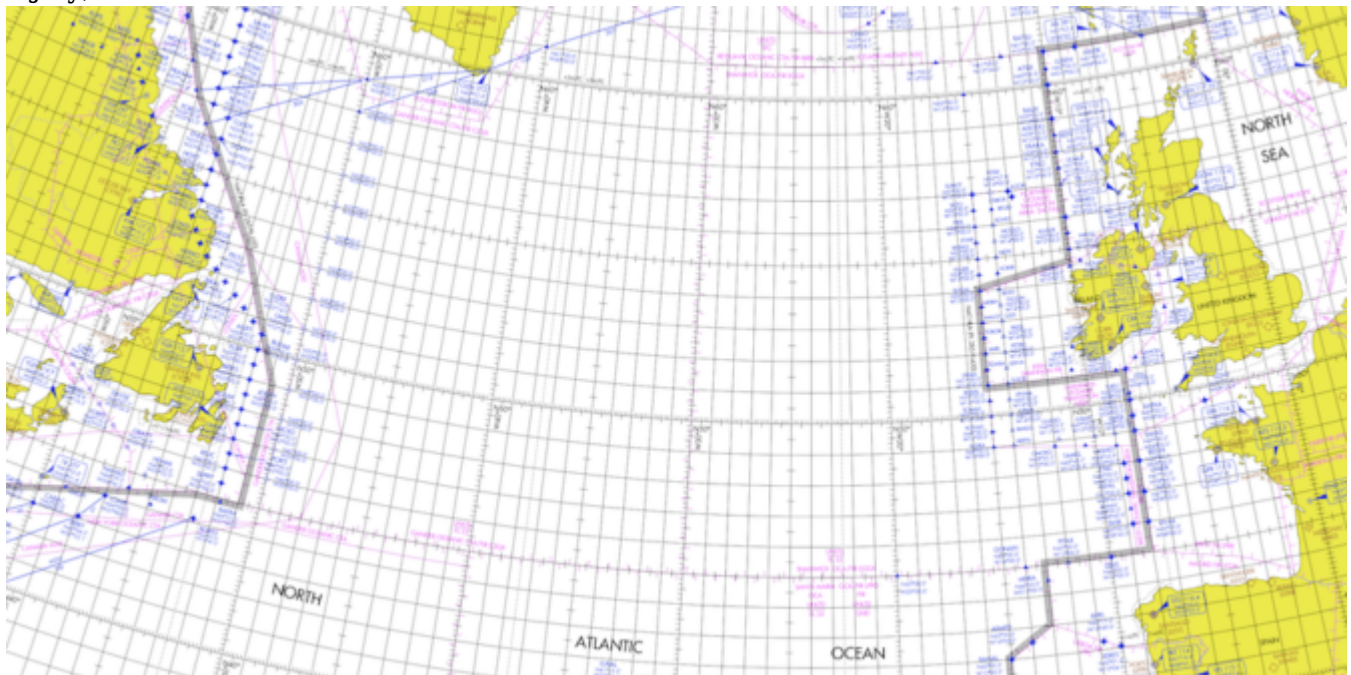
From Shannon ATC

Thanks to Shannon ATC for adding this useful information for crews operating on the Tango Routes:

- EICK Departures via T9/T213/T16 should get their Oceanic clearance prior to departure – ask the Tower 45 minutes ahead of time.
- All other EI/Irish departures can request clearance when airborne. For info, the earlier crews request their clearance the better, as it means they are more likely to get a better level and it allows ATC to plan for getting the aircraft to that level.
- Important: Due to the risk of two aircraft using the same squawk leading to a mis-ident, Northbound traffic entering SOTA via T9, T13, or T213 should squawk 2000 at least 10 minutes prior to the Irish boundary.

July 2020 North Atlantic Ops Update

David Mumford
1 July, 2021



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

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

ICAO NAT Ops Bulletins

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

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

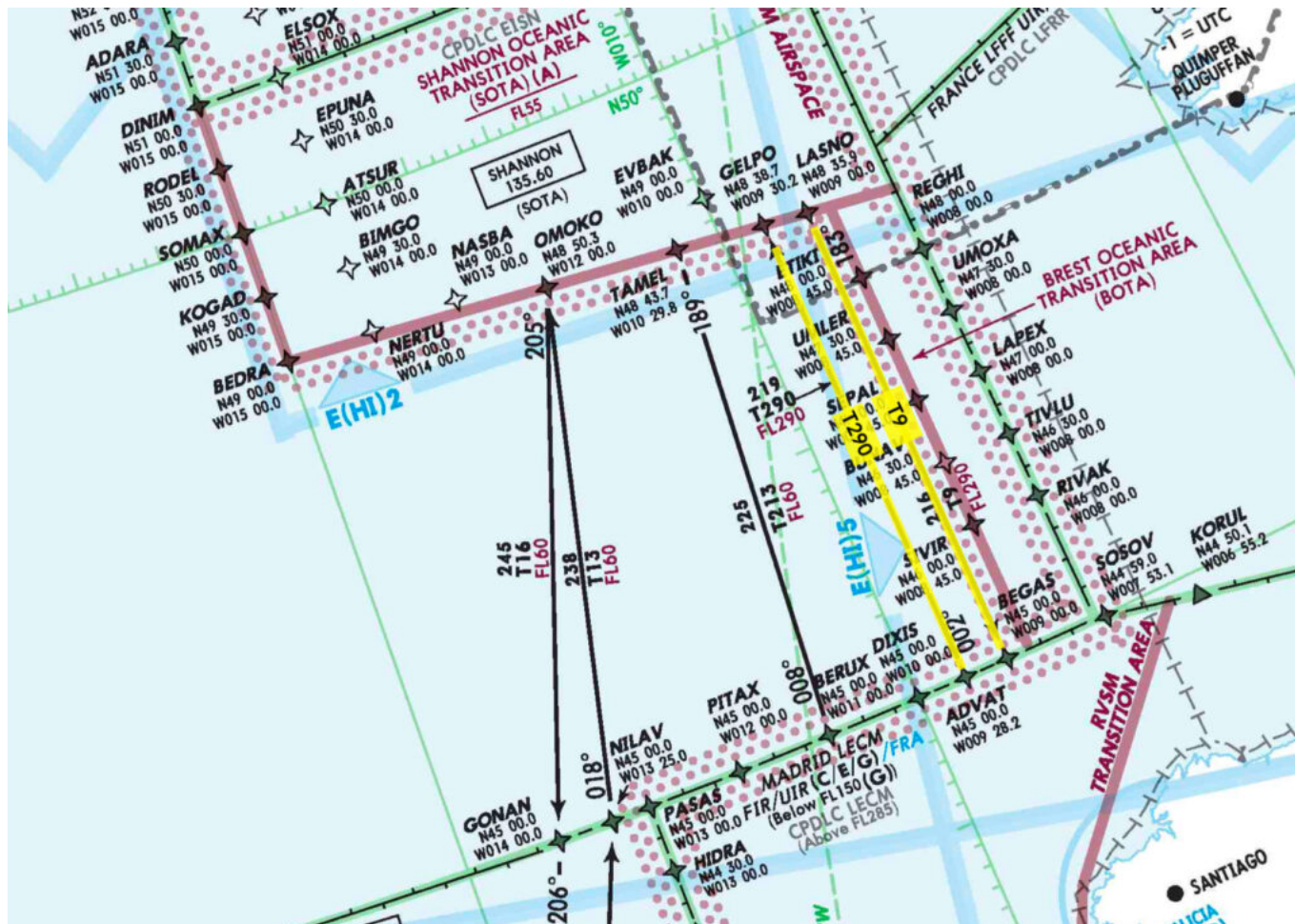
Second, there's a new Bulletin called **2020_002: Surveillance Service in the NAT Region / Flight**

Crew Operating Procedures. This is a strange one. The message seems to be this: back in the old days, you used to get a call from ATC saying “radar service is terminated” or “surveillance service is terminated” when heading out into the NAT, or when crossing from one oceanic control centre to the next. But nowadays, with improved SSR equipment and ADS-B more widely implemented, you might not get this message anymore.

ICAO NAT Doc 007 (2020, Version 2)

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


- There’s now a specific note saying that **state approval** is required to operate on these.
- There’s also a change to the **transponder procedures** when using **T9** or **T290**: normally you change transponder code to 2000 30mins after NAT entry, but because of the limited time spent in the NAT HLA when flying on T9 and T290 you should instead make this change 10mins after joining either of those routes.



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

What to do during “ATC Zero” events

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



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration

SAFO
Safety Alert for Operators

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Distributed by: Air Transportation Division

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

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

NAT Datalink Mandate

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

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

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