Turkey: New rules for GA/BA flights

David Mumford
18 February, 2021



Strange things are happening in Turkey.

Strange Thing #1

A few weeks ago we spotted a new doc issued by the Turkish CAA with guidelines for foreign registered aircraft who wish to operate **domestic legs** in Turkey – to get a permit, you now need to apply at least 15 days in advance, and you will need to **prove that you have investments in the country.**

Strange Thing # 2

Then this week, Turkey suddenly **revoked all landing permits for non-Turkish operators** unless they had "special exemptions".

No one seemed to know why this happened, what these special exemptions were, or how to go about applying for them.

So we got in touch with local Turkish handling agent Gozen Air for some urgent help to understand what's going on!

Here's what they said:

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With effect Feb 13, 2021, the Turkish CAA (TCAA) has started to apply
operational
limitations for all non-Turkish registered aircraft on general-business
aviation
operations to/from Turkey. This was just a verbal announcement by the TCAA -
they
haven't made any official announcement yet, though a change in the AIP and on
the
permit application system is expected soon.
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In the meantime, here's the lowdown:

Flights will only be considered as Private if the following criteria is met:
- Owner must be the same as the aircraft operator. i.e. the aircraft can't be leased out.
- Aircraft can only have maximum 12 passenger seats (or 19 seats if the country
of aircraft registration has a bilateral agreement with Turkey).

If flights don't match this criteria for any reason, then the flight will be considered a Commercial flight. In this case, the operator must apply for a charter landing permit, and include these docs in the application:
- AOC / Operations Specification
- Authorization Letter to your representative company in Turkey
- Handling Agreement (in case you are operating more than 4 flights to/from Turkey)
- Aircraft documents: Insurance, Registration, Noise, Airworthiness.

Regardless of whether a flight is considered Private or Commercial, foreign aircraft
with passengers onboard can only fly to Turkey from the country the operator/aircraft
is registered in.

Bottom line, the issue is that **there was previously no separation between Commercial and Private flights** among business aviation in general, and most of the business aviation flights were considered as private before. Now, the TCAA has implemented these new measures to **regulate them**, and also to **protect the local Turkish operators** in business aviation – although the roll-out of the new rules has so far been a bit uncoordinated and confusing.

Strange Thing #3

Back in December 2020, we had one report of a flight headed from Sweden to Cyprus – when on the runway about to depart, they received notification from the Turkey ACC that **overflight of Turkish airspace was not allowed**, and they would have to **route around the country**.

We had several other reports that the **United Arab Emirates CAA are now denying approvals for flights to/from Turkey** – they haven't officially published this new rule anywhere, but local permit agents have confirmed this is what's happening.

These events might be connected. Might not be. Might be to do with political tensions surrounding recent EU plans for sanctions against Turkey and naval drills off the Turkish coast. Might not be.

Whatever it is that's going on, if you've got a flight going **to or over Turkey** any time soon, **double-check your permits are all still valid**, and keep an eye on any AFTN replies you might get from Turkey once you've filed your flight plan.

If you need help with ops to Turkey, of for overflight of the LTAA/Ankara FIR, you can get in touch with local agent Gozen Air by email at: occ@gozenair.com