Why do we see US Military Notams?

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Back in March, an OPSGROUP member reached out to us after the following Notam appeared in their flight plan briefing package.

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EGKB: V0381/23 INSTRUMENT APPROACH PROCEDURE/NOT AVBL
QPIAU/ / /A/0/999  Valid: 05/12/2023 21:28 - 17/04/2024 23:59
( MILITARY NOTAM )
[US DOD PROCEDURAL NOTAM] INSTRUMENT APPROACH PROCEDURE NOT
AUTHORIZED ILS/LOC/DME/VOR RWY 21
```

As **EGKB/Biggin Hill** (UK) was their filed alternate, the Notam was of some interest. A quick email to the airport authority confirmed that the ILS was fully serviceable and available.

The member contacted Jeppesen directly about the Notam, and here was their response:

"The Notam in question is actually a US DOD procedural Notam which only applies to US military pilots and those flying under contract/partnership with the DOD. So, while the tower may confirm that the approach is in-service, the US military is not authorized to fly it for reasons known only to them..."

The following questions remained:

- **Why are we seeing these Notams in the first place?**
- **What is the reason for the restriction on military aircraft?**

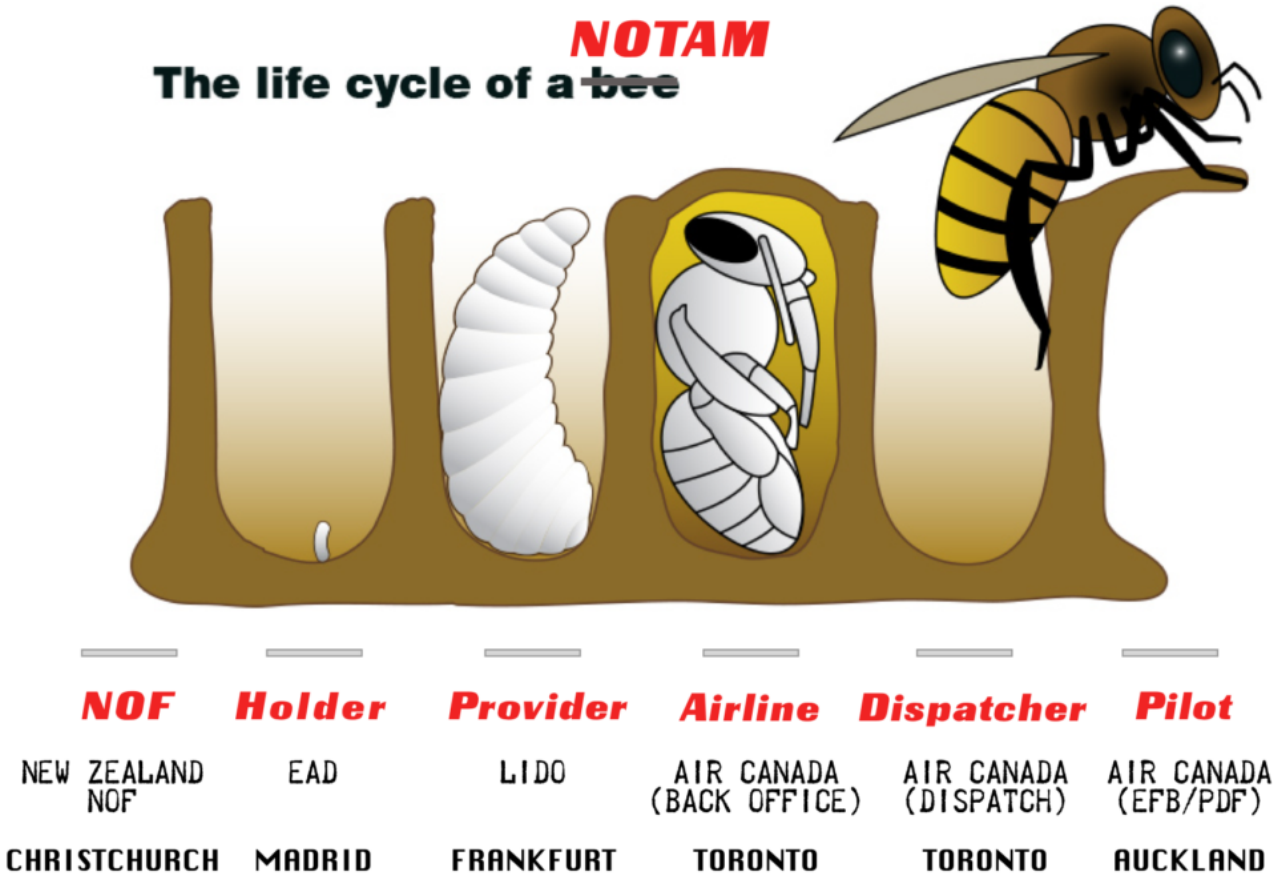
The short answer is that the response from Jeppesen was correct – but could use a little more explanation.

Where we get our Notams from.

There are **two primary "original" sources** for Notams around the world:

1. **The European AIS Database (EAD)** – run by Eurocontrol
2. **The US DoD (Department of Defense).** It supplies Notams to the FAA for their 'Notam Search' app, and their SWIM feeds – the FAA's information-sharing platform.

If your flight plan package is sourcing Notams from the US DoD (and not being filtered correctly), you will see military Notams included – like the one above. Think of them like company notams, for internal use. In this sense, they are not 'true' Notams and shoud be **completely disregarded by civilian operators.**



But why the UK?

To use the DoD Notam feed correctly, military Notams need to be filtered out. But there may be more to it than that.

You'll see the EGKB Notam above has a 'V' designator.

In the UK 'V' series Notams mean the following:

"Notification of Security Advice to UK Air Operators by Government to provide guidance/instructions on Airspace Security Risks. Volcanic Ash related information within En-Route Airspace London FIR/UIR, Scottish FIR/UIR, Shannon FIR/UIR and Shanwick Oceanic FIR…"

In the US, they mean something different:

"A NOTAM information pertaining to a location's published instrument procedures, i.e., Standard Instrument Approach Procedure (SIAPs), Standard Instrument Departure (SIDs), Departure Procedures (DPs). These NOTAMs shall be published under the direction of TERPS personnel…"

Which is why in this case (and many others) we may still see these Notams find their way into our briefing packs.

In a Notam-tale as old as time: **just because they're there, doesn't mean they're relevant.** The potential for confusion holds strong – especially if civilian operators misinterpret Notams never meant for them in the first place.

Why does the military have their own restrictions?

Because they do! In the same sense one airline can do something another does not allow.

Common sense indicates that the way military aircraft are operated differs substantially from civilian aircraft – and that the margins and procedures designed for us do not necessarily work in the same way for them.

Have more info?

If you have something you'd like to add to this article, **we'd love to hear from you**. You can reach us at team@ops.group.