

## Strategic Lateral Offset Procedure (SLOP) While Within Oceanic Airspace

The strategic lateral offset procedure (SLOP) has been promoted and practiced in oceanic airspace for a number of years. The standards for SLOP have been established by ICAO through Document 4444, Procedures for Air Navigation Services - Air Traffic Management. Until recently, application of SLOP offered aircraft operators options only to fly the track centerline, 1.0 NM, or 2.0 NM right of track. However, a change to the International Civil Aviation Organization Document 4444, Procedures for Air Navigation Services - Air Traffic Management, established new criteria for SLOP such that offsets may be performed at .1 NM intervals up to a maximum of 2.0 NM right of track. The new criteria will allow 21 offset positions versus the existing three positions, thereby, increasing safety. **These procedures will be published in the United States Aeronautical Information Publication on 30 January 2020.:**

It has been determined that allowing aircraft conducting oceanic flight to fly lateral offsets, in increments of .1 nautical mile (NM) up to a maximum of 2 NM right of center line, will provide an additional safety margin and mitigate the risk of conflict when non-normal events, such as aircraft navigation errors, altitude deviation errors, and turbulence-induced altitude-keeping errors occur.

**Effective 12 September 2019, these procedures are authorized in U.S.–controlled Oceanic Airspace and also the airspace surrounding the island of Bermuda, the airspace controlled by Honolulu Control Facility (HCF) and the airspace controlled by Guam Combined Center Radar Approach Control (CERAP).**

These procedures provide for offsets within the following guidelines: Along a route or track there will be 21 positions that an aircraft may fly: on center line or at increments of .1 NM (e.g. .1, .2, .3, .4 ..... 1.8, 1.9, 2.0) right of center line out to a maximum offset of 2 NM. Offsets must not exceed 2 NM right of centerline. The intent of this procedure is to reduce risk (add safety margin) by distributing aircraft laterally across the 21 available positions.

Pilots must fly the track center line if their aircraft does not have automatic offset programming capability. Pilots of aircraft unable to offset at .1 NM increments should fly on the track centerline, or at the 1.0 NM or 2.0 NM positions right of centerline when using SLOP.

An aircraft overtaking another aircraft should offset within the confines of this procedure, if capable, so as to create the least amount of wake turbulence for the aircraft being overtaken.

Pilots should also fly one of the available offset positions shown above to avoid wake turbulence.