

## **IBAC Technical Report Summary**

**Subject: NAT Operations and Air Traffic Management**

**Meeting: North Atlantic (NAT) Air Traffic Management Group 43<sup>rd</sup> Meeting (ATMG/43)**

**IBAC File:**

**Reported by: Brian Bowers**

**Summary:** NAT ATMG/43 was held in Prestwick, United Kingdom, 10 to 14 March, 2014.

ATMG/43 noted the projected I-4 satellite coverage over Greenland will be very limited or non-existent. This will affect the NAT Data Link Mandate in the Northern part of the NAT by prohibiting ATM services (based on data link) such as reduced separations. The Group will bring this to the attention of the NAT IMG.

The Group noted Phase 1 of the RLatSM trial is postponed until 12 November, 2015, due to a projected delay in system readiness.

The Group is concerned there is substantial work necessary in a short span of time to transition from the MNPS airspace to NAT High Level Airspace (HLA) based on PBN. This work will require changes to the different ICAO and NAT documents to be synchronised and ready for the 2015 milestone. As well clarification is required from regulatory authorities on how the transition process should take place during the 2015 to 2020 period. The ATMG recommends to the IMG to create a "Task Force" to clarify the NAT MNPS to PBN transition process and to draft changes to ICAO documentation.

The ATMG reviewed the speed distribution of aircraft that had been assigned a fixed Mach setting in the Reykjavik CTA. Speed information was obtained via ADS-C periodic reports and compared to the assigned Mach speed as issued in the NAT Oceanic clearance. The Reykjavik analysis showed speed distribution of aircraft with assigned Mach speed is more than 99.99% of the time within +/- M0.02 (approximately 13 knots) of the assigned Mach speed.

The ATMG reviewed a paper advocating an aircraft clearance in the NAT based on the assignment of a block of speeds and/or a block of altitudes, in lieu of a fixed speed and altitude. Although most ANSPs did not object to the use of blocks of altitudes, they did indicate being unable to accommodate the use of blocks of speeds due to potentially prohibitive upgrade costs and impracticable ATC procedures. The group agreed that a clear distinction would need to be made between cruise climb clearances and clearances to operate in blocks of flight levels if the practice of issuing more than one flight level to aircraft was introduced in the NAT. The ATMG recommends to the IMG to have Iceland submit a Proposal for Amendment (PFA) to the NAT SUPPS to remove the requirement to assign fixed Mach speed to all turbo jet aircraft in the NAT.

The Group could not achieve consensus on whether to recommend that the NAT DMO either correct the inaccurate information in NAT Doc 007, or remove any mention *that an MEL relief could be provided for inoperative ACAS/TCAS*. Therefore the decision on the best course of action was left to the discretion of the NAT IMG

The ATMG agreed to develop an implementation plan to support a "No SELCAL Check Trial" for NAT ATMG/44 review.

The Group noted that, following a PFA to section 15.8 of the PANS – ATM (Doc 4444), expected to take effect in November 2014, the responsibility for Volcanic Ash (VA) avoidance or the decision to fly or not to fly into an area of known or forecast VA contamination would be transferred from ATM to Aircraft Operators (AO). ATM will not change from its normal ATC provision in areas of known or forecast VA contamination as each aircraft operator will make its own decision on whether or not to operate through areas of known or forecast VA. IATA indicated that they needed to consult with their members before being able to comment on the proposed change.

Edition 2013 of NAT Doc 007 is available for public access on the ICAO EUR/NAT website effective 16 December 2013.

The DMO asked the ATMG members to review NAT Doc 007 Chapter 18 (incorporating relevant portions of the *North Atlantic International General Aviation (IGA) Operations Manual*) as the NAT IGA Ops Manual has not been

updated for many years, and to report any content that could be inaccurate or misleading.

The ATMG noted the effectiveness of regional documentation review with direct exchange with the NAT DMO, and felt it would be very beneficial to have this opportunity on a yearly basis, in support of the ATMG work programme. The ATMG proposes the composition of the ATMG be modified in the *North Atlantic Systems Planning Group Handbook* (NAT Doc 001). The Group would invite the NAT DMO once a year to the ATMG meeting taking place in Paris, France, unless otherwise agreed by the Group.

ATMG/44 is planned to take place in Paris, France, from 8 to 12 September 2014. It was agreed to recommend to NAT IMG that NAT ATMG/45 take place in Toronto, Canada, from 9 to 13 March, 2015.

**Implication for Business Aviation:**

**Note.** Phase 1 of the RLatSM trial is postponed until 12 November, 2015.

**Note.** The substantial work necessary to transition from the MNPS airspace to NAT High Level Airspace (HLA) based on PBN.

**Note.** That speed distribution of aircraft with assigned Mach speed is more than 99.99% of the time within +/- M0.02 (approximately 13 knots) of the assigned Mach speed.

**Note.** Most ANSPs do not object to the use of blocks of altitudes in lieu of a fixed altitude.

**Note.** The clear distinction between cruise climb clearances and clearances to operate in blocks of flight levels if the practice of issuing more than one flight level to aircraft is introduced in the NAT.

**Note.** The inaccurate information in NAT Doc 007 stating that an MEL relief can be provided for inoperative ACAS/TCAS.

**Note.** The change to PANS-ATM (Doc 4444) to transfer the responsibility for Volcanic Ash avoidance or the decision to fly or not to fly into an area of known or forecast Volcanic Ash contamination from ATM to Aircraft Operators.

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**Note.** NAT Doc 007 Chapter 18 incorporates relevant portions of the *North Atlantic International General Aviation (IGA) Operations Manual* and that the IGA Operations Manual has not been updated for many years, and to report any content that could be inaccurate or misleading.

**Decisions Required:**

On the timely acquisition of equipment, the degree of training and certification required to meet the requirements to efficiently continue accessing NAT airspace.

To equip, train and certify to meet the Data Link Mandate timing and implementation phases as agreed by the NAT SPG.

To note the transition of the NAT MNPS airspace to NAT HLA based on PBN and take action as required to continue unrestricted access to the NAT HLA.