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AIC
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A04 - OCEANIC CLEARANCE REMOVAL

1. Introduction

The Oceanic Clearance Removal is planned within Bodø OFIR (Bodø Oceanic FIR) on AIRAC 21 MAR 2024.

1.1 The NAT Region requires operators to obtain a specific Oceanic Clearance to operate within the region. This procedure was introduced to enable safe and efficient handling of the large volume of traffic that operated within the NAT procedural oceanic airspace utilizing HF voice communications and large separation standards.

1.2 Recently, significant technological advancements in Communication, Navigation and Surveillance have enabled NAT ANSPs to improve safety and services in the NAT Region and further reduce separation minima. These technologies include:

- Communication – utilization of CPDLC, including route conformance check using the uplink message CONFIRM ASSIGNED ROUTE;
- Surveillance – utilization of ADS-C and ADS-B, including route conformance check using the ADS-C capability to report the NEXT and NEXT+1 waypoint;
- Improved computer interfaces between Domestic and Oceanic air traffic control sectors.

1.3 The NAT Systems Planning Group concluded that technological developments have reached a point where oceanic clearance is no longer required.

1.4 The following is an explanation of the terms “should”, “must” and “shall” as used in this AIC:

- “Should” is used to indicate a recommended practice or policy that is considered desirable for the safety of operations.
- “Shall” and “must” are used to indicate a practice or policy that is considered necessary for the safety of operations.

1.5 This AIC describes in English only amended procedures that are applicable after the removal of NAT oceanic clearances that is planned in Bodo OFIR (Bodo Oceanic FIR) on AIRAC 21 MAR 2024.

2. Flight Crew Procedures

RCL (Request for Clearance)

2.1 The ACARS or voice RCL must contain all of the following information:

- Oceanic Entry Point (OEP)
- ETA for the OEP
- Mach Number (based on FMS cost index (ECON))

- Requested Flight Level (RFL)
 - The highest acceptable Flight Level which can be attained at the OEP (via free text)
- provide the highest acceptable Flight Level as MAX FL
- Example: Requesting FL360 - enter free text MAX F380
- If the requested Flight Level is the highest acceptable, provide the requested Flight Level as MAX FL
- Example: Requesting FL360 - enter free text MAX F360

2.2 Flight crews must send the ACARS RCL message at least 20 minutes prior to the Bodo OFIR (Bodo Oceanic FIR) OEP.

2.3 Voice shall be used to submit an RCL message if:

- Not-ACARS Data Link equipped
- ACARS Data Link is not operational
- RCL REJECTED is received by aircraft (ACFT)
- No response to RCL is received within 15 minutes of sending RCL

2.4 The following response message to the RCL will be generated automatically by the ANSP and delivered to the ACFT via ACARS or voice as appropriate:

RCL RECEIVED BY [ANSP]. FLY CURRENT FLIGHT PLAN OR AS AMENDED BY ATC.

Revert to voice if **RCL REJECTED** is received,

Note: There will be no clearance sent via the traditional ACARS method. Flight crew must fly what is loaded in the FMS or as amended by ATC.

Note: If ATC cannot accept the requested OEP Flight Level, the closest oceanic Flight Level to the one requested (RCL) will be determined and a clearance to climb or descend issued prior to the OEP.

The “MAX FL” will never be violated.

Note: Flight crews are reminded that a change in Flight Level, Speed or Route can be requested at any time after the OEP.

2.5 The information in the RCL message will be processed as follows:

RCL data item	ATC Processing
Oceanic Entry Point (OEP) and ETA time	Information is used to update the currently held ATC data
Mach Number time	ATC will use the requested Mach speed information as the reference speed for cost index (ECON) operations. The aircraft should continue to operate on FMS cost index (ECON) unless it is assigned a fixed Mach speed by ATC. ATC must be advised if the speed changes by Mach 0.02 or more from the Mach in the RCL.
Flight Level	ATC will store the requested Flight Level information. The aircraft shall not change Flight Level unless it is cleared for a Flight Level change by ATC. Flight crews are reminded that a change in Flight Level can be requested at any time after the OEP as the traffic situation constantly changes and previously blocked Flight Levels may become available.
Max Flight Level	Max Flight Level shall be provided in the RCL. ATC will store the Max Flight Level Information for traffic planning purposes. If no Max Flight Level is provided, the RCL requested Flight Level will be considered as the highest acceptable Flight Level at OEP.
Other information	Information is brought to the attention of the controller.

2.6 Oceanic Route Change Communications (**Prior to OEP**)

Upon receipt of the ACARS Data Link RCL, any route amendment to the current flight plan (what is loaded in the FMS) will be issued either by voice or CPDLC loadable route clearance uplink.

2.7 Route Conformance Checking (**After passing OEP**)

CONFIRM ASSIGNED ROUTE will be uplinked to FANS equipped ACFT after crossing the OEP. CPDLC loadable route clearance uplinks will be used to amend the current flight plan where necessary after the OEP.

2.8 Entry Conditions

Enroute ACFT shall enter oceanic airspace in accordance with their current flight plan (what is loaded in the FMS), or as amended by ATC. No oceanic clearance is required.

2.9 Speed

- Fly cost index FMS (ECON). ATC will assign a fixed Mach number if required due to traffic.
- If ATC assigns a fixed Mach number for the oceanic crossing due to traffic, request NORMAL SPEED (via CPDLC or voice) after the OXP (Oceanic Exit Point) in domestic ATC airspace.

3. Air-Ground Communications Failure

3.1 The NAT loss of communication procedure has been amended as follows:

Communications failure while operating in the NAT Region:

- The pilot shall maintain the current flight plan until reaching the OXP.
- No route, flight level or speed change shall be made before the OXP unless a change is deemed necessary by the pilot in command to ensure the safety of the ACFT.

4. Websites and other information

The ICAO EUR/NAT Office Website is at: www.icao.int/eurat.

Click on EUR & NAT Documents >> NAT Documents to obtain NAT Operations and NAT Region Update Bulletins and related project planning documents.

5. Contacts

The following may be contacted for information or to provide feedback:
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