SECTION 2

INTERNATIONAL OCEANIC AIRSPACE NOTICES

INTRODUCTION

The following information contains the most current notices involving airspace matters pertaining to U.S. internationally delegated airspace. The information provided is divided into two sections: General and Region Specific.

Failure to Comply with ATC Clearances in Oceanic Airspace

The FAA has identified categories of problematic events that continue to occur in oceanic operations. These events involve pilots either not complying with an ATC clearance or not adhering to Oceanic Weather Deviation Procedures published in ICAO Document 4444 (Procedures For Air Navigation Services, Air Traffic Management), and which are reprinted in the Aeronautical Information Manual (AIM), and in the United States Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP). The following are descriptions of problematic categories:

1. **Failure to comply with Conditional Clearances.** Pilots continue to disregard the time restriction in conditional clearances. For example, with the following clearance issued at 1200: “MAINTAIN FL 350, AT 1210 CLIMB TO AND MAINTAIN FL370, REPORT REACHING,” pilots frequently climb right away instead of waiting for the time restriction (in this case, 1210).

2. **Failure to Update Time Estimates.** Pilots continue to provide inaccurate estimated times of arrival (ETAs). ICAO Annex 2 requires pilots to notify ATC if the originally provided estimate changes in excess of 2 minutes from that previously notified. ETAs can be affected by weather deviations, speed changes, and/or inaccurate winds or speeds in the navigation computer.

3. **Failure to Coordinate Altitude Clearance.** Pilots continue to climb without clearance to the altitude associated with the oceanic clearance and/or an en route filed level change (in Item 15 of the flight plan). Such vertical clearances need to be coordinated with ATC.

4. **Non-adherence to Oceanic Weather Deviation Procedures.** Pilots continue to deviate around weather without requesting clearances from ATC. Only if conditions preclude such coordination should pilots deviate without a clearance, and if such un-cleared deviations are necessary, pilots should adhere to the ICAO Weather Deviation Procedures referenced above.

5. **Non-compliance with Revised Clearances.** Pilots continue to fly the filed flight plan routing instead of the ATC cleared routing. Pilots whose oceanic clearances differ from the filed routing in many cases fail to re-program navigation computers with the revised route of flight.

Failure to comply with ATC clearances is a major cause of risk in oceanic airspace. Requirements to comply with ATC clearances are published in paragraph 3.6.2 (Adherence to flight plan) of ICAO Annex 2 (Rules of the Air) and 14 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations), Part 91, Section 91.123 (Compliance with ATC clearances and instructions).

Operators must stress in pilot training and operations manuals the necessity to:

1. Comply fully with an ATC clearance.

2. Obtain a revised clearance prior to deviating from cleared track or flight level or, if unable to obtain a clearance prior to deviating, follow the appropriate deviation procedure for oceanic airspace (weather deviation or in-flight contingency).

3. Adhere to the provisions of published Oceanic Weather Deviation Procedures.

Questions on this Notice may be directed to one of the following:
GENERAL

Re-designation of North Atlantic Minimum Navigation
Performance Specification Airspace as NAT High Level Airspace

1. Purpose. This notice serves to inform the U.S. aviation community that the ICAO North Atlantic Systems Planning Group re-designated the long-standing North Atlantic (NAT) Minimum Navigation Performance Specifications (MNPS) airspace as NAT High Level Airspace (HLA) on February 4, 2016. This change supports the MNPS to performance based navigation (PBN) transition plan. This action is taken in accordance with ICAO NAT Implementation Management Group Decision 45/2 which was announced in a January 5, 2015 letter to States and industry organizations from the ICAO European and North Atlantic office.

2. Boundaries of NAT HLA. The NAT HLA includes the following airspace, between flight levels 285 and 420: the oceanic control areas of Bodo Oceanic, Gander Oceanic, New York Oceanic East, Reykjavik, Santa Maria, and Shanwick, excluding the Shannon and Brest Ocean Transition Areas.

3. Letter X for Air Traffic Control Flight Plan. Item 10A of the flight plan filed with ATC should continue to be annotated with the letter “X” to indicate that the aircraft and operator meet the requirements for NAT HLA operations.

4. Effect on FAA Operations Specification (OpSpec), Management Specification (MSpec) and Letter of Authorization (LOA) B039. A new OpSpec/MSpec/LOA B039 was effective in June, 2016 under the title “Operations in North Atlantic High Level Airspace (NAT HLA).” Previous issuances of B039 (i.e. reflecting authorization for operations in MNPS airspace) may remain valid until January 2020 and permit operations in NAT HLA until then. All new issuances, and re-issuances, of B039 now require the operator to be capable of and authorized for a minimum of RNP 10.

5. FAA NAT Resource Guide for U.S. Operators. The NAT Resource Guide has been updated to reflect the ongoing transition from NAT MNPS to NAT HLA. The guide can be found at:

http://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/avs/offices/afs/afs400/afs470/media/NAT.pdf

6. Questions. If you have questions, please contact one of the following:

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