

Performance Based Communications Surveillance (PBCS) in the North Atlantic Organized Track System

Effective March 29, 2018 the NAT OTS will publish PBCS tracks. (PBCS separation standards are being implemented worldwide.) PBCS replaces the existing RLatSM trials in the NAT OTS. By reducing the lateral and longitudinal separation standards, more aircraft will be able to benefit from the preferred core winds.

This provides Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs/aka ATC) the ability to publish up to nine tracks, with a half-degree of (lateral) separation and as little as 5 minutes in-trail separation (longitudinal), in the North Atlantic Organized Track System (NAT OTS).

By now your airline should have published training materials and Flight Operations Bulletins to international crew-members educating them of these new standards and procedures.

Please refer to your company's materials for more detailed information.

IFALPA would like to highlight the importance of a few items:

- 1-** Review your company's Flight Operations Bulletins regarding operations in the NAT, particularly as it pertains to the use of half-degree tracks or waypoints, and the implementation of PBCS.
- 2-** Pay close attention to strict adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) regarding clearances that involve a half-degree waypoint or track. Your company's NAT Oceanic Checklist should provide you with very specific procedures to mitigate the inherent risks of truncated Lat/Long waypoints in your FMC/FMS. Even the most seasoned flight crew can fall victim to display ambiguity.
- 3-** Review CPDLC procedures and employ your company's SOP with focus on cockpit discipline. Understanding and properly complying with CPDLC clearances will help prevent Gross Navigational errors (GNEs).
- 4-** Through your company's training materials you should be able to educate yourself regarding PBCS implementation. You should understand, among other things:
 - a) How to identify whether your aircraft is PBCS authorized,
 - b) The new separations standards laterally and longitudinally,
 - c) Any revised contingency procedures,
 - d) Monitoring of performance standards in compliance of PBCS,
 - e) What to do if you fail to meet PBCS requirements once on the OTS.

- 5- If your aircraft does NOT meet PBCS requirements, your Dispatcher should specify that in the OFP (Flight Plan).
- 6- PBCS airspace is from FL350 to FL390 (inclusive).
- 7- The most reduced separations standards are minimums available to ATC. This does not mean that all PBCS aircraft will be at these minimum standards.
- 8- PBCS aircraft will be paired in order to optimize the lowest separation standards.
- 9- NON-PBCS aircraft will not be cleared into PBCS airspace or on a PBCS track.

Attachments*:

NOTE: The following ICAO Bulletins for the NAT are provided for your education and background. Your company will likely have detailed procedures for your specific aircraft and your specific navigation and communication equipment.

These bulletins are reference material and do not supersede your company SOP.

*ICAO NAT OPS BULLETIN 2018-001-Rev.1 published March 2, 2018 and effective March 29, 2018. (Implementation of PBCS Minima)

*ICAO NAT OPS BULLETIN 2017-005 published December 7, 2017 (Sample Oceanic Checklist)

*ICAO NAT OPS BULLETIN 2017-002-Rev 1 published December 7, 2017 (Oceanic Errors Safety Bulletin)

The safe and efficient operation in the NAT is a team effort. Between air traffic controllers' and pilots' disciplined procedures, we can ensure the highest level of safety for all passengers.