

Kabul FIR Updated Information

Note: This Safety Bulletin (originally published 17 August 2021) represents a rapidly changing situation, updates may be published quickly.

IFALPA has received the following information via the Kabul FIR Contingency Coordination Team (CCT).

This bulletin issued to provide an update on the ongoing contingency situation in the Kabul FIR. Changes/updates and new information are highlighted.

Summary of changes:

UPDATED: Afghanistan participation in CCT video-teleconference, and information provided. Several deletions of information on non-contact with Afghanistan.

UPDATED: Limited ATS at Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif.

UPDATED: Clarification of the scope of restoration of the Afghanistan NOTAM service. Pakistan assisting Afghanistan.

UPDATED: Clarification of information on potential pop-up departure traffic, and the dependence on Afghanistan agreement to and/or development of contingency procedures.

UPDATED: Information on NOTAM sources and anomalies.

UPDATED: Afghanistan ATM Contingency 2021 webpage.

SITREP at 09 September 2021, 1300 UTC

UPDATED: ICAO has been informed that officials have been appointed to senior positions in the Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority, and relevant Point of Contact details have been provided. ~~However, multiple attempts have not yet established contact. ICAO is continuing efforts to establish contact with the ACAA Officials concerned.~~

Afghanistan participated in the Fourth Video Teleconference of the Kabul FIR CCT, held on 08 September 2021, and informed the meeting that the situation in Afghanistan had stabilized, which would permit better communication with the CCT and other stakeholders.

ICAO has established contact with officials from Qatar who are coordinating assistance and advice to the Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority. Qatar is conducting an assessment of capability and needs, and may provide further information as it becomes available.

Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority: you are requested to establish and maintain contact with ICAO APAC Office for operational contingency coordination purposes: apac@icao.int; ssumner@icao.int (tel/sms: +66 837557504).

ENROUTE ATS in the Kabul FIR remains unavailable. Most flights are avoiding the Kabul FIR.

UPDATED: Some limited ATS may be available at Kabul airport. A limited TWR service supporting VFR operations for landing and take-off is available at Kabul. Operating hours are 0330 – 1330 UTC.

A Flight Information Service is provided at Mazar-e-Sharif. The scope of this service is not known.

UPDATED: Afghanistan AIS has partially restored the NOTAM Office service. NOTAMs issued on 06 September 2021 are available in the Afghanistan AIS alternative NOTAM webpage: <https://www.afgais.com/>.

Pakistan is kindly providing assistance to Afghanistan for NOTAM distribution.

SEE CAUTION RE NOTAMS BELOW.

NOTAM Kabul FIR indicates 24-hour prior notification is required for all flights.

ICAO has developed **DRAFT** NOTAMs detailing contingency procedures for overflight traffic, and for traffic arriving in, departing from, or operating wholly within the Kabul FIR. The proposed contingency arrangements are based on the continued unavailability of ATS in the Kabul FIR, and the requirement for TIBA procedures.

As Points of Contact for Afghanistan CAA have now been provided, the draft NOTAMS have been forwarded to Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority for their consideration and in-principle approval.

The contingency arrangements in the draft NOTAMS will require agreement from neighbouring FIRs, which will be sought following in-principle approval from Afghanistan.

~~CAUTION: While ICAO continues to reach out to Afghanistan, there has been no meaningful operational coordination in response. All Stakeholders are advised that the situation may change without coordination.~~

Afghanistan has not notified ICAO of the formal activation of its ATM contingency plan. ICAO has not yet received any notification from Afghanistan or neighbouring States of the formal activation of any contingency plan.

The Kabul FIR ATM Contingency Plan may be accessed at <https://aca.gov.af/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Afghanistan-ATM-Contingency-Plan-V2.1-APR-2021.pdf>

All relevant States are urged to activate any contingency arrangements they may have relating to non-availability of ATS in the Kabul FIR.

All potentially affected States, **particularly Bahrain, India, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and UAE**, are urged to take into account the likelihood of increased non-normal traffic through your FIRs, or traffic operating on other than the usual ATS routes.

Related NOTAMs published by the above States should be coordinated with neighbouring States and published at the earliest opportunity where specific ATS routing or other requirements for contingency traffic become necessary (particularly Afghanistan-neighbour States **China, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan**), and in accordance with any established contingency plan where applicable.

UPDATED: It is likely that neighbouring States, especially **but not limited to Iran, Pakistan, and Turkmenistan** may encounter pop-up departure traffic from OAKB at the FIR boundary. Further consideration is being given to local procedure development, **subject to Afghanistan agreement to proposed contingency procedures and/or**

development of alternative procedures, and may be the subject of a CCT video teleconference with ANSPs of neighbouring FIRs.

Some traffic has been observed entering/leaving and operating within the Kabul FIR, both by day and by night:

- Flights observed entering and leaving the Kabul FIR to/from:
 - Abu Dhabi, Islamabad, Al Udeid, Doha
- Some UN/WFP operations
- Some military transport operations (Qatar, Turkey)
- Some Domestic flights

Note 1: periodical observations made using publicly available online flight tracking services. Observation of operating traffic is dependent on the coverage of the sensors contributing to the flight tracking service, and on aircraft transponders operation. There is likely to be other traffic that is not observed.

Note 2: No information is available on procedures used by these flights for entry to/exit from or operation within the Kabul FIR.

UPDATED: Some NOTAM Office (NOF) functions of the Afghanistan AIS have been restored. Pakistan is assisting Afghanistan in distributing NOTAMS. New NOTAMS published by Kabul NOF are available on the alternate AIS webpage <https://www.afgais.com>.

However, all stakeholders should note that Afghanistan CAA website has two separate NOTAM pages. **At time of publication of this bulletin the page <http://notam-aca.com> has not been updated.**

UPDATED: NOTAMS for Kabul FIR (OAKX,) and Kabul International aerodrome (OAKB), have been published on the USA Defense Internet NOTAM Service (DINS, <https://www.notams.faa.gov/dinsQueryWeb/>). ~~At the time of publication of this bulletin the DINS had not been updated with new Afghanistan NOTAMS. The DINS has now been updated with new Afghanistan NOTAMS, and the NOTAMS previously issued by military agencies prior to 31 August 2021 have been removed~~

There remain a number of NOTAMs in both of the ACAA web portals, and DINS, that have passed their expiry date in Item C and therefore require either review (EST date/time in Item C) or removal (Item C time not EST).

CAUTION: ALL STAKEHOLDERS ARE URGED TO CHECK ALL AVAILABLE SOURCES TO VERIFY NOTAM INFORMATION UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Due to changing information being published in NOTAMs in DINS but not coordinated with ICAO or the CCT, snapshots of NOTAMs are no longer attached to CCT Bulletins.

UPDATED: Afghanistan ATM Contingency 2021 Webpage

CCT Bulletins, CCT video-conference briefings and other relevant ATM contingency-related information are now available on a dedicated webpage, accessible through the ICAO Asia/Pacific Regional Office website:

Regional Office website:

<https://www.icao.int/apac/Pages/default.aspx>

Afghanistan ATM Contingency 2021 webpage:

<https://www.icao.int/APAC/Meetings/Pages/2021-AFGH-ATM.aspx>

Distribution of CCT bulletins to all CCT participants by email will continue. Bulletins and other relevant information will be posted to the website at the earliest opportunity during business hours (Bangkok).