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The purpose of North Atlantic Operations Bulletin 2026-001_Revision 00 is to promulgate the Oceanic Errors Safety Bulletin (OESB).

Any queries about the content of the attached document should be addressed to:

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¹ This NAT OPS Bulletin supersedes Serial Number: 2017-002 Revision 09.

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This OESB is intended for distribution to industry and training centers. The OESB will also be posted on various websites to enable broad distribution and rapid updates. In addition, the OESB should be used in conjunction with the guidance detailed in the current edition of North Atlantic Operations and Airspace Manual. This manual can be found at <https://www.icao.int/EURNAT> under: “EUR/NAT Documents > NAT Documents > NAT Documents > NAT Doc 007.” Operators should consult <https://www.icao.int/EURNAT> for the most current version of the OESB under “EUR/NAT Documents > NAT Documents > NAT OPS Bulletins.” A **sample oceanic checklist** has been developed using many of the recommendations found in this OESB and can be downloaded via the same links. The OESB is promulgated by the NAT Safety Oversight Group (NAT SOG). Questions or comments regarding this Bulletin may be directed to The European and North Atlantic Office of ICAO: icaoeurnat@icao.int.

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OESB – Oceanic Errors

The Oceanic Errors Safety Bulletin (OESB) is intended to help air operators transiting North Atlantic oceanic airspace by highlighting commonly observed operational errors.

Top Tips for Operators

- Request weather deviations early. If ATC clearance cannot be obtained, advise ATC and execute the published weather deviation procedure, changing altitude 300ft upon reaching 5 NM L or R of course. If previously unable to contact ATC, continue attempts until ATC replies.
- Be familiar with CPDLC ROUTE CLEARANCE uplinks and loading. Ensure the FMS is properly configured (activated/executed) with the revised routing before sending WILCO/ACCEPT.
- Independently confirm CPDLC climb or descent clearances and cross-check with the other pilot before executing them. A “STANDBY” response may appear on the same screen as the request. Do not mistake this message for a clearance.
- Display and verify the full DEGREES and MINUTES (expanded coordinates) loaded into the FMS for unnamed (Lat/Long) waypoints. Truncated (shortened) displays cause persistent problems in NAT HLA.
- When GNSS RFI results in degraded clock or navigation performance, advise ATC promptly to allow application of larger separation standards.

Large Height Deviations

1. If a flight level becomes unsustainable due to degrading performance (e.g., operating near maximum FMS altitude), it is imperative to coordinate and request a flight level change with ATC. If an ATC clearance is not available, apply the 5 NM lateral offset contingency procedure and inform ATC.
2. Both pilots should agree (cross-check) with the flight level change clearance and the automation mode used to accomplish the flight level change.
3. The following CPDLC messages are **not** a clearance to change flight level:
 - WHEN CAN YOU ACCEPT FLXXX?
 - CAN YOU ACCEPT FLXXX at XX:XX?
 - EXPECT FLXXX.
 - HIGHER FLIGHT LEVEL MAY BE AVAILABLE IF REQUESTED.
 - A CPDLC “STANDBY” response to a climb request.
 - An FMS “REMINDER” for a planned climb or descent.
4. A filed flight plan with a planned change in flight levels **is not** a clearance to change flight level.
5. RCL responses such as “RCL RECEIVED BY SANTA MARIA” or “RCL IS NOT REQUIRED BY BIRD” are not an ATC clearance to change flight level. RCL information should be checked for accuracy before sending.
6. Shanwick is the only center issuing Oceanic Clearances in response to an RCL.
7. If unable to achieve your requested oceanic level, or if your ETA at the Oceanic Entry point is erroneous by 3 minutes or more, send updated information to the OCA.
8. Be alert for situations when ATC issues conditional clearances. Examples and a detailed explanation can be found in ICAO NAT Doc 007, attachment 2.
9. When reviewing aircraft climb and cruise capabilities, do not request or accept a clearance to flight levels outside of the aircraft performance envelope.

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10. The NAT radio communications failure procedure is published in NAT Doc 007. Pilots shall maintain current cleared route, level, and speed until reaching the oceanic exit point unless a change is deemed necessary by the pilot in command to ensure the safety of the aircraft.
11. Use of SATVOICE can help with contacting ATC when HF or CPDLC is not functioning properly.

Lateral Deviations

1. It is essential that both pilots independently verify (cross-check) the clearance for any route change.
 - Be certain to check all waypoints in a CPDLC or ACARS clearance (read the entire clearance).
 - When receiving route clearances or amendments, always expand to read the full coordinates (degrees and minutes) of unnamed waypoints to avoid truncated display issues.
 - o “What you see is not always what you get.”
2. When ATC changes the named oceanic exit waypoints:
 - It is possible that a discontinuity will be created in the FMS between the new Oceanic Exit Point (OXP) and the original routing. Routing after the OXP will be provided by domestic ATC.
 - In the event of lost communications after the OXP, follow the radio failure communications procedures for the airspace in which the aircraft is operating.
3. It is strongly recommended to check position 10 minutes after each waypoint.
4. Request weather deviations early. If ATC clearance cannot be obtained, advise ATC and execute the published weather deviation procedure; changing altitude 300ft upon reaching 5 NM L or R of course. If previously unable to contact ATC, continue attempts until ATC replies.
 - Request additional clearance for any deviations that are required beyond the current weather deviation clearance.

Strategic Lateral Offset Procedures (SLOP)

1. Re-arm LNAV (NAV) if HDG SEL was used to reach SLOP position.
2. Confirm SLOP position before executing to avoid selection errors.
3. Only RIGHT offsets are authorized under SLOP in tenths of a mile up to 2NM.
4. All offsets beyond 2NM will result in an alert to ATC.
5. SLOP should be used on random routes.
6. Do not execute SLOP near a waypoint because it can result in skipping a waypoint (SLOP Skip).
7. Guidance on SLOP is available in the video found at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/4eawt84f>

Controller Pilot Data Link Communications (CPDLC)

1. Use the LOAD prompt to avoid lateral deviations.
2. Ensure the entire oceanic route (flight plan or amended routing) is loaded in the FMS before responding to “CONFIRM ASSIGNED ROUTE.” When available, use the automated response, not free-text.
3. Carefully review the entire CPDLC message as they are often more than one page.
4. Review the time stamp of CPDLC messages to ensure they are not old (delayed).
5. Avoid using free-text messages when standard messages are available.

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Contingencies

1. Apply contingency procedures when ATC clearance cannot be obtained and when unable to maintain assigned flight level or cleared route of flight.
2. Request weather deviations early. If ATC clearance cannot be obtained, advise ATC and execute the published weather deviation procedure, changing altitude 300ft upon reaching 5 NM L or R of course. If previously unable to contact ATC, continue attempts to contact ATC until ATC replies.
 - Obtain a new clearance for any weather deviation beyond the current weather deviation clearance.
 - Weather deviations less than 5 NM still requires requesting a clearance from ATC.
3. If ATC clears a pilot to deviate for weather and instructs the pilot to “REPORT BACK ON ROUTE,” do not make this report until re-established on original routing.

General

1. Notify ATC of GNSS Interference as early as possible. Early notification of any failure or malfunction of GNSS, loss of RNP 4/10 capability, loss of CPDLC, loss of ADS-C, or loss of ADS-B enables improved ATC coordination and strategic planning of flights into the NAT utilizing non-performance-based separation minima.
2. Equipment codes in items 10 and 18 of the flight plan are used by ATC and need to be accurate.
3. Dispatch should ensure ATC and flight crews hold the same flight plan. Having multiple flight plans in flight data systems creates confusion and system errors.
4. If originally assigned a fixed Mach, an ATC instruction to "RESUME NORMAL SPEED" still requires notification to ATC for speed changes plus or minus Mach .02 from the last assigned Mach number.
5. Avoid breaks or distractions during high levels of vulnerability or near the oceanic boundary.
6. Disciplined and detailed changeover briefings are essential during crew change.
7. HF voice oceanic communications go through a radio operator, who is not an air traffic controller, and must relay all reports and requests to ATC for approval and processing.
8. Expectation bias can be avoided by reading the FMS route first and then comparing it to the clearance.

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