



EASA Information Note on the Airspace of Afghanistan

Published: August 17, 2021.

In the wake of recent developments in Afghanistan, the Integrated EU Aviation Security Risk Assessment Group held an extraordinary meeting on 17 August 2021 on the use of Afghan airspace (**OAKX/Kabul FIR**) and has evaluated the impact on security and safety of all types of civil flight operations in the region.

Available information from various sources have been reviewed as well as intelligence assessments from Member States, INTCEN and information from airlines and other relevant parties, so as to perform the most accurate assessment possible of the situation and its impact on civil traffic in FIR Kabul.

Existing information on the armed clashes were reviewed, in particular the significant developments taking place from 6 August 2021 to date, where the Taliban have taken control of the vast majority of the country, including the following major airports in Afghanistan: Kandahar (OAKN/KDH), Herat (OAGR/HEA), Jalalabad (OAJL), Mazar-i-Sharif (OAMS/MZR), Konduz (OAUZ/UND) and Farah (OAFR/FAH).

The meeting also noted that the Taliban has usurped a substantial amount of military equipment in the process of taking control of military installations, airports and airbases across Afghanistan which possess additional threats to civil aviation. The rapid deterioration of the security situation at Kabul International Airport was also discussed by the Group.

On 16 August 2021 a NOTAM was issued for Afghan airspace stating that due to security reasons Kabul ACC is released to military control and no ATS will be available. Thus, aircraft transiting through the OAKX/Kabul FIR will be flying in uncontrolled airspace at their own risk (OAKX A0630/21).

The meeting also acknowledged that the threat posed to civil aircraft comes not only from ground-to-air weaponry but also from the potential use of the Afghan airspace by military aircraft operated by the Taliban, whose training, capability to deal with civil/military coordination is not assessed. The lack of navigational aids and the poor security and safety services on the ground would be critical in case of engine failures or emergencies on board, including the events of unlawful interference.

The Group also noted that as of 16 August 2021 all commercial flights at Kabul International Airport have been suspended indefinitely, with only military and humanitarian evacuation flights authorised.

On the basis of the information available, the Integrated EU Aviation Security Risk Assessment Group agreed that the situation in the region is unstable, with increasing safety risks to commercial aviation due to lack of Air Traffic Services. Therefore, EASA advises commercial operators as a precautionary measure not to conduct any flights in the OAKX/Kabul FIR until further notice.

This recommendation is valid until further notice and will be revisited at the next regular meeting of the Group which is scheduled to take place on 20 September 2021.

It would be appreciated if you and your partners would share any additional information that could contribute to the “Integrated EU Aviation Security Risk Assessment Group” assessment.

Please take this information and any other relevant guidance into account in your own risk assessments. We also invite you to share this information with your airlines.