



Operational Notice Number: 004/21

Nicosia FIR Communication procedures

Applicable to:	Operations in Nicosia FIR
Effective Date:	1 November 2021
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Authorized by:	Senior Vice President Operations, Safety and Security (OSS) IATA
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General

Following the establishment, in 1974, of a separate administration in the north of Cyprus (though one not recognised by the United Nations), the "Ercan Advisory Area" was introduced in 1977. This is monitored by "Ercan Control" for air traffic control covering the northern part of the Nicosia FIR and parts of the southwestern section of the Ankara FIR. The control of this area by Ercan is not recognised by ICAO.



Contrary to ICAO requirements, there is no contact in effect between Ankara and Nicosia ACCs. Authority for Air Traffic Control within Nicosia ICAO FIR/UIR (LCCC), rests solely with Nicosia ACC. ATC instructions must ONLY be accepted from Nicosia ACC, including allocation of SSR codes.

Operations in the northern part of the Nicosia FIR are subject to the hazards of conflicting air traffic control (ATC) instructions in the same piece of airspace, uncoordinated transfer of traffic, and unknown military activity in close proximity of civil traffic. Events

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of failures to coordinate flight plans and deviations from ATC instructions are reported every year, involving, for the best part, operators that are not using that airspace frequently and therefore might not be familiar with the issue.

The following guidance is provided to complement AIP information and active NOTAMs, that must be consulted in conjunction with this Operational Notice.

Southbound Procedures

- While in Ankara FIR comply with control instructions issued by Ankara ACC (either directly or through any other station designated by Ankara, e.g. Ercan on 126.70 MHz) up to point VESAR or point TOMBI.
- Nicosia ACC requires that aircraft approaching Nicosia FIR/UIR from Ankara FIR make pre-entry contact at least 10 minutes before the FIR boundary. It is essential that crews comply with this requirement: only then will Nicosia ACC be in a position to assume control and provide appropriate traffic separation.
- Once contact is established and flight details including Flight Level (FL) information passed, avoid making requests to Ankara ACC for FL changes for the rest of the flight through Ankara FIR, unless climbing from or descending to aerodromes in the immediate vicinity of the FIR boundary. If for any reason, it becomes absolutely necessary to make such level changes after initial contact with Nicosia while still in Ankara FIR, it is important for safety reasons that Nicosia ACC be advised at once of the change.
- At VESAR or TOMBI, flights will come under the sole control of Nicosia, change automatically to Nicosia ACC. Although there are no formal transfer of control procedures between Ankara and Nicosia ACCs and no changeover instructions will be issued on crossing the FIR boundary, once within the Nicosia FIR, flights should ONLY accept control instructions issued by Nicosia ACC until hand over to the next ATC Unit or FIR. Any invitation to change to another station (e.g. Ercan control) should be politely acknowledged but disregarded. In case of insistence a check should be made with Nicosia ACC.
- For flights entering the Nicosia FIR from the north and continuing east to the Damascus FIR, on completion of ATC formalities with Nicosia ACC after entry into the FIR as well as the position reporting requirements for Damascus FIR, establish communications with "Ercan" station and pass on relevant flight details. This should be regarded as a purely courtesy call – under NO circumstances should any ATC instruction be accepted from "Ercan" station.

Northbound Procedures

- Due to lack of direct contact between Ankara and Nicosia centers, advance flight information can ONLY be provided to Ankara by relay.
- Provide flight information at least 10 minutes prior to entering Ankara FIR, to Ercan station on 126.70 for relay to Ankara. Any Flight Level changes made thereafter under instructions from Nicosia ACC must be communicated at once to Ercan Control for relay to Ankara ACC.
- Control authority of Nicosia ACC remains absolute up to the point of entry into Ankara FIR.

Eastbound Procedures

- Eastbound aircraft entering Damascus FIR are required to establish contact with Damascus ACC 10 minutes before ETA at NIKAS. If for any reason this is not possible, aircraft must provide a position report to Latakia Radio, a relay station for Damascus ACC, at VESAR, ALSUS or BALMA for relay to Damascus. Even if a position report and flight details have been

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communicated to Latakia Radio, two- way communications with Damascus ACC should be established as early as possible and before passing the Baniyas NDB. Nicosia ACC remains primary station for listening watch until NIKAS where you can expect to transfer to Damascus.

Westbound procedures

- Aircraft flying west from the Damascus FIR should establish contact with Nicosia at the FIR boundary (NIKAS) unless requested by Damascus ACC to call Nicosia earlier.
- Aircraft planning to continue into the Ankara FIR should follow the "Northbound Procedures" above and provide flight information at least 10 minutes prior to entering Ankara FIR, to Ercan station on 126.70 for relay to Ankara.
- Control authority remains with Nicosia ACC until the FIR boundary (VESAR). Further calls to "Ercan" station may be made if requested, to the extent other commitments permit.

PLEASE NOTE:

This Operational Notice is a restatement, in substance, of a similar document prepared and issued by IATA in the period before 1999. The document is solely procedural in scope and IATA makes no statement, representation or comment with respect to (a) the territorial, political or administrative arrangements for any region, geographical unit, place or locality, or (b) any related matters of diplomatic and political recognition as they may arise between States.

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