

Safety Information Bulletin

ATM/ANS – Aerodromes

SIB No.: 2020-12

Issued: 30 June 2020

Subject: NOTAM Format on COVID-19 Measures

Ref. Publications:

Commission Regulation (EU) [2017/373](#) dated 01 March 2017.
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 15, Aeronautical Information Services.
ICAO Doc 10066, Aeronautical information Management.
ICAO Doc 8126, Aeronautical Information Services Manual.
ICAO Doc 8400, ICAO Abbreviations and Codes.
European Aviation Crisis Coordination Cell (EACCC) COVID-19 Harmonised NOTAM Format.

Applicability:

National Aviation Authorities (NAAs), air navigation service providers, aerodrome operators and other NOTAM originators.

Description:

Following the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, a large number of NOTAMs were issued in order to disseminate adequate information to the aviation community regarding the measures that individual States decided to implement. At that time, especially during the first days of the pandemic, it was noticed that there was a significant variation regarding the content and the format of the NOTAMs that were issued, although they would deal with identical or similar issues. This resulted in readability and interpretation problems, eventually causing a risk regarding the possible mishandling of the NOTAMs contents.

To mitigate the relevant risk EACCC, in coordination with EASA and other key stakeholders, issued a recommendation for the use of specific NOTAM Format templates for COVID-19 publications. Amongst others, the recommendation foresaw the use of the keyword “COVID-19” in the item “E)” of COVID-19 related NOTAMs. As regards items “Q)”, “A)”, “B)” and “C)”, they should be filled as usual, according to ICAO Doc 8400 ‘Procedures for Air Navigation Services – ICAO Abbreviations and Codes (PANS-ABC)’, and as per the ‘NOTAM Selection Criteria’ contained in ICAO Doc 8126.

The return to normal operation (RNO) phase has already started with the gradual restoration of flights between States. Therefore, it is imperative that, during this phase, appropriate and adequate information continues to be promulgated to the aviation community regarding the availability of air navigation services and facilities, including aerodromes and related services. Such information may also be of a non-aeronautical nature which, however, is necessary for the aviation community (e.g. changes to applied health restrictions, procedures to be applied for arriving and departing passengers, etc.), as this may affect flight operations from the planning stage and eventually the smooth functioning of all aspects of the air-navigation system.

This is information only. Recommendations are not mandatory.



Such information is expected to be promulgated by NOTAMs as per the provisions of point AIS.TR.100 of Regulation (EU) 2017/373, in conjunction with the applicable provisions of ICAO Annex 15, which prescribe the cases where a NOTAM needs to be originated and subsequently issued by the responsible “NOTAM Office”. This applies irrespective of the identity of the NOTAM originator (e.g. aerodrome operator, air navigation service provider, NAA or other non-aviation State authority).

However, during the RNO, an increasing amount of COVID-19 related NOTAMs without the recommended “COVID-19” keyword in the item “E” of the NOTAM has been noted and thus, to avoid that important information is missed by the NOTAM users, EASA deems necessary to raise the awareness of its stakeholders.

At this time, the safety concern described in this SIB is not considered to be an unsafe condition that would warrant Safety Directive (SD) action under Regulation (EU) [2017/373](#), Annex II, ATM/ANS.AR.A.030, nor under Regulation (EU) [139/2014](#), Annex II, ADR.AR.A.040.

Recommendation(s):

EASA recommends that:

- (1) NAAs liaise with NOTAM originators in their State, in order to raise their awareness regarding the consistent use the “COVID-19” keyword at the beginning of the item “E” of the COVID-19-related NOTAM that they originate.
- (2) Aeronautical information service providers responsible for the issuance of NOTAMs ensure that the COVID-19-related NOTAMs they issue contain the relevant keyword, as per point (1) above.

Contact(s):

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