

FAA Background Information Regarding U.S. Civil Aviation in the Tehran Flight Information Region (FIR) (OIIX)

Due to concerns about deconfliction between military activities and civil flight operations, there is continued risk to U.S. civil aviation operating in the Tehran Flight Information Region (FIR) (OIIX). For this reason, on 9 September 2018, the FAA published Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) KICZ A0016/18, advising U.S. civil aviation to exercise caution when operating into, out of, within, or over the Tehran FIR (OIIX). The NOTAM also advised U.S. civil operators and airmen operating in or adjacent to the Tehran FIR (OIIX) to carefully review current NOTAMs and other sources of aeronautical information and be familiar with current conditions in the Middle East.

There are a wide array of military activities occurring within, emanating from, or transiting the Tehran FIR (OIIX) that present potential deconfliction concerns for U.S. civil aviation. Additionally, there is concern for heightened Iranian air defense sensitivity and exercises as a result of regional instability and/or political tensions. Heightened Iranian air defense sensitivity may create an inadvertent risk to U.S. civil aviation operating in the Tehran FIR (OIIX). For example, a U.S. civil operator experienced a fighter intercept in the Tehran FIR (OIIX) in December 2017.

There are also military activities emanating from or transiting through the Tehran FIR (OIIX) that are associated with the conflict in Syria. These activities include, but are not limited to, Russian air-launched cruise missile attacks launched from over Iran toward targets in Syria and Russian maritime-launched land-attack cruise missiles fired from the Caspian Sea - four of which inadvertently impacted the ground in Iran while en-route to targets in Syria in October 2015. There is the potential for Iranian surface-to-surface missile fire from western Iran, targeting Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) positions located in the region (such as occurred in June 2017). Iran has also conducted multiple missile test launches in the Tehran FIR (OIIX). These activities present a military-civil deconfliction challenge in the region. Additionally, there is an inadvertent risk to U.S. civil aviation operations in the Tehran FIR (OIIX) from Iranian-fielded GPS jammers.

U.S. civil aviation operating in the Tehran FIR (OIIX) should closely follow civil and military air traffic control instructions, particularly during weather or mechanical diversions from published air routes. Security conditions could change rapidly, so operators are reminded to review applicable NOTAMs and other sources of aeronautical information, such as aeronautical information publications and circulars, on an ongoing basis.

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