

ALL



Issue Date: 02/03/2024  
Effective: 02/03/2024  
Number: 1/24.  
Incorporated: Revision 1

Origin: James Coombe  
Position: Airbus Chief Pilot  
Authority: Lucas Hanman  
Position: Director of Flight Operations

## Heathrow Procedures During Congestion

### Introduction

With the recent release of the FENIX IAE model, we have seen an impressive increase of PIREPs filed within BAVirtual. In addition to this, our colleagues at VATUK have been busy providing Air Traffic Services for a highly congested airspace and airfields around the UK.

It has been brought to my attention from our own pilot reports and that of the controllers at LHR that there have been crews (both from BAVirtual and elsewhere) who have not been following the guidance from the Heathrow Charts.

Upon initial contact with any ATC unit, crews should *tune, listen, talk* in order to reduce the time spent dealing with calls being blocked on R/T.

### Arrivals

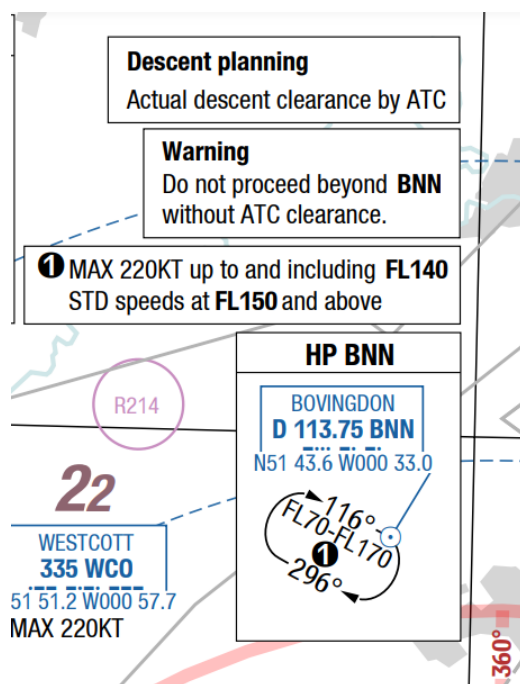
For arrivals bound for London Heathrow you **must not** proceed beyond the hold at the respective VOR for your arrival without ATC clearance. These include; Bovingdon (BNN), Lambourne (LAM), Ockham (OCK) and Biggin (BIG).

ATC clearance will likely come in the form of a heading to leave the VOR for example:

*Speedbird 23T, leave Ockham heading 080 degrees, Or,*

*Speedbird 717T, direct to Biggin, leave heading 270 degrees.* This implies that the crew should, now they are established in the hold, head DCT BIG before leaving overhead BIG on a heading of 270 degrees.

This requirement is stated on each of the STAR charts for Heathrow.



As seen above, **WARNING:** Do not proceed beyond **BNN** without ATC clearance.

During the week, crew report delays of over 45 minutes arriving in Heathrow. It is prudent that crews anticipate delay in the current times and carry additional fuel for holding that it suitable for the aircraft type.

If you are close to using your DIVERSION fuel you may be able to choose a closer alternate airfield for fuel uplift. Flights planned to LHR with STN as an alternate may consider LGW to give an additional 100-200 kgs of holding fuel. If this is not sufficient, you may be able to commit to London Heathrow (please see FSCI 03 and OM-A 4.1.5 for more information). At no point should crews be arriving at Heathrow with less than 30 minutes of FINAL RESERVE on board, if this is looking likely, crews should declare *MAYDAY FUEL* as stated in OM-A 4.3.11.4, a diversion may be required to uplift additional fuel.

## Departure

There are also risks with departure. There have been incidents with crew departing with less than their minimum taxi fuel. If you can see that delays are anticipated for departure, please ensure that TAXI FUEL is manually increased for your flight when planning to an amount that will see the aircraft depart with sufficient fuel.

It is the responsibility of the commander/flight crew to ensure that an appropriate fuel uplift is chosen before leaving the stand.

As with all changes in weight and balance, it is recommended to replan an OFP when additional fuel is uplifted as you may find you will need additional trip fuel to operate with the weight of your additional fuel for arrival delays.

## Gatwick

The same applies for EuroFlyer and Gatwick longhaul. Crews should NOT proceed beyond WILLO or TIMBA without ATC clearance.

CLASS A

D-ATIS	136.525
Gatwick DIR	126.825
	118.950
	129.025

**Caution**  
Do not proceed beyond WILLO without ATC clearance

GNSS or DME/DME required

RNAV 5

**Holding Speeds:**  
MAX holding speed in the London TMA up to and including **FL140** is 220KT.  
At **FL150** and above standard ICAO speed apply.

**Descent Planning**  
Actual descent clearance by ATC

Software such as VatSpy or SimAware may be useful to crews in predicting a delay and selecting an appropriate fuel load.