
**Proposed to amendment control area
boundary west of Queenstown
— user consultation**

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Introduction

The Part 172 provider of air traffic control services, Airways Corporation of New Zealand, has submitted a petition to amend the boundary of NZA949 (CTA/C, lower limit FL175) and NZA946 (CTA/C, lower limit FL285) by 15 NM southwards.

The Director has designated controlled airspace to protect the flight paths of IFR aircraft arriving at and departing from Queenstown aerodrome.

Airways' petition states the following reasons for the change:

'A portion of Oceanic Controlled Airspace (OCA) Class A and G, west of Queenstown (QN) was recently delegated to AREA sector by Auckland Oceanic Sector to assist management of the increased levels of traffic arriving eastbound / departing westbound to/from the NZ Oceanic FIR (NZZO) for NZQN/NZDN/NZNV.

Coupled with increased surveillance in the south, the immediate impact of this delegated Oceanic airspace has been simplification of separation conflicts to the west of NZQN which previously were made more complex due to the requirement for (often restrictive) procedural separation standards.

International arrivals/departures now route via 1 of 4 new oceanic waypoints (EKODA, MADOK, DADLU or BEBOB) and the NZ Domestic FIR (NZZC) boundary points (LIBLA & ADKOS). Overflights to/from South America e.g. QFA27/28 also transit this area of the South Island and the level can sometimes be lower than FL285 which could require vectors to contain the overflight in CTA. Flights via DADLU and BEBOB transit close to the CTA/C airspace north of Manapouri which has a lower level of FL285. Under radar control, aircraft cannot be vectored any closer than 2 NM from uncontrolled airspace. To provide 5 NM separation, the "space" available to vector aircraft south of track could be as little as 3 NM laterally.

Flights departing NZQN/NZDN via DADLU or BEBOB frequently converge with inbound / overflying flights via ADKOS and due to their proximity, procedural separation on occasions may be the only option without vectoring. By having more "space" south of track, the AREA controller will have an option to vector the affected departing flight(s) (often more direct) while allowing the inbound flight(s) to remain on the Standard Arrival (STAR) and transition.

Currently, QN Approach (APP) are responsible for separation between departing IFR flights and any arriving flights for which they have received notification of prior to the departing flight getting airborne. A procedural separation is used with the option to "improve" on radar once released to AREA. By having more scope to vector aircraft, AREA may well be able improve or even cancel procedural restrictions once radar separation is available.

During busy periods involving significant numbers of jet arrivals and departures – both international and domestic (e.g. ski season) - QN APP are dealing with quite complex procedural scenarios and by AREA being able to relieve some of this workload/pressure using surveillance, a significant improvement in the capacity could be expected. Having more airspace available to the north of Manapouri (SW of NZQN) is critical in achieving this benefit.

At times, in order to achieve the time requirements for QN APP and their sequence, arriving flights either need to hold or fly extra track miles to meet these times. Again, by having more airspace available to vector aircraft, AREA will be better able to assist with these time constraints.

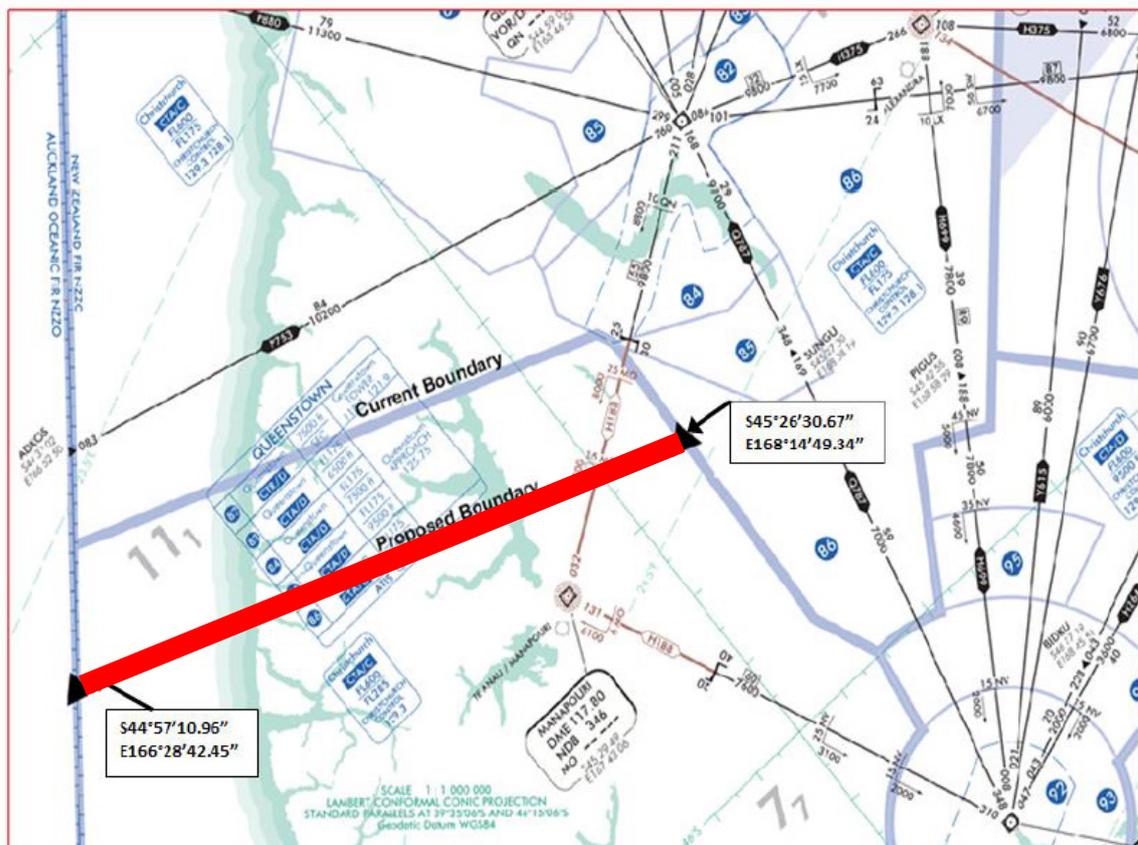
By moving the common boundary of NZA949 (FL175-FL600) and NZA946 (FL285-FL600) 15 NM south, it will enable controllers to track trans-Tasman aircraft direct to BEBOB or DADLU after completing the Runway 23 Standard Instrument Departure (SID) at QN whilst still being contained in controlled airspace. Similarly, once westbound international departures from DN are under control of AREA sector (normally passing 11,000ft) direct tracking to DADLU / BEBOB would most likely be available.

This will reduce the track miles being flown resulting in both fuel saving and reduced carbon emissions. These are benefits to both our customers and protecting the New Zealand environment.'

Proposed amendment

The proposed change would move the boundary of NZA949 southwards as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 – Proposed amended boundary



Possible effect on VFR aircraft

The airspace concerned is well above the altitudes that most VFR aircraft operate at. VFR flights would still be able to operate in the revised airspace if required, subject to ATC clearance.

For these reasons, it is considered that the likely impact on VFR aircraft would be minimal or nil.

Consultation undertaken by Airways

Airways is still consulting with various operators and has requested feedback by 31 January 2016.

However, because of the 2016 visual navigation chart update publication cut-off date in April, Airways has submitted its petition to allow time for CAA to also consult with users as is required under rule 71.9.

Airways advises that:

‘Once the feedback cut-off date is past, Airways will consider the feedback received and either, confirm with CAA the petition or, withdraw it if consideration of feedback warrants this.’

Separate to any feedback provided to Airways, CAA requests submissions from users about this proposal.

Consultation List

This document will be sent directly to the following organisations that have been identified as being directly affected by the proposed change:

- Air New Zealand Group
- Airways Corporation of New Zealand
- Gliding New Zealand
- Jet Star
- Jet Connect/Qantas
- RNZAF
- Virgin Australia

Electronic notification of the consultation will be sent to subscribers to the CAA email Notification Service for Airspace Notifications Areas NZ7, NZ9 and NZ10.

Submissions

Prior to making a designation or classification of airspace, Civil Aviation Rule 71.9 requires the Director to consult with all parties that may be affected within the aviation industry.

This document forms part of the consultation process. Submissions are sought from any interested person, organisation or representative group to provide further information relevant to this proposal.

Submissions are accepted either electronically or via mail.

Please address submissions to:

Group Executive Officer
Aviation Infrastructure and Personnel
Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand
PO Box 3555
Wellington 6140

Fax: 04 569 2024

Email: dianne.parker@caa.govt.nz

Reference – Proposed amendment to control area boundary west of Queenstown.

Closing date for submissions is **Thursday 25 February 2016**.

Further information

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