

Heighten awareness when operating in areas of conflict

The Secretary General of ICAO, Raymond Benjamin, has recently issued a Letter to all ICAO Contracting States concerning the safety and security of civil aircraft operating in airspace affected by conflict. In the letter, Mr Benjamin reminds States of the need for close coordination between civil and military Authorities in the event of armed conflict and, if necessary, to restrict or prohibit aircraft from other States from flying over such territory for reasons of military necessity or public safety.

“Such prohibited areas, if needed, shall be of reasonable extent and location so as not to interfere unnecessarily with air navigation. Notices to airmen (NOTAM) or other communications containing the necessary information, advice and measures to be taken should then be issued and subsequently updated in the light of developments.”

IFALPA subsequently issued a **statement** (on 25 July 2014) stressing the need for a risk assessment of all flight operations. If in doubt as to the acceptable level of risk, such operations should only be carried out in the abundance of caution. In other words, if unsure or uncomfortable, pilots should not overfly or operate into potentially hostile areas.