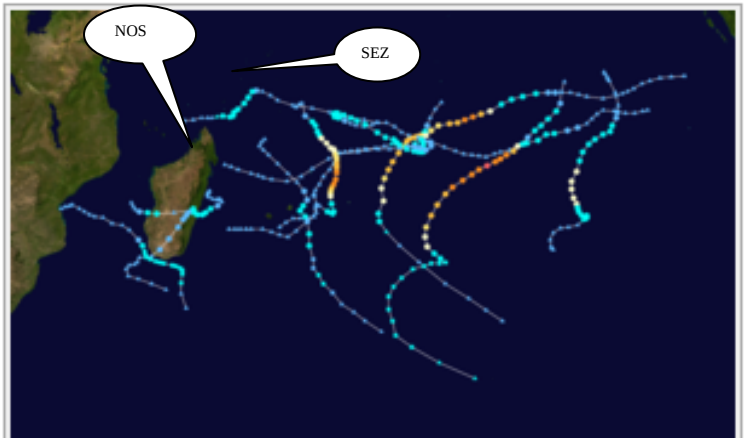
Weather Avoidance – Seychelles

Background

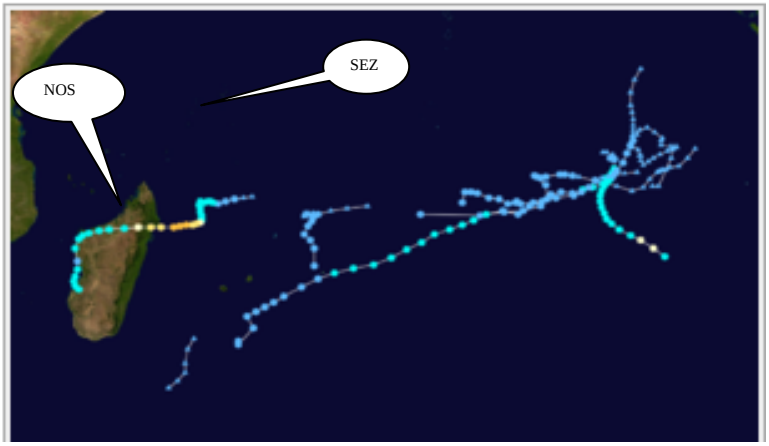
Even though most of the Seychelles islands lie outside the cyclone belt the flight path to Seychelles International and/or Nosy-Be may be affected. Alternate airports and routes are very limited due to the islands remote location. Below are examples of cyclone activities in this area.

2009–10 South-West Indian Ocean cyclone season



First storm formed:	August 18, 2009 (01)
Last storm dissipated:	May 29, 2010 (Joel)
Strongest storm:	Edzani – 905 hPa (mbar), 220 km/h (140 mph) (10-minute sustained)
Total disturbances:	16
Tropical depressions:	12
Total storms:	10
Tropical cyclones:	5
Intense cyclones:	2

2010–11 South-West Indian Ocean cyclone season



First storm formed:	25 October 2010 (01)
Last storm dissipated:	16 April 2011 (09)
Strongest storm:	Bingiza – 953 hPa (mbar), 165 km/h (105 mph) (10-minute sustained)
Total disturbances:	9
Tropical depressions:	6
Total storms:	4 Official, 1 Unofficial
Tropical cyclones:	2
Intense cyclones:	1

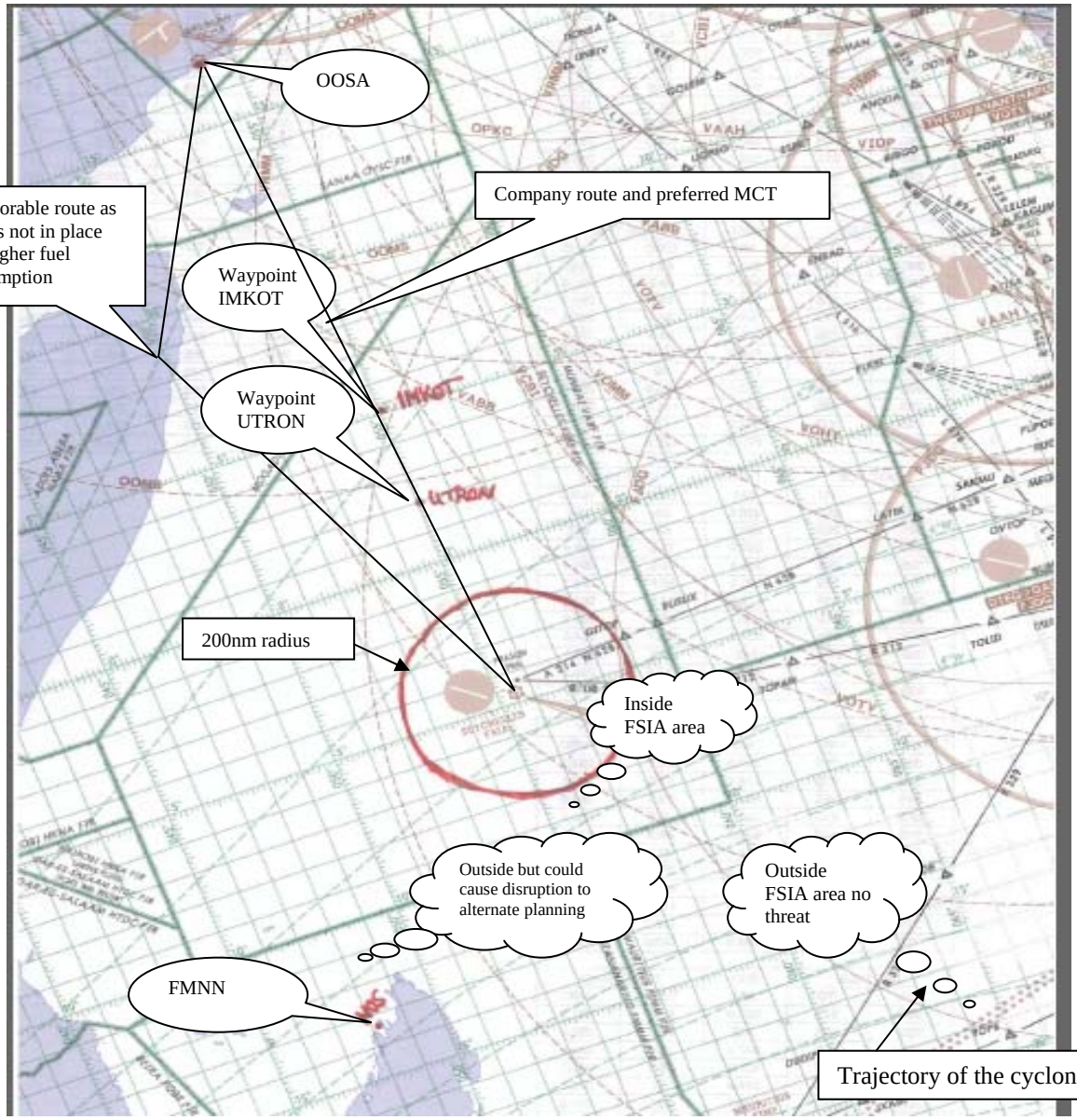
In cooperation with Flight Operations following procedure has been set up allowing us to operate flights into the Seychelles with a contingency plan in case the situation at destination deteriorates and landing is not possible.

Instruction

Seychelles is under constant **flight watch** by flight dispatch. This includes weather watch such as TAF's, Metar's, Sigmets, Cyclone trajectory etc. It also includes airport watch to ensure that the runway is open and operational.

At planning stage the dispatcher will check if a cyclone or similar weather phenomena such as heavy CB formation is in the vicinity of the Seychelles or Nosy-Be. The chart below shall provide a distance guideline which has been established at 200nm around the destination airport. In case disruption due to bad enroute/destination or alternate weather can be expected please follow the instructions of the contingency plan.

Flight Explorer will help to establish if a cyclone is inside or outside the above radius.



Flight Watch

It is necessary to carry out a thorough flight watch as these flights are very critical. The Dispatcher must ensure that he/she always knows where the aircraft is and he/she must stay current on the weather and NOTAM situation.

Contingency Plan

Salalah (OOSA) has been chosen as the diversion airport in case a safe operation into the Seychelles is not possible. All SEZ flights can be calculated through TFR and company route and are ETOPS flights. The dispatcher must select the correct ETOPS alternates which are currently OOSA and FSIA. The MCT will then be the same as the company route which is the shortest way. We have identified 2 possible decision points at which Flight Dispatch together with the Operating Crew and the NOC Duty Manager will determine if it is safe to continue or if the aircraft should turn back to OOSA for refuelling. For that reason it is necessary to provide the crew with a decision point plan based on below information (which may vary according to wind, temperature and weight). This flight plan should be given for information only and must not be filed.

All Flights are calculated as tankering sectors irrespective of the fuel price. The decision point IMKOT will use less fuel returning to OOSA than continuing to FSIA even if no extra fuel has been loaded due to payload constraints.

Possible Airways	Associated Decision Points	Distance from OOSA	Remaining Distance to FSIA	Planned Alternate	Fuel required to Destination and OOSA
R401	IMKOT	702NM	607NM	**FMNN**	DP IMKOT TO FSIA MIN 9.5kgs DP IMKOT TO OOSA MIN 9.0kgs

The decision point UTRON may be used if enough tankering fuel is added to cover the extra fuel needed to return to OOSA.

Possible Airways	Associated Decision Points	Distance from OOSA	Remaining Distance to FSIA	Planned Alternate	Fuel required to Destination and OOSA
R401	UTRON	907NM	402NM	**FMNN**	DP UTRON TO FSIA MIN 8.3kgs DP UTRON TO OOSA MIN 9.5kgs

There is one route along the coast of Somalia which is longer and uses more fuel. The system will sometimes pick this route if no ETOPS alternates are selected by the dispatcher. This route must be avoided as it is not cost effective, not favourable due to payload restrictions and TFR maintenance is not yet in place even though overflight permissions are granted.

Always stay in touch with the operating crew and make sure that they receive regular updates.