

DESTINATION ALTERNATES FOR ICELAND, SPECIFICALLY KEFLAVIK (BIKF)

The IFALPA Member Association for Iceland (FIA) has notified IFALPA that operators may not be aware that Iceland has published a difference to ICAO SARPs in their AIP which specifies that alternates are required for operations into Iceland.

1.7.6.1 Part I International Commercial Air Transport – Aeroplanes – (reference ICAO Annex 6 Part I paragraph 4.3.4.3), “Alternate airports must be specified in Operational Flight Plan and ATC flight plan for all IFR flights within Icelandic territory and from Iceland. Same applies for flights within or to Greenland.”

This is specifically necessary for operations into Keflavik (BIKF). The MA points out that the three alternates available for Keflavik (BIAR, BIRK, and BIEG) have very different technical properties, pros and cons. When conditions in Keflavik are challenging, selecting an alternate should be done carefully.

As recently as 16 September 2018, BIKF saw a challenging situation. A business jet landed on RWY 01, suffered a sudden hydraulic leak, both runways were disabled resulting in at least seven aircraft being located in holding patterns. One flight diverted to Akureyri - BIAR.

IFALPA believes this to be the third time in 24 months that a disabled aircraft has resulted in a significant disruption at BIKF. This incident is a reminder of the importance of alternates in Iceland. BIAR, BIRK, and BIEG have different properties, and the fact that these aerodromes also have limited parking space is turning into a hazard.

The importance of carrying alternate/extra fuel while operating to Iceland and carefully selecting your alternate cannot be overemphasised.