On 8th August the (US) Federal Aviation Administration issued a new Notice-To-Airmen (NOTAM) restricting US operators from flying in the airspace above Iraq due to the hazardous situation created by the armed conflict. The new NOTAM supersedes previous FAA guidance for this airspace.

Furthermore, on 18th August the FAA issued a new Notice To Airmen (NOTAM) restricting US operators from flying in the Damascus Flight Information Region, which includes all of Syria. This replaces the current NOTAM in place that strongly advises US operators against flying in that airspace and requires them to contact the FAA before they operate in that airspace.

Based on an updated assessment of the risk associated with such operations and the lack of any requests from operators wishing to fly in this airspace, the FAA believe it prudent to prohibit US operators from flying into, out of, and over Syria. The ongoing armed conflict and volatile security environment in Syria poses a serious potential threat to civil aviation. Armed extremist groups in Syria are known to be equipped with a variety of anti-aircraft weapons which have the capability to threaten civilian aircraft. Opposition groups have successfully shot down Syrian military aircraft using these anti-aircraft weapon systems during the course of the conflict. Opposition elements have previously warned civilian air carriers against providing service to Syria. Due to the presence of anti-aircraft weapons among the extremist groups and ongoing fighting in various locations throughout Syria, there is a continuing significant potential threat to civil aviation operating in Syrian airspace.

The new NOTAMs can be read on the FAA website to be found at: www.faa.gov go to “News” then “Latest News and Updates”