

## **VOR Airways disappear entirely in Southern Ontario, major changes elsewhere**

### **Kevin Psutka**

For those who on November 13 expect to navigate in certain areas of Canada using ground-based nav aids, it may come as a surprise to you that there will no longer be any VOR airways to do so.

With the November 13 update to the aeronautical information comes a major shift away from conventional navigation as Nav Canada invokes another phase of its Windsor-Toronto-Montreal (WTM) project to modernize the navigation structure for the future. Similar changes are underway in Alberta <http://www.navcanada.ca/EN/products-and-services/Pages/on-board-operational-initiatives-airspace-studies.aspx>

The result of these initiatives is to gradually replace all VOR airways and NDB air routes in Canada with space-based T and Q routes and also reduce the system of ground-based nav aids to an absolute minimum to serve as a back-up to space-based navigation in the event of a failure.

COPA has been heavily involved in the WTM project as well as other initiatives, such as Performance Based Navigation (PBN) <http://www.navcanada.ca/EN/products-and-services/Pages/on-board-operational-initiatives-pbn-rnav.aspx>, to move toward a more efficient and less costly navigation system. The problem with these initiatives is that very few users, including me, know about where, when and to what extent changes will occur until just before they occur.

I have pushed over the years for developing a plan, consulting it with industry and then making it public, along with sufficient time (in the form of years) for those with only conventional aids on board their aircraft to plan for migrating to space-based navigation, including re-equipping their aircraft, but to date Nav Canada has not done so.

When a major change occurred a couple of years ago with the removal of all but a few VOR airways in southern Ontario and western Quebec, I met with senior Nav Canada officials to highlight my ongoing concern. However, any plan has yet to be made available to the public. Instead, surprises continue.

In the case of the major change on November 13, when for example there will no longer be any VOR airways in southern Ontario, there was simply an AIC issued on October 16 [http://www.navcanada.ca/EN/products-and-services/Documents/AIP/Current/part\\_5\\_aic/5aic\\_eng\\_2014\\_32.pdf#top](http://www.navcanada.ca/EN/products-and-services/Documents/AIP/Current/part_5_aic/5aic_eng_2014_32.pdf#top) giving users less than a month's notice.

I will continue to press for a publicly available plan, timings and considerably more notice but in the meantime please pay close attention to the AICs and to Nav Canada's website for notices of changes.

If you have comments about how these sudden changes are affecting you or suggestions for improving Nav Canada's planning and communications with users, please send them to [service@navcanada.ca](mailto:service@navcanada.ca) and copy me [kpsutka@copanational.org](mailto:kpsutka@copanational.org) so that COPA can follow-up in forums such as the Air Navigation System National Advisory Committee and the Nav Canada Advisory Committee, on which COPA has a seat.