Twenty Seventh Meeting of the
Informal South Pacific ATS Co-ordinating Group
(ISPACG/27)

Auckland, New Zealand
27 February – 01 March 2013

Agenda Item 5.1 – Seamless Airspace Chart

OCEANIC CONFLICT ADVISORY TRIAL (OCAT)

Presented by Federal Aviation Administration

SUMMARY

This information paper provides information on the Oceanic Conflict Advisory Trail (OCAT) status and the anticipated use within the Pacific Region.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. OCAT is a year-long FAA operational trial designed to help airlines evaluate and fly their preferred oceanic routings. OCAT makes conflict probe capabilities available via a standard web service to OCAT partner airlines. Participants will make use of the OCAT web service to pre-probe desired flight profile changes (any valid combination of vertical, lateral, and/or speed changes) during the trial period. The OCAT system will assist users in determining which of their potential flight profile changes are currently conflict-free and, therefore, more likely to be acceptable to oceanic air traffic control.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1. OCAT is an advisory service to the airlines and does not interact with the operational environment. Clearance requests will continue to be made, and responded to, in accordance with existing air traffic control and pilot procedures. The trial started November 26, 2012.

2.2. Essentially, OCAT allows users to probe proposed routing, altitude or speed changes against the current oceanic situation with a “shadow system” utilizing the most recent Ocean21 conflict probe algorithms. It analyzes the proposed change against current traffic to determine if any predicted separation violations would result. OCAT operates without impacting the Ocean21 system or air traffic controllers. Projected benefits include savings of time, fuel and, most importantly, CO_2 emissions.

2.3. Compared to present practices, OCAT streamlines the process of planning for a potential change by allowing the flight dispatcher to analyze a planned change prior to submitting it to the pilot for ATC interaction. The results of the analysis through OCAT does not necessarily guarantee ATC issuance of the desired change as

requested, but does increase the confidence that the efforts involved in formulating the proposed change will be rewarded.

2.4. Independent studies have shown that approximately 58% of flights could improve their routes over the Pacific, yet currently fewer than 1% of flights utilize the available Dynamic Airborne Reroute Procedure (DARP). Airlines cite the dispatcher workload as the major barrier to use of DARP. OCAT is intended to improve airline confidence in receiving positive response to DARP requests by allowing for conflict probe analysis.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1. The meeting is invited to:

a) Note the information provided.