

**Twenty Third Meeting of the
Informal South Pacific ATS Co-ordinating Group (ISPACG/23)**

Santiago, Chile, 26-27 March 2009

Agenda Item 3: Review Relevant Work Conducted Since ISPACG/23

ESTABLISHMENT OF ICAO FLIGHT PLAN & ATS MESSAGES TASK FORCE

(Submitted by ICAO Asia and Pacific Regional Office)

SUMMARY

International Civil Aviation Organization
Twentieth Meeting of the Bay of Bengal ATS Coordination Group (BBACG/20)
Male, Republic of Maldives, 27 – 29 January 2009

Agenda Item 2: Review outcomes of related meetings

ESTABLISHMENT OF ICAO FLIGHT PLAN AND ATS MESSAGES TASK FORCE

Ref: BBACG/20 – WP/09
(Presented by the Secretariat)

This paper draws attention to the comprehensive changes to the ICAO Flight Plan format and associated ATS messages, as described in the amendment to PANS-ATM that will take effect from November 2012. The paper highlights the initial response taken by APANPIRG in convening a suitable Task Force to ensure a streamlined implementation of the new arrangements.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 APANPIRG/19 (September 2008) noted that on 28 May 2008, Amendment 1 to the Fifteenth Edition of the *Procedures for Air Navigation Services – Air Traffic Management* (PANS-ATM, Doc 4444) was approved, calling for substantial changes to ICAO flight plan format to take effect from 15 November 2012. The interim edition of the PANS-ATM amendment is available as an attachment to the electronic version of State letter AN 13/2.1-08/50 on the ICAO-NET (www.icao.int/icaonet).

1.2 The amendment encompasses a substantial revision to the ICAO flight plan as contained in Appendix 2 to the PANS-ATM. As implementation of this proposed amendment will require significant effort and lead time for States, air navigation service providers and aircraft operators, and because the change-over should be coordinated with all stakeholders, all ICAO regions should develop coordinated transition plans.

1.3 During the discussions on this topic, APANPIRG/19 raised the concern that States could begin to implement the new flight plan format as early as 2009. Implementation of the flight plan format in a non-integrated manner could result in flight plans being rejected or processed improperly by States that have not yet transitioned. The changes will have widespread implications on automated systems, including ATM systems and airspace user systems.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 In view of the many implications affecting a wide range of automated flight plan processing systems and the associated operating practices, APANPIRG/19 recognised that the transitioning process needs to be carefully planned taking into account compatibility with existing systems, human factors, training, cost and transition aspects. Any incompatibility in the processing capability in a few States could have significant impact on operations in other States of the Regions.

2.2 APANPIRG/19 was of the view that that a full and comprehensive assessment of the implications of the transition to the new flight plan format for air navigation service providers (ANSPs) and airspace users is absolutely necessary. In this regard, the meeting considered that ICAO global leadership was critical in addressing the issues to ensure a smooth transition.

2.3 In order to assist States for an orderly transition from the current flight plan to the new one, a basic checklist, using the performance framework form (PFF) has been developed by the ICAO headquarters and is available in **Attachment A** to this paper. Additional guidance on transition to the new flight plan is being developed by the ICAO headquarters and is scheduled to be made available to States by February 2009. Interim documentation is included as **Attachment B** to this paper.

2.4 APANPIRG/19 agreed that there would be many actions necessary to ensure a streamlined regional implementation, including the development of a regional transition strategy and procedures for its implementation. In order to ensure that the matter would be appropriately addressed on a regional basis, the meeting agreed to the following Decision and drafted preliminary terms of reference (TOR) accordingly.

Decision 19/6 – Establishment of an ICAO Flight Plan & ATS Message Implementation Task Force

That, an Asia/Pacific ICAO Flight Plan & ATS Message Implementation Task Force (FPL&AM/TF), with terms of reference as outlined in Appendix C (Attachment C to this paper) to the APANPIRG/19 Report on Agenda Item 3.2, be established to develop a regional transition strategy and procedures to ensure the streamlined implementation of the amended ICAO flight planning and associated ATS Message provisions.

2.5 The first meeting of the FPL&AM/TF has been tentatively scheduled over 4 days from 17-20 March 2009 at the ICAO Regional Office in Bangkok.



3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information in this paper,
- b) Review and discuss the Terms of Reference for the FPL&AM/TF and the attached guidance materials and
- c) Identify and action any initial steps towards compliance with the new flight plan format, including making arrangements for participation in the first meeting of the FPL&AM/TF in March 2009

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