



International Civil Aviation Organization

**The Third Meeting of the Asia/Pacific ICAO Flight Plan and ATS Messages
Implementation Task Force (FPL&AM/TF/3)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 23 – 24 August 2010

Agenda Item 4: Aspects of implementation in Asia/Pacific Region

**Working Paper on ICAO 2012 Flight Plan –
Implementation Issues to be presented to APANPIRG/21**

(Presented by Australia)

SUMMARY

This paper invites members to review the Working Paper on implementation issues surrounding introduction of the 2012 ICAO Flight Plan to be presented to APANPIRG/21 by Australia.

Action by FPL&AM/TF/3 is at paragraph 3.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The second meeting of the FPL & AM Task Force held in Bangkok from 17 to 20 November 2009 identified a number of issues which were a risk to the successful implementation by States and airspace users of the ICAO 2012 Flight Plan.

2. ISSUES IDENTIFIED

2.1 Amendment 1 to the *Procedures for Air Navigation Services - Air Traffic Management*, Fifteenth Edition (PANS-ATM, Doc 4444) was approved by the Council on 27 May 2008 with an implementation date of 15 November 2012. Halfway along the road to implementation it is apparent that some States have already acknowledged that they will not be able to meet the implementation date while the Flight Plan Implementation Tracking System (FITS) indicates that the majority of States have not registered an implementation plan on the site.

2.2 With a requirement on ANSPs to accept NEW and PRESENT during a transition period prior to the 15 November 2012 implementation date, States should be in a position to advise their ability to meet the 2012 applicability date. It is appropriate at this stage to request ICAO to conduct a review into State's readiness to implement the change to NEW.

2.3 The risks involved with filing flight plans and ATS messages in PRESENT and NEW and the subsequent transmission errors which can result in the conversion process have been well publicised. The risk associated with a significant number of States being unable to implement the change to NEW on 15 November 2012 also needs to be addressed.

2.4 This Information Paper is provided for the benefit of FPL&AM/TF members to seek their agreement that a Working Paper should be presented to APANPIRG/21 seeking action from ICAO Headquarters to address these risks.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to review the contents of the Working Paper to be presented to APANPIRG by Australia.

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INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

**TWENTY FIRST MEETING OF THE
ASIA/PACIFIC AIR NAVIGATION PLANNING AND
IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL GROUP (APANPIRG/21)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 6-10 September 2010

Agenda Item 3: Regional Air Navigation Planning and Implementation issues
3.2 ATM/AIS/SAR

ICAO 2012 FLIGHT PLAN – IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

(Presented by Australia)

SUMMARY

Amendment 1 to the *Procedures for Air Navigation Services - Air Traffic Management*, Fifteenth Edition (PANS-ATM, Doc 4444) introduces an amended flight plan form and new flight planning procedures. The updated ICAO model flight plan form is intended to meet the needs of aircraft with advanced capabilities and the evolving requirements of automated air traffic management (ATM) systems. The applicability date of the new ICAO Flight Plan Format is 15 November 2012. This paper discusses risks resulting from State's varying levels of preparedness for implementation of the changes.

Action by APANPIRG/21 is contained in paragraph 3.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The current ICAO model flight plan form is universally adopted and implemented by States. PRESENT is defined as the present flight planning and ATS message formats as defined in the current version of the PANS-ATM. NEW is defined as the flight planning and ATS message formats as specified in Amendment 1 to the PANS-ATM.

1.2 Amendment 1 to the PANS-ATM contains changes to the length and content of items. The changes to content are as follows:

- Change the way aircraft equipage and capabilities are communicated to provide more details;
- Provide additional means of describing route way points (specifically bearing and distance from points other than navigation aids); and
- Permit specification of the date of flight in a standardised manner.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 State Letter AN 13/2.1-09/9 6 February 2009 - Guidance for implementation of flight plan information to support Amendment 1 of the *Procedures for Air Navigation Services — Air Traffic Management*, Fifteenth Edition (PANS-ATM, DOC 4444) advised States that the Flight Plan changes have considerable consequences on ANSP flight data processing systems that check and accept flight plans and related messages, use flight plan data in displays for controller reference, use data in ANSP automation and which support communication between ANSPs as the flight progresses. Preparation for the changes should therefore be made well in advance of the applicable date. The changes also have consequences for airspace users. If a flight plan with new content is sent to an ANSP that has not prepared to accept the new content then it is likely that some information will be lost, misinterpreted or cause a rejection of the flight plan.

2.2 Additionally, State Letter AN 13/2.1-09/9 states that “to allow performance case considerations to drive individual airspace user and ANSP implementation schedules, the ATM system will need to simultaneously support both PRESENT and NEW for a period of time.” However, from 15 November 2012, ANSPs are not required to accept and process PRESENT and airspace users are expected to file NEW as using PRESENT is not assured.

2.3 At FPL&AM/TF/2 a number of risks associated with implementation were identified during development of the region’s implementation strategy. These risks are summarised as follows:

- a) IATA advised that in order to ensure compliance by States the changes to the flight plan format should be issued as SARPs to ensure uniform application by all States as it is necessary in the interests of safety or regularity of international air navigation. Amendment 1 to PANS-ATM 4.4.1.3 still only advises operators and ATS units that they *should* comply with the instructions for completion of the flight plan form. With the almost total reliance placed on FPL and ATS message formats in today’s automated ATM systems, IATA firmly believes the FPL format should be adopted as a standard.
- b) At the first meeting of the European FPL TF in Sep 09, NATS UK and AENA Spain announced they would not be capable of accepting the NEW format in 2012 with NATS expecting late 2013/early 2014 and AENA indicating early 2013. Additionally, on the ICAO Flight Plan Implementation Tracking System (FITS) located at <http://www2.icao.int/en/FITS/Pages/home.aspx> it is apparent that there is a great majority of States that are still only evaluating their current systems with no update regarding implementation. This is a concern as the implementation date is a little over two years away and given the number of ANSP system changes required, including the number of dependent systems reliant on accepting flight plan data, planning should be at a very advanced stage.
- c) State Letter AN 13/2.1-09/9 provides a conversion table for flight plan data from NEW to PRESENT however no conversion from PRESENT to NEW is available. Therefore if an aircraft transits FIRs which alternately support NEW, PRESENT and NEW data will be irretrievably lost.
- d) If there is no universal adoption by States of the NEW flight plan format there is a possibility that airspace users will not be prepared to adopt the changes as there would be a requirement to update their flight planning systems to allow filing of flight plans in two formats in circumstances where a region or ANSP only supports NEW or PRESENT.

2.4 There is a significant financial investment to be made by States and airspace users to implement the 2012 ICAO Flight Plan. States require a level of certainty to be provided through ICAO’s PANS and SARPs that the changes to be implemented are going to be adopted by all States and airspace users.

2.5 The issue of the integrity of flight planning data is a very real one in circumstances where flight plans need to be converted from NEW to PRESENT and vice versa. The fact that flight planning information can be lost, misinterpreted or rejected is a major safety risk to ANSPs.

2.6 Under State Letter AN 13/2.1-09/9 ICAO has an expectation that all States and airspace users will be ready to implement the change to NEW on 15 November 2012. The State Letter does not provide for circumstances of ANSPs and airspace users on a large scale not being ready or able to accept, process or file NEW. ICAO needs to provide guidance to States beyond 15 November 2012 if the implementation of NEW is in any way compromised by inability of States or airspace users to comply.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the readiness of all States, including those outside the Asia/Pacific Region, in implementing the 2012 ICAO Flight Plan as recorded in the FITS;
- b) request that ICAO HQ urge States to provide updates on implementation status and provide confirmation they will be ready to implement the new ICAO Flight Plan on 15 November 2012;
- c) request that ICAO HQ conduct a review of States preparedness to implement the new ICAO Flight Plan on 15 November 2012; and
- d) request that ICAO HQ provide timely guidance to States in the event that a significant number of States indicate that they will be unable to implement the new ICAO Flight Plan on 15 November 2012.
