



International Civil Aviation Organization

The First Meeting of the ICAO Asia/Pacific Regional Air Traffic Management Contingency Plan Task Force (RACPTF/1)

Bangkok, Thailand, 17 – 20 April 2012

Agenda Item 3: Review Outcomes of Related Meetings

RELATED MEETING OUTCOMES

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper provides relevant outcomes from the DGCA/47, ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/21, APANPIRG/22 and METWARN/I TF/1 meetings.

This paper relates to –

Strategic Objectives:

A: Safety – Enhance global civil aviation safety

C: Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of Air Transport – Foster harmonized and economically viable development of international civil aviation that does not unduly harm the environment

Global Plan Initiatives:

GPI-6 Air traffic flow management

GPI-7 Dynamic and flexible ATS route management

GPI-8 Collaborative airspace design and management

GPI-18 Aeronautical information

GPI-19 Meteorological Systems

GPI-22 Communication infrastructure

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Conference of Directors General of Civil Aviation, Asia and Pacific Regions (DGCA/47, Macao, China, 25-29 October 2010) recognized the need for ATM Contingency Plans to be developed and implemented on a regional basis. DGCA/47 requested the Regional Office to consider the establishment of a task force for planning, coordination and implementation of a regional ATM Contingency Plan (Action Item 47/1).

1.2 The First Meeting of the Meteorological Advisories and Warnings Task Force (METWARN/I TF/1) was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 23-24 March 2011.

1.3 The Twenty-First meeting of the ATM/AIS/SAR Sub-group of APANPIRG (ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/21) was held at Bangkok, Thailand from 27 June until 01 July 2011.

1.4 The Twenty-Second Meeting of the Asia/Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG/22) was held at Bangkok, Thailand from 5 until 9 September 2011.

2. DISCUSSION

METWARN/I TF

2.1 The METWARN/I TF had noted that the EUR/NAT regional contingency plan might not be a suitable to the APAC region. APAC Volcanic Ash Advisory Centres (VAACs) had determined that there was too much uncertainty and error in the volcanic ash concentration product and only 2 of the 9 VAACs worldwide provided volcanic ash concentration maps.

2.2 The meeting noted with appreciation the sub regional initiative taken by Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and IATA in organizing Special Coordination Meeting (SCM) in Singapore from 31 January to 1 February 2011. The second teleconference, including a table top exercise was held on 26 August 2011 with the participation of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand supported by IATA. The intent of the SCM was to develop an interim arrangement in the absence of a harmonized contingency plan to minimize flight disruption in the event of volcanic eruptions. It was recognized that this initiative could be adopted as a model for other sub-regions to implement initiatives in line with the regional targets, with the aim to harmonize procedures among all the sub-regions.

2.3 It was also noted that the RACP/TF would develop regional ATM contingencies plan that would include volcanic ash. It was further noted that to ensure coordination, a link between the RACP/TF and the METWARN/I TF had also been included in CNS/MET Tasks List.

2.4 IATA reiterated its position on operating in or near volcanic ash should be left to the airlines noting that through safety risk assessment and standard operating procedures as approved by the respective regulator has proven successful over the years in that no fatalities were associated with the volcanic ash hazard. To conduct the proper safety risk assessment, it was noted that accurate and timely information related to volcanic ash was necessary.

2.5 The specific points presented by IATA with regard to volcanic ash were also noted. The meeting considered that this information could be used at future meetings dealing with volcanic ash for consideration:

- **Radioactive cloud information:** notification of radioactive material was sent by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, Austria to
 - VAAC London to notify ACCs; and
 - WMO Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres (RSMC) for further distribution to MWOs (through national meteorological centres).
- **Notification of radioactive cloud information to ACCs:** validation of the AFTN addresses in the Asia/Pacific Region used by VAAC to notify ACCs of a radioactive material release (Amendment 75 to Annex 3) was an important issue.

2.6 The meeting noted the Collaborative Decision-Making (CDM) approach in Australia in response to volcanic ash transported from southern Chile that impacted the Melbourne FIR beginning 9 June 2011. The Australian National Operations Centre Meteorological Unit (NOC-MET) coordinated discussions involving VAAC Darwin, Qantas and Virgin Australia meteorological units as well as Airservices Australia and the airlines. Coordination amongst Darwin, Toulouse and Wellington VAACs was performed and agreed that each VAAC would issue volcanic ash advisories for their respective areas of responsibility.

2.7 Darwin VAAC considered airlines' desire to provide volcanic ash concentration charts as well as longer duration forecasts at greater frequency, however, Darwin was unable to produce volcanic ash concentration charts given the current level of accuracy of volcanic ash forecasts and further work was expected at the global level in coordination with the VAACs to meet the users' needs.

2.8 The METWARN/I TF/1 report covered the topics that include SIGMET tests and SIGMET advisory trial, difficulties in formulating SIGMET on radioactive cloud, lack of clarity in utilizing Tsunami warnings for aviation purposes, issues related with volcanic ash advisories such as confusion associated with the use of color code for eruption and the development of regional contingency plans. One of the main tasks of METWARN/I TF included the development of regional contingency plans that includes volcanic ash, tropical cyclone, radioactive cloud, and Tsunami.

2.9 CDM had proven to be a valuable method of determining ATM measures necessary for events (e.g. volcanic ash, tropical cyclone, disasters such as earthquake and Tsunami) that impact international flight. IATA agreed to the sharing of information by VAACs as this would help reduce the differences between VAACs noting some have less capability than others. In addition, IATA supported the concept of choice by the operator and the policy of not prohibiting airspace.

ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/21

2.10 During the ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/21, Hong Kong, China asked how domestic contingency planning fitted in to the proposed task force's work. It was not expected that regional contingency planning would invalidate this, but would probably form the lower echelon of a three tiered approach, recognizing that the second level meant bilateral arrangements, and the top level was a much wider regional event. Japan expressed its concerns about the proposed TOR, stating that the concept and TOR should be focused on Annex 11 ATM Contingency planning.

2.11 Australia was concerned about how effective the RACP/TF would be and were looking at the TF to operate in a similar fashion to the PBN TF in undertaking a review of the State plans. Australia noted there was a need to be cautious about the cost of holding meetings. The Task Force would be small to set up the framework, details to be worked out multi-laterally. Singapore agreed that the TF needed to take an overall view. The Secretariat noted that the impression in the DGCA Conference was that other areas such as CNS were considered. The key areas were considered to be the framework (principles and practices, guidance material), gap analysis to determine the level of harmonization, and the assessment of State Plans.

APANPIRG/22

2.12 The Meeting reviewed the Report of the ATM/AIS/SAR SG and determined that there should be a link between the RACP/TF and the METWARN/I TF. Malaysia agreed that the RACP/TF was important and recommended that time be given to allow the Contingency Plan to be established.

2.13 APANPIRG/22 recalled Decision 21/9, regarding the Air Navigation Commission encouragement to APANPIRG to expedite the development of a volcanic ash regional contingency plan in coordination with all parties concerned. It was noted that in regard to Global Plan Initiative (GPI/19 Meteorological Systems) the MET/ATM TF would provide input to the METWARN/I TF to develop a framework for contingency planning for specific phenomenon including volcanic ash, radioactive cloud, tropical cyclone and Tsunami events.

2.14 IATA noted that guidance material and standards for volcanic ash during the Icelandic volcano incident were lacking. IATA supported the Contingency Task Force as it would allow a faster reaction to events. IATA supported a comprehensive Task Force, which could allow the development of a checklist to be used whenever there was a disruption. The APANPIRG Chairman noted that whatever the causes, the issue was the effect on the ATM system. Singapore suggested starting with development of the necessary framework.

2.15 Australia suggested that a single Task Force should adopt an ‘all hazards’ approach, and should be similar to Y2K, which had a core team of people working on whether State plans were adequate, and whether the plans integrated. Australia noted that the PBN TF actually rated State plans so that approach was desirable, noting that a small team of people could work with States to review the adequacy of their plans.

2.16 New Zealand was concerned that this Task Force could have a large amount of work with the large number of initiating actions. New Zealand’s plan had short, medium, and long term timeframes so the meeting needed to be clear about what the Task Force had to do, perhaps requiring a sub-regional representative approach. APANPIRG/22 agreed to the following Conclusion:

Conclusion 22/9 – Regional ATM Contingency Plan Task Force

That, a Regional ATM Contingency Plan Task Force (RACP/TF) be formed, reporting to APANPIRG through the ATM/AIS/SAR Sub-Group for planning, coordination and implementation of a regional ATM contingency plan, with a link to the METWARN/I Task Force, in accordance with the Terms of Reference as provided in Appendix G to the Report on Agenda Item 3.2.

2.17 The Terms of Reference of the RACP/TF are appended in **Attachment 1**.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) review the Terms of Reference as approved by APANPIRG/22; and
- b) discuss any other relevant matters.

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Appendix G: Terms of Reference

Regional ATM Contingency Plan Task Force **(RACP/TF)**

1) The objective of the Regional ATM Contingency Plan Task Force is:

In collaboration with affected stakeholders and ensuring inter-regional harmonization, develop and implement a Regional ATM Contingency Plan that:

- i) provides a contingency response framework for States;
- ii) ensures a timely, harmonised and appropriate response to events that affect the provision of Air Traffic Services (ATS), or which ATS is involved in; and
- iii) provides a greater degree of certainty for airspace and aerodrome users during contingency operations.

2) To meet this objective the Task Force shall:

- a) Review the current status of ATM Contingency Plans and the contingency preparedness of Asia and Pacific Region States;
- b) Identify areas where ATM contingency planning requires improvement in terms of compliance with Annex 11 and accepted best practice, and to make recommendations on those areas of improvement;
- c) Analyse contingency procedures in use in other ICAO Regions, and cooperate with other groups which are involved with similar work in adjacent airspaces, in order to achieve harmonized inter-regional solutions;
- e) Develop a Regional ATM Contingency Plan that:
 - i) takes into account the varying levels of contingency response necessary, commensurate with precipitating events;
 - ii) takes into account the varying levels of State contingency capability;
 - iii) provides principles for Regional ATM Contingency planning;
 - iv) details recommended Regional contingency practices to events such as severe meteorological and geological phenomena, health emergencies (pandemics, etc), military conflicts and industrial relations issues; and
 - v) where practical, provides contingency planning templates for States.

The Task Force reports to APANPIRG through the ATM/AIS/SAR Sub-Group for planning, coordination and implementation of a regional ATM contingency plan, with a link to the METWARN/I Task Force.