



International Civil Aviation Organization

**The Second Meeting of the APANPIRG ATM Sub-Group
(ATM /SG/2)**

Hong Kong, China, 04-08 August 2014

Agenda Item 6: AOP, MET, AIM, SAR

WP30 SECRETARIAT COMMENTS

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper presents comments to support the conclusions of WP30 from the Secretariat.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 In regard to the conclusions of WP30 by Australia that self-evident lessons learnt from the MH370 event needed to be discussed by the ATM/SG and the APSAR/TF, the following are potential matters that could be incorporated into the Asia/Pacific SAR Plan and/or global SAR material.

- a) **CIVIL/MILITARY:** It is apparent that a higher degree of civil/military coordination may have revealed the possibility of the MH370 course reversal much earlier after the initial alert advice from Viet Nam ATC, and saved as much as a week of fruitless searching in the wrong area, while reducing the chances of finding the ULB given its limited battery life.
- b) **SAR PHASES:** The time lapses of more than 16 minutes between the transfer of control point at IGARI and the advisory to Kuala Lumpur ACC that MH370 had disappeared, 38 minutes for the issuance of an INCERFA SAR phase, and 7 hours and 21 minutes for the issuance of an ALERFA/DETRESFA SAR phases indicates that the Annex 12 SAR phases and actions may need to be revised to take into account the expectations and capabilities of a modern ATS surveillance environment (the SAR phases were designed in a procedural environment). The SAR actions should include the need for civil/military coordination where appropriate, and advisories to all neighbouring ACCs in the case of uncertainty of the aircraft's track.
- c) **SAR PREPAREDNESS:** Poor SAR preparedness and ad hoc SAR coordination between States needs to be addressed. Past APANPIRG Conclusions meant to address SAR coordination weaknesses had been largely ignored. In some cases SAR Agreements were hindered by political barriers whereby States can take many years to progress documents through government ministries. This may require a high level political agreement to change the manner in which SAR agreements and operational coordination is prioritized and managed. In addition, the region needs to conduct properly organized SAREX that actually test the SAR system on a regular basis and report the outcomes to APANPIRG, instead of this being done on an ad hoc basis between States.

- d) ANNEX 12/13 TRANSITION: Annex 12 and Annex 13 need to be updated to include SARPs on transition procedures between the two Annexes, particularly regarding who is responsible during concurrent Annex 12 and Annex 13 activities (i.e.: who is responsible for a rescue operation and when that phase ends, so it becomes primarily a recovery/investigation operation under Annex 13).
- e) MULTIPLE SRRS/FIRS: Annex 12 had no reference in paragraph 5.2.4 as to responsibility when more than two SRRs were involved, especially if the airspace concerned was not part of the original flight plan.
- f) SRR DESIGNATION Aeronautical SRR designation by States (as it is written in Annex 12 at present) instead of the ICAO Council was not the most optimal method, and did not align with the process used to designate FIRs; thus there were areas where there was an overlap of SAR responsibility or no clear responsibility.

2. ACTION BY THE MEETING

2.1.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this flimsy; and
- b) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

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