International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG/20 and RASG-MID/10 Meetings

(Muscat, Oman, 14-17 May 2023)

Agenda Item 2.1:   **ICAO update**

REVIEW OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE ANC ON
MIDANPIRG/19 AND RASG-MID/9 REPORT

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY
This paper presents an overview of the review of the MIDANPIRG/19 and RASG-MID/9 Reports by the WG/SRP and the Commission. The Director of the Air Navigation Bureau and the President of the ANC presented the information to the Council as part of the consolidated annual report on the activities of planning and implementation regional groups (PIRGs) and regional aviation safety groups (RASGs).
Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

REFERENCES
- * AN-WP/9599
- AN-WP/9578
- C-WP/15370
- C-DEC 226/10
- Report of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Middle East Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group and Ninth Meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group-Middle East.
https://www.icao.int/MID/MIDANPIRG/Pages/default.aspx
*Principal Reference

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   On 20 April 2022, the WG/SRP reviewed the MIDANPIRG/19 and RASG-MID/9 Reports presented by Mr. Ahmed Ibrahim Al Jallaf, Chairperson of MIDANPIRG and Mr. Mohamed Smaoui, Deputy Regional Director, MID Regional Office who presented the RASG-MID report on behalf of Capt. Sulaiman Almuhaimedi.

1.2   The WG/SRP thanked Mr. Al Jallaf and Mr. Smaoui and their teams for their time and effort in the preparation of this very comprehensive, efficient, and clear presentation to the WG/SRP. The WG/SRP presented its report to the Commission and there after D/ANB and the President of the ANC presented the information to the Council as part of the consolidated annual report on the activities of planning and implementation regional groups (PIRGs) and regional aviation safety groups (RASGs) (C-WP/15370)

1.3   The Commission was presented with an overview of the MIDANPIRG/19 and RASG-MID/9 meetings outcomes. (AN-WP/9599. It was noted that the meetings were attended by a total of 190 participants. (118 in person and 72 virtual participants), which included experts from 14 States (Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, UAE, USA, and Yemen) and 10 International Organizations/Industries (ACAO, ACI, BOEING, CANSO, EUROCONTROL, GCC, IATA, IFALPA, IFATCA and MIDRMA).

1.4   The Commission noted that the attendance was good as the first experience as a hybrid meeting. The Commission commended the MID Region for the excellent quality of the regional reports and the progress made in the region.

1.5   It was also noted that the MIDANPIRG/19 meeting adopted fifteen Conclusions and twelve Decisions. The RASG-MID/9 meeting adopted seven Conclusions and three Decisions. The Commission noted that the meeting was structured in a combined PIRG/RASG plenary and a separate PIRG and RASG meetings.

2.   DISCUSSION

2.1   The Commission noted that excellent coordination took place between the MIDANPIRG and RASG-MID. It was noted that the meeting reviewed the High-level Conference on COVID-19 (HLCC) recommendations and based on this, States were encouraged to support and implement the HLCC recommendations.

2.2   The Commission was appraised by the report of the progress made by the region on the regional projects, through the close coordination between, the MIDANPIRG and the RASG-MID. The Commission noted with satisfaction that so far, seven (7) States of the Region signed the MoU on the Middle East and North African States (MENA) Accident Investigation (AIG) Regional Coordination Mechanism (ARCM). With respect to the MID Regional Flight Procedures Program (MID FPP), the Commission noted with satisfaction that this project is well on its way to completing its activities, with the recruitment of the staff and the provision of infrastructure and tools in the MID FPP office.

2.3   The Commission was apprised of the regional safety priorities and noted with appreciation the region's approach to addressing simultaneously the operational safety risks as well as organizational-related challenges that affect safety performance in the region. In this connection, the Commission noted that the operational risks identified in the region are consistent with those listed in the High-Risk Categories in the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) while the organizational challenges include States' Safety Oversight Capabilities, Safety management and Human Factors and Competence of Personnel.

2.4   The Commission noted also that the emerging risks identified in the region include global navigation satellite system (GNSS) Outages/ Vulnerability, COVID-19 Pandemic outbreak, the Safe Operations of UAS (drones), and the impact of Security events on Safety.

2.5   With regards to GNSS Outage and vulnerabilities, the Commission noted with concern that pilots reported a huge number of GNSS outage events in 2021, with most of the incidents reported in Ankara

and Baghdad FIRs. It noted that some military activities might cause GNSS signal interferences observed in the region.

2.6   The Commission noted with relief that the initiatives taken by the Region to address the issue, which include, an invitation to MID region States to report events of GNSS radio frequency interferences to the ITU Radio-communication Bureau, and the planning of a Civil-Military Webinar/Workshop in the region for later in 2022. The Commission expressed interest in the initiatives taken by the Region to address the matter and acknowledged that the ANC should be continuously updated, by the Secretariat, about the progress made.

2.7   With regards to Radio Altimeter Interference, the Commission recalled the HLCC-2021 Recommendation 5/5 on mitigating the risk of 5G implementation to safety-critical radio altimeter functions that urged States to take actions as appropriate. The Commission was informed of the actions taken by Saudi Arabia to mitigate possible harm caused to Radio Altimeter from 5G Networks. The Commission was informed that no interference related to 5G networks has been reported in the Region.

2.8   With respect to the safe operation of the UAS, the Commission noted the report of the MID Region related to the impact of UAS's Operations on Aeronautical Surveillance Equipment, and specifically the concerns regarding the congestion of 1090 MHz and the shortage of 24-bit aircraft addresses. This is due to the increasing density of ground-based and on-board surveillance systems using the 1030/1090 MHz frequencies.

2.9   The Commission was also informed that the rapid growth in the number of unmanned aircraft (UA) was making the concerns more severe and was warned that the situation might result in a reduction to the overall performance of ACAS as well as the SSR/MLAT and ADS-B systems. The Commission noted with interest the concerns raised and requested MIDANPIRG and RASG-MID to monitor the situation in the region and report to the ANC.

2.10   With regards to reduced vertical separation minimum (RVSM) Operations and Monitoring Activities in the MID Region, the Commission noted that the MID RVSM Safety Monitoring Report (SMR) 2021 was endorsed. The Commission noted with concern the increased number of Large Height Deviation (LHD) reports submitted by Sana'a ACC, and urged the relevant Regional Offices and RMAs to resolve the issue and report to the ANC. The Commission noted that for the Year 2022 the highest volumes of traffic would be, in addition to the Hajj season, during the FIFA World Cup 2022 event, organized by Qatar (November and December 2022).

2.11   The Commission noted the update to the MID Region Dashboard on Global Reporting Format (GRF) Implementation and the invitation addressed to States to continuously provide the ICAO MID Office with their updated data on the implementation of the National GRF Implementation Plans (GRF Milestones), and their airports readiness for the GRF deployment.

2.12   The Commission was informed of the agreement of MIDANPIRG to go ahead with the project related to the upgrade/improvement of the MID RAS Software. This action was based on the experience gained by the MID RMA Team through the extensive work on the software during the last 10 years and the offer received from the MID RAS Developer to address the identified issues and necessary improvements.

RASG-MID/9 activities and achievements

2.13   The Commission noted the achievements of the RASG-MID since the previous report. The Commission noted that the Tenth Edition of the MID Regional Aviation Safety Report (MID-ASR)

including MID Region safety priorities was endorsed by RASG-MID/9. The Commission noted the establishment of the MID Region Aerodromes Safety and GRF Dashboards and the updated status of the SEIs implementation (MID-RASP 2020-2022). The Commission noted that the Safety Management Implementation Team (SMIT) handbook including the MID Region SSP Assessment tool was endorsed by the RASG-MID/9.

2.14   With regards to the 10th MID Annual Safety Report, the Commission noted the goal to achieve a continuous reduction of the operational safety risk by reducing the regional average rate of accidents in the MID Region from 2.67 which is slightly higher than the global average of 2.44 accidents per million departures. For the period 2016- 2020, the fatal accident rate in the MID was also slightly higher at 0.73 versus the global average of 0.43 fatal accidents per million departures.

2.15   The Commission was informed that the sudden increase in the rates of accidents and fatal accidents was due to four accidents registered in the region during the year 2020, which combined with the reduced number in flights, due COVID-19 pandemic effects, inflated these rates.

2.12   With regards to the regional goal to Strengthen States' Safety Oversight Capabilities and to increase the regional average EI to be above 70 per cent by 2020, the Commission noted with satisfaction the performance of the MID Region who registered an average EI of 74.16 per cent, well above its initial target of 70 per cent average regional EI. The Region was also very close to achieving its regional target of 11 MID States having achieved more than 60 per cent EI, with 10 States above 60 per cent. The Commission was also informed that the three remaining States could not achieve the target of 60 per cent EI due to internal political and security challenges.

MIDANPIRG/19 Activities and Achievements

2.16   With regards to the implementation of the GANP, the Commission noted that the MIDANPIRG/19 overall implementation level of the priority 1 ASBU Threads/ Elements is 58 per cent. The Commission was informed that in relation to the implementation of the GANP, (ANS Performance Monitoring) the Web-based MID Air Navigation Report for 2021 includes, for the first time, the measurement of the Regional KPIs (01, 02, 13 and 14) the data included covered 17 out of 57 international aerodromes in the MID Region. This represents 29.8 per cent. Regarding the ATFM implementation, the Commission was informed that CANSO is working closely with the various PIRG subsidiary bodies, in particular, the ATFM Task Force.

2.17   To further facilitate the implementation of PBN, the Commission noted the establishment of a PBN Implementation Plan Ad Hoc WG to review and update the MID Region PBN Implementation Plan (MID Doc 007). It was noted that to foster the transition from AIS to AIM capacity building activities would include Workshops and Webinars on various AIM subjects. The Commission specifically noted that in preparation for the FWC 2022, the Qatar operational plan, including the implementation of an ATFM solution during the event, was reviewed and updated.

2.18   With regards to CNS matters, the Commission noted that in order to implement reduced channel spacing for VHF Radio Navigation Aids, a Proposal for Amendment (PfA) would be processed. The Commission was informed that States were encouraged to ensure alignment of their ANS national Cybersecurity plans with the ICAO Cybersecurity Action Plan (CyAP).

2.19   Regarding the planning for ADS-B implementation, the Commission noted with interest the conclusion taken by the MIDANPIRG that the MIDRMA Board explore the possibility to extend the functions and responsibilities of the MIDRMA to include the collection and sharing of information on the level of ADS-B equipage of the registered fleet and all flights operating from/to or through the MID RVSM airspace. The Commission appreciated the data-driven approach used by the region.

2.20   The Commission was apprised of the progress made with the implementation of regional projects like the MID Flight Procedure Program (MID-FPP) which is set to run with the finalization of the recruitment of the project manager and the successful meeting of the steering committee. In the same vein it was noted that the MID region AIM Database (MIDAD) is in Phase A with only two States of the region already migrated to EAD. It was also noted the ongoing coordination for some States of the MID region to join the EUROCONTROL IP Network Project (New PENS).

Challenges Faced by the MIDANPIRG/19 and RASG-MID/9

2.21   The Commission noted the challenges faced by States & industry related to COVID-19 as reported by all the regional groups. It was noted that even though virtual meetings attracted a greater number of participants from States and other stakeholders, this format, however, did not allow for more efficiency in terms of decision-making, especially for complex meetings such as PIRGs and RAGSs where consensus and flexibility are necessary to make decisions. The Commission noted that like other Regions, there is a low level of active participation in MIDANPIRG & RASG-MID Subsidiary bodies meetings.

2.22   The Commission was informed that specific challenges for MIDANPIRG included the alignment with the 6th edition of the GANP, especially at the National level, including the development of NANPs, implementation of the Performance Based Approach and measurement of the agreed KPIs for the monitoring of the Air Navigation System Performance (KPIs: 01, 02, 13 and 14). The level of implementation of certain ASBU Threads/Elements (FICE, CCO/CDO, ACDM, NAVS, NOPS) is also below expectation. Other challenges include the population of the MID eANP Tables ATM I-1 and SAR I-1 specifically FIR boundaries, and Civil/Military Cooperation & Flexible Use of Airspace.

2.23   With regards to the challenges faced by the RASG-MID, the Commission noted the case of the three (3) States that have a USOAP EI below 60% due to unstable internal security and/or political situations and appreciated that, notwithstanding these circumstances, the RASG-MID and the ICAO MID Regional Office indicated full commitment to continue to support these States towards the regional targets. The Commission also noted the challenge posed by the slow development of NASP and specifically the low level of SSP implementation by States in the Region.

2.24   In addition to the above challenges, the Commission noted the lack of sharing of Air Navigation as well as Safety data and information by the States, making it difficult for the MIDANPIRG and the RASG-MID to conduct data-based activities to address deficiencies and properly monitor progress. The Commission was further informed that the lack of data sharing by States of the region has a lot to do with a lack of political will: many States refraining to share their data. The Commission acknowledged that the issue of lack of data sharing was also noted in many other regions with several reasons to explain it, and agreed that the issue needs global, coordinated, and harmonised initiatives to address it.

2.25   The Commission noted that there are no Conclusions or Decisions that require specific action by the Air Navigation Commission.

3.   ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1   The meeting is invited to review the actions taken by the Air Navigation Commission and the Council on the Report of the MIDANPIRG/19 and RASG-MID/9 Report.

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