



International Civil Aviation Organization

**THIRD MEETING OF ASIA/PAC OPMET MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
OF CNS/MET SUB-GROUP OF APANPIRG (OPMET/M TF/3)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 2-4 March 2005

Agenda Item 5: Transition to BUFR coded OPMET information

PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION TO BUFR CODED OPMET INFORMATION

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper presents the discussion at APANPIRG/15 regarding the planned transition to BUFR code for the OPMET information. The regional planning is to be undertaken by the OPMET/M TF and ATN Transition TF.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The 15th meeting of APANPIRG, 23 – 27 August 2004, Bangkok discussed the need for regional planning of the transition from traditional alphanumeric codes (TAC) to the so called table-driven code formats (TDCF). The meeting adopted Decision 15/40, Planning for migration to BUFR-coded aeronautical meteorological messages, by which the OPMET/M TF and the ATN Transition TF were tasked to pursue matters related to the BUFR Transition.

2. DISCUSSION

Migration to BUFR-coded aeronautical meteorological messages (METAR/ SPECI and TAF) as discussed by APANPIRG/15

2.1 APANPIRG/15 meeting was informed that the Fourteenth WMO Congress held in Geneva, 5 to 23 May 2003, endorsed a plan for migration from the traditional alphanumeric codes (TACs) to the so-called table-driven code formats (TDCFs), i.e. BUFR and CREX code forms. The migration plan would allow the use of table-driven codes in parallel with alphanumeric codes as of the year 2007, and would require the exclusive use of table-driven codes around the year 2015.

2.2 The meeting recognized that the transition to the TDCFs for aeronautical meteorological messages would be a major undertaking and potentially expensive. Therefore, in order to ensure an orderly migration to the TDCFs, it was recommended that detailed regional implementation plan should be developed by MET and CNS experts.

2.3 The communication problems related to the transition to TDCFs were outlined. With the introduction of AMHS it would be expected that the OPMET traffic, currently, promulgated on AFTN, would be transferred to the AMHS, as AFTN cannot support binary data. It should be noted that according to the implementation plan most Asia/Pacific States would be ready for bit oriented data exchange for the identified transition period. However, in order to handle BUFR-coded OPMET data detailed information should be provided regarding the message headers, the detailed format of the messages and bulletins, etc

2.4 The meeting agreed that the task to address the migration to TDCFs should be assigned to the existing ATN Transition Task Force, which reported directly to APANPIRG, and to the OPMET Management Task Force, which reported to CNS/MET SG. Both groups should review the matter based on their specific expertise and coordinate a draft migration plan. In order to foster the coordination between the groups, it was envisaged that one of the next regular annual meetings of the ATN Transition TF and the OPMET/M TF should be held jointly.

2.5 In view of the above discussion, APANPIRG/15 formulated the following Decision:
Decision 15/40 – Planning for migration to BUFR-coded aeronautical meteorological messages

That,

- a) *the ATN Transition Task Force and the OPMET Management Task Force be tasked to address the issues related to the transition to BUFR-coded aeronautical meteorological messages by conducting studies, as necessary;*
- b) *the two Task Forces develop in coordination a regional plan for migration to BUFR-coded aeronautical meteorological information by the end of 2005.*

Further action

2.6 The meeting is informed that a BUFR Transition Assessment Task Force was established in EUR Region in order to provide evaluation of all aspects related to the BUFR transition, including a cost-benefit analysis. The ICAO Secretariat considered that the joint meeting of OPMET/M TF and ATN/T TF should be better planned for the beginning of 2006 and in the meantime the MET and COM experts should collect enough information needed for the efficient planning for the BUFR transition.

2.7 The report of the BUFR/T Assessment TF in EUR is provided in IP/7. The meeting is invited to review this report and discuss the issues from the ASIA/PAC perspective.

2.8 The ATN/T TF meeting in April 2005 will be informed of the outcome of this meeting and a proposal will be made for a joint meeting of OPMET/M TF and ATN/T TF (or its successor) in March 2006.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) note the content of this paper;
- b) review the report of EUR BUFR/T Assessment TF;
- c) discuss and make proposals regarding the regional planning of BUFR transition for OPMET.

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