



OUTCOME

VOLCANIC ASH CHALLENGE TEAM

SYNOPSIS OF DISCUSSIONS

Tuesday, 20 September 2011, from 1400 hours to 1700 hours
Conference Block, Room A & B

Institutional Issues

- Noting the roles and responsibilities of the State of the Operator, the Provider State and the Air Operator as embedded in the ICAO Convention and its Annexes, the Volcanic Ash Challenge Team (VACT) **endorsed** the following principle as the basis for the further work of the International Volcanic Ash Task Force (IVATF):

Except in unique circumstances, airspace should be closed only for reasons of national security.

Action: The Secretariat to inform the IVATF.

- Germany could not take part in the endorsement.

Manufacturers

- In reaction to an invitation to provide the Air Operators with more information to enhance their operational decisions on flights during an eruptive event, ICCAIA made the following **statement**:

Manufacturers agree to work with airlines to develop criteria for night/IMC operations to avoid volcanic ash.

Manufacturers agree to review the work underway in the IAVWOPSG for potential involvement towards improving VAAC products for operators, noting that the manufacturers consider the IAVWOPSG as the preferred venue in which to further develop reliable information more accurately indicating areas of ash cloud with associated probabilities.

Manufacturers agree to continue to provide operators data to support safe operations following a volcanic eruption. This includes:

- awareness of potential system effects should ash be encountered*
- signs that indicate hazardous levels of ash have been encountered in flight*
- appropriate maintenance actions following an ash encounter*

Volcanic Ash Advisory Centres

- Considering the needs for improved continuity between adjacent VAAC areas of responsibility, clarification of user requirements and assistance to VAACs in development and deployment of existing and new products, the VACT **agreed** as follows:

That the industry (IATA, ICCAIA, IFALPA) will work with the VAACs, through the IAVWOPSG, to develop a standardized product by June 2012 that meets the user requirements so as to allow for safe and efficient flight operations.

Action: IATA, ICCAIA, IFALPA

- Considering that detection of volcanic ash by satellite is one of several crucial tools for VAACs (data assimilation), that satellite-based on-board sensors are being re-purposed for environmental monitoring and that existing sensors need enhancement, the VACT **agreed** as follows:

To develop a proposal for lobbying the satellite community (US, Europe, Japan, China) to enhance satellite coverage, resolution and availability of data, to improve the capabilities of the VAACs.

Action: ICAO to initiate the process by end October 2011.

- Considering that State/Regional level scientific research has not been fully assimilated into the operational environment and that funding opportunities for further research are insufficient, the VACT **agreed** as follows:

To develop a proposal to lobby the research community to raise the profile of volcanic ash, in order to enhance the capabilities of the VAACs by making data available from ground-based and airborne detection systems.

Action: ICAO to initiate the process by end October 2011.

Volcanic Observatories

- Considering that volcano observatory information is crucial for aviation, that one-third of all potentially explosive volcanoes worldwide are not monitored on a continuous basis and that operation of volcanic observatories often reside in scientific/academic research domain and/or for State-level civil/public contingency, the VACT **agreed** as follows:

The Challenge Team members will lobby selected States together with ICAO to ensure adequate volcano monitoring and communication links to the aviation community, in particular in areas with active volcanoes. This may be done through the World Organization of Volcano Observatories and the World Meteorological Organization/International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics.

Action: ICAO to initiate the process by end September 2011.

Aeronautical Information

- Considering the need to avoid ambiguity in aeronautical information and to reduce information overload, the VACT **endorsed** the following long-term goal:

One set of aeronautical information for one eruptive event.

Action: ICAO to inform the IVATF

Guidance for Operators

- Considering that the guidance document *FLIGHT SAFETY AND VOLCANIC ASH – Risk Management of Flight Operations with Known or Forecast Volcanic Ash Contamination* will be finalized and published as a living document, the VACT **agreed** as follows:

Stakeholders will continue to support updates of the document, as/when required (ICAO, CANSO, IATA, IFALPA, IFATCA, ICCAIA, ACI).

Document will be co-branded by stakeholders.

Next Steps

- It was agreed that the Secretary General should convene another meeting of the VACT if necessary.

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