INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANISATION

AFI PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL GROUP (APIRG)
AFI OPMET MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE FOURTH MEETING (AFI OPMET MTF/4)
(Pretoria, South Africa, 10 to 11 September 2012)

Agenda Item 4:   **Review of regional guidance material on OPMET exchange**

b) Review of the AFI Meteorological Bulletin Exchange (AMBEX) Handbook

COMPILING OF OPMET BULLETINS BY AFI AMBEX CENTERS (BCCS)

(Presented by South Africa)

SUMMARY
The responsibilities of the BCCs in terms of compiling the bulletins are emphasized in this working paper. Further, the current challenges in this regard are also highlighted for consideration of the meeting. Action for the meeting is in paragraph 4.

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   In this paper, focus is placed on the status of implementation of the AMBEX Scheme by the AFI AMBEX centers (BCCs). The meeting may wish to note that the procedures for exchange of OPMET data within the AFI Region and between Interregional OPMET Gateways (IROGs) are clearly defined in AFI AMBEX Handbook, page 16, 25 and paragraph 8.31 to 8.3.8. In addition, the procedures regarding the format of the bulletins are included in paragraph 8.4 of the AMBEX HB.

2.   DISCUSSION

2.1   The meeting may wish to note that the status of OPMET exchange in the AFI Region needs to be improved. This was evident in the recent query received from ASIA/PAC whereby they requested confirmation of the routine procedures for certain bulletin headers. The query was to ascertain whether what was received on their side was what they should be receiving as per the AFI routine tables. The recent Meteorological Warning Study Group (METWSG/4) agreed action and Satellite Distribution Operations Group (SADISOPSG) conclusion, as described in working paper three (WP03) on Special Air Reports just highlights the extent of this problem.

2.2   The two AFI Regional OPMET Databanks (Dakar and Pretoria) have the responsibility for storing and disseminating bulletins originating from AFI AMBEX center and other ICAO Regions. The Regional OPMET Databanks (RODBs) also conducts routine monitoring as per previous AFI MTF conclusion and is expected to report on the outcome of this monitoring to ICAO. The monitoring activities reveal that in the AFI Region, the BCCs are not compiling bulletins as per AMBEX Handbook. Further, it would appear that OPMET data is received at the RODBs via different channels outside those defines in the AMBEX HB.

2.3   The meeting is invited to note that this practice contributes to the lack of AFI Bulletins in the region and other ICAO Regions. It also means that users do not have access to these bulletins, if any, because they are not been generated and stored in the databank. It must be remembered that OPMET

information originates from aerodromes, then to the national OPMET centers (NOCs) and or AMBEX Centers where bulletins are compiled and send to the RODBs for storage and dissemination as per AMBEX Scheme. This procedure is clearly defined in the AMBEX HB but challenges still exist.

3.   CONCLUSION

3.1   In order to ensure the availability of AFI OPMET information to users and other ICAO Regions as well as IROGs, different role players needs to play their part as described in AMBEX HB. It must be noted that the RODBs are used for storage and dissemination of OPMET data so the BCCs and aerodromes must also play their role in terms of originating OPMET information and compiling of bulletins respectively and ensuring that this is send to the RODBs.

Recommendation 4/xx: Increasing the availability of OPMET information to users and ICAO regions

That, the secretariat writes to States requesting that all AFI AMBEX Centers, also known as Bulletin Compiling Centers (BCCs) or National OPMET Centers (NOCs), and aerodromes concerned, take note of their responsibilities regarding the compilation of AFI OPMET Bulletins and initiation of OPMET data respectively as described in the AFI AMBEX HB.

4.   ACTION BY THE MEETING

4.1   The AFI OPMET MTF is invited to take the following action:

   a) note the information presented in this paper.
   b) decide on the draft recommendation proposed for the Task Force's consideration.

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