INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

**Fourteen Meeting of the APIRG Air Traffic Management/Aeronautical Information
Management/Search and Rescue Sub-Group (ATM/AIM/SAR SG/14)
(Dakar, Senegal, 11 - 14 May 2015)**

**Agenda Item 3: Status of implementation of the Sub-Group work programme and
related Task Forces/Working Groups as assigned by APIRG**

3.1 Air Traffic Management

MISSING FLIGHT PLANS

(Presented by IATA)

SUMMARY
Missing operational messages including FPLs have huge safety repercussions in addition to the potential to disruption of efficiency of air traffic management. This paper highlights the main outcome of the workshop on the Mitigation of Loss of Operational Messages including FPLs which was held in Dakar on 12-14 May 2014. One year on, States and Operators have not fully implemented recommendation from the workshop. A follow up implementation plan needs to be discussed and agreed upon.
REFRENCE(S): ICAO Annex 6-Aicraft Operations 4.6.1 (b) Duty of Flight Operations Officer/Dispatcher ICAO Annex 10-Aeronautical Telecommunications (Vol 1, 2 and 3) ICAO Annex 11-Air Traffic Services Doc 8259 - Manual on the Planning and Engineering of the Aeronautical Fixed Telecommunication Network ICAO ASBU Performance Improvement Areas and Block0 Modules: PIA1 (B0-FICE); PIA2 (B0-DATM, B0-AMET) PIA3 (B0-FRTO, B0-NOPS, B0-ASEP, B0-OPFL, B0-SNET); APIRG - Meeting Reports
Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s): Safety and Air navigation Capacity and Efficiency

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 APIRG 17 of 2011 acknowledged the need to resolve the issue of missing flight plans recognizing that it had become a critical and perennial safety issue that needed immediate intervention. The discussions resulted in conclusion 17/42 i.e. In order to effectively address the problem of missing flight plans between AFI ACCS, AFI States:

a) Take immediate measures to ensure that standard requirements for flight plan processing are adhered to;

b) Ensure that all FIRs collect/record information on missing flight plans and exchange such information/data with other FIRs;

c) Ensure that ACCs/FICs respond to queries from other ACCs/FICs regarding missing flight plans on a timely basis, providing details that might assist not just the affected FIRs but others in resolving the causes for missing flight plans; and

d) Bring the trend information/data on missing flight plans to the attention of the TAG for further action.

1.2 APIRG 18 of 2012 noted the limited progress in implementing conclusion 17/42 and further agreed to implement conclusion18/17 that AFI States should:

a) address the loss of ATS messages using AFTN, including missing flight plans, as a matter of urgency;

b) continuously monitor missing flight plans through:

   i.   the AFI Tactical Action Group (TAG); and

   ii.   conduct regular surveys on missing flight plans for a longer period (e.g. 30 days), or at regular intervals, under the coordination of the ICAO Regional Offices; and

c) ensure that their ATC systems' clocks are synchronized with the GPS time in order to meet Annexes 2 and 11 relevant provisions.

1.3 In addition to conclusion 18/17, APIRG 18 issued conclusion 18/18 that states; That, in order to reduce risks of missing flight plans, enhance safety and efficiency, States and concerned international organizations including IATA take necessary measures to ensure that flight planning personnel are adequately trained on the tasks for which they are engaged in the processing of flight plans.

1.4 The above conclusions have been implemented to a varied degree. However, the issue of missing flight plans is still a cause of concern for both States and Operators and requires further review and resolution. It has further been complicated with the introduction of FLT2012 implementation.

2. **DISCUSSION**

2.1 Several ATM CM meetings under ICAO auspices have been held to address issue of missing flight plans. ASECNA and ATNS presented the ATM CM meeting in Johannesburg on 3-5 February 2015 with results of surveys they did pursuant to APIRG conclusions 17/42 and 18/17. AFTN availability was not the major cause of missing FPL. The major causes was determined to be;

   - Incorrect addressing of FPLs
   - Switch Configuration e.g. AFTN traffic routing in Addis Ababa;
   - Syntax/Data error and system queues;

2.2 ICAO organized a workshop on the mitigation of loss of Operational messages (e.g. FPLs) with several recommendations (1-9) which includes Draft Recommendations (1/06);

   - ANSPs should issue AICs and letters to inform their neighbors, IATA, Eurocontrol & ICAO on their collective addressing procedures;
   - States should establish local multidisciplinary working groups composed of representatives of CAAs, airlines, ANSPs and other stakeholders to address the

issues of missing flight plans.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1   The meeting is invited to:

a) Discuss and adopt recommendations of the ICAO workshop on mitigation of loss of operational messages as lasting solutions to missing flight plans, and in particular recommendations 01/06;

b) Include missing flight plans as one of the parameters for investigation when conducting the AFI Aeronautical Mobile communication Survey in order to identify deficiencies determined interventions to address them.

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