



International Civil Aviation Organization

**The Third Meeting of the Asia/Pacific ICAO Flight Plan and ATS Messages Implementation Task Force (FPL&AM/TF/3)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 23 – 24 August 2010

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**Agenda Item 3: Review available documentation and guidance materials**

**Differences between Asia Pacific FPL&AM/TF/2 Guidance Material, and  
FAA and EUROCONTROL Coding Guidance**

(Presented by the United States of America)

**SUMMARY**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) supports a harmonized, global approach for implementation of Amendment 1 to the *Procedures for Air Navigation Services – Air Traffic Management, Fifteenth Edition* (PANS-ATM, DOC 4444). This information paper presents the results of a differences analysis between coding guidance formulated by APAC, FAA and EUROCONTROL.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 FPL&AM/TF/2 published draft coding guidance in November 2009. The FAA has noted a few specific differences between that guidance, the FAA's guidance and EUROCONTROL's latest directive in the areas of PBN/ consistency checking and determining whether an FPL is NEW or PRESENT.

**2. Terminology**

- 2.1 The following terms are used as defined below in this paper:
- 2.1.1 PRESENT – ICAO flight planning and ATS message formats currently in use as specified in DOC 4444, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition.
- 2.1.2 NEW – ICAO flight planning and ATS message formats specified in Amendment 1 to DOC 4444, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition.

**3. PBN/ Consistency Checking**

- 3.1 EUROCONTROL, the FAA and APAC are in agreement with the exception of the following:
- 3.1.1 FPL&AM/TF/2 Draft Implementation Guidance references a NEW Item 18 PBN/C5 entry (para. 5.5, 4<sup>th</sup> bullet). This is a typographical error as Amendment 1 does not define C5.
- 3.1.2 The consistency check should include checking for "R" in Item 10, Field 10a whenever a PBN/ entry appears in Item 18.

#### **4. Differentiating Between NEW and PRESENT Formats**

4.1 The following differences were identified in Section 7 of the Draft Implementation Guidance compared with the FAA and EUROCONTROL tables.

4.1.1 In determining as PRESENT format:

4.1.1.1 The APAC guidance incorrectly notes that “D” would appear in Field 10a. “D” would be filed in Field 10b.

4.1.1.2 The FAA noted that entries of “E”, “P” or “Q” in Field 10a would also denote PRESENT format.

4.1.1.3 The FAA noted that an entry of “N” in Field 10b would denote PRESENT format.

4.1.1.4 The FAA clarified the logic for evaluating PER/ entries in Item 18. We suggest that PRESENT format is denoted by “an Item 18 PER/ entry of more than a single alpha character or a letter that is not allowed by DOC 8168 Volume I.

4.1.2 In determining as NEW Format:

4.1.2.1 The APAC guidance is missing “P8” and “P9” in the list of Field 10a possibilities. Additionally, the FAA suggests that checking for a numeric value in Field 10a rather than checking against a predefined list may also be an acceptable approach.

4.1.2.2 Similarly, in the evaluation of Field 10b the FAA suggests that checking for “E”, “H” or “L” or for any numeric value may be an equally acceptable approach.

#### **5. Validity Checking & Processing of Item 18 Indicators**

5.1 Section 5.6, item a, states that indicators not defined in the PANS-ATM should not be accepted, with exceptions being allowable for flights wholly within a FIR (i.e., won’t affect other ANSPs).

5.1.1 In developing transition plans, EUROCONTROL in particular encountered difficulty in establishing filing practices within the Amendment 1 constraints that meet the requirements and permit filing of all required information in a way that is adequately detectable by automation. They therefore will use at least one non-standard indicator, “EUR/.” Perhaps the guidelines should indicate the acceptability of this approach.

5.1.2 In evaluating FAA automation systems, two different approaches to handling unknown Field 18 indicators were found. In one FAA system, unknown indicators are changed to remove the “/” character, and moved to be part of RMK/. For example, if ABC/SOME TEXT RMK/SOME REMARKS was filed the system will change it to RMK/SOME REMARKS ABC SOME TEXT.

5.1.2.1 Because of the high incidence of improper or unknown indicators encountered, this method was considered preferable to rejecting the message, since all rejected messages must be corrected by local flight data personnel.

5.1.3 This seems to indicate the possibility of two approaches, depending on whether the system in question is able to return accept/reject messages to the filer. Perhaps the guidelines should allow for this kind of flexibility in order to raise the acceptance rate on FPLs.

**6. Action by the Meeting**

6.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Consider the information provided, and
- b) Decide whether to incorporate changes into the Guidance published after TF/2.

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