International Civil Aviation Organization

The Fourth Meeting of the Asia/Pacific ICAO Flight Plan and ATS Messages Implementation Task Force (FPL&AM/TF/4)

Bangkok, Thailand, 2 – 3 June 2011

Agenda Item 6:   Regional strategies for implementation

Field 18 – RMK

(Presented by IATA)

SUMMARY

This paper discusses the use of multiple items under RMK in field 18 to satisfy State requirements.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   The development of the new ICAO FPL and ATM Messaging format provides a much needed update recognising technological advances that have occurred.

1.2   It is also an opportunity to ensure FPL systems accommodate the needs of all Users (both ANSPs and operators).

2. **DISCUSSION**

2.1   Prior to the amendment, **RMK** in field 18 has been used as a "catch all" accommodating both ATC and State requirements.

2.2   Utilisation has included the following:

- ACAS II equipage, RMK/ACAS II
- ADS-B approved capability, RMK/ADSB
- Flex entry/exit in China, RMK/FLEXIBLE OPERATION
- Overflight permit number, RMK/TURKMENISTAN PERMIT NO. XX/111/2222/333333
- Eurocontrol low visibility operations for state approved minima, RMK/LVTO RVR 150
- Take-off alternate, RMK/TKOF ALTN VAAH
- To facilitate RWY allocation, HKCAD request to identify freighter in FPL, RMK/CARGO AIRCRAFT
- Special operational request, RMK/FREIGHTER OPS, REQST LNDG KLAX RWY 25L IF TFC PERMITS

2.3   Following implementation of the new format, new codes for ADS-B and TALT will cater for these aspects but the others will still need to be denoted.

2.4   With the long-haul nature of many operations with multiple State requirements to be met, there will be an on-going requirement to annotate multiple items under RMK even after the new format becomes effective.

2.5   ICAO guidance (both current and the amendment) provides no detail as to how this situation should be accommodated. There is no prescribed limit to either field length for field 18 or restriction on the use of multiple RMK.

2.6   Some States however have already prescribed their own requirements and do not accept multiple RMK items while other States allow the use of multiple items under a single RMK e.g. RMK/IFPS REROUTE ACCEPTED/TURKEY XXXXX/TCAS EQUIPPED ACARS EQUIPPED. This remedy can make it difficult however to distinguish between a message separator (e.g. different remarks) and part of a single message (e.g. permit numbers).

2.7   Also under some State/ Regional requirements, certain characters are specifically precluded (e.g. CFMU handbook stipulates that " ( ) ^ % $ # / - are not allowed to be used in the sub-field).

2.8   Obviously while these variations may be acceptable to some ATC systems, it may cause messages to be rejected by others.

2.9   With the reliance on automated systems today, it is important that some degree of commonality be established. The ICAO guidance already reflects the importance of this in that the sequence of data fields under field 18 is prescribed under the new format.

2.10   With system design and implementation currently underway, it is important that this matter be considered in the immediate term while potential remains for changes/ accommodations to be made in design.

2.11   Some ICAO guidance as to how States should resolve this would be welcome in the interests of global harmonisation and standardisation.

3.   **ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1   The meeting is invited to:

        ↗   Discuss the issue of multiple RMK items in field 18
        ↗   Consider how the multiple requirements should be catered for
        ↗   Recognise the impact of sequence of items in field 18
        ↗   Request ICAO HQ for further guidance
        ↗   Request ICAO HQ formalise the requirements in the interests of global harmonisation and standardisation.