

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first meeting of the Meteorological Advisories and Warnings Task Force (METWARN/I TF/1) was held in Bangkok, Thailand from 23-24 March 2011. The meeting was attended by forty-five participants from 13 States, 1 Special Regionalized Centre and ICAO. This task force was established by the CNS/MET SG/14 meeting to address regional implementation issues associated with meteorological advisories and warnings and to develop a framework of contingency plans related to volcanic ash, tropical cyclone, radioactive material and Tsunami. This meeting was quite timely in light of recent disasters in the Asia/Pacific Region such as the earthquake, tsunami, and accidental release of radioactive material in Japan, earthquake in New Zealand, historic floods and major tropical cyclone landfall in Australia, volcano eruptions in Indonesia as well as other States in the Region. Fifteen action items were agreed upon by the group that address implementation issues and longer term needs such as the development of guidance material for the issuance of aerodrome warnings for Tsunami and issuance of SIGMET on radioactive material that were tied into global groups already addressing these longer term issues. Highlights of the actions agreed are provided here within.

Radioactive cloud

In light of the recent accidental release of radioactive material associated with the Fukushima nuclear power plant, issues related to the issuance of SIGMET and NOTAM on radioactive material such as SIGMET compliance with Annex 3 is necessary for ingest systems used for flight briefings. Classification of airspace used in NOTAMs was also discussed and compliance to definitions provided in Annex 15 supported by the group. Assuring 8-character AFTN addresses for ACCs used in the notification of the release of radioactive material was also supported by the group. As a result, the meeting agreed that the Regional Office consider informing States to issue SIGMET in compliance with Annex 3, utilize airspace definitions in Annex 15 in formulating NOTAMs and assuring the 8-character AFTN addresses for ACCs are provided and updated for the notification of radioactive release by VAAC London (**Action Agreed 1/8**).

The meeting noted the difficulties in issuing SIGMET on radioactive cloud noting the uncertainty of defining what levels of radioactive material constitutes a hazard to aviation. Furthermore, measurements in the vertical are limited and determining a height of SIGMET deemed difficult. In addition, further guidance is needed on how to utilize information on radioactive material transport and dispersion products provided by Regional Specialized Meteorological Centres (RSMCs) noting that different RSMCs can have different priorities in modeling (e.g. Australia focuses on deposition versus dispersion). Members of the International Airways Volcano Watch Operations Group (IAVWOPSG) agreed to assist in determining current capabilities on the issuance of SIGMET on radioactive cloud in the APAC Region via a survey and report directly to the IAVWOPSG/6 meeting in September 2011 as well as forward the METWARN/I TF report to the Secretariat of IAVWOPSG for consideration in the IAVWOPSG/6 meeting (**Actions Agreed 1/9 and 1/10**).

Tsunami

Likewise, issues related to the issuance of aerodrome warnings on Tsunami were discussed such as which aerodromes should receive this warning information, how is that information provided, who it is provided to and what is done with this information. Members of the Meteorological Warnings Study Group (METWSG) agreed to assist in determining current capabilities on the issuance of aerodrome warnings on Tsunami in the APAC Region via a survey and report directly to the METWSG/4 meeting in May 2012 as well as forward the METWARN/I TF report to the Secretariat of METWSG for consideration in the METWSG/4 meeting in May 2012 (**Action Agreed 1/11 and 1/12**).

Volcanic Ash

Issues such as timeliness of volcanic ash advisories shortly after an eruption for one event in the Region were discussed. In addition, clarification on the use of color-code for eruptions in volcanic ash advisories was deemed necessary since this information is provided by volcano observatories and if no notice is provided this field is NIL even though volcanic ash is present. Users including ATM may find this information conflicting and the meeting agreed that a member of the IAVWOPSG provide a working paper addressing this issue to the IAVWOPSG/6 meeting in September 2011 (**Action Agreed 1/15**).

Regional Contingency Plans

A framework of contingency plans that addresses the needs of the region was developed by an ad-hoc group that will be circulated to States for comment. Furthermore, current arrangements by States (e.g. Singapore-Indonesia) will be requested by the Secretariat to determine a common thread amongst sub-regional plans in formulating contingency plans being developed by the APANPIRG Regional Contingency Plan Task Force (**Action Agreed 1/13 and 1/14**). One topic of interest in sub regional arrangements included the use of collaborative decision making via sharing information and teleconferences that now include Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines.

SIGMET tests and SIGMET advisory trial

SIGMET tests were reviewed and the meeting noted a drop in participation in the November 2010 SIGMET tests. The use of Z99 as a designator in the SIGMET test to avoid overwriting a valid SIGMET and remove the need to reissue a valid SIGMET after a test SIGMET message is issued was determined too risky based on varied practices in States (2 or 4 characters are used in some States). Further testing is needed for determination by the CNS/MET SG/15 meeting (**Action Agreed 1/5**). The SIGMET advisory trial, a global initiative to determine the feasibility of issuing SIGMET advisories to improve the issuance of SIGMET by Meteorological Watch Offices, will take place from May – July 2011 in the APAC Region. SIGMET advisories will be issued by the host State, China, for 9 APAC States in S, SE and E Asia. Hong Kong - China will receive SIGMET from 3 Regional OPMET Data Banks (RODBs) (Bangkok, Singapore, Tokyo) from the end of March to the end of July 2011 (**Action Agreed 1/6**) to assist in the analysis of the issuance of SIGMET by participating States in this trial. The meeting noted that the designator to use in the WMO heading should be FX (miscellaneous forecast) and not FR (aviation route forecast) to mitigate complications that arise at the RODBs in reading the information. The Secretariat informed the Secretariat of METWSG of this issue to relay this information to the AFI Region which will begin the SIGMET advisory trial in April 2011 (**Action Agreed 1/7**).

Wind shear

The meeting was apprised of a brief summary on the wind shear systems acquisition workshop held in Bangkok, Thailand from 1-3 December 2010. Global developments on determining wind shear phraseology and the possible use of expected and reported for semi-automated systems versus fully automated systems currently in Annex 3 is being investigated by the METWSG.

TORs and PFFs

Proposed changes to the Terms of Reference were limited to the inclusion of Singapore as a member of the METWARN/I TF (**Action Agreed 1/1**). Proposed changes to the Performance Framework Form included the removal of global references in the development of regional contingency plans (**Action Agreed 1/2**).
