



International Civil Aviation Organization

Special Coordination Meeting Afghanistan, India and Pakistan
Bangkok, Thailand, 27 June 2013

Agenda Item 2: Implementation of 50NM horizontal separation

Update on discussions held on 27/28 May 2013
(Presented by the Secretariat)

The purpose of this working paper is to update the meeting on the discussions held at ICAO Regional Office, Bangkok, between Pakistan, IATA, and ICAO relating to the implementation of 50/50 NM in India, Pakistan and Afghanistan airspace, on 27 and 28 May 2013.

This paper relates to –

Strategic Objectives:

- A: *Safety – Enhance global civil aviation safety*
- C: *Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of Air Transport – Foster harmonized and economically viable development of international civil aviation that does not unduly harm the environment*

Global Plan Initiatives:

- GPI-1 Flexible use of airspace
- GPI-3 Harmonization of level systems
- GPI-6 Air traffic flow management

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 A meeting was held between Pakistan IATA, and ICAO at the Regional Office to discuss issues relating to the implementation of 50NM horizontal separation in the airspace of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and the communications issues between Kabul and Lahore ACCs.

2. **DISCUSSION**

2.1 A summary of discussions of the meeting is attached.

3. **ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information in the paper.
- b) Discuss any other issue relating to the above.

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BRIEF SUMMARY ON DISCUSSIONS OF AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES

(27-28 May 2013, Bangkok, Thailand)

An informal meeting was held from 27 to 28 May 2013, at ICAO APAC Regional Office, Bangkok, Thailand. The following attended the meeting.

- a. Mr. Muhammad Saleem Ather Director Operations, Civil Aviation Authority of Pakistan
- b. Mr. Rashid Rasheed Zuberi Corporate Manager (ATS), Civil Aviation Authority of Pakistan
- c. Mr. David Rollo, Assistant Director (SO&I), IATA
- d. Mr Li Peng Regional Officer CNS, ICAO Regional Office
- e. Mr Soon Boon Hai, ATM Expert, ICAO Regional Office

Issues:

1. CNS related matters

1.1 Improvement of AFS communications between Pakistan and Afghanistan

1.1.1 The outcome of the COM coordination meeting held in June 2012 and status of follow-up actions were reviewed by the meeting.

a. Action Item 1: Near-term by end of September 2012, fully utilize the VPN circuit operational since January 2012 for exchange of AFTN traffic and organize training for users if required;

- Status: The VPN circuit via U.K. has been operational in normal status. Messages exchanged over the circuit between Karachi and Kabul was as follows:
 - March 2013: Received messages from Kabul were 3307 and sent to Kabul: 62152
 - April 2013: Received 4062; sent 57344
- Number of flight plans received from Kabul by Lahore ACC in first 4 months of 2013 was as follows:
 - January 105, February 108, March 106 and April 97. Number of Flights per day was from 15 to 25. Only about 18% flight plans was received before departure of the flights. This might have been because of operational reasons including lack of appropriate training to the operators and/or air traffic controllers in using the Aeronautical Fixed Service or some system discrepancy.

1.1.2 There was still a serious issue regarding no flight information received at Lahore / Karachi side for aircraft entering Pakistan airspace from Kabul Low Sector.

b. Action Item 2: Mid-term by end of March 2013, harmonize VSAT terminal equipment and select common network service provider to recover the VSAT Links;

- Status: VSAT at Pakistan side had been upgraded with spare parts imported from the supplier in Germany. The VSAT terminals on both sides had been aligned with ASIA SAT 5 through the common service provider. It had been fully tested and confirmed serviceable at Pakistan side. Efforts were made to conduct trials using the recovered VSAT, however, connectivity problems probably still existed from time to time including operational issues such as no response from Afghanistan side.

c. Action Item 3: Long-term by end of June 2014, establish 2 MB dedicated landline connection with multiplexers between Afghanistan and Pakistan to support both data and voice communication between COM centres and ACCs

- Status: Pakistan confirmed again that landline cable was available up to the border (Torkhum) from Pakistan's side. No further progress had been made, as difficulties were experienced coordinating with Afghanistan.
- It was agreed that a follow-up COM coordination meeting should be held by the end of 2013 in Pakistan to progress remedial actions.

1.2 ATS direct speech circuit between Pakistan and China

1.2.1 Air Traffic Transfer mistakes reported between Lahore and Urumqi Area Control Centers (ACCs) in 2010 was initially brought to the notice of Pakistan and China. These mistakes were initially found attributable to the unsatisfactory performance of ATS Direct Speech Circuit provided between the ACCs of the two States. A special coordination meeting between China and Pakistan was held in Karachi in 2011 with LOA renewed. Two separate ISD lines had been made available in Lahore ACC. However, Pakistan informed that the ISD lines were working satisfactorily and no major problem had been observed / reported. In recent RASMAG/18 meeting held at the end of March 2013, it was reported as one of the issues causing concern that require further improvements and necessary remedial action. As result of investigation from China side, the reason was identified as unstable ISD supporting the ATS direct communication operating.

1.2.2 In order to resolve the problem raised by China, , it was considered necessary, as a minimum requirement, to establish a direct ATS speech circuit between Lahore and Urumqi as primary means for communications, and to keep ISD as secondary means. China had proposed to use new technology of VSAT to provide economical and efficient solution to the problem. Pakistan agreed to take urgent action to improve ATS direct speech communication between Karachi and Urumqi ACCs. The meeting therefore recommended Pakistan in coordination with China to take necessary action to establish a dedicated ATS direct speech circuit between Lahore and Urumqi. The dedicated circuit to be established will serve as the primary means for the ATS coordination and the existing ISD circuit between two ACCs was to be kept as an alternate means. ICAO APAC Office was also requested to facilitate the coordination for early implementation.

2. ATM Related matters

2.1 Applying 50/50 NM horizontal separation in the Lahore and Karachi FIRs

2.1.1 Pakistan was amenable to applying 50/50NM horizontal separation within the entire Lahore and Karachi FIRs instead of on selected routes, for RNAV capable aircraft, and where DCPC was available. However, Pakistan felt that full benefits for overflying aircraft of applying 50/50NM would accrue only if the neighboring FIRs would do likewise. A mixture of 50NM and 80NM longitudinal separation might lead to safety issues thus was not advisable.

2.2 Converging tracks in an adjacent FIR

2.2.1 Pakistan agreed in principle that the ACC transferring aircraft on converging tracks which met in another FIR, should be responsible for providing adequate longitudinal separation to enable the receiving ACC to effect separation at the point of convergence. If that could not be achieved, vertical separation was to be applied. Where surveillance was available the agreed separation could be reduced by mutual agreement. (The routes where such issues might occur were to be identified and the arrangements made part of the operational letters of agreement)

2.3 PRA SERKA extension

2.3.1 Pakistan informed that they were studying the proposal. However, this could not be easily resolved as there were military considerations in the way of this proposal. Also the proposed route would cross several routes within the Karachi FIR, the first one within less than 2 minutes of flying time from the FIR boundary. IATA felt that since India had indicated that they were ready to implement the route segment in India airspace, requested that Pakistan continue their study of the proposal, and possibly implements it as an east-bound route in the first instance if practicable.

2.4 G325 Blocking of FL330

2.4.1 Pakistan has reviewed a previous request to rescind the blocking for FL330 for G325 as the traffic volumes were high. Pakistan advised that they were even using FL330 in the opposite direction so as not to block a westbound level and keep facilitating BOBCAT flow unhindered. Pakistan further elaborated that this restriction was valid only for a small portion of routes within Pakistan airspace entering from Kabul FIR i.e from TCP on routes between Kabul ACC and Lahore / Karachi ACCs till intersection points on route G325.

2.5 G208/N895 TELEM routing issue

2.5.1 Pakistan highlighted that the current arrangements for the RHS implementation on eastbound traffic flow on route N636 was unsatisfactory. As the issues mentioned were complex, Pakistan volunteered to provide the Meeting with appropriate charts and a detailed explanation of the issue and the desired solution for further discussion with India in the forthcoming meeting following APANPIRG

3. Any other matters

3.1 Pakistan informed the meeting that they had installed new ATM system in recent past and was in the process of replacing SSR/PSR sensors. The new sensors were likely to be operational by the end of 2015. Part of the new systems requirements was the AIDC functionality which was being tested internally. Pakistan was advised to take into consideration the minimum set of messages expected, arising from an ATM SG/1 Draft Conclusion which would be presented to APANPIRG.

3.2 Pakistan indicated that they would have a delegation at the next APANPIRG meeting and were ready to meet with the Afghanistan and Indian delegates to follow up on the work begun by BOBRHS T/F and subsequently SAIOACG meeting.