



International Civil Aviation Organization

**The First Meeting of the APANPIRG ATM Sub-Group
(ATM /SG/1)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 20 – 24 May 2013

Agenda Item 4: ATM Systems (Modernisation, Seamless ATM, CNS, ATFM)

REGIONAL AIR TRAFFIC FLOW MANAGEMENT

(Presented by IATA)

SUMMARY

This paper presents views on the focus of the Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM) Steering Group – “To be effective ATFM Steering Group should be comprised of appropriate state and industry ATFM expertise and focused on coordinating sub- Regional capability and interoperability taking a Network View in support of harmonized implementation”

This paper relates to –

Strategic Objectives:

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-6 Air traffic flow management
- GPI-7 Dynamic and flexible ATS route management
- GPI-8 Collaborative airspace design and management
- GPI-9 Situational awareness
- GPI-16 Decision support systems and alerting systems

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 As demand increases the ability of the Asia Pacific Regional aviation infrastructure to manage the increasing activity is being challenged. Many major airports today are currently slot constrained as demand exceeds capacity at certain times of the day.

1.2 From an APAC airspace perspective, South East Asia, in particular, is characterized by relatively small FIRs with corresponding low ‘flight transit times’ (often a flight will transit an FIR in 10 -20 minutes flying time). What this means in essence is the process applied in one FIR has a knock on effect in multiple ‘downstream’ FIRs and procedures applied are therefore structured around the lowest capability of a particular route/flow.

1.4 Many States, recognizing the impending capacity constraints, are implementing significant & costly upgrades to their ATM systems—with total short term investments in capability, estimated to be in excess of **USD1.5billion**.

1.5 If this investment is not made with regional interoperability and parallel skills development “Front of Mind” it could be argued that the investment will only be partially effective (restricted to the FIR in question) and further restricted by external FIR capability and connectivity.

1.6 It is clear that APAC requires sub regional “linked up” regional thinking and solutions to meet the forecast aviation demand for the region. This is particularly true when considering the pressing need for effective sub regional ATFM options & harmonization.

2.0 DISCUSSION

2.1 This current overall lack of coordinated ATFM solutions has led to inefficiency – as recognized in the SEACG 3 report:

3.13 Hong Kong, China noted that the lack of coordinated ATFM processes in the region often made it necessary for procedural separation standards to be applied as pseudo ATFM measures. Thailand supported the comment from Hong Kong, China, noting that controller workload and resources could be a constraining factor, and which may be reflected in an agreed spacing across an FIRB, similar a pseudo-ATFM measure.

2.2 Some ‘early stage’ multi-State projects are under development, with a view to link individual flow management processes and are the updated in other papers to this meeting.

2.3 In general however, various states are developing ATFM tools and Plans (India, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Australia, Japan, Indonesia), these tend to be FIR focused and without regional linkage, although there is a clear willingness to share information and collaborate with neighbors with regard to Flow Management.

2.4 ‘Flow Management’ in the region, until recently, has tended to be a rather blunt tool restricting volumes rather than taking a wider Network View that optimizes available capacity on a sub-regional basis.

2.5 The ICAO APAC Seamless ATM Plan will assist and provide a blueprint for coordinated Regional development based on the ICAO ASBU roadmap. With ATFM being a priority one element - timely collaborative and harmonized implementation will be a key success factor.

2.6 ATFM, taking a Network view, is a key element in ASBU Block Zero and is identified as ‘critical’ in the Seamless Plan. - *PIA 3/BO35 - Improved Flow Performance through planning based on a Network-wide view.*

2.7 For APAC a centralized approach (ATFMU) is not practical at this time, and a more pragmatic approach is to concentrate on and support sub regional multi state programs.

2.8 In recognition of the importance of sub regional ATFM and the need for harmonized regional implementation - The SAIOACG20/SEACG3 developed the following Draft Decision:

Draft Decision SAIOACG20/SEACG3-3: Asia/Pacific ATFM Steering Group
That the Asia/Pacific ATFM Steering Group be reconvened by 1 September 2013, to address ATFM implementation issues.

2.9 To be effective ATFM Steering Group should be comprised of appropriate state and industry ATFM expertise and focused on coordinating & planning sub- Regional capability and interoperability taking a Network View in support of harmonized implementation.

3 ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper; and
- b) discuss ensuring appropriate expertise is available on the ATFM/SG;

c) discuss the need for the ATFM/SG to co-ordinate sub regional initiatives taking a Network view in support of harmonized implementation.

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