



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

**The Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc Afghanistan Contingency Group Meeting (AHACG/2)**

Istanbul, Turkey, 17-19 November 2014

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**Agenda Item 3: Europe- Southeast/South Asia Contingency Planning (scenarios, procedures)**

**MID REGION ATM CONTINGENCY SCM OUTCOMES**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

**SUMMARY**

This paper presents the outcome of the Special Coordination Meeting (SCM) on the implementation of ATM Contingency Arrangements in the Middle East (MID) Region.

The Group is invited to support contingency planning with a coordinated effort to ensure harmonization across the ICAO regions.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Special Coordination Meeting on the Implementation of ATM Contingency Arrangements in the MID Region (SCM-IACA) was held at the ICAO MID Regional Office, Cairo, Egypt, 24-25 September 2014.

1.2 The meeting was attended by a total of twenty two (22) participants from seven (7) States (Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and UAE) and one (1) International Organization IATA. The main objectives of the meeting were to discuss the issues related to the safety of the traffic circumnavigating Iraq, Syria and Ukraine Airspaces through Tehran Flight Information Region (FIR) and to agree on ATM contingency arrangements to be implemented in an harmonized manner to overcome the challenges.

**2. DISCUSSION**

2.1 The SCM-IACA meeting was apprised of the situation in Iraq, Libya and Syria including the actions undertaken by ICAO after the tragic incident of the MH17 on 17 July 2014, in particular the issued State Letters and the establishment of the Task Force on Risk to Civil Aviation arising from Conflict Zones (TF RCZ). The meeting noted that the TF RCZ conducted two successful meetings on 29 July 2014 and 25-26 August 2014 and planned the third meeting in December 2014. The meeting was also apprised of the outcome of the AHACG/1 meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

2.2 The SCM-IACA meeting emphasized that the successful implementation of contingency arrangements/operations requires coordination between all concerned stakeholders. In this regard, the meeting encouraged ICAO and IATA to continue their coordination with the adjacent ICAO Regional Offices, Paris and Bangkok, to ensure the implementation of harmonized contingency operations across Asia, Middle East and Europe. The meeting invited Iran to study the scenarios proposed by the AHACG/1 meeting and provide their feedback/plans to the ICAO MID Regional Office by **15 October 2014**. The meeting also urged the concerned States to attend the AHACG/2 meeting bringing with them their plans/proposals for contingency arrangements to be implemented in the event of discontinuity of Air Traffic Services (ATS) within Afghanistan Airspace.

2.3 The SCM-IACA meeting noted with appreciation the contingency measures implemented by Iraq to ensure the safety of the traffic operating within Baghdad FIR through the avoidance of the conflict zones. Iraq highlighted that proactive measures have been put in place by the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority (ICAA) to protect commercial traffic from airspaces with potential conflict. Measures such as fully segregated military airspaces and close coordination with the military ensure the ability to separate civilian traffic from the activities associated with the conflict zones. The meeting noted that no incidents have been reported related to the ground invasion and that ICAA is ready to implement contingency route schemes in coordination with the airspace users. ICAA will continue to publish appropriate aeronautical information related to the status of Iraqi Airspace.

2.4 Based on the above, the SCM-IACA meeting noted that IATA will convene a meeting, in UAE, around 8 October 2014 with the major Air Operators to re-analyze the situation in Iraq Airspace and recommend actions as appropriate.

2.5 The SCM-IACA meeting noted the significant increase of traffic overflying Tehran FIR (the figures approximately doubled after 8 August 2014, 480 to 900 Flights per day). The meeting applauded Iran for their efforts and their quick response to accommodate the extra traffic flows through the implementation of contingency measures such as the establishment of two (2) additional ATC sectors and contingency parallel routes (Q1 to Q5). It was highlighted that the interface Iran-Pakistan is considered as a bottleneck due to the 10 minutes longitudinal separation required by Pakistan. Accordingly, the meeting urged ICAO to follow-up this issue with Pakistan to implement 20 NM Longitudinal Separation to ensure harmonized traffic flow across the Regions and to establish two (2) additional Entry/Exist Points between Karachi and Tehran FIRs.

2.6 The SCM-IACA meeting noted Iran's concerns related to the maintenance and improvement of their CNS/ATM infrastructure and the challenges they are facing due to the sanctions imposed on Iran. (As an example the south-eastern part of the Tehran FIR is not covered with radar services; and Iran is unable to procure necessary radars to cover this area. Accordingly, and in the benefit of safety, it was recommended that ICAO raises the subject to relevant authorities and support Iran's proposal to exempt the civil aviation equipment from the sanctions.

2.7 The SCM-IACA meeting noted the concerns raised by Bahrain related to the interfaces, ALSER, ORSAR and MIDSII and those raised by UAE related to ORSAR and DARAX. The meeting commended the efforts and the commitment of the concerned States to solve these issues. Accordingly, side meetings between the concerned States took place, which led to the signature of an updated Letter of Agreement (LoA) between Bahrain and Iran and the negotiation of an update to the Bahrain-Kuwait and Iran-UAE LoAs.

2.8 The SCM-IACA meeting noted the agreement reached between Bahrain and Iran to solve the issue at ORSAR, ALSER and MIDSII through the establishment of two (2) additional routes at RAGAS (263537N 0521337E) and OBTAR (265934N 0510309E) parallel to the existing routes at MIDSII and ALSER. Furthermore, two additional contingency routes have been established: one at KUVAR for traffic from ANKARA FIR to Bahrain FIR through Tehran FIR, and one at ROTOX (283323N 0494809E) for traffic from Bahrain FIR to ANKARA FIR through Tehran FIR. The meeting may wish to note that the new and the contingency routes at the interface between Bahrain and Tehran FIRs, were successfully implemented on 16 October 2014. It is to be highlighted that the implementation of the contingency routes required the amendment of the LoA between Bahrain and Kuwait. In this regard, Kuwait, thankfully, supported the proposal and informed the meeting that the update version of the LoA will be signed very soon. Bahrain and Iran were requested to issue NOTAM and AIP SUPP to inform the Airspace Users.

2.9 In the same vein, Iran and UAE discussed the issues related to ORSAR and DARAX and agreed to split the traffic on DARAX into two (2) unidirectional parallel routes. Accordingly, the meeting encouraged the concerned States to sign the LoA and agree on an effective date, as soon as practicable.

2.10 The SCM-IACA meeting noted that Egypt is still studying the proposal to reduce the longitudinal separation to 10 NM with Saudi Arabia and that they are considering the implementation of some contingency arrangements to better accommodate the extra traffic flows within Cairo FIR. Egypt underlined that Cyprus are still applying 30NM Longitudinal Separation.

2.11 Based on the discussions and taking into consideration the situation in the MID Region, Afghanistan and Ukraine the SCM-IACA meeting agreed to the following:

- The MID Region ATM Contingency Plan should be amended to cover the cases of significant traffic increase in some FIRs, as a result of the circumnavigation of Airspace(s) due to conflict zones, weather, etc.
- In accordance with the MID Region ATM Contingency Plan, extra traffic shall be accommodated on the existing route network, unless additional routes are needed. Accordingly, coordination between the concerned States and the Users (IATA) should be carried out for the implementation of temporary routes, on case-by-case basis. In this regard, the meeting agreed that there is no need for the development of permanent Contingency Routing Schemes to be included in the MID Region ATM Contingency Plan.
- A draft process for notification and coordination of contingency was developed to complement the responsibilities/tasks of the Contingency Coordination Team reflected in the MID Region ATM Contingency Plan (it will be presented by IATA in separate paper).
- The revised version of the MID Region ATM Contingency Plan should be presented to MSG/4 meeting, Cairo, Egypt 24-26 November 2014 for endorsement.
- ICAO MID Regional Office and IATA MENA to communicate to the relevant authorities Iran's concerns related to the impediments for the improvement of their CNS/ATM system due the sanctions imposed on Iran.
- With regard to Afghanistan Contingency planning, ICAO MID Regional Office, IATA and the concerned States to continue their support and contribution to the work programme of the AHACG, in order to ensure the implementation of harmonized inter-regional contingency arrangements.
- Bahrain, Iran and UAE to request formally from the ICAO MID Regional Office the allocation of Five Letter Name Codes (5LNCs) and route designators for the new established ATS routes and request the amendment of the MID ANP accordingly.
- The following is a non-exhaustive list for consideration by the States during their contingency planning process:
  - Develop/update their National Contingency Plan.

- Design contingency routes and Flight Level Allocation Scheme (FLAS) in consultation with the Airspace Users (IATA).
  - Involve the MIDRMA for the safety assessment of the new ATS routes within the RVSM Airspace.
  - Develop necessary coordination and communication procedures.
  - Determine minimum longitudinal, lateral and vertical separations (aircraft spacing, where no ATC service is provided).
  - Determine capacity of contingency airspace; both the degraded airspace, and the airspace used for alternative routes.
  - Conduct traffic simulation of ATS contingency routes and, in the case of alternative airspace, normal traffic. The simulation should preferably be a fast-time simulation using known/anticipated traffic to determine whether demand will exceed capacity.
  - Conduct real-time simulation of contingency procedures.
  - Finalize procedures.
  - Conduct Safety Analysis.
  - Finalize Contingency Plan, related LoA or other agreement instruments, and promulgate AIS Publication.
  - Conduct simulator training of operational ATC staff.
  - Conduct regular review of contingency plan, and refresher simulator training of ATC staff.
  - Consider the implementation of well-defined segregated airspace to be avoided in case of conflict, weather, etc.
- ICAO to follow-up with Oman the concerns related to the implemented restrictions on the traffic flow entering Muscat FIR.
  - The development of ATFM Plan for the implementation of harmonized ATFM measures within the MID Region should be considered. This would be addressed during the ANSIG/1 or the ATM SG/2 meetings.

2.12 The meeting may wish to note that the Invitation to the AHACG/2 meeting was extended to Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Oman and UAE. Accordingly, only Iran confirmed participation and provided their inputs related to contingency planning which are presented in a separate working paper.

### **3. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper;
- b) note the concerns raised by Iran at paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 and agree on appropriate follow-up actions;
- c) take into consideration the situation and the developments in the MID Region when discussing inter-regional ATS Routes and contingency arrangements; and
- d) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

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