



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

**EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE METEOROLOGY  
SUB-GROUP (MET SG/18) OF APANPIRG**

ICAO Regional Sub-Office, Beijing, China  
18 – 21 August 2014

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**Agenda Item 7: Research, development and implementation issues in the MET field**

**7.6 MET/ATM coordination**

**PROPOSAL FOR REGIONAL VOLCANIC ASH EXERCISE**

(Presented by Japan)

**SUMMARY**

This paper presents the necessity and the benefit of conducting volcanic ash exercises in the APAC Region.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Following the Volcanic Ash Exercise (VOLCEX) in ICAO EUR/NAT region, which has been conducted since 2008, the similar exercise in EUR (EAST) region including Kamchatka Peninsula started in 2013.

1.2 The exercise in EUR (EAST) region is called VOLKAM and is making remarkable progress in coordination procedures between all participating parties (ANSPs, ATM Centres, AIS, volcano observatories (VOs), VAACs, MWOs and users) as well as in other items, considering the case of volcanic eruptions.

**2. Discussion**

2.1 Volcanic ash contains extremely hazardous materials that could cause serious problems in aviation operations. To avoid airplane-related disasters caused by volcanic ash, it is essential for VAACs, MWOs, VOs and others to provide information on volcano eruptions and sequential volcanic ash diffusions to airline companies, civil aviation authorities and relevant organizations. Also, they need to prepare effective procedures and protocols for such emergency cases.

2.2 Close coordination/communication between information providers and users are indispensable for smooth response against volcanic ash emissions and they are to be prepared for various types of cases considering volcano locations, eruption duration, volcanic ash propagation, its coverage, and so on.

2.3 Many active volcanoes are in the APAC Region and some of them have actually erupted with huge amount of volcanic ash emissions very recently. It is not difficult to imagine another eruption sometime in near future and it may well be said that the Region is facing the volcano-related issues.

2.4 Japan participated the Volcanic Ash Exercise in Kamchatka (VOLKAM) in 2013 and 2014 planned by ICAO EUR/NAT Regional Office. These exercises were effective for all participating parties including the Japan Meteorological Agency as VAAC Tokyo since we noticed some issues to conduct our smooth operations and to learn lessons to improve procedures. (please refer to IP/18) Volcanic ash exercise in the APAC Region is sure to be a good start for an improved crisis management: it will make the coordination/communication between all participating organizations closer and will even enhance the understanding of each other. These effects will lead to enhanced crisis management skills in this region.

2.5 For this reason, a volcanic ash exercise in the APAC Region is awaited.

### **3. Action by the Meeting**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper;
- b) discuss conducting hypothetical exercises led by ICAO APAC Office (ICAO APAC Office will take lead of constructing the framework), and
- c) encourage enhancement of crisis management skills caused by volcanic ash clouds including the communication and coordination levels between neighboring FIRs and VAACs.

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