



ICAO

*International Civil Aviation Organization***INFORMATION PAPER****Asia and Pacific (APAC)
Twelfth Meeting of the Meteorological Services
Working Group (MET/S WG/12)**

Online, 30 March to 01 April 2022

Agenda Item 3: Planning and implementation of meteorological services

MEKONG SIGMET COORDINATION

(Presented by Cambodia, Hong Kong China, Thailand and Viet Nam)

SUMMARY

This paper presents the setup and progress of the Mekong SIGMET Coordination between Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam in meeting SIGMET Coordination recommendation of ICAO Annex 3.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Under Amendment 79 to Annex 3, SIGMET Coordination has become a recommended practice on 5 November 2020.

3.4.4 Recommendation --- An MWO should coordinate SIGMET with neighbouring MWO(s), especially when the en-route weather phenomenon extends or is expected to extend beyond the MWO's specified area of responsibility, in order to ensure harmonized SIGMET provision.

1.2 In view of the above recommendation, a SIGMET Coordination project named Mekong was set up in 2020 to facilitate coordination activities across the boundaries between the flight information regions (FIRs) of Cambodia, Thailand and Ho Chi Minh of Viet Nam. The coordination was carried out through the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) SIGMET Coordination web platform.

1.3 This paper presents the setup, progress and achievements of the Mekong SIGMET Coordination.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The Mekong SIGMET Coordination involves three FIRs, namely, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh and Phnom Penh (Figure 1). Round-the-clock (24 hours 7 days a week) SIGMET coordination has been set up since August 2020. The group started coordinating SIGMETs from October 2020 as soon as Phnom-Penh MWO (VDPP), Cambodia resumed its SIGMET issuance responsibility.

2.2 Coordination attempts were not that frequent initially as it took time for the forecasters to get familiarized with the coordination procedures and the web platform. More coordination attempts were made from mid-2021 onward, when Thailand joined as an observer in the GHKPSV SIGMET Coordination¹ review meetings. Those review meetings allowed effective communication among MWOs through reviewing past cases, highlighting and overcoming difficulties encountered. It also enhanced mutual understanding in the differences of national SIGMET issuance practices.

2.3 As of January 2022, a total of 42 coordination attempts were made. It is noted that winter was best weather season in Ho Chi Minh FIR. Figure 2 shows a coordinated case between Bangkok and Phnom Penh MWOs on 12th October 2021. The project participants generally commended that the display of real time observational data (e.g. satellite, radar, pilot reports, etc) on the platform had raised the common situational awareness among MWOs and made the coordination process easier and more effective.

2.4 Overall speaking, the Mekong SIGMET coordination helped improve SIGMET services over the area and ensured harmonized SIGMET information to be disseminated to aviation users.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to note the information contained in this paper.

¹ Cambodia and Viet Nam are both participants of the GHKPSV SIGMET Coordination. For details of the coordination, please refer to MET/S WG/11 IP/03.



Figure 1 A map showing the FIRs participating in the Mekong SIGMET coordination

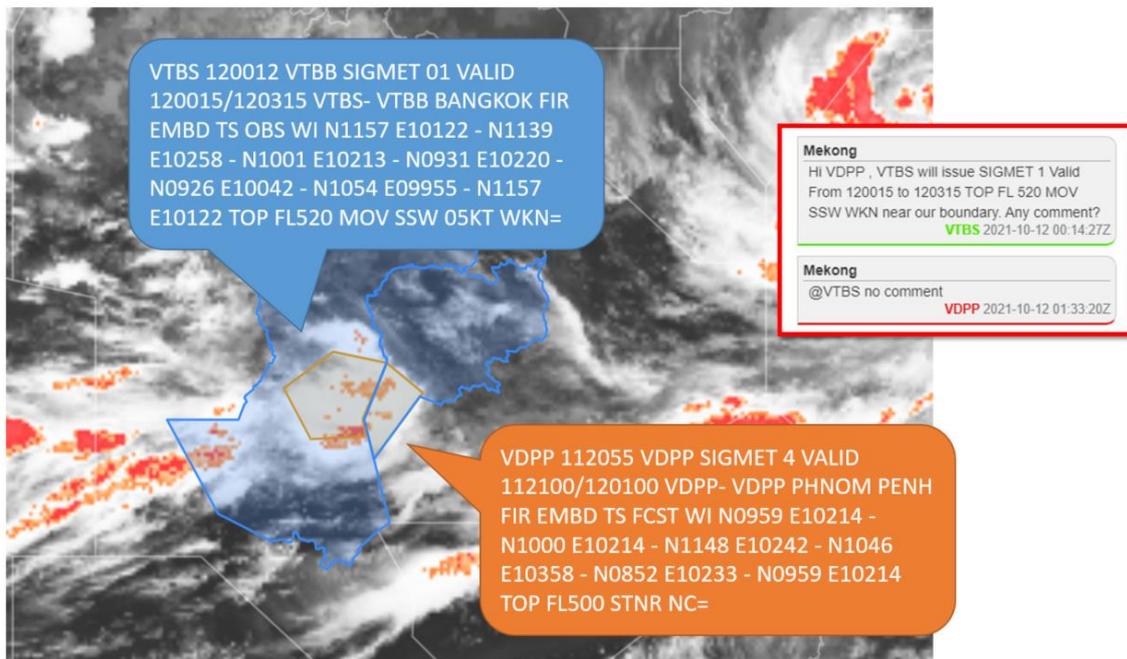


Figure 2 A coordinated case of issued SIGMETs (orange polygons) for Bangkok and Phnom Penh FIRs (background: deep convection satellite imagery) on 12th October 2021 with the associated chatroom messages (right)