



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION
AFI PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL GROUP (APIRG)

AFI OPMET MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE (AFI OPMET MTF)
FIFTH MEETING (AFI OPMET MTF/5)
Nairobi, Kenya, 3 – 5 July 2013

Agenda Item 3: Provision of tropical cyclone and volcanic ash advisories for AFI Region and of the corresponding SIGMET by MWOs and review of report on SIGMET Tests conducted in November 2012.

Request to update AFI Basic air navigation plan

(South Africa)

SUMMARY

The paper reflects on the requirements for AIRMETS in the Africa and Indian Ocean Region (AFI Region) and put forward arguments for updating the AFI Basic Air Navigation plan regarding AIRMET information in the AFI Region.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 AIRMET information is defined by ICAO as *“Information issued by a meteorological watch office concerning the occurrence or expected occurrence of specified en-route weather phenomena which may affect the safety of low-level aircraft operations and which was not already included in the forecast issued for low-level flights in the flight information region concerned or sub-area thereof”*.
- 1.2 Currently, AIRMETS are not required to be issued in the AFI Region. This is in accordance with AFI Regional Air Navigation Plan (AFI RAN) Recommendation 7/8 contained in the AFI Basic Air Navigation Plan (Doc 7474), *paragraph 6.6*.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 AIRMETS are increasingly being issued by meteorological watch offices (MWOs) particularly those in Europe. Other countries such as the United States, Canada and Australia are also issuing AIRMET information. AIRMET messages are distributed on SADIS particularly those originating from MWOs under the SADIS footprint.
- 2.2 Many MWOs in the AFI Region do not issue AIRMETS. This is probably because AIRMETS are not a requirement in this region as stated above. This provision effectively means that the SADIS provider state is under no obligation to distribute AIRMET information from the AFI Region. Despite AIRMETS not being a requirement in the AFI Region, South Africa is one of the countries that have consistently issued AIRMET information and have previously requested the

information to be broadcast on SADIS. South Africa believes that given the poor air safety record in the region, there should be no provision restricting the issuance of any piece of information which may assist the users to conduct their operations in a safe and efficient manner. South Africa believes that the provision in the AFI Basic Air Navigation Plan (Doc 7474) paragraph 6.6 is somehow depriving users of useful piece of information which can be used as input into their safety management system (SMS).

2.3 Further, South Africa would like this provision to be removed from the AFI Basic Air Navigation Plan (Doc 7474) so that the global requirement regarding AIRMET issuance as stated in ICAO Annex 3, Meteorological Service for International Air Navigation, Chapter 7, pg 7.2.1 to 7.2.3 could automatically become applicable to the AFI Region.

2.4 The increasing use of air transport globally means that every little piece of information becomes very crucial to help the operators conduct their activities in a safe and efficient manner.

DRAFT RECOMENDATION 5/XX

That, the AFI Basic Air Navigation Plan (DOC 7474), paragraph 6.6 be updated to allow for the provision of AIRMETs by MWOS in the AFI Region.

3. ACTION BY THE GROUP

3.1 The meeting is invited to note the information and decide on the draft recommendation presented under paragraph 3.1.