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国际民用
航空组织

Ref: ES AN4/44 - 0905

31 October 2011

Subject: Operation in Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum (RVSM) airspace by Non RVSM Approved State Aircraft

Action Required: In accordance with paragraph 8

Sir/Madam,

1. I have the honour to draw your attention to the continued operation of non-RVSM approved State aircraft in AFI RVSM airspace resulting in several safety occurrences.

2. It may be recalled that pursuant to the AFI RVSM safety policy and ICAO provisions on RVSM, a minimum of 1000 feet separation shall be applied between RVSM approved aircraft within the RVSM airspace, by the respective Air Traffic Services (ATS) units.

3. All operators intending to operate within the RVSM airspace in the AFI Region are required to indicate their RVSM status, *inter alia*, by inserting the letter "W" in the equipment field of flight plans they are filing. Furthermore, non-RVSM approved aircraft, other than State aircraft, shall not be permitted to operate within RVSM airspace except if an uninterrupted climb to a level above FL410 or descent to a level below FL290 can be achieved through RVSM airspace.

4. Your attention is invited to the provision of ICAO Document 7030 *Regional Supplementary Procedures* (5th edition, 2008) paragraph 2.1.7, (*Non-RVSM Approved State Aircraft*), which requires that operators of *non-RVSM approved State Aircraft* with a requested flight level of 290 or above shall insert "STS/NON RVSM" in Item 18 of the flight plan. ATS units would then, traffic permitting, accept the non-RVSM approved aircraft in the RVSM airspace and apply a 2000 feet vertical separation between such (non-RVSM approved) aircraft and RVSM approved aircraft, in accordance with paragraph 6.2 of Doc 7030.

5. In view of the above, it may be noted that operators of *non-RVSM approved State aircraft* have the following options:

- Obtain State RVSM operational approval and operate in accordance with RVSM procedures and requirements, as is the case with any other RVSM approved aircraft. This is the recommended option;
- Remain clear of RVSM airspace (which is between FL 290 and FL410);

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- For flights above FL410, submit a flight plan on condition that an uninterrupted climb through RVSM airspace to the requested flight level (above FL410) and descent through the same airspace can be achieved; or
- Indicate the *non-RVSM approved* status by inserting “STS/NON RVSM” in Field 18 of the flight plan, without a “W” in the equipment line. In this case, operation in RVSM airspace may, traffic permitting, be accepted with 2000 feet vertical separation.

6. In considering the above options, it is important to recall that in order for a *non-RVSM approved aircraft* to operate in the RVSM airspace, specific permission would have been given by each of the ATS providers responsible for the airspace through which the aircraft intends to fly.

7. Let me also take this opportunity to note that some States’ Administrations are facing situations of lack of clarity in distinctions between *State aircraft* and what may be referred to as “state flights,” a situation which induces challenges in applying the RVSM procedures, and to recall that the ICAO definition of a “State aircraft” may be found in Article 3 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

8. In order to ensure the enhancement of safety in the AFI RVSM airspace, it is critically important that the abovementioned procedures for operation in RVSM airspace are adhered to. Your Administration is therefore, requested to take necessary measures to ensure compliance by aircraft operators and ATS provider/s within the airspace for which your State is responsible.

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.


for Meshesha Belayneh
ICAO Regional Director
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