



International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG/19 and RASG-MID/9 Meetings

(Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 14-17 February 2022)

Agenda Item 5.4: Air Navigation Planning and Implementation - AIM

NOTAM ISSUES/PROLIFERATION

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper outlines the activities undertaken by the AIM Forum in relation to COVID-19 publications and NOTAM proliferations.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

REFERENCES

- AIM SG/8 & MIDAD TF/6 Report
- MIDANPIRG/18 Report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The meeting may wish to recall that the MIDANPIRG/18 meeting held virtually, 15-22 February 2021, agreed through Conclusion 18/21, that, Webinars on the NOTAM proliferation and needs for improvement, as well as on the AIM/QMS Functions Systems and Processes be organized in 2021. Therefore, the ICAO MID established a NOTAM Go-team, composed of ICAO MID, IATA, AACO and GCAA UAE; organised a series of regional webinars during 2021 with the aim of raising awareness to improve the quality of NOTAM, monitoring progress in eliminating the old NOTAM and sharing experiences and lessons learned. The schedule for these regional webinars was: 1 June 2021; 16 August 2021; and 15 December 2021. (Ref ICAO MID SL AN 8/2.1 – 21/068 dated 9 May 2021).

1.2 In addition, the ICAO MID AIM/QMS Functions Systems and Processes Webinar was successfully held on 29 April 2021.

2. DISCUSSION

ICAO MID AIM/QMS Functions Systems and Processes Webinar

2.1 The ICAO MID AIM/QMS Functions Systems and Processes Webinar was organised with the objective to provide an overview of the QMS requirements, outline the quality management system and its processes with a detailed explanation of step-by-step QMS implementation, explain quality management principles and ISO 9001 standard requirements and allow member States to share experiences and best practices, identify some of the challenges in QMS implementation and how they have been addressed by some States.

2.2 The webinar was attended by a total of eighty nine (89) participants from thirteen (13) States (Australia (CASA), Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, USA (FAA) and UAE) and seven (7) organizations/industries (AACO, ACAO, CANSO, IATA, IFATCA, ISO and Jeppesen).

2.3 The webinar's materials including, presentations and the Q&A are available at <https://www.icao.int/MID/Pages/2021/AIM-QMS.aspx>

2.4 It was noted that the level of implementation of Quality Management System (QMS) for the Aeronautical Information Services (AIS) in the MID Region is still far below expectation. 9 out of 15 States have implemented QMS in AIM. Therefore, States that have not yet done so, are urged to accelerate their QMS implementation.

2.5 It was noted that ICAO MID has a key role to play and will continue working closely with States and key international organizations to provide guidance material, gather and share best practices and offer support to States in need of assistance.

COVID-19 Publications

2.6 The AIM Forum noted that much improvement has been achieved in the quality of COVID-19 publications over the past year. This is attributed to several activities and interventions:

- Implementation of the NOTAM templates and aeronautical information publication guidance;
- Collaborative engagement through the MID AIM Forum;
- Webinar on QMS implementation in aeronautical information management;
- Direct State engagement in the form of AIM Panels facilitated by the MID NOTAM Go-team.

2.7 There remain however a few challenges that still need to be addressed to ensure that aeronautical information that is published supports and enables safe, efficient, and sustainable flight operations:

- Many States do not publish the COVID-19 requirements and restrictions in Aeronautical Information, but rather issue Government and/or safety notices or updated regulations. These are unfortunately not always known or visible to the airspace users. As there is no reference to these notices or regulations in the aeronautical information publications, it appears that no requirements or restrictions are in place.
- Some States who have published NOTAM with restrictions and requirements containing extended text, and in many cases, this text is ambiguous or even contradictory. This can impact safety, efficiency, and cost effectiveness of flights.
- Due to the protracted timeframe of the COVID-19 pandemic, the standard validity period for NOTAM and, other aeronautical publications, has been “conveniently” unheeded. Estimate NOTAM have been repeatedly replaced to extend the validity period instead of being taken up into a more appropriate publication. This creates uncertainty in the system and hinders longer term planning.

Regional NOTAM Campaign

2.8 The meeting recalled that, ICAO launched the Global Campaign on NOTAM Improvement (NOTAM2021) with a virtual webinar on 8 April 2021. The NOTAM2021 Global Campaign was supplemented by a series of regional activities during 2021 organised by the AIM Forum with the aim of raising awareness to improve the quality of NOTAM, monitoring progress in eliminating the old NOTAM and sharing experiences and lessons learned. The AIM Forum served as a platform for information exchange, in which States and stakeholders have had the opportunity to share and discuss their experience and views on NOTAM issues and provide solutions and recommendations.

2.9 The regional webinars details and presentations could be found at: <https://www.icao.int/MID/Pages/2021/NOTAM%20Improvement%20Webinar.aspx>

2.10 The campaign acknowledged that the NOTAM issues must be considered as significant safety issue and need to receive special attention. It was acknowledged that NOTAM proliferation may result in significant information being hidden and missed in the pre-flight information bulletin, which would end in reduction of flight crew's situational awareness.

2.11 A summary of the recommendations of the campaign is provided below for further follow-up by MID States:

- **Quality management and automation:**
 - AIS QMS should be effective in identification and resolution of deficiencies of AIS products including NOTAM. Verification and validation procedures shall be introduced to ensure quality requirements related to NOTAM.
 - Establishment of systematic review mechanisms (routine manual check or automatic check by NOTAM systems) to continuously monitor and identify NOTAM passing their validity.
 - Enhancement of NOTAM system (AIS database) would significantly improve monitoring of NOTAMs and compliance with ICAO SARPs (validity, format, syntax, etc.).
- **Safety oversight:** States safety oversight system should include the review of aeronautical information management and publications to ensure that States published aeronautical information, including NOTAM are issued in compliance with the ICAO SARPs in Annex 15 and PANS AIM.
- **Training:** AIS and NOF personnel shall be appropriately trained on continuous basis in accordance with the competency and knowledge required to perform their functions.
- **Coordination with data originators:**
 - Mature, well understood and mutually agreed formal arrangements with data originators (aerodromes, air navigation service providers, military, etc.) is a priority.
 - Formal arrangements must be supported (signed) by the top management of originators.
 - Regular awareness campaigns and coordination meetings (e.g. annual or bi-annual) must be held with data originators.
 - Development of NOTAM Origination Guidance is recommended to enhance originators' awareness and knowledge.
- **Adherence to SARPs:**
 - Information of a lasting character must be published through amendments to AIP (AIRAC, regular) not NOTAM, particularly operationally significant information.
 - If a PERM NOTAM has been issued, it must be transferred to the appropriate publication without delay.

- AIP amendment shall be published on a sufficiently frequent interval to make sure that NOTAM would not be used to publish PERM information instead of amendment of the correct placement of the information
- AIRAC provisions must be fully adhered to when operationally significant information is published. Use of NOTAM for notification of operationally significant information must be avoided.
- Use of NOTAM must be limited to operational information of short duration and temporary nature. Proper coordination with the originator would be needed to terminate the NOTAM in due time.
- Origination and issuance of NOTAM shall be limited to the information types prescribed in Annex 15 (6.3.2.3)
- NOTAM shall not be originated and issued for the situations prescribed in Annex 15, 6.3.2.4.
- Originating and issuing NOTAM for the following purposes must be avoided: legal protection from liability, political reasons, re-notification of the information already published in AIP (for emphasis), notification of information requiring AIRAC amendment, etc.
- AIP Supplement should not be considered as a replacement for NOTAM, as far as practicable. Intended use of AIP Supplement as described in Annex 15 and PANS-AIM must be taken into consideration.
- Repetitive NOTAM replacement is against its initial intent (short duration/temporary nature information). A NOTAM must be issued for a maximum of 3 months validity and be replaced only for one more term (maximum 3 months), if needed.
- NOTAM should have text a pilot and ATC can easily apply. Use terminology and information frequently seen on the flight deck and used in radio communication. Avoid references to AIP pages within NOTAM.
- PERM NOTAM should be cancelled as soon as the information is no longer applicable or has been incorporated into PERM publication.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) urge States and Aeronautical Information Service providers to implement the recommendations related to the COVID-19 NOTAM and publications;
- b) call upon States to adhere to the recommendations at para. 2.11;
- c) invite States requiring assistance to make their needs known to the NOTAM Go-team through the ICAO MID Regional office.