

THIRD MEETING OF THE ALLPIRG/ADVISORY GROUP

(Montreal, 6 – 8 April 1999)

Agenda Item 5.1: Interregional coordination and harmonization mechanism – Uniform methodology for assessing air navigation shortcomings and deficiencies

PROGRESS AND ACTIONS BY THE EANPG ON THE APPLICATION OF THE UNIFORM METHODOLOGY

(Presented by the Secretary of the EANPG)

SUMMARY

This working paper reflects the findings of EANPG/40 (January 1999), as well as actions taken by that meeting on some specific items. It suggests some action that may be applied generally by ALLPIRG in the field of shortcomings and deficiencies.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Pursuant to the request of the Air Navigation Commission (ANC), approved and supported by Council, for harmonised policy on the matter throughout all ICAO Regions, the EANPG/39 (Paris, December 1997) adopted the proposed uniform methodology for the identification, assessment and reporting of air navigation shortcomings and deficiencies. It decided to involve its contributory bodies and COG in the application of this methodology, as well as to ensure liaison with Eurocontrol. It also agreed to include the Methodology in the EANPG Handbook along with an indication that the identification of shortcomings and deficiencies should be included as a permanent item on the EANPG and subgroups agenda.

1.2 The EANPG also invited States and international organizations concerned to apply the "Uniform Methodology for the identification, assessment and reporting of air navigation shortcomings and deficiencies" (Conclusion 39/34 refers).

1.3 In light of experience and comments made by Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs) on the matter, an updated Uniform Methodology has been approved by the Council of ICAO on 23 June 1998. This updated Uniform Methodology is to be used by European States, international organisations, EANPG and subgroups, and is reflected in the EANPG Hand Book (Second Edition, November 1998).

2. DISCUSSION

Initial activities by AOPG/AWOG

2.1 The All Weather Operations Group (AWOG) and the Aerodrome Operations Group (AOPG) of the EANPG recognised that selected international organizations, including IATA, IACA, IFALPA and IAOPA, in their capacity as users of air navigation facilities, would be valuable sources of information on shortcomings and deficiencies, especially those that are safety related. It was also appreciated that, in addition, Eurocontrol may be a source of information, in particular from its newly established "Performance Review Commission", its Air Navigation Team (ANT), and its CIP activities, as well as the Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA). As an initial step, the users have been invited to identify deficiencies and shortcomings of region-wide nature and serious local deficiencies and shortcomings in the field of aerodrome and all weather operations, including assessment and proposed corrective action(s).

Initial activities by METG

2.2 The Meteorology Group (METG) noted that in the EUR/NAT Regional Office of ICAO the knowledge of the shortcomings and deficiencies in a systematic form was very limited. One reason for this was the non-existence of a systematic reporting mechanism from the States of the status of implementation of the facilities, services and procedures required in the EUR Air Navigation Plan, due to the significant delay in the updating of the EUR ANP (Doc 7754). The same situation applied for mission reports and for aircraft accident and incident reports due to the fact that the Regional Office was carrying out very few missions to the States, nor received any accident and incident reports on a regular basis. Taking the above facts in consideration, the METG concluded that the most important and reliable information must be the direct inputs from States and user organizations.

2.3 The METG also agreed that the assessment and prioritization along the given methodology would be very important but sometimes difficult tasks, where the operational consequences of the shortcoming or deficiency should be of utmost importance. There could be a temptation in the assessment to classify everything as "U" (Urgent) with the intention to get "something to happen". This should, of course, be avoided in order not to dilute the system as a whole.

Initial activities by NEWFLO

2.4 When considering the Uniform Methodology, the Second ATM Co-ordination Meeting (NEWFLO/2 – Brussels, 19–20 October 1998) considered that, in view of the complexity of the task, States needed more time to study and understand new provisions and to organize themselves in order to comply. For this reason, the NEWFLO/2 Meeting carried out its review of the list of Specific Shortcomings in the fields of ATS and ATFM and Telephone Communications in its traditional format. It will introduce the Uniform Methodology as soon as possible.

Initial activities by AFSG, FMG and MOTNEG

2.5 The Aeronautical Fixed Service Group (AFSG), Frequency Management Group (FMG) and Meteorological Communications Group (MOTNEG) have all considered the matter as a specific agenda item at their 1998 meetings and intend to apply the Uniform Methodology.

Future work

2.6 It is expected that all EANPG subgroups will report to EANPG/41 (December 1999) their findings and proposed course of actions, including any changes necessary to improve the format and use of the Methodology. Specific issues will then be treated, as appropriate, in accordance with relevant ICAO procedures.

2.7 It has become clear that some identified shortcomings were of a nature extending well beyond the borders of States or regions and required concentrated action at an inter-regional or even global level. A few examples are given to illustrate this point.

Specific issue - Non-compliance with the AIRAC procedures

2.8 The EANPG/40 meeting noted the concerns that had been expressed regarding the non-compliance of some States with the AIRAC procedures. Non-compliance could take many forms such as the late notification of changes, incomplete information, withdrawal of changes at the last minute or multiple changes to the same facility. Also, on occasions the number of changes that had been provided late had caused serious problems for the airspace users. These problems had a considerable negative effect on the timely production of charts and maps as these activities were labour intensive. Furthermore, the late promulgation of information affected the timely updating of aircraft Flight Management Systems (FMS).

2.9 The EANPG agreed that this matter had potentially a significant impact on flight safety and that action was urgently required. It was however recognised that the problem was not restricted to the European Region and that global action was required. With this in mind, it was agreed that the European and North Atlantic Office of ICAO should inform States in the region of the necessity of promulgating information in a timely fashion (56 days or twice the minimum AIRAC cycle – EUR ANP, Part 7, paragraph 4.1 refers) and, at the same time, to bring this matter to the attention of the Air Navigation Commission. A specific Conclusion to cover this matter had been formulated by the EANPG (Conclusion 40/48 - Adherence for the AIRAC procedures).

Specific issue - Continuous Regional developments

2.10 Implicitly, shortcomings and deficiencies had always been on the agenda of the EANPG and its subgroups. From time to time, States and international organisations had brought up issues of that nature for consideration by the EANPG, which in most cases resulted in an improvement, either as Conclusions, proposed amendments to Operational Requirements, Planning Criteria and Methods of Application (RCM) or SUPPs or, sometimes as the basis for actions on a global level (proposed amendments to SARPs and/or PANS). Thus, this process could be considered as an important element of the overall improvement/development mechanism, and as such be included in the reporting Table of Deficiencies and Shortcomings.

2.11 For instance, the following issues, considered and acted upon by EANPG/40, could be reflected in the reporting Table of Deficiencies and Shortcomings for the European Region:

Conclusion 40/4	Frequency requirements for Civil Aviation (5000-5150 MHz)
Conclusion 40/6	ICAO Manual of "RVR observing and reporting practices" (Doc 9328)
Conclusion 40/10	Data base for Flight Management Systems (FMS)
Conclusion 40/24	Uniform use of the date/time group in METAR and TAF
Conclusion 40/27	Proposal to amend Annex 3 Chapters 4 and 6

Conclusion 40/30	Mandatory participation in the SCAR scheme
Conclusion 40/39	Revised co-ordination procedures for frequency management
Conclusion 40/46	Adherence to the AIRAC procedures
Conclusion 40/56	Protection of aviation frequency spectrum requirements
Conclusion 40/58	Naming of way-points in TMA
Conclusion 40/59	Eurocontrol activities on MSAW
Conclusion 40/60	Communication failure procedures

Specific issue – Reporting mechanisms

2.12 Although many sources of information are identified in the Uniform Methodology, it may be considered appropriate, as an additional source, that PIRGs conduct of regular regional reviews of ICAO provisions (SARPs, PANS, SUPPs, RCM) to ascertain their validity, regional applicability and degree of implementation.

2.13 As a result, corrective actions could be proposed for inclusion in the reporting Table of Deficiencies and Shortcomings. At the same time, work should be engaged for the identification and assessment of the reason(s) why some provisions could not be implemented or were considered not fitting with the current and foreseen air navigation system, thus constraining States in their implementation.

3. ACTION BY THE ALLPIRG

3.1 The Group is invited to:

- a) note the above information;
- b) provide guidance as appropriate;
- c) recommend that PIRGs' Conclusions or other references relevant to the continuous improvement of the Regional air navigation systems should be reflected in the respective PIRG report for follow-up; and
- d) invite PIRGS to identify any changes necessary to improve the format and use of the Uniform Methodology.

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