THIRD MEETING OF THE ALLPIRG/ADVISORY GROUP

(Montreal, 6 – 8 April 1999)

Agenda Item 5.7:   Interregional coordination and harmonization mechanism – Y2K date change preparations

ATS CONTINGENCY PLANNING ISSUES

(Presented by the International Air Transport Association (IATA))

SUMMARY

With December 31st less than 9 months away, IATA and ICAO are stressing the need for effective ATS Contingency Planning. This requires close co-ordination between adjacent ATCCs, and consideration of regional and inter-regional procedures. Coordination between regions is essential to ensure a smooth traffic flow along major air routes. At this stage it is unclear whether all service providers will meet necessary target dates. ALLPIRG is requested to encourage PIRGs to further prioritize and expedite regional initiatives, and to review and share experiences to date. Actions are proposed.

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Awareness of the potential problems to ATS caused by the Year 2000 roll-over has been generally recognized by all the ICAO regional planning and implementation groups. IATA and ICAO have been working closely to raise awareness amongst service providers and to ensure minimum disruption during the changeover period. Contingency plans are under development in various areas. Whist progress at the PIRG level is generally encouraging, much remains to be done. To be effective, this process must be accorded a high priority.

2.   DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLICATION OF ATS CONTINGENCY PLANS

2.1   Development of ATS contingency plans for Y2K is a complex issue requiring an unprecedented level of coordination amongst provider States. It is particularly important that such plans recognize the needs of long-haul operations that transit more than one region. Interregional coordination therefore becomes significant in order to secure harmonization of contingency measures. ALLPIRG is invited to consider whether the mechanisms available to ensure proper coordination are adequate.

(4 pages)

3.   **COORDINATION OF ATS CONTINGENCY PLANS**

3.1   To facilitate a smooth flow of traffic, contingency plans need to be coordinated at several levels:

   a)   between adjacent FIRs;

   b)   on a regional/main traffic flow basis;

   c)   between adjacent regions; and

   d)   subject to a broad global overview to minimize major inconsistencies.

3.2   Work is in hand, to a greater or lesser degree, through PIRGs to develop regional contingency plans. National plans should reflect the general philosophy developed by the regional task forces. Sub-paragraph a) will require the usual level of cooperation and coordination between adjacent ATSUs.

3.3   Sub-paragraph b) will be a matter for the regional task forces. Some good progress is noted in certain regions. A status report to this meeting by region would assist the group to identify areas where more support may be needed. In addition, ALLPIRG/3 presents an excellent opportunity to share experiences and identify practical solutions.

3.4   Sub-paragraph c) has yet to be fully addressed. A mechanism is needed under the respective ICAO Regional Offices to bring together representatives of the adjacent regions to resolve any inconsistencies, especially where major traffic flows cross regional boundaries. IATA is willing to assist and support this process.

3.5   Sub-paragraph d) requires a good overview of the progress being made. This would seem to be principally a matter for ICAO Headquarters.

4.   **INFORMATION SHARING**

4.1   In terms of ATS contingency planning, some States will make rapid progress, others, perhaps less well resourced, could benefit significantly from that experience. Recognizing that some States may wish to ensure confidentiality of certain information, States are nevertheless urged to share information to the degree possible. Recent IATA enquiries suggest a less than satisfactory knowledge amongst ATSU of the plans/progress of their neighbours in a number of sub-regions.

5.   **PUBLICATION OF CONTINGENCY PLANS**

5.1   Where specific contingency measures are expected to be implemented, it is essential that these be fully coordinated, and published sufficiently far in advance to ensure adequate promulgation amongst users and database/charting agency action. Involvement of user organization representatives is considered essential. IATA is making a major commitment to this activity and is working closely with the ICAO Regional Offices and their respective Y2K CP Task Forces.

5.2　　　　To facilitate interregional coordination and allow adequate time for FMS database development, a target date of 1st August must be achieved for publication of ATS contingency plans. IATA has developed a web site page for the benefit of member airlines to check progress in development and promulgation of ATS contingency plans. The principal source must be NOTAMed or AIP Supplemented.

6.　IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINGENCY PLANS

6.1　　　　A major concern of operators is to ensure that any restrictions applied by service providers to mitigate unforeseen effects of the transition (e.g. implemented regional or national contingency plans), are kept to a realistic minimum. There is concern that some provisions may be overly protective or extend beyond the minimum time considered necessary to confirm the existence of problems, or lack means to end them once it has become clear that they are no longer needed. In particular, any proposals that severely restrict, or stop operations altogether must be reviewed in the light of the particular circumstances and the need for general continuity of operations.

7.　AFTN STATUS

7.1　　　　An aspect of increasing concern amongst users is the potential performance of the AFTN. These include flight plan transmission and exchange of OPMET information. There is a certain amount of information available, but this is presently inadequate to confirm the availability of essential information transmitted via AFTN on the critical dates.

7.2　　　　ALLPIRG is requested to review available information on AFTN status and propose an appropriate course of action.

8.　IN-FLIGHT BROADCAST PROCEDURES

8.1　　　　In areas of the world where poor or unreliable ATS communications present a hazard to safe operations, IATA member airlines have for many years successfully implemented the (IATA) In-Flight Broadcast Procedure (IFBP). Twelve years ago this procedure was harmonized with the ICAO TIBA to ensure no serious inconsistencies. States have been reluctant to implement TIBA, and IFBP has proven a very successful solution. In the context of temporary potential loss of ATS air/ground communications, use of an in-flight broadcast procedure has already been raised in ASPAC, SAM, and AFI. In the former, IFBP was favourably considered and in the latter endorsed.

N.B. The IFBP requires continuous operation of transponders, a factor that should be considered in terms of any contingency planning.

8.2　　　　ALLPIRG is invited to recommend that PIRGs and States endorse the use of IFBP during temporary outages associated with the Y2K contingency plans.

9.　Y2K TRANSITION LIAISON CELLS

9.1　　　　In certain regions, consideration is being given by ICAO to the establishment of Regional ATS Contingency Coordination and Information Centres . These would act as a focal point for intelligence as the transition period gets underway. ALLPIRG may wish to seek a briefing on the status, objectives and functions of these proposed cells and to make recommendations as appropriate for regions where no decision has yet been taken. IATA fully supports this development.

10. **IATA/ICAO Y2K PARTNERSHIP**

10.1   IATA and ICAO have collaborated closely in their respective Y2K awareness programme, both at HQ and regional levels. The level of activity, particularly at a regional level, will need to be elevated further over the next 8 months. ALLPIRG is invited to recommend the need for clear and immediate prioritization of ICAO Y2K initiatives in the ICAO Regional Offices and PIRGs in relation to other programmes, and to recommend that appropriate resources support this.

11. **ACTION BY THE ALLPIRG**

11.1   ALLPIRG/3 is invited to:

   a) consider the issues raised in this paper in making recommendations to the ICAO Council and PIRGs regarding Year 2000 ATS Contingency Planning, and particularly to urge PIRGs to specify that regional Y2K measures are accorded a high priority supported by an appropriate level of resource;

   b) encourage implementation of Regional ATS Contingency Coordination and Information Centres, as appropriate, and endorse full ICAO participation;

   c) recommend the use of an In-flight Broadcast Procedure for temporary activation as part of the contingency planning process, noting the user preference for IFBP;

   d) urge all ICAO member States to take prompt action to complete their review of Y2K preparedness, and to collaborate with ICAO in developing and promulgating current and expected status;

   e) recommend that the capability of the AFTN to support operations during the Y2K transition period, and other critical dates, be further investigated by ICAO; and

   f) urge States to adhere to 1st August for publication of contingency planning measures.

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