

FOURTH MEETING OF THE ALLPIRG/ADVISORY GROUP

Montreal, 6 – 8 February 2001

Agenda Item 2.1: Interregional coordination and harmonization mechanism – Harmonization of air navigation systems

CONSEQUENCES OF AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION INCONSISTENCIES

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

The consequences of aeronautical information inconsistencies have proven to be serious in terms of safety as well as economy and capacity. Coordinated global actions are proposed to improve the situation.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The forty-second meeting of the European Air Navigation Planning Group (EANPG/42) was informed of the result of research, within EUROCONTROL, which revealed inconsistencies in the description of the ATS routes used by ground and on-board systems, leading to safety concerns. Initial investigation indicated that this problem was mostly related to non-adherence to aeronautical information regulation and control (AIRAC) procedures by States. In this regard, reference was made to a specific Eurocontrol project, aimed at improving AIRAC adherence performance, and to EANPG Conclusion 40/46. Further research, however, had highlighted that the scope of the problem was broader than just non-adherence AIRAC and further fact-finding activities had been undertaken. The results had been presented to the European Air Traffic Management Programme (EATMP) Management Committee, which approved an action plan. In addition, all stakeholders — and, in particular, ICAO through the EANPG — were to be kept well informed.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The aeronautical information inconsistencies referred to operational aeronautical data content, data timeliness, data integrity and data consistency and included the full airspace route infrastructure, i.e. routes, way-points, navigation aids, standard instrument departure and arrival routes (SIDs/STARs), etc. The problem had manifested itself through inconsistencies of aeronautical information inserted in flight management systems, charts, ATC display screens, flight data processing systems, etc.

2.2 The consequences had proven to be serious in terms of safety as well as economy and capacity. As an example, three EUR States had reported more than 20 occurrences/incidents due to this factor during 1999. EANPG/42 fully recognized the serious safety, cost and capacity implications.

2.3 The causes of aeronautical information inconsistencies had been found to be many and varied, e.g.:

- a) *Direct causes*: Multiple publications, lack of standardization/uniform implementation, lack of validation (incorrect data) and late publication/cancellation of information changes.
- b) *Indirect causes*: Lack of awareness, institutional factors, insufficient resources to deal with large changes, insufficient coordination during large airspace structure changes and especially between neighbouring States, lack of communication, paper-based systems with little or no use made of electronic data handling techniques.

2.4 EANPG/42 expressed its strong support of the EUROCONTROL awareness campaign by bringing the issue of inconsistencies in aeronautical information to the attention of the appropriate management levels within States, taking into account that the aeronautical data chain included many different actors (procedure designers, airspace planners, State AIS, commercial data suppliers, etc.) and involved close bilateral cooperation between neighbouring States. At the same time, it should be recognized that this is a global problem, and consequently it should be fully coordinated with ICAO. EANPG/42 consequently agreed on the following conclusion:

Conclusion 42/12 – Aeronautical information inconsistencies

That, taking into account the serious safety aspects of this subject:

- a) EUROCONTROL be invited to assist ICAO in promoting awareness in the whole EUR Region, as well as in other ICAO Regions as required, and to prepare relevant ICAO regional guidance material; and
- b) the ICAO Regional Director, Europe and North Atlantic, draw the attention of States to the importance of implementation of the new ICAO standard AIP format to improve the consistency of aeronautical information.

Proposed action

2.5 Taking into consideration the global nature of this problem, it is proposed that:

- a) the EUR awareness campaign for improvement of the consistency of aeronautical information be extended to all ICAO Regions, possibly with the assistance of EUROCONTROL and through the EUR/NAT Regional Office; and
- b) the attention of all States be drawn to the importance of implementation of the new ICAO standard AIP format to improve the consistency of aeronautical information.

3. ACTION BY THE GROUP

3.1 The ALLPIRG is invited to define an appropriate mechanism for a coordinated global action as outlined in paragraph 2.4.