



International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG/21 and RASG-MID/11 Meetings

(Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 4-8 March 2024)

Agenda Item 5.3: ANS (AIM, PBN, AGA-AOP, ATM-SAR, CNS and MET

PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE COORDINATION BETWEEN OMAN AND PAKISTAN TO ENHANCE AIRSPACE OVER HIGH SEAS BETWEEN MID AND APAC REGIONS

(Presented by the Oman and Pakistan)

SUMMARY

This paper highlights the need for optimizing the airspace over the high seas between the Middle East and Asia Pacific Regions to enhance safety, address capacity and inefficiencies constraints, reduce fuel consumption, thus CO₂ emissions from aircraft operations and optimize available navigation systems.

It also highlights the several initiatives undertaken by Oman as part of its continuous commitment to exploring opportunities for collaboration with neighbouring Asia Pacific States.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

REFERENCES

- MIDANPIRG/20.
- 41st ICAO Assembly Resolution A41-21.
- MIDANPIRG - ATM SG/9.
- MIDRMA Board/19-REPORT
- MID RVSM SMR [2022]

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The meeting may wish to recall that the MIDANPIRG/20 held in Oman, 14-17 May 2023, Through Conclusion 20/6 as follows: PIRG/RASG CONCLUSION 20/6:

COORDINATION TO ENHANCE AIRSPACE OVER HIGH SEAS BETWEEN MID REGION AND APAC

That,

- a) ICAO MID is tasked to initiate and foster inter-regional and sub-regional initiatives that aim to enhance the airspace at the interface with the ASIA Pacific region; and*
- b) States and aviation stakeholders are encouraged to collaborate and support airspace development initiatives aiming at enhancing safety, improve efficiency of the airspace over the high seas at the interface with Asia Pacific.*

1.2 In the light of the above, Oman has undertaken several initiatives as part of its continuous commitment to exploring opportunities for collaboration with neighbouring Asia Pacific States. These efforts aim to enhance and optimize airspace operations.

1.3 This paper provides an update on progress related to the implementation of these initiatives.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The Ninth Meeting of the MIDANPIRG ATM Sub-Group ATM SG/9 (Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, 14 – 16 November 2023) highlighted the imperative to optimize airspace over the high seas connecting the Middle East and Asia-Pacific regions. This optimization aims to bolster safety measures, alleviate capacity and efficiency constraints, minimize fuel consumption, consequently reducing CO2 emissions from aircraft operations, and optimize the utilization of available navigation systems and infrastructure.

2.2 The ATM SG/9 meeting has also recognised the need, for international collaboration and coordination among the States and aviation authorities in the regions. This might involve the development of more efficient air traffic routes, the implementation of modern air traffic management systems, implementing reduced longitudinal separation of 20NM and the establishment of agreements and protocols to ensure safe and effective airspace management. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) plays a crucial role in facilitating such cooperation.

2.3 The 41st ICAO Assembly through Resolution A41-21 (Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies and practices related to environmental protection - Climate change), Requested States to:

- *work together with manufacturers, Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs), aircraft operators and airport operators to accelerate the development and implementation of fuel-efficient routings and air navigation procedures and ground operations to reduce aviation emissions, and work with ICAO to bring the environmental benefits to all regions and States, considering the Aviation System Block Upgrades (ASBUs).*

2.4 Oman has therefore carried out a number of meetings with: Mumbai and with Pakistan, in an ongoing effort to explore the possibilities of association with adjacent Asia Pacific States to enhance & optimise the airspace.

2.5 As part of the technical workshop event that was conducted between OMAN & Pakistan in the period between 27th – 30th November 2023 to agree on the common challenges faced and required airspace enhancements to facilitate for safety, capacity and efficiency.

2.6 Both States acknowledge the shared challenges they face and have reached a mutual agreement to form a collaborative technical team.

2.7 Both states have recognized the shared challenges they encounter and have mutually agreed to form a collaborative technical team. This team will focus on addressing the intricacies of airspace optimization and air traffic flow, with a particular emphasis on studying the following:

- route accessibility to and from the newly developed Gwadar Airport in Pakistan.
- Improved traffic flow through existing route network and possible modifications.
- Improved & reduced separation procedures between both states.
- Endorse SAR process between both states.
- Explore interfacing ATM systems to enhance informational exchange.
- Work in progress to resolve OLDI/AIDC challenges faced.

2.8 In order to accommodate the projected growth, States CAA, ANSPs, Airspace users, and aviation stakeholders in the Middle East and Asia Pacific should work together to restructure and modernize airspace, implement new technologies and systems that can meet the demands of the rapidly expanding aviation industry.

2.9 Accordingly, Oman reiterates the need that all stakeholders at the Middle East and Asia Pacific to collaborate and support airspace development initiatives aiming at enhancing safety, improve efficiency of the airspace over the high seas at the interface with Asia Pacific.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) take note of the progress made by Oman in developing initiatives aiming at enhancing safety, improve efficiency of the airspace over the high seas at the interface with Asia Pacific;
- b) acknowledge the Oman-Pakistan joint collaboration to optimize the airspace in the interface between their FIRs in the Middle East Region & APAC Region respectively; and
- c) reiterate its support for a call for collaboration to an effective actions and implementation as per PIRG/RASG CONCLUSION 20/6.