



ICAO

International Civil Aviation Organization  
North American, Central American and Caribbean Office

WORKING PAPER

FPL/AD/MON — WP/08  
19/02/15

**FPL Ad hoc Group Missing/duplicated/erroneous Filed flight plan /Flight plan (FPL) evaluation meeting (FPL/AD/MON)**

Mexico City, Mexico, 24-26 February 2015

**Agenda Item 8 Discussion of Alternate Aerodrome issue**

**DESTINATION ALTERNATE AERODROME FILLING EXCEPTION**

(Presented by IATA)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This working paper presents a resume of previous documents presented at the NACC4 and GREPECAS regarding to the requirements specified on the ICAO Annex 6 part 1 that allows the airlines, to present the FPL without the destination alternate aerodrome. The intention of this working paper is not to validate the procedures mentioned on the Annex 6 and accepted by the amendment 36, but to reach a regional agreement on how to implement them on the CAR and only for flights having the USA as destination.

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>Action:</b>               | The suggested action is presented at the section 5  |
| <i>Strategic Objectives:</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency</li><li>• Economic Development of Air Transport</li><li>• Environmental Protection</li></ul> |
| <i>References:</i>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ICAO Annex 6 – <i>Operation of Aircraft</i></li><li>• Doc. 4444 - <i>ATM — Air Traffic Management.</i></li></ul>                    |

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The amendment 36 to Annex 6, Part I, “alternate aerodrome selection and fuel planning Provisions”, was part of a joint IATA and ICAO initiative to improve aeroplane fuel efficiency and reduce emissions. A realistic, modern approach was needed that would take into account operational experience, new technologies and advanced aeroplane capabilities while providing safe operations through the use of modern methods including operational data analysis and safety risk management (SRM). The task to draft the amendment was undertaken by the Operations Panel in 2008 and progressed through a series of meetings and correspondence among members.

1.2 The principal purpose of amendment 36 was to introduce globally harmonized planning criteria for the selection of alternate aerodromes and the pre-flight computation of total fuel supply.

1.3 Under the conditions mentioned on the amendment 36, the exception to avoid selecting a destination alternate aerodrome was a feasible option for the airlines while increasing the efficiency, reducing the CO2 emission while keeping a high level of safety for the operations.

**2. Requirements to comply with the exception: “FOR THE AIRSPACE USERS”**

2.1 The ICAO Annex 6 part 1, under the title 4.3.4.3 “Destination alternate aerodromes”, paragraph 4.3.4.3.1, states that:

*“For a flight to be conducted in accordance with the instrument flight rules, at least one destination alternate aerodrome shall be selected and specified in the operational and ATS flight plans, **unless**:*

*a) the duration of the flight from the departure aerodrome, or from the point of in-flight re-planning, to the destination aerodrome is such that, taking into account all meteorological conditions and operational information relevant to the flight, at the estimated time of use, a reasonable certainty exists that:*

- 1) The approach and landing may be made under visual meteorological conditions; and*
- 2) Separate runways are usable at the estimated time of use of the destination aerodrome with at least one runway having an operational instrument approach procedure;*

**Note 1.** — *Separate runways are two or more runways at the same aerodrome configured such that if one runway is closed, operations to the other runway(s) can be conducted.”*

2.2 Under the same chapter, the paragraph 4.3.6.3 states that among other consideration that the pre-flight calculation of usable fuel required shall include:

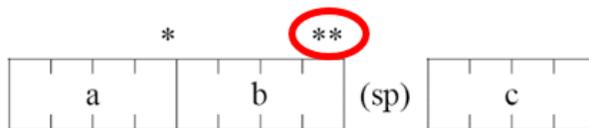
*“Where a flight is operated without a destination alternate aerodrome, the amount of fuel required to enable the aeroplane to fly for 15 minutes at holding speed at 450 m (1 500 ft) above destination aerodrome elevation in standard conditions;”*

**3. Requirements to comply with the exception: “FOR THE ATS UNITS”**

3.1 The Doc 4444 on the appendix 3, page A3-20 describes Message contents and formats used for the air traffic services messages.

1.1. The field type 16 fo

- a) Destination aerodrome
- b) Total estimated elapsed time; and
- c) destination alternate aerodrome(s)



3.2 The explanation below the element “b” description, identified with the “\*\*” symbol, states that on this same element, the FPL message could end (not considering the “c” element corresponding to the “destination alternate aerodrome”), when so agreed between the ATS units concerned or prescribed on the basis of regional air navigation agreements.

**\*\*** This field may be terminated here in FPL messages when so agreed between the ATS units concerned or prescribed on the basis of regional air navigation agreements.

3.3 After few tests performed with some states and ATM systems from different providers in the regions, it was noted that:

*Some FPL interfaces requires the destination alternate aerodrome and consider this field as mandatory. This situation is not happening with all the ATM system providers.*

#### **4. Review**

4.1 The user requirements to apply the destination alternate aerodrome exemption on the FPL, are clearly defined on the ICAO Annex 6 and these are the result of specialized group of experts convened by ICAO through several meetings, originating the amendment 36 to the mentioned Annex.

4.2 The CAR/SAM states have accepted the amendment 36 to the Annex 6 issued in 2012, without differences declaration, nevertheless some ATS units or even different shifts within the same ATS unit, are not recognizing the document stating different personal safety criteria.

4.3 Many states have implemented the exceptions listed in the Annex 6, allowing the users to present the FPL (specifically for flights going to USA), nevertheless other ATS units have rejected the FPL, due to the lack of uniformity about this part of the message format, as expressed on the points 3.3 and 3.4 from this working paper.

4.4 There were reports of flights diversions due to the rejection of the FPL by an intermediate FIR (overflight), which was demanding the destination alternate aerodrome on the FPL, in spite of the departing and destination ATS units approval, that had no objection recognizing the exceptions in Annex 6.

#### **5. Suggested Actions**

5.1 The Meeting is invited to review the information provided in order to:

- a) obtain the consensus and get a regional agreement on the interpretation of these paragraphs to unify the application criteria, used by the ANSPs under the ICAO Annex 6 and Doc4444 statements;
- b) harmonize the technical specification requirements for the future ATM systems or FPL interfaces on the region, to enable the ATS units and airlines, to apply this exception according to the annex 6 and Doc.4444 without the current software limitation; and
- c) include the proposed procedure as part of the regional supplementary procedures (chapter 2, part 2.1) as mentioned on the Doc4444 and the paragraph 3.3 of this working paper.