



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

First Meeting of the Africa-Indian Ocean Aviation System Planning and implementation Group (AASPG/1)

Libreville, Gabon, from 3 to 7 November 2025.

Agenda Item 4: Implementation of safety and air navigation goals, targets and indicators, including priorities set in the Regional Aviation Safety and Air Navigation Plans

4.5. Regional and National Aviation Safety and Air Navigation Plans

AFI Regional Air Navigation Plan Update - FIR/UIR and SRR Boundaries Charts

(Presented by the Democratic Republic of the Congo)

SUMMARY	
This paper reports on the AFI Regional Air Navigation Plan update - FIR/UIR and SRR Boundaries Charts.	
Action by the Meeting is provided in paragraph 3.	
REFERENCE(S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convention On International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention), Articles 1, 5, 6, and 9b; - AFI Regional Air Navigation Plan; - Annex 11, Chapter 2 §2.1; - APIRG/24 Decision 24/30; - ICAO/WACAF Letter T16.3-0670 dated October 7, 2023; - Letter AAC/100/DG/AKT/KMF/0203/2025 dated February 17, 2025; - Letter AAC/DG/100/DG/TMJ/KMF/DSNA/1768/2023 dated October 27, 2023.
<i>Strategic Objectives</i>	<p>A: Safety and</p> <p>B: Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency.</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This working paper aims at bringing to the attention of the meeting the concerns of the Democratic Republic of the Congo regarding the AFI Regional Air Navigation Plan update.
- 1.2 These concerns mainly relate to the data provided in Volume I charts concerning the coordinates of Flight Information Regions (FIR/UIR) and Search and Rescue Regions (SRR) boundaries.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1. Under the provisions of Article 1 of the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, Member States have complete and exclusive sovereignty over the airspace above their territory. However, due to some operational constraints noted in specific parts of the AFI airspace, inconsistencies remain between data provided in the Regional Air Navigation Plan and the reality in the field. Such discrepancies mainly concern the boundaries between Flight Information Regions (FIRs/UIRs) and Search and Rescue Regions (SRRs), which do not always match.

2.2. In order to comply with the relevant provisions of the Chicago Convention, as well as Chapter 2 of Annex 11 to the Convention, which provides for the possibility for a State to delegate the management of all or part of its airspace to another State, it seems necessary for the meeting to address the inconsistencies identified. Such consideration is important in order to prevent any negative impact on the safety and efficiency of air traffic in our respective airspaces.

2.3. To date, there are still clear discrepancies between Flight Information Regions (FIRs/UIRs), as published on air navigation maps, and Search and Rescue Regions (SRRs) defined by States themselves. This situation poses a potential risk to air navigation safety, including in the event that a Member State considers applying Article 9b of the Chicago Convention, relating to the restriction or prohibition of overflights for safety or sovereignty reasons.

2.4. A concrete example of this issue can be seen in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, specifically in the part of the airspace above the “Katanga pedicle”. According to aeronautical charts published by ICAO, this area is currently assigned to Zambia, which manages the air traffic, while the corresponding land area falls within the Kinshasa Search and Rescue Region (SRR).

2.5. From the perspective of aviation safety and compliance with international standards, this situation is inconsistent, insofar as no official delegation in charge of the management of this area has been formally designated in writing by both States concerned. Such a lack of documentation contravenes the relevant provisions of the Chicago Convention and ICAO standards, including those relating to coordination between States for the management of airspace and search and rescue services.

2.6. It is likely that similar cases of inconsistency between FIRs/UIRs and SRRs exist in other parts of the Africa–Indian Ocean (AFI) region. In order to ensure an acceptable level of air navigation safety, it is critical that the respective responsibilities of States concerned be clearly defined, including through formal bilateral agreements. In this regard, the ICAO Secretariat can play a facilitating role, supporting Member States in formalizing such agreements, in accordance with the provisions of the Chicago Convention and ICAO standards.

2.7. For coordinates of the points delineating the FIRs/UIRs boundaries for Kinshasa, Entebbe, Juba, and Kigali, it can be noted in the draft Regional Air Navigation plan being processed that the relevant chart has not been filled in or has only been partially filled in, even though data validated by parties is available. The DRC suggests that the meeting agree for the Secretariat to incorporate them into the new draft.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Encourage the Secretariat to facilitate technical mediation during this AASPG-1 session, in order to harmonize the coordinates between the adjacent FIRs affected by the identified inconsistencies;
- b) Encourage the Secretariat to incorporate available and validated data relating to FIR/UIR and SRR boundaries into the draft Regional Air Navigation Plan;
- c) Ask States concerned to initiate bilateral or multilateral coordination to agree on common points for their respective FIR and SRR boundaries; and
- d) Encourage all States in the region to collaborate in order to address any discrepancies between the officially reported dimensions for their FIRs/UIRs and SRRs and the areas actually operated, in accordance with the provisions of the Chicago Convention.