



International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG/17 and RASG-MID/7 Meeting

(Cairo, Egypt, 15 – 18 April 2019)

Agenda Item 6.2: Air Navigation Planning and Implementation

REGIONAL COLLABORATION FOR MANAGING CONTINGENCY SITUATIONS

(Presented by the Sultanate of Oman)

SUMMARY

This paper presents actions being undertaken by Oman to deal with Pakistan and Afghanistan airspace closure and the need for further regional collaborative effort in managing contingency situations to ensure minimum disruption to ‘normal’ air transport operations.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

REFERENCES

- ATM SG/4-REPORT
- MID Doc 001, MIDANPIRG PROCEDURAL HANDBOOK
- RASG-MID PROCEDURAL HANDBOOK

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The States are responsible for their airspace and have a responsibility to restrict traffic or close all or part of their airspace should the risk become unacceptable.

1.2 The contingency planning plays a vital role in minimizing impact in case of possible disruption in the provision of ATS.

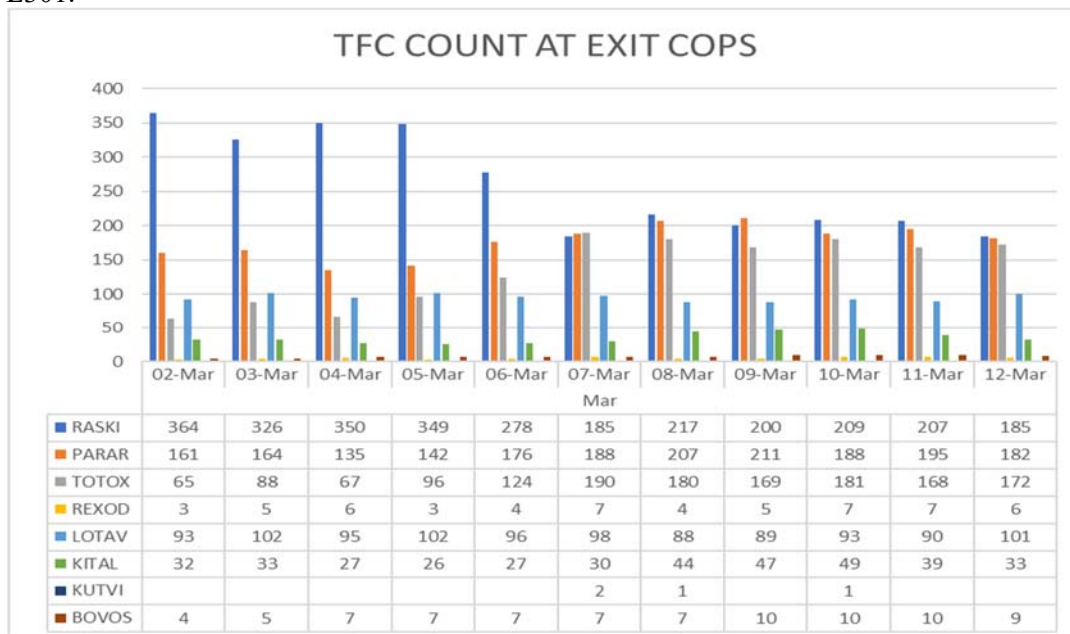
1.3 On 27th of February 2019, Pakistan and Afghanistan declared their airspace closed with immediate effect. Consequently, more than 480 flights rerouted through the Muscat FIR, resulting in airspace congestion particularly at Muscat UTA.

1.4 The Sultanate of Oman is fully committed and assures to take all necessary actions for safety, regularity and efficiency of aircraft operation within Oman’s airspace in all circumstances.

1.5 This paper highlights the actions taken by Oman to deal with the situation and the need for further regional collaborative effort in managing contingency situations to ensure minimum disruption to ‘normal’ air transport operations.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 As a direct result of Pakistan and Afghanistan airspace closure, Oman witnessed a significant increase in traffic, reaching up to +32% in a day, and all traffic to/from Mumbai FIR concentrated on RASKI L301.



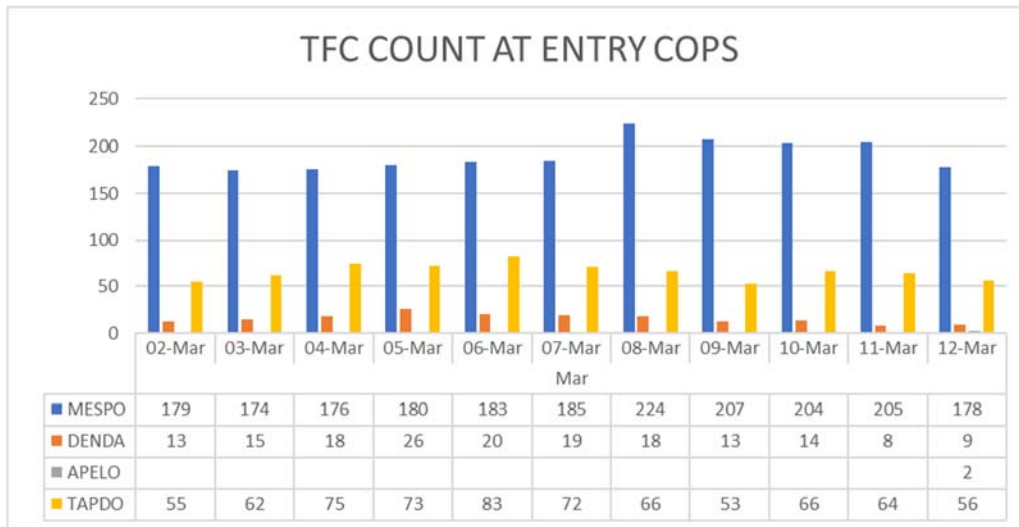
2.2 Oman carried out a safety risk assessment and applied contingency measures to manage the daily traffic and accommodate the additional flights. The measures varied from tactical rerouting, change of route direction, reduced separation and Flight Level Allocation Scheme. It achieved an acceptable balance between the air traffic demands and the air navigation system capacity.

2.3 The management of the situation was accompanied with a number of challenges. The main ones were:

- Observations on the level of adherence to the published contingency measures.
- Capacity limitations due to limited surveillance and communication infrastructure over oceanic airspace adjacent to Muscat FIR.
- Restrictions to utilize the airspace due to several conflict zones within a relatively small geographical area.
- Unilateral and/or short noticed changes of published information related to airspace and route availability that impacted neighbouring FIRs.

2.4 On the other hand, the outstanding level of coordination and collaboration between the States, ANSPs, ICAO and IATA and the majority of the airlines through Pakistan CCT facilitated the smooth flow of information and helped in addressing operational challenges.

2.5 It is known that, in addition to the existing situation which Oman has been facing, since June 2017, with the implementation of a contingency plan for Qatari registered aircraft and the provision of access through contingency ATS routes (North/ South) which cross major flows of traffic along the existing ATS route network (East/ West), the Pakistan contingency measures are have different objectives, resulting in several intersecting tracks and overlapping traffic streams within Oman's airspace.



2.6 The challenge is not only to decrease congestion, but also to keep the highest safety levels as traffic increases within Oman’s airspace. Therefore, appropriate short and medium term measures should be taken to relieve the pressure of airspace congestion.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information in this working paper,
- b) urge States to coordinate changes that may impact air traffic flow in other FIRs; and
- c) agree to the following Draft Conclusions:

Why	To analyse and communicate identified safety issues to civil aviation caused by contingency and/or changes to ATS Route Network.
What	Safety Assessments / Analysis of the situation
Who	States / ATM SG
When	July 2019 / September 2019

DRAFT MIDANPIRG CONCLUSION 17/XX: SAFETY ASSESSMENTS DUE TO CONTINGENCY WITH IMPACT ON ATS ROUTE NETWORK

That,

- a) States be urged to carry out safety assessment of the current contingency situation and associated recent changes to the ATS Routes Network and provide them to the ICAO MID Office by 15 July 2019;
- b) ATM SG/5 to conduct analysis of the situation based on the inputs received form States to identify the challenges and agree on necessary measures for improvements and to mitigate any safety risk; and
- c) MIDRMA to support as required.

Why	To eliminate/mitigate uncoordinated actions and/or inconsistent information that may cause safety issues to airspace users or ANSPs during contingency situation
What	Enhanced framework for the MID CCTs
Who	MID ATM SG
When	TBD

DRAFT MIDANPIRG CONCLUSION 17/XX: ENHANCED FRAMEWORK FOR THE MID CCTS

That,

- a) *States intending to restrict traffic or close all or part of their airspace be urged to:*
- *assess the impact of any change on the air traffic flow and coordinate the outcomes with the impacted State(s) and relevant Organizations.*
 - *consider adequate time before affecting the required change to minimize traffic disruption.*
- b) *the MID ATM SG to enhance the notification and coordination process of contingency operations in the frame of the MID CCT, particularly for:*
- *implementing changes to contingency arrangements that have impact on traffic flow in other FIRs.*
 - *consistency of interrelated contingency information promulgated by more than one State*
 - *agreement on Recovery Roadmap for each contingency situation.*

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