



AERODROME METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND FORECAST STUDY GROUP (AMOFSG)

EIGHTH MEETING

Melbourne, Australia, 15 to 18 February 2010

Agenda Item 5: Observing and forecasting at the aerodrome and in the terminal area 5.1: Aerodrome observations

DEFINITION OF VICINITY

(Presented by Steven Albersheim)

SUMMARY

This paper proposes a minor change to the description of the term “Vicinity” in order to accommodate large aerodromes.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The term ‘vicinity’ has been a topic at the Aerodrome Meteorological Observation and Forecast Study Group (AMOFSG) since Meeting 1 in 2000. Proposals for the definition of the term “vicinity” were first discussed at AMOFSG/1. Further considerations were debated at subsequent meetings, including the concerns raised from the 2002 MET Divisional Meeting.

1.2 The term Vicinity (VC) is used in the METAR and SPECI to note certain weather phenomena away from the aerodrome. For example, showers observed approximately 10 km from the aerodrome would be reported as VCSH.

1.3 The Czech Republic proposed at the WMO First Meeting of Inter-Programme Expert Team on Data Representation and Codes (15-18 September 2009), that a clarification be provided for the term ‘vicinity’ in METAR/SPECI such that “the actual range for which the qualifier VC is to be applied will be determined locally, in consultation with aeronautical authorities.”

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Annex 3 — *Meteorological Service for International Air Navigation* , Appendix 3, paragraph 4.4.2.6 states as a Recommendation that the term Vicinity is “Between approximately 8 and 16 km of the aerodrome reference point and used only in METAR and SPECI with the present weather in accordance with the template shown in Table A3-2 when not reported under 4.4.2.5”.

2.2 Annex 3, Chapter 1 defines Aerodrome Reference Point as “the designated geographical location of an aerodrome”. The term aerodrome reference point is used only in Annex 3 in the description of term Vicinity.

2.3 At large aerodromes, it may not always be feasible to comply with the definition of VC with respect to the reference point, as the location at which observations are made may not be located at the exact aerodrome reference point. . Since the term VC incorporates the word “approximately” in the distance measurement, it would seem reasonable to allow for a variance in the term’s description to allow for the inclusion of the words “location at which observation is made”.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 As a recommendation in Annex 3, Appendix 3, paragraph 4.4.2.6, add the words “or point of observation” to the description of the term Vicinity, such that Vicinity becomes:

“Between approximately 8 and 16 km of the aerodrome reference point, or location at which observation is made, and used only in METAR and SPECI with the present weather in accordance with the template shown in Table A3-2 when not reported under 4.4.2.”

4. ACTION BY THE AMOFSG

4.1 The AMOFSG is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper; and
- b) consider the proposal in paragraph 3.1 and if supported by the group, formulate a draft amendment to Annex 3 for the incorporation in Amendment 76.

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