International Civil Aviation Organization

INFORMATION PAPER

Eleventh Meeting of the Meteorological Services Working Group (MET/S WG/11)

Virtual meeting, 24 to 26 March 2021

Agenda Item 3: Planning and implementation of meteorological services

SIGMET COLLABORATION – NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA

(Presented by New Zealand)

SUMMARY

This paper is an update on how operational forecasters from the Meteorological Service of New Zealand (MetService NZ) and the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) collaborate about the borders of the NZZO, YMML and YBBB Flight Information Regions (FIRs). Both organisations make use of Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) to collaborate and examples of forecaster interaction is included below. The positive uptake in the use of MS Teams as a collaboration tool is a direct result of the physical distancing requirements that both Australia and New Zealand adhered to in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The following recommendation came into effect in November 2020 as part of Amendment 79 to Annex 3:

> 3.4.4 **Recommendation**.— *An MWO should coordinate SIGMET with neighbouring MWO(s), especially when the enroute weather phenomenon extends or is expected to extend beyond the MWO's specified area of responsibility, in order to ensure the provision of harmonized SIGMET.*

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 MetService NZ and the BoM were very familiar with forecaster collaboration as part of their existing Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre (VAAC) operational requirements. VAACs Wellington and Darwin have for some time used the WhatsApp social media platform to collaborate.

2.2 The operational impact of the COVID19 pandemic saw both MetService NZ and BoM forecasters using MS Teams to collaborate internally and this has been expanded to external communications with each other. Initially VAACs gravitated to using MS Teams as a way of collaborating during 2020. Both VAACs are now part of a single MS Teams group, which is made up of just under 50 participants and can be used to quickly link both VAACs as operationally needed.

2.3 Since the forecasters who work as part of both VAACs also work in their respective aviation weather centres, the same MS Teams Group has been used for scenarios where hazardous weather phenomena look to affect or are affecting the YMML, YBBB and NZZO FIRs. This is demonstrated in the following two examples.

<u>26 February 2021</u>

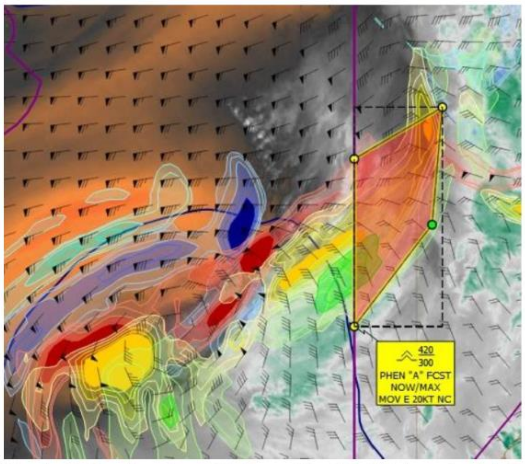
MetService NZ and BoM forecasters collaborate on a SIGMET for clear air turbulence:

BoM Forecaster 2/26 6:41 PM
Check border 163E we have SEV CAT FL160/350 on approach mov E 20 KT

See if it spills in your FIR near 40S

MetService 2/26 6:43 PM
OK, I'm having look now.

MetService 2/26 6:56 PM

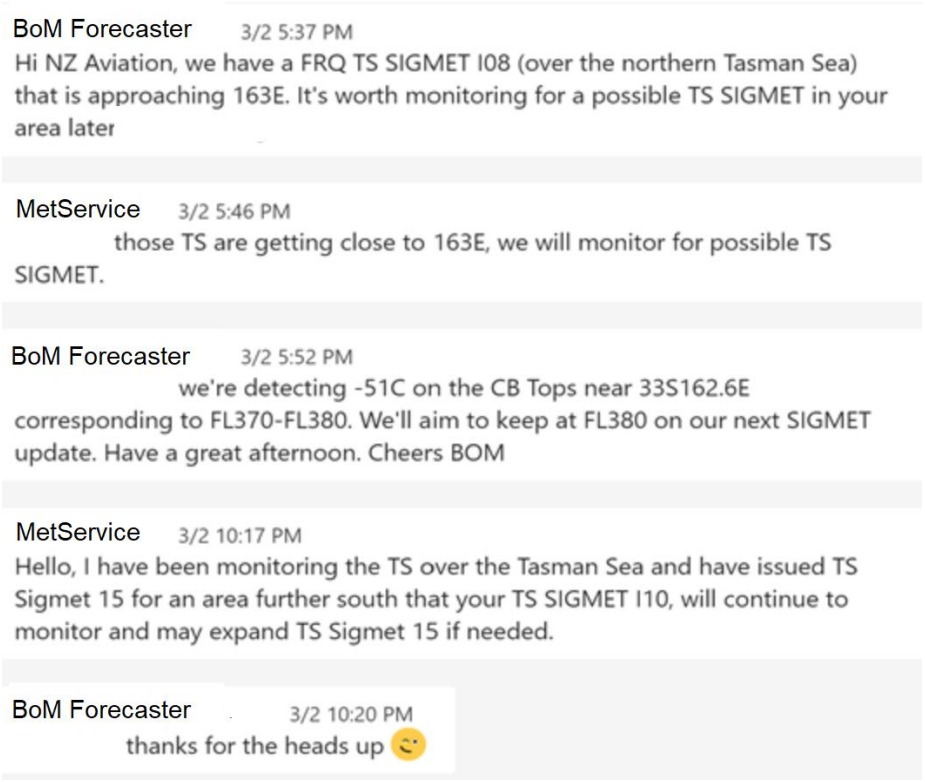


Yeah, it looks the CAT level is bit higher in NZ FIR, around 200hPa-250hPa. I'll issue with with the matching boundary points.

BoM Forecaster 2/26 6:56 PM
Ok good .. it is a match then!

<u>2 March 2021</u>

MetService NZ and BoM forecasters collaborate on the positions of thunderstorm SIGMETs:



2.4 These examples demonstrate the value in collaboration between the centres leading to a higher situational awareness across the wider YBBB, YMML and NZZO regions and an overall improved service for operators.

2.5 MetService NZ has also recently set up an MS Teams channel with the Fiji Meteorological Service, leading to an improvement in responsiveness between Fiji Meteorological Service and MetService NZ, with respect to Tropical Cyclone Advisories and SIGMETs. There has recently been an agreement between BoM and MetService NZ to explore extending the channel to include BoM as well.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 Note the information contained in this paper.

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