

*International Civil Aviation Organization***ICAO****Twelfth Meeting of the South China Sea Traffic Flow Review Group (SCSTFRG/12)**

Bangkok Thailand, 11 – 12 November 2024

Agenda Item 2: Review of the Current and Planned CNS/ATM Capabilities and Identifying Associated Reduced Horizontal Separation**IMPLEMENTATION OF 50NM LONGITUDINAL SEPARATION
ON ATS ROUTE M768**

(Presented by Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Viet Nam)

SUMMARY

This paper presents an update on the implementation of 50NM longitudinal separation for ATS route M768 between Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Viet Nam.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The enhancement of longitudinal separation on ATS route M768 was first identified as an action item to undertake at the SCSTFRG/6 to ensure seamless operations along the route, which serves flights between Southeast Asia and Australasia. The discussions were put on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resumed in 2022.

1.2 At the SCSTFRG/11 in July 2023, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Viet Nam jointly presented a paper on the reduction of longitudinal separation of aircraft on this route from 80NM to 50NM, as part of regional efforts to enhance route capacity. This paper updates the meeting of the progress of the implementation.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 ATS route M768 traverses the Ho Chi Minh, Kota Kinabalu, Singapore and Ujung Pandang FIRs, each of which has different operational requirements for longitudinal spacing. It was thus important for States to develop a coordinated implementation timeline and harmonised set of coordination procedures, taking into consideration (i) aircraft equipage, (ii) conditions for the application of 50NM longitudinal separation, and (iii) conditions for the suspension of the reduced separation and implementation of Large-Scale Weather Deviation procedures.

2.2 Improvements in the navigation performance of aircraft facilitated opportunities for Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Viet Nam to implement initiatives to improve efficiency. On 13 March 2024, the four States agreed on coordination procedures for the application of 50NM longitudinal separation on ATS route M768. The States noted that the implementation of 50NM longitudinal separation would not affect ATC workload, as 99.6% of the flights on the route were RNP 10-capable based on filed flight plans in 2023.

2.3 Subsequently, a two-month trial was conducted from April to June 2024 based on the agreed coordination procedures. Throughout the trial, no negative feedback was received from airlines. Feedback from the respective ATS units was thoughtfully discussed and addressed in subsequent follow-up meetings. Following the successful trial, 50NM longitudinal separation on ATS route M768

was implemented across Ho Chi Minh, Kota Kinabalu, Singapore and Ujung Pandang FIRs from June 2024 onwards with no further issues.

2.4 A key enabler for seamless operations is achieving a common understanding of the different operational requirements of the ATS units involved. The reduced separation and enhancement of ATS route M768's route capacity has been enabled through the redesignation of segments of the route within the Kota Kinabalu, Singapore, and Ujung Pandang FIRs as an RNP 10-exclusive route for FL290 and above. This could be supported for the segment of the route in the Ho Chi Minh FIR, without needing to redesignate the navigation performance requirement, as the segment falls under ADS-B surveillance coverage. For operational efficiency, the ATS units for Ho Chi Minh, Kota Kinabalu and Singapore FIRs agreed to ensure that northbound aircraft pairs are ADS-B equipped before applying 50NM longitudinal separation.

2.5 The key milestones towards the implementation of 50NM longitudinal separation on ATS route M768 are summarised in Table 1 below.

Timeline	Description
Q2 2022	Start of discussions on reduced separation on ATS route M768
July 2023	Joint presentation at SCSTFRG/11 on the progress update to enhance traffic flow on ATS route M768
March 2024	Joint meeting via videoconference between Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Viet Nam to discuss implementation timeline and coordination procedures
April 2024	Commence 2-month operation trial
June 2024 onwards	Implementation of 50NM longitudinal separation between the ATS units of Ho Chi Minh, Kota Kinabalu, Singapore and Ujung Pandang FIRs

Table 1: Key milestones towards the implementation of 50NM longitudinal separation

2.6 Increased collaboration and open communication between States are instrumental for making progress towards the targets in the ICAO Asia Pacific Seamless ANS Plan, which recommends for States to implement RNP routes whenever practicable. The designation of RNP routes would increase route capacity and improve safety when encountering weather phenomena. This joint initiative of enhancing longitudinal separation on ATS route M768 provided an opportunity for States to collectively identify areas for improvement, understand each other's operational considerations and work together to enhance the safety and efficiency of air traffic management.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper; and
- b) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

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