



ICAO

*International Civil Aviation Organization*

**Twenty-First Meeting of the ICAO Aeronautical Information Services – Aeronautical Information Management Implementation Task Force (AAITF/21)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 19 – 22 May 2026

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## **Agenda Item 2: Review Outcomes of Related Meetings**

### **OUTCOMES OF THE APAC 5LNC AD HOC GROUP**

(Presented by APAC 5LNC Ad Hoc Group)

#### **SUMMARY**

This paper presents the progress of the APAC 5LNC Ad Hoc Group established under International Civil Aviation Organization AAITF to address 5LNC shortages and duplication. It highlights that, despite short-term relief from released codes, depletion remains a concern and proposes the use of 5ANNC as a mitigation measure. The applicability of a 300 NM sound-like proximity criterion in APAC requires further safety assessment. Relevant International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations inputs were reviewed. ICARD issues are being addressed globally through an ICAO Exploratory Group, where the Ad Hoc Group will be represented.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The AAITF/20 meeting discussed updates on the management of Five-Letter Name Codes (5LNC) and Five-Alphanumeric Name Codes (5ANNC). During the discussion, several States expressed their support for further work, and the meeting agreed to establish the APAC 5LNC Ad Hoc Group to address challenges related to code shortages and duplication within the region.

1.2 AAITF/20 agreed to the following Decision:

#### ***Decision AAITF/20-4: Establish APAC 5LNC Ad Hoc Group***

1.3 Up to AAITF/21, a total of five meetings have been conducted virtually. The Ad Hoc Group comprises members from Australia, Hong Kong China, France (New Caledonia), Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, International Air Transport Association (IATA), International Federation of Aeronautical Information Management Associations (IFAIMA) and ICAO. Mr. Kenny Lalljee (Airservices Australia) serves as Rapporteur.

1.4 The Ad Hoc Group has examined a range of measures to address the challenges associated with 5LNC management, including the proactive use of 5ANNC, sound-like proximity criteria, safety risk assessment considerations, and potential amendments to existing guidance material.

## 2. DISCUSSION

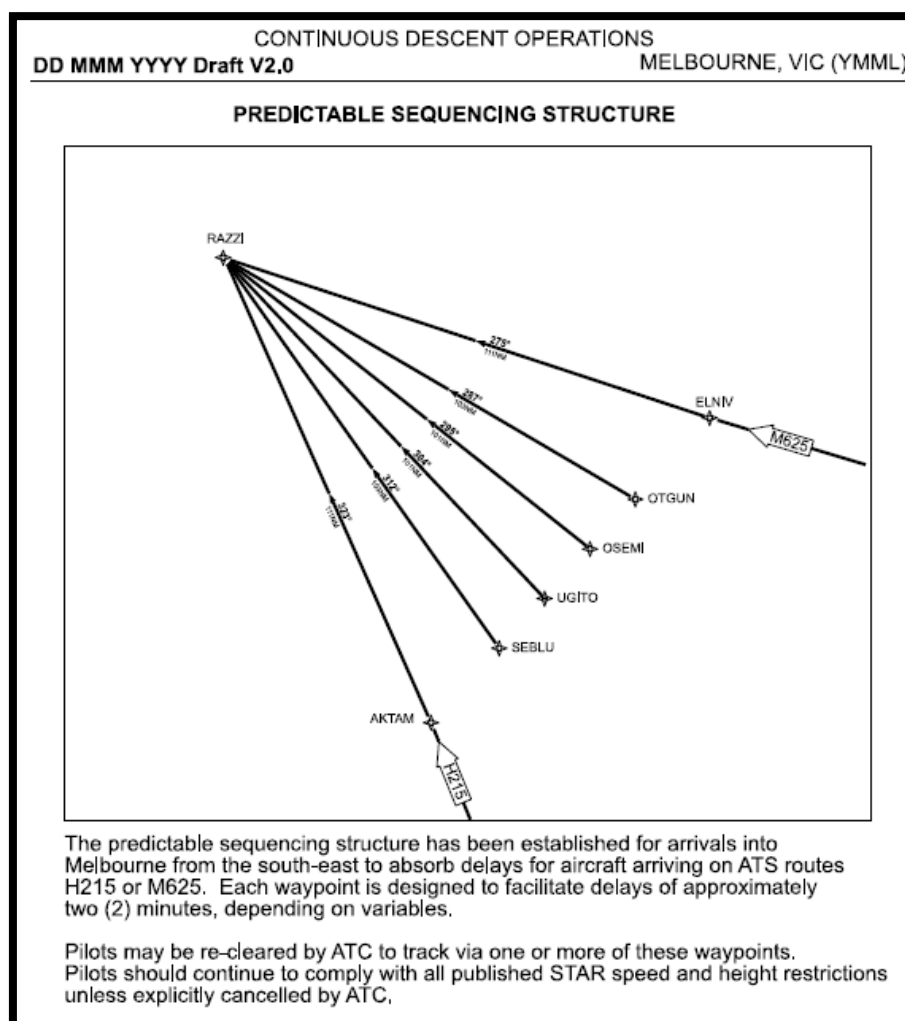
### 5ANNC

2.1 The release of block codes was discussed at AAITF/20 and subsequently submitted to ATM/SG/13 for consideration. **Conclusion ATM/SG/13-8 on the removal of available (non-allocated) 5LNCs starting with “X” and the release of block codes** was endorsed. As no requests were received from States/Administrations to retain these block codes by 31 December 2025, a total of 2,683 5LNCs were released.

2.2 While this action has improved the availability of identifiers in the short term, it does not address the underlying issue of 5LNC depletion.

2.3 The use of 5ANNC, either as a replacement for existing 5LNC or as a new allocation, has been discussed within AAITF as a potential mitigation measure to address this issue.

2.4 Annex 11 Appendix 2 and Doc 8168 (Procedures for Air Navigation Services - Aircraft Operations (PANS-OPS)) currently limit 5ANNC use to the terminal area in support of RNAV SIDs, STARs and instrument approach procedures and are not used for ATC purposes. The expanded use of 5ANNC to support terminal area arrival arrangements, such as ATC predictable route sequencing, was discussed and benefits over the use of 5LNCs were identified.



2.5 Although some States in the APAC region have already implemented 5ANNC, its adoption is not yet universal. The Ad Hoc Group therefore considers that greater encouragement of its use would be beneficial.

2.6 Noting the current relevant provisions contained in Annex 11 Appendix 2 and Doc 8168, the Ad Hoc Group proposes the following Conclusion:

**Conclusion AAITF/21-xx: Utilization of 5ANNC**

That, Noting the identified exhaustion of 5LNC and the consideration of 5ANNC within AAITF as a mitigation measure, and recognizing the provisions of Doc 8168 on aircraft identification and addressing, States/Administrations are:

1. encouraged to consider the use of 5ANNC, either as a replacement for existing 5LNC or as a new allocation, in order to address the exhaustion of 5LNC;
2. ensure the convention and the rules of application of 5ANNC are published in the State AIP in accordance with Doc 8168; and
3. invited to share their experience and best practices regarding the implementation of 5ANNC, including any use of 5ANNC outside of instrument flight procedures.

Sound-like proximity

2.7 In the EUR/NAT region, a sound-like proximity check of 300 NM has been adopted, compared with the current 500 NM criterion applied in the APAC region. Discussions were therefore conducted on the background of this difference and on the feasibility of introducing a similar approach in APAC.

2.8 In 2014, an ICAO/EUROCONTROL 5LNC Task Force proposed reducing the proximity check from 500 NM to 300 NM to address difficulties in identifying suitable pronounceable codes free from sound-like conflicts. This proposal was endorsed by the EANPG and reflected in updates to the ICARD User Guidelines for the EUR/NAT region.

2.9 However, the application of the 300 NM criterion has not been uniformly implemented across European States and remains subject to national discretion. For example, France applies a 500 NM criterion.

2.10 It is recognized that the applicability of a 300 NM criterion in the APAC region should be carefully assessed, including through further safety studies and operational evaluations.

2.11 Accordingly, it is proposed that this matter be retained as an ongoing work item for the Ad Hoc Group, with a view to reporting progress to AAITF/22 in 2027.

IFATCA papers

2.12 In addition, previously published papers by International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations on 5LNC-related matters were reviewed. These papers highlight that 5LNCs are a finite resource with increasing demand and emphasize communication safety concerns arising from similar- or sound-like waypoint names, which may lead to operational errors.

2.13 The papers further underscore the importance of maintaining alignment with evolving ICAO provisions and identify potential mitigation measures, including improved standardization of pronunciation, refinement of naming rules, and consideration of 5ANNC as an alternative to alleviate 5LNC scarcity.

2.14 While IFATCA does not directly participate in AAITF, appreciation is expressed for its continued cooperation and information sharing on this matter.

#### ICARD User Guideline

2.15 With regard to the ICARD User Guideline, proposed revisions were submitted by several member States of the Ad Hoc Group and have been discussed accordingly. Initially, it was intended to submit the outcome as a deliverable to AAITF in the form of a Proposal for Amendment (PFA).

2.16 However, issues related to ICARD are not limited to the APAC region and are recognized as significant at the global level. In this context, ICAO Headquarters has decided to establish an ICAO Secretariat Exploratory Group dedicated to developing a new International Codes and Route Designators (ICARD) system Handbook.

2.17 Given that ICARD itself, as well as any potential future framework, is expected to be addressed within this group, it has been decided that the aforementioned PFA will be submitted through this mechanism.

2.18 Furthermore, it was agreed that the Ad Hoc Group would be represented in the Exploratory Group by its Rapporteur, Mr. Kenny Lalljee.

### **3. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the progress made by the APAC 5LNC Ad Hoc Group;
- b) discuss and agree to the proposed Conclusion on the utilization of 5ANNC;
- c) agree that the applicability of the 300 NM sound-like proximity criterion in the APAC region should be subject to further study;
- d) consider consulting the ATM Subgroup or ATM OPS Panel regarding the proposal to utilize 5ANNC on predictable sequencing procedures considering compliance and amendment to Annex 11 and Doc 8168;
- e) note the review of IFATCA materials and the importance of continued information sharing;
- f) note the approach regarding ICARD developments, including engagement with the ICAO Secretariat Exploratory Group; and
- g) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

<b>Conclusion AAITF/21-X: Utilization of 5ANNC</b>	
<p>That, Noting the identified exhaustion of 5LNC and the consideration of 5ANNC within AAITF as a mitigation measure, and recognizing the provisions of Doc 8168 on aircraft identification and addressing,</p> <p>States/Administrations are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. encouraged to consider the use of 5ANNC, either as a replacement for existing 5LNC or as a new allocation, in order to address the exhaustion of 5LNC;</li> <li>2. ensure the convention and the rules of application of 5ANNC are published in the State AIP in accordance with Doc 8168; and</li> <li>3. invited to share their experience and best practices regarding the implementation of 5ANNC including any use of 5ANNC outside of instrument flight procedures.</li> </ol>	<p>Expected impact:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Political / Global</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Inter-regional</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Economic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ops/Technical</p>
<p>Why: Growing demand for waypoint identifiers continues to strain the limited availability of 5LNC. Short-term measures are insufficient, and inconsistent adoption of alternatives may create inefficiencies and safety concerns. The use of 5ANNC is therefore a practical mitigation measure for sustainable code management.</p>	<p>Follow-up: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Required from States</p>
<p>When: 7-Aug-26</p>	<p>Status: Draft to be adopted by Subgroup</p>
<p>Who: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sub groups <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> APAC States <input type="checkbox"/> ICAO APAC RO <input type="checkbox"/> ICAO HQ <input type="checkbox"/> Other: XXXX</p>	

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