

International Civil Aviation Organization

ICAO

WORKING PAPER (WP/12)

ICAO ASIA AND PACIFIC (APAC)
THIRTIETH MEETING OF THE METEOROLOGY
SUB-GROUP (MET SG/30)

Bangkok, Thailand, 20 - 24 July 2026

Agenda Item 4: Regional Guidance Material**ONLINE DIGITAL METAR/TAF TABLES OF ROBEX HANDBOOK**

(Presented by Hong Kong, China)

SUMMARY

This paper presents a proposal to develop an online spreadsheet hosting digital version of the METAR/TAF bulletin tables of the APAC ROBEX Handbook, enabling timely sharing of pending updates submitted by States/Administrations.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The collection and dissemination of METAR and TAF bulletins are specified in the tables in Appendix A and B to the APAC ROBEX Handbook respectively.

2. DISCUSSIONDeveloping online digital METAR/TAF bulletin tables

2.1 To expedite the sharing of the latest status of METAR/TAF bulletin updates submitted by States/Administrations, it is proposed to develop an online spreadsheet of METAR/TAF tables of the APAC ROBEX Handbook. This tool will provide timely access to METAR/TAF updates not yet reflected in the formal publication of the APAC ROBEX Handbook on the ICAO APAC e-documents website, which can take several months for official revisions to process.

2.2 A trial version of the online METAR/TAF tables has been developed, as shown in the **Appendix A** to this paper. The prototype is currently shared via a public-access link¹ hosted on Microsoft OneDrive.

2.3 The proposal was presented at MET/IE WG/24. The meeting expressed general support for the proposal and requested Hong Kong, China to further develop the concept in coordination with the Secretariat, including change-management aspects, and to present the refined proposal to MET SG/30.

¹ Link: https://hkobservatory-my.sharepoint.com/:x/g/personal/mhkok_hko_gov_hk/IQctU15_Xeh6QofwJyBjPjicAX1fIVXwP6nUewjf-xjji2c?rttime=zparnaqd3kg

Hosting and maintaining the online tables

2.4 It is proposed that the link to the online METAR/TAF bulletin tables be published at ICAO APAC e-documents website for public access. While Hong Kong, China has conducted tests with the Secretariat to host the online tables on the Secretariat's Microsoft OneDrive/SharePoint, the shared spreadsheet configuration could not support public access permissions (i.e., allowing "everyone" to view it). Alternative hosting arrangements for the online spreadsheet may need to be explored.

2.5 Regarding the spreadsheet maintenance, it is proposed that a couple of designated volunteer members serve as points of contact alongside the Secretariat, with editing permissions to assist in updating the online spreadsheet.

Managing changes and versions

2.6 To manage changes to the online METAR/TAF bulletin tables, the following procedures are proposed:

- a) Upon receipt of a proposal to the Secretariat and ROBEX Focal Points for amendment to the METAR/TAF bulletin tables of the ROBEX Handbook submitted by a ROC (or State/Administration via their ROC), the online tables will be updated to reflect the bulletin change being implemented in track-changes mode within one week.
- b) Once a new edition of the ROBEX Handbook formally incorporates the proposed amendments to METAR/TAF bulletin tables and is published on the ICAO e-documents website, the online tables will be updated within one week to accept all approved changes, ensuring full alignment and consistency with the newly published edition of the ROBEX Handbook.

2.7 Noting that ROCs are able to initiate changes to the tables at any time to reflect the latest operational bulletin exchange, a proposed process for managing changes between MET IE/WG or MET SG meetings and between publication of authoritative version has been developed, as illustrated in an example in **Appendix B** to this paper. The process utilises a color-coded tracking system to distinguish changes between different stages of approval and publication:

- Green highlights (Approved but pending publication): Changes formally agreed by the MET/IE WG or MET SG meetings, but are awaiting the publication in the next formal Handbook edition.
- Red highlights (Pending review and approval): New operational changes requested and implemented by ROCs that are yet to be approved by MET/IE WG or MET SG. These remain highlighted in red to indicate they are pending formal approval at the next WG/SG meeting.
- Publication of authoritative version: When a new edition of the ROBEX Handbook is published and the previously approved changes are incorporated, their green highlights are removed. The online spreadsheet is updated to reference the new edition of the Handbook.

2.8 The online tables should only reflect changes which are currently operationally disseminated, excluding pending proposed changes requested at a meeting and that have not yet been implemented.

2.9 The link to the online digital tables could be placed on the cover pages of Appendices A and B to the ROBEX Handbook, with an explanatory note such as: "*For up-to-date bulletin information, refer to <spreadsheet link> for any changes made since publication of this version*".

Transitioning from PDF version to digital version

2.10 To avoid duplication, potential administrative overhead and any version-control issues, the medium-term plan is to replace the static tables in the PDF version of ROBEX Handbook with a direct link to the digital tables.

2.11 To ensure a smooth transition, it is proposed to maintain both PDF and digital versions in parallel for a trial period. This will verify that the workflow for digital tables is mature, stable and capable of serving its intended purpose before the static PDF tables are replaced.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper;
- b) consider the value of utilising the proposed online digital tables to expedite the maintenance and communicating process of the METAR/TAF bulletin tables;
- c) consider and review the proposed hosting arrangement and change management processes of the online tables, as well as any alternative solutions; and
- d) discuss relevant follow-up actions as appropriate.

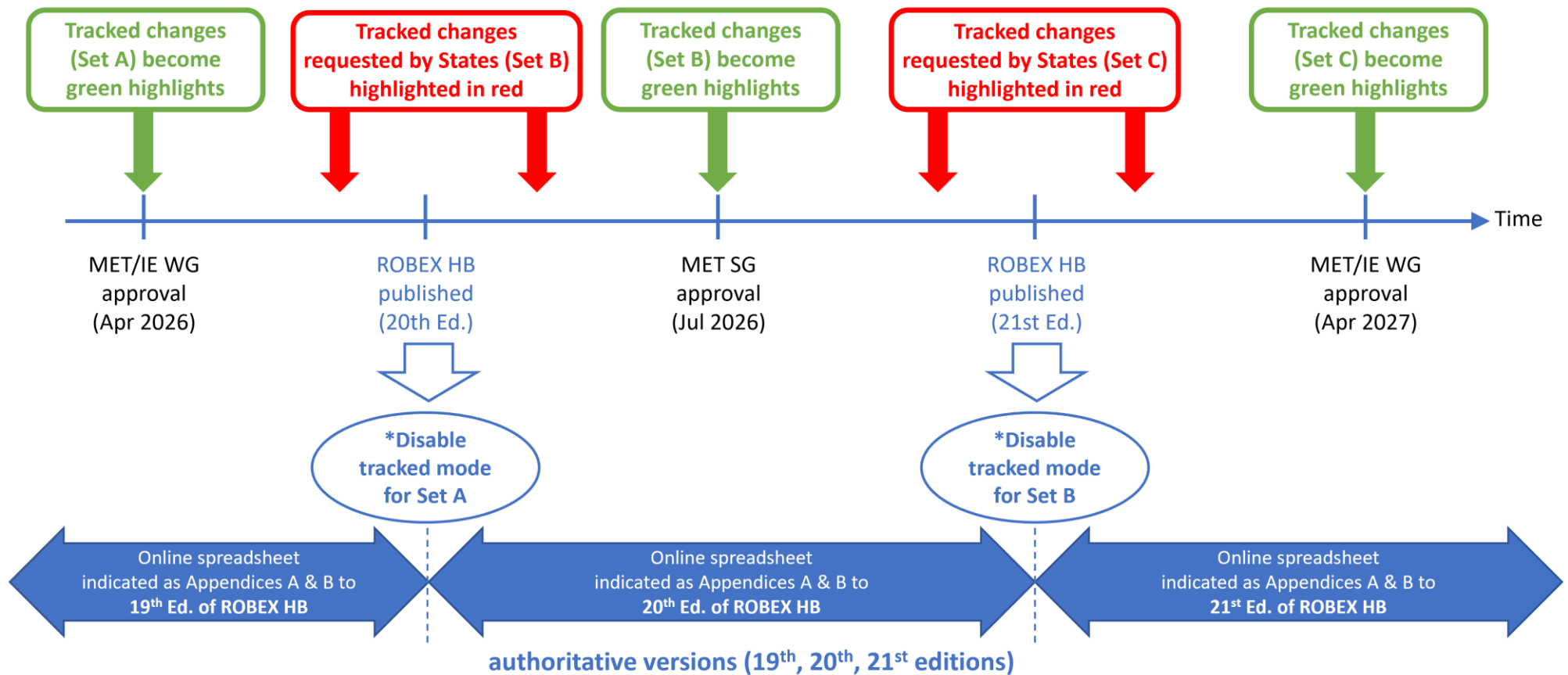
Appendix A – Proposed online digital version of METAR/TAF tables of ROBEX Handbook

Appendix B – Proposed process for managing changes between meetings and publishing approved updates in the authoritative version

Proposed online digital version of METAR/TAF tables of ROBEX Handbook

How changes be tracked, distinguished; and how to indicate authoritative version

Use two distinct status colour to communicate tracked changes (only cover what is currently operationally disseminated):
- Green: Approved by MET/IE WG or MET SG
- Red: Not yet approved by MET/IE WG or MET SG



*Save an official copy of the authoritative digital version for the Secretariat's archives.