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*International Civil Aviation Organization*

**The Fifth Meeting of the South Asia, Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia ATM Coordination Group (SAIOSEACG/5)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 13 – 16 January 2026

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

### **BAY OF BENGAL TRAFFIC FLOW REVIEW GROUP MEETING OUTCOMES**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

#### **SUMMARY**

This paper presents the key outcomes of the Sixth Meeting of the Bay of Bengal Traffic Flow Review Group (BOBTFRG/6) for the review and action by SAIOSEACG.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Bay of Bengal region has made steady progress in reducing separation minima, modernizing ATM operations, upgrading CNS infrastructure, and coordinating implementation timelines. While system readiness and equipage differences remain, the region is clearly transitioning toward performance-based, harmonized operations, delivering increased capacity, improved efficiency, and environmental benefits through phased, safety-driven implementation.

1.2 The Bay of Bengal Traffic Flow Review Group (BOBTFRG), initiated by SAIOACG, focuses on analyzing traffic patterns and air routes within the Bay of Bengal airspace. Its goals are to address safety concerns and enhancing long-term airspace efficiency.

1.3 The seventh meeting of the Bay of Bengal Traffic Flow Review Group (BOBTFRG/7) was held as a Virtual Teleconference (VTC), from 9 to 11 December 2025. The meeting was attended by 71 participants from BOB member states. Presentations and documents from the meeting can be accessed at <https://www.icao.int/APAC/meetingdocs?fid=3069#block-icao-page-title>.

## **2. DISCUSSION**

### **Airspace Structure Optimization and Reduction of Separation Minima**

2.1 Significant progress has been made toward applying reduced, performance-based separation minima in the Bay of Bengal, in line with ICAO Project 30/10 and the Asia/Pacific Seamless ANS Plan. States are gradually transitioning from conventional 50 NM longitudinal separation toward 30 NM and, in some cases, 20 NM, where safety assessments and system readiness permit.

2.2 Malaysia successfully commenced a one-year trial of 30 NM PBCS longitudinal separation on ATS route N571, demonstrating safe operations with clear benefits in capacity, flight efficiency, and environmental performance. India has already applied 20 NM longitudinal separation on selected routes using space-based ADS-B and confirmed 30 NM separation at FIR boundaries with Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka formally adopted Project 30/10 principles and is preparing to introduce RNP 4 operations on selected routes.

2.3 A three-phase regional PBCS implementation plan was reaffirmed, with a target for permanent application of 30 NM longitudinal and 23 NM lateral separation no later than 1 March 2026, subject to positive safety reviews and operational readiness. Progress was also reported on optimizing FLAS/FLOS, with India announcing plans to progressively remove FLAS in the Bay of Bengal, beginning with the Kolkata FIR following safety assessments and coordination.

#### **Enhancement of ATM Systems and Operational Concepts**

2.4 States reported steady advancement toward modern, performance-based ATM operations, including PBCS, ATFM integration, FRA trials, and TBO enablers. The review of BOBTFRG priority areas and implementation timelines improved transparency on progress and readiness across the region.

2.5 The BOBCAT ATFM system demonstrated effective demand–capacity balancing, reducing airborne holding and delivering measurable fuel and emissions savings. Indonesia reported successful implementation of User Preferred Routes (UPR) and cross-FIR operations, achieving efficiency and environmental benefits without increasing controller workload.

2.6 Sri Lanka presented a phased roadmap toward Direct Routing Areas (DRA) and Free Route Airspace (FRA), supported by structured safety assessments, SOP development, and ATC training, laying the foundation for more flexible and efficient operations.

#### **CNS Infrastructure Modernization and Performance Monitoring**

2.7 The region continues to strengthen CNS infrastructure to support reduced separation and advanced ATM concepts. ADS-C and CPDLC capabilities are operational or under trial in several FIRs, including Kuala Lumpur, Chennai, Mumbai, Colombo, and Jakarta. While most FIRs meet the minimum 95% data link performance requirement, further actions are underway to achieve the 99.9% target, including closer monitoring and operator follow-up.

2.8 Space-based ADS-B has enabled reduced separation in Indian airspace and is planned for wider implementation in Indonesia by 2026–2027. Bangladesh completed installation of a new ATM automation system, successfully transitioned AMHS messaging, and initiated AIDC testing with neighboring FIRs. Indonesia and Sri Lanka reported continued upgrades to ATM systems supporting ADS-C, CPDLC, AIDC, ATFM, AIM, and future SWIM readiness.

2.9 The importance of formal Central Reporting Agency (CRA) agreements and regular, high-quality CNS performance data was reaffirmed as a prerequisite for safely applying minimum separation standards across FIR boundaries.

#### **Implementation Timelines and Forward Planning**

2.10 Clear milestones were reported for regional implementation. Malaysia’s 30 NM PBCS trial on N571 will continue until August 2026, after which a decision on permanent implementation will be made. Permanent regional application of 30 NM separation is targeted no later than March 2026, subject to safety and readiness criteria.

2.11 Bangladesh plans to begin operational use of its new ATM system in Q1 2026, with automatic FIR handoff targeted for Q3 2026. Indonesia’s ATMAS and centralized ATFM systems are scheduled for operation from Q2–Q4 2026, with regional AIDC integration planned by 2027. Sri Lanka aims to implement DRA by March 2026 as a step toward wider FRA.

2.12 States agreed that previously fixed timelines should be adjusted, adopting a more opportunity-based and capability-based approach that reflects mixed aircraft equipage levels and varying infrastructure readiness across the region.

**3. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper;
- b) Relevant states to update the meeting with the latest progress on the Priority Areas of the BOBTFRG; and
- c) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

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