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

Bangkok, Thailand, 13 – 16 January 2026

Agenda Item 3: Review of Current Operations and Problem Areas

IMPLEMENTATION OF PBCS BASED 30NM SEPARATION ON ATS ROUTE N571 IN BAY OF BENGAL AREA

(Presented by INDIA)

SUMMARY

This paper presents the successful implementation of the reduced longitudinal separation of 30NM minimum for PBCS capable pairs of aircraft on ATS route N571 between AGELA and IGOGU within Chennai FIR in the Bay of Bengal region with cross border trial implementation with Malaysia.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INDIA presented an Information Paper IP06 titled “PBCS IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY IN INDIAN OCEANIC AIRSPACE (CHENNAI) “in SAIOSEACG/3 in 2024 and followed by a working paper WP10 titled “IMPLEMENTATION OF PBCS BASED SEPARATION IN OCEANIC AIRSPACE IN CHENNAI FIR” in the SAIOSEACG/4. This working paper highlights the commitment of India to formalize the application of separation based on PBCS to facilitate the airline community in better flight profiles and contribute to the reduction in carbon emission in this area of Bay of Bengal.

2. DISCUSSION

Commencement of trial operations of PBCS based separation minimum implementation

2.1 As laid out in the previous submission in 2024, Post stakeholder meetings and safety assessment, the initial plan was revised from exclusive PBCS level band (FL360 – FL410) to nonexclusive PBCS level bands with RVSM airspace (FL280 - FL460) considering that at least 45% of the fleet was non PBCS capable and also the lessons learnt for similar application in the airspace between Mumbai and Muscat FIR.

2.2 The trial operations were commenced from 04/02/2025 0300UTC daily between 0300UTC – 1300UTC. Post three months, the same was extended for another three months.

2.3 In June 2025 however, the trials were extended to H24 to facilitate more aircrafts to benefit from the procedures.

2.4 Monitoring of the trials yielded the following results

- a) Controller comfort in application of procedures without increasing stress and workload.
- b) Increase in number of aircraft pairs benefiting from the procedures.
- c) Impact of GNSS interference on certain flights entering Bay of Bengal transiting from the areas affected in the European airspace, which led to unreliable ADS C reports. Contingency procedures such as cross reference to ground based nav aids used by controllers to ascertain the position and maintain convention separation minimums with respect to such affected aircraft.
- d) Inability to implement the procedures due to Non PBCS capable or slower aircraft ahead.
- e) In the month of June 2025, one outage was reported by SITA the CSP for one hour.

2.5 The trial operations were extended into Kuala Lumpur ACC(Malaysia) from 01/09/2025 as an example of cross border application on H24 basis. As submitted in BOBTFRG/7 by Malaysia, a few pairs of aircraft were transferred between the two ATSU's across waypoint IGOGU .

2.6 The data below indicates the number of pairs recorded during the trials

SI No.	Month	Aircraft Pairs
1.	Feb 2025	12
2.	March 2025	07
3.	April 2025	02
4.	May 2025	12
5.	June 2025	15
6.	July 2025	06
7.	Aug 2025	23
8.	Sep 2025	18
9.	Oct 2025	08
10.	Nov 2025	22

2.7 INDIA conducted the commissioning level safety assessment on the on-going trials by VC involving the various stakeholders for formalizing the procedures within India FIRs on 15/12/2025. The outcomes of the meeting were very encouraging and the proposal to extend the procedures on other ATS routes of interest was welcomed by the participants. Some of the ATS routes proposed were P574, L510 & N563 in the BOB region.

3. PROBLEM AREAS

3.1 Some of the challenges that exist are

- a) When the data link connection transfers from VHF to SATCOM or vice versa, near the exit and entry to Chennai OCC leads to delay in connectivity on few occasions.
- b) Non transfer of Data authority from the adjoining ATSU in certain occasions. The same was mitigated by requesting the upstream ATSU to transfer the connection or advise the aircraft to disconnect and relog with Chennai datalink.
- c) Large scale weather deviations in Bay of Bengal were a factor in some of the period wherein the said procedure could not be implemented and relevant NOTAM was taken. Kuala Lumpur ACC was advised of the same. This probably could lead to ground delays which has been reflected in the paper presented by Malaysia in BOBTFRG/7.

- d) The fleet equipage data indicates a marginal increase in the number of aircraft which are PBCS capable, but mixed fleet of aircraft limits the full advantage possible.

4. ACTION BY THE MEETING

4.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper;
- b) encourage the participation of other ANSPs in the effort to optimize airspace utility in the Bay of Bengal area; and
- c) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

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