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

Agenda Item 3: Review of Current Operations and Problem Areas

JOINT INITIATIVE ON THE ENHANCEMENT OF LONGITUDINAL SEPARATION ON ATS ROUTES BETWEEN MANILA AND UJUNG PANDANG FIR

(Presented by Philippines and Indonesia)

SUMMARY

This paper provides an update on the joint initiative between the Philippines and Indonesia regarding longitudinal spacing improvements on route segments between the Manila FIR and the Ujung Pandang FIR, in response to SCSTFRG Task List Action Item 10/1.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 At the Thirteenth Meeting of the South China Sea Traffic Flow Review Group (SCSTFRG/13), held in Beijing, China in July 2025, Indonesia, through WP/14, conveyed its commitment to support collaborative initiatives aimed at enhancing airspace capacity. This commitment includes the reduction of longitudinal separation to 30 NM, in coordination with adjacent FIRs, as part of regional efforts towards airspace harmonization and operational efficiency. In particular, WP/14 proposed the establishment of a joint initiative with the Philippines for the implementation of 30 NM longitudinal separation on ATS routes between the Ujung Pandang FIR and the Manila FIR.

1.2 In response, the Philippines expressed its willingness to cooperate with Indonesia in achieving the mutual objective of improving airspace capacity and harmonizing procedures across FIR boundaries.

1.3 It is noted that the most recent engagement between the CAA Philippines and AirNav Indonesia on collaborative projects to enhance longitudinal separation took place in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the 50 NM longitudinal spacing minimum was applied to route segments of A461, B472, and G578 between the Manila FIR and the Ujung Pandang FIR. After five years, both parties have reaffirmed their commitment to continued coordination, technical harmonization, and the establishment of working groups to support successful implementation of the proposed initiatives.

2. DISCUSSION

Outcome of SCSTFRG/13 Side Meeting Between Philippines and Indonesia

2.1 During the side meeting, both States agreed to adopt a phased approach for the implementation of enhanced longitudinal separation to further improve airspace efficiency and safety between the Manila FIR and the Ujung Pandang FIR.

a) Phase 1 will introduce 30 NM longitudinal spacing minima on routes A461, B472, and G578, with R590 under consideration pending further safety assessment. The trial implementation is tentatively scheduled for Q1 2026.

b) Phase 2 will apply 50 NM longitudinal spacing minima on routes B473, B462, and A339. This phase will require aircraft to be equipped with RNP10, ADS-C/CPDLC, and PBCS capabilities meeting RCP240 and RSP180 standards. Further technical criteria will be discussed bilaterally, with implementation tentatively scheduled for Q4 2026.

Notes:

: *30 NM Longitudinal Spacing (in trial Q1 2026)*
: 50 NM Longitudinal Spacing (in trial Q4 2026)
: 30 NM Longitudinal Spacing (pending for safety assessment)

Outcome of Bilateral Meeting Between Philippines and Indonesia (Dec. 22, 2025)

2.2 The meeting discussed the details of Phase 1 implementation of enhanced longitudinal separation. It was agreed that the application of 30 NM longitudinal spacing would be subject to the following requirements:

a) Between turbo-jet aircraft operating at or above FL290;
b) Between aircraft equipped with RNP4; and
c) Distance is constant or increasing, with appropriate ATC restrictions applied as necessary to ensure the required spacing is maintained.

2.3 The application of 30 NM longitudinal spacing during the trial will be limited to routes G578, A461, and B472. The 30NM longitudinal spacing will be supported by surveillance systems and VHF radio direct controller-pilot communications (DCPC). Accordingly, the trial will be suspended in the event of:

a) Loss of surveillance system data;
b) Loss of VHF radio communications;
c) Degradation of the air traffic management system; or
d) Other circumstances that may affect the safety of flight during the application of 30NM longitudinal spacing.

2.4 During the trial, the existing 50 NM longitudinal spacing will remain applicable for aircraft equipped with RNP10 in accordance with the existing LOCA procedures.

2.5 Both parties agreed that the trial will commence on 1 April 2026, with a safety review to be conducted after one month of implementation. The trial will remain in effect until the Letter of Operational Coordination Agreement (LOCA) is updated to incorporate the procedures for the application of 30 NM longitudinal spacing, unless it is suspended entirely due to operational issues.

2.6 The operational trial is expected to provide the following benefits:

a) Improved en-route capacity, allowing more efficient handling of increasing traffic demand on the affected ATS routes.
b) Enhanced traffic flow predictability, supporting better planning and coordination between adjacent FIRs.
c) Optimized airspace utilization, making more effective use of available flight levels while maintaining the required level of safety

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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