International Civil Aviation Organization

Middle East Regional Monitoring Agency Board

Twenty-first Meeting (MIDRMA Board/21)
(Cairo, Egypt, 14 – 15 January 2026)

Agenda Item 5: RVSM Monitoring and Related Technical Issues

MID RVSM HEIGHT MONITORING ACTIVITIES

(Presented by the MIDRMA)

SUMMARY

This working paper presents an overview of the RVSM height monitoring activities conducted by the Middle East Regional Monitoring Agency (MIDRMA) during the period 01 January 2025 to 31 December 2025, using Enhanced GPS Monitoring Units (EGMU).

During 2025, MIDRMA carried out an extensive RVSM height monitoring programme covering a wide range of RVSM-approved aircraft registered within the ICAO Middle East Region and beyond. Particular emphasis was placed on completing a significant number of monitoring activities for Iranian-registered aircraft, despite operational, logistical, and regulatory challenges. These activities were successfully accomplished through exceptional coordination with the concerned Civil Aviation Authorities and airworthiness inspectors.

The paper also highlights the continued importance of renewing the OFAC licence issued by the United States Department of the Treasury, which remains a critical enabler for monitoring Iranian-registered aircraft and ensuring the continued safety of RVSM operations in the region.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

REFERENCES

- MIDRMA Board/20 Report
- MMR Table December 2025
- MIDRMA Auto MMR Tool in https://midrma.com website
- ICAO Docs 9574 (Third Edition) and 9937

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Middle East Regional Monitoring Agency (MIDRMA), under the auspices of ICAO MIDANPIRG, is responsible for monitoring the continued compliance of RVSM-approved aircraft operating within the ICAO Middle East Region, in accordance with the globally adopted RVSM Minimum Monitoring Requirements (MMR).

1.2 RVSM height monitoring remains a cornerstone of the RVSM safety framework, providing objective verification of aircraft height-keeping performance and ensuring that approved aircraft continue to meet the required Altimetry System Error (ASE) standards throughout their operational life.

1.3 The EGMU-based height monitoring system utilises high-accuracy GPS data to determine an aircraft's geometric altitude and compares it against the reported pressure altitude. This comparison enables the identification of any deviations from acceptable RVSM performance limits and supports airworthiness authorities in maintaining effective continued airworthiness oversight.

1.4 Throughout 2025, MIDRMA continued to enhance its coordination with Member States, operators, and airworthiness authorities, while maintaining transparency through the publication of Minimum Monitoring Requirements and monitoring results on the MIDRMA website. These efforts contribute directly to sustaining an acceptable level of safety within RVSM airspace across the Middle East Region and beyond.

2. DISCUSSION

Operational Complexity of EGMU Height Monitoring

2.1 Although EGMU height monitoring is a highly effective and globally accepted method for verifying RVSM height-keeping performance, the practical execution of EGMU monitoring missions is not routine and not easy at all. Each mission requires extensive preparations by the MIDRMA team and strong, coordinated support from multiple stakeholders to ensure safe, secure, and timely completion of monitoring activities.

2.2 In addition to technical readiness, MIDRMA missions require prior coordination with:

(i) The Civil Aviation Authority and the designated Airworthiness/Flight Safety focal points.
(ii) Airline operators and engineering/maintenance teams.
(iii) Airport authorities and ramp access control; and critically.
(iv) Airport security and airport customs.

2.3 Handling EGMU equipment, gaining airside access, and arranging movement of technical devices through airports can be challenging, particularly when procedures differ from one airport to another. In many cases, the process demands patience, clear official facilitation, and continuous follow-up to prevent delays that could jeopardize the mission schedule.

2.4 Accordingly, the successful delivery of EGMU monitoring missions is a combined result of MIDRMA technical capability and the operational cooperation and support received from the participating authorities. MIDRMA therefore emphasizes that the monitoring outputs achieved in 2025 reflect a significant collective effort, not only the physical testing itself.

Overview of 2025 EGMU Monitoring Output

2.5 During the period 01 January 2025 to 31 December 2025, MIDRMA conducted a total of 144 EGMU monitoring missions. This represents a very intensive operational year requiring careful mission planning, travel coordination, technical readiness, and sustained engagement with States and operators to meet RVSM Minimum Monitoring Requirements (MMR).

Height Monitoring Missions to Check IRAN CAA RVSM-Approved Aircraft

2.6 A major highlight of the 2025 RVSM height monitoring programme was the successful monitoring of 71 Iranian-registered RVSM-approved aircraft using EGMU. This figure constitutes the largest single-State RVSM monitoring effort undertaken by MIDRMA during the year.

2.7 With the completion of these 71 aircraft in 2025, the total number of Iranian-registered RVSM-approved aircraft height-monitored since the granting of the OFAC licence has reached 107 aircraft. This leaves only six (6) remaining Iranian RVSM-approved aircraft to be height-monitored in order for Iran to achieve full compliance with RVSM height monitoring requirements.

2.8 This level of compliance represents a historic achievement that has never been reached before since the introduction of RVSM monitoring for Iranian-registered aircraft. It reflects MIDRMA's sustained technical effort, careful planning, and long-term commitment to resolving a complex monitoring backlog under challenging regulatory conditions.

2.9 MIDRMA records its sincere appreciation to IRAN CAA, and in particular the Chief Airworthiness Inspectors and responsible airworthiness teams, for their exceptional cooperation, proactive coordination, and continuous support. Their practical assistance was essential in overcoming operational and administrative difficulties, facilitating access to aircraft, and ensuring that monitoring activities were completed efficiently and successfully.

2.10 The results achieved in 2025 clearly demonstrate what can be accomplished when a state oversight authority and MIDRMA operate as one integrated safety team with a shared objective. The near completion of RVSM height monitoring for the Iranian fleet stands as a strong example of effective cooperation in support of regional and global RVSM safety.

OFAC Licence Renewal and Proposal to Remove the OFAC Requirement

2.11 The ability to conduct monitoring of Iranian-registered aircraft remains directly linked to the OFAC licence issued by the United States Department of the Treasury. The current licence will expire on 31 July 2026, and MIDRMA has already initiated the renewal process through the official OFAC website. This renewal process is complex and time-consuming, and despite submitting the request, MIDRMA has not yet received confirmation or feedback.

2.12 MIDRMA stresses that any interruption or delay in licence renewal will immediately translate into a growing number of unmonitored aircraft, which would negatively affect RVSM compliance levels and could ultimately impact RVSM safety performance in the MID Region and beyond.

2.13 MIDRMA therefore proposes that the meeting continue to support efforts aimed at eliminating this administrative barrier, noting that RVSM monitoring is a safety-driven requirement, and that the Region's ability to verify compliance should not be exposed to uncertainty, long delays, or potential disruptions caused by external administrative processes.

Height Monitoring Missions of Iraq RVSM-Approved Aircraft

2.14 During 2025, MIDRMA conducted 11 EGMU monitoring missions for Iraq RVSM-approved aircraft. MIDRMA acknowledges the strong cooperation of the Iraq CAA Flight Safety/Airworthiness teams, whose support and engagement contributed to smooth mission execution and ensured that monitoring was carried out effectively.

2.15 MIDRMA considers Iraq among the States demonstrating serious commitment to ensuring that RVSM approvals remain aligned with MMR expectations and appreciates the continued coordination and follow-up by the responsible inspectors, consistent with the positive approach highlighted previously.

Height Monitoring Support from Saudi Arabia (GACA) – Strong Leadership and Follow-up

2.16 MIDRMA places on record its high appreciation for the Saudi Arabia GACA Continuous Airworthiness leadership, which continues to demonstrate an outstanding example of professionalism, active follow-up, and clear direction to operators. The Continuous Airworthiness Director's approach reflects a strong safety culture and a clear understanding that RVSM compliance is not a one-time approval, but a continuing obligation that must be tracked and enforced.

2.17 MIDRMA considers this level of follow-up and coordination among the strongest in the region, and it remains a key reason why monitoring actions can be planned and completed efficiently. This is in line with the strong recognition previously documented regarding GACA's active monitoring oversight and cooperation.

Height Monitoring of Syrian RVSM-Approved Aircraft –Successful Regional Facilitation

2.18 During 2025, MIDRMA successfully supported the monitoring of 4 Syrian RVSM-approved aircraft, which required special coordination and practical facilitation. MIDRMA appreciates the close cooperation of the Syrian CAA Chief Airworthiness Inspectors, who worked in a very coordinated manner with MIDRMA to ensure the aircraft were made available for monitoring and that the necessary approvals and arrangements were in place.

2.19 MIDRMA also expresses its sincere appreciation to the Kuwait CAA for facilitating the conduct of Syrian aircraft monitoring from Kuwait. This cooperation represents an excellent example of regional support and operational flexibility in the interest of RVSM safety and compliance.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

a) note the RVSM height monitoring activities conducted by MIDRMA during 2025, as presented in this working paper; and

b) support and endorse MIDRMA's ongoing efforts to renew the OFAC licence beyond July 2026 in order to avoid any disruption to the RVSM height monitoring of Iranian-registered aircraft, and further support initiatives aimed at eliminating the need for an OFAC licence, acknowledging that RVSM monitoring is an essential safety function that should remain free from regulatory or administrative barriers.

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