



WORKING PAPER

THIRTEENTH AIR NAVIGATION CONFERENCE

Montréal, Canada, 9 to 19 October 2018

COMMITTEE A

**Agenda Item 3: Enhancing the global air navigation system
3.5: Other ATM issues**

ICARD FIVE-LETTER-NAME-CODES

(Presented by Ireland)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper reports on the ICAO International Codes and Route Designators (ICARD) Five-Letter Name Code (5LNC) Task Force, which was established by the Coordination Group of the European Air Navigation Planning Group (EANPG COG), and its work to evaluate the pronounceability of the 5LNC available in the ICARD European (EUR)/North Atlantic (NAT) reserve list and to identify related issues which may have applicability at the global level.

A major issue identified was the number of available codes with ‘sound-alike’ characteristics, consequently reducing the actual number of available codes.

A number of short-term and medium-term recommendations are made to address these issues.

Action: The Conference is invited to agree to the short and medium-term recommendations as contained in section 2 of this paper.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The ICAO International Codes and Route Designators (ICARD) Five-Letter-Name-Code (5LNC) Task Force (TF) was established in June 2017 by the Coordination Group of the European Air Navigation Planning Group (EANPG COG) to evaluate the pronounceability of the 5LNC available in the ICARD European (EUR)/North Atlantic (NAT) reserve list and to identify related issues which may have applicability at the global level. The work of the TF had been in full compliance with the ICAO State letter, AN 11/45.5-17/101 dated 11 August 2017 regarding the ICARD database system, and more specifically, the need to update the database and the rules for 5LNC duplicate resolution worldwide.

1.2 The ICARD TF addressed a number of issues, such as the global implementation of performance-based navigation (PBN), visual flight rules (VFR) reporting points to be in compliance with European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) audits and the necessity to find available 5LNC to replace

duplicates worldwide in order to comply with Annex 11 — *Air Traffic Services* provisions, which had placed an additional strain on an already limited ICARD.

1.3 The TF made a detailed assessment of the pronounceability of the 5LNCs available in the EUR/NAT reserve list of the ICARD database, analyzed criteria for combination of letters in a 5LNC, reviewed the purpose of use of a 5LNC according to the current ICAO provisions (ICAO Annex 11 and *Procedures for Air Navigation Services — Aircraft Operations* (Doc 8168)). The TF also noted the global ICAO position on the use of 5LNC for military purposes.

1.4 As a result of the work performed, the difficulty to find available codes free of sound-like issues was one of the major problem identified and would affect the actual number of available codes. Therefore, the feasibility of transferring some codes in ICARD from another ICAO Region having a lower demand for 5LNC (such as the Western and Central African Office, Dakar (WACAF) Region) to the EUR/NAT reserve list may be explored.

1.5 As part of the work, a few upgrades to the ICARD database which would benefit both State users and ICARD data managers were identified.

2. WAY FORWARD

2.1 The work of the ICARD TF was presented at several regional (Route Development Group East, Route Network Development Subgroup) and interregional meetings (Advanced Interregional ATS Route Development Task Force) and the recommendations were supported. It was also presented to the Coordination Group of the PIRG (EANPG) who reviewed and endorsed the recommendations.

Short-term recommendations

2.2 It is proposed that :

- a) ICAO urgently address the lack of awareness and training on the use of ICARD in the Regions that do not actively use ICARD;
- b) ICAO and States urgently complete the population of ICARD with all used 5LNC worldwide to ensure the accuracy of the database; Ensuring that all 5LNC used worldwide are reported in the database;
- c) ICAO and States to complete the clean-up of 5LNC duplicates and sound-like conflicts; and
- d) in line with the global ICAO position on military use of 5LNC, States to improve civil-military coordination to ensure that whenever a 5LNC used for military purpose is published in an ICAO Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) and consequently coded into aircraft FMS, such 5LNCs are coordinated through the ICARD process.

Medium-term recommendations

2.3 After completion of the short term recommendations and the availability of a coherent global overview of the 5LNC in the ICARD database, the following medium-term recommendations are proposed:

- a) analyse the feasibility of transferring 5LNC from one ICAO region to another ICAO's region reserve list (eg transfer codes from WACAF to EUR/NAT reserve list), and/or the feasibility of creating new codes that can be added to the database; and
- b) ICAO shall in parallel set up rules specifically defining how pronounceable 5LNC shall be composed (combination of consonants and vowels, pairs of same sounding 5LNC but with different spelling).

Technical and Functional Improvements to the ICARD Database

2.4 To improve efficiency in the management of 5LNC in ICARD, the following upgrades to the database would be beneficial to both States users and data managers:

- a) upgrade the database with a MAP depicting the flight information region (FIR) and the need for a more detailed '5LNC log history' to be viewed by ICARD data managers and ICARD authorized users; and
- b) enhance ICARD sound-like proximity checks which would also include 5LNCs that have been reserved (orange) but not yet allocated by ICARD data manager.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Based on ICAO State letter, AN 11/45.5-17/101 dated 11 August 2017 regarding the ICARD database system, it is an essential prerequisite that States complete the update of 5LNC records in ICARD, align the database with the national AIP publications and resolve the issues related to duplicates.

3.2 Future changes in airspace design and implementation of new concepts will continue to generate an increasing demand of 5LNC. The current estimates of 5LNC allocation per region/per year, indicated that there will be a need for a mid-term improvement and a long-term solution.

3.3 The conference is invited to agree to the short and medium term recommendations as contained in section 2 above.

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