



WORKING PAPER

FOURTEENTH AIR NAVIGATION CONFERENCE

Montréal, Canada, 26 August to 6 September 2024

- Agenda Item 3: Air Navigation System Performance Improvement**
3.1: Proposals to improve the efficiency of air navigation services contributing to LTAG

MINIMUM SERVICE LEVEL REQUIREMENTS OVER THE HIGH SEAS

(Presented by the United Arab Emirates)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper proposes establishing a Minimum Service Level Requirements (MSLR) framework for flight information regions (FIR) over the high seas to enhance air navigation services (ANS). Based on the Convention on International Civil Aviation, the paper addresses the need for standardized separation minima and improved air traffic services (ATS) in oceanic airspace over the high seas to eliminate global bottlenecks and reduce environmental impacts. It calls for global collaboration and modern air traffic management (ATM) solutions. The proposed MSLR framework, overseen by ICAO, aims to standardize separation minima, promote air navigation services provider (ANSP) collaboration, and ensure equitable access to oceanic airspace. The paper recommends adopting the MSLR program to optimize air traffic management and enhance global air navigation efficiency.

Action: The Conference is invited to agree to the recommendation in Paragraph 3.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Instilling from *the Convention on International Civil Aviation* (Doc 7300) of the “future development of international civil aviation can greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world”; and whereas “it is desirable to avoid friction and to promote that cooperation between nations and peoples upon which the peace of the world depends” and the signing governments having “agreed on certain principles and arrangements in order that international civil aviation may be developed in a safe and orderly manner and that international air transport services may be established on the basis of equality of opportunity and operated soundly and economically”, the following paper suggest establishing a framework of provision of a Minimum Service Level Requirements (MSLR) across flight information regions (FIRs) over the high seas (oceanic airspace).

1.2 Without withholding the right of contracting States, the extent of exercising the rights of their sovereignty this paper is concerned with the available airspace for the whole of humanity over the high seas and oceanic airspace for the purpose of facilitating a safe, efficient and expeditious air traffic services (ATS).

1.3 According to Article 22 of the Convention “each contracting State agrees to adopt all practicable measures, through the issuance of special regulations or otherwise, to facilitate and expedite

navigation by aircraft between the territories of contracting States, and to prevent unnecessary delays to aircraft, crews, passengers and cargo, especially in the administration of the laws relating to immigration, quarantine, customs and clearance”.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Due to the absence of any arrangements of a unified separation minima across FIRs and air navigation regions, there are volumes of airspace especially across the ICAO’s air navigation regions that are considered global bottlenecks that requires immediate attention in order to facilitate the global traffic movements, provide efficient ATS, and reduce adverse environmental impacts of aviation activities.

2.2 Global collaboration is required to produce initiatives to emphasize the attention and inspire the implementation of continuous improvements on the delivery of enhancing the region-to-region ATS handling over the high seas with the adoption of modern air traffic management (ATM) solutions, effective air traffic flow management (ATFM), flexible use of airspace (FUA), and improve the civil-military coordination across large portion of airspace.

2.3 Ignoring this ongoing issue across large portions of airspace over high seas will lead to shifting current bottlenecks by ambiguous patterns and provide inefficient delivery of ATS, and will not cater for the future development of the ATM endeavours and the fast-paced technological advancements and the expansion of the airspace users’ fleets. Additionally, there should be a global understanding of the importance of balancing the forecasted air traffic demand and realistic assessments of current airspace capacity and the capabilities of each contracting State to carry over their role towards the aviation community.

2.4 Therefore, this paper suggests a building of an oversight MSLR program across airspace over the high seas under the auspices of ICAO and its regional offices by providing a clear assessment framework of the current ATS measures and minima in manner of open data policies, collaborative decision making, airspace users consultation and engagements, data visualization tools, and standardized reporting and performance metrics.

2.5 The objectives of the suggested MSLR are:

- a) to establish standardized separation minima for airspace over the high seas to improve air navigation efficiency;
- b) to promote collaboration between ANSPs and airspace users to ensure compatibility and uniformity in the application of separation minima;
- c) to provide fair and equitable access to airspace, aimed at reducing excessive separation minima in oceanic and airspace over the high seas; and
- d) to establish an assessment and oversight platform to resolve current air navigation inefficiencies, and provide the airspace users with ICAO’s intended level of excellent service.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Establishing MSLR for airspace over the high seas is essential for improving air navigation efficiency and safety. Through collaborative efforts and the implementation of such initiative with a

governed oversight by ICAO, significant advancements can be made in optimizing air traffic management in FIRs that extends over the high seas.

3.2 By prioritizing standardized separation minima and technological solutions, the aviation community can mitigate challenges and enhance the overall efficiency of the global air navigation system.

3.3 Through the above-mentioned content, the Conference is invited to agree on the following recommendations:

- a) establishment of a MSLR program to assess cross-region traffic handling for the purpose of enhancing air navigation services delivery to airspace users;
- b) provision of MSLR framework of oversight across FIRs encompasses high seas portions and
- c) support inter-regional efforts for a streamlined implementation of the MSLR through ICAO's regional offices.

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