



Sixth Meeting of CNS/MET Sub-Group of APANPIRG

Bangkok, Thailand, 15 – 19 July 2002

Agenda Item 12: Implementation of International Airways Volcano Watch (IAVW)

**PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL AIRWAYS VOLCANO WATCH**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

Summary

This paper provides information on the progress in implementation of the International Airways Volcano Watch (IAVW) in the ASIA/PAC Regions. It is proposed to establish a Volcanic Ash Task Force in place of the Volcanic Ash Warning working group.

1. Introduction

1.1 The volcanic ash advisory centres (VAACs), namely Anchorage, Darwin, Tokyo, Washington and Wellington, have continued to provide the advisory service in the ASIA/PAC Regions. This paper gives information on some developments since the CNS/MET SG/5 meeting held in July, 2001

2. Discussion

24 hours operation of VAACs

2.1 As a follow up of the APANPIRG conclusion 12/30, formulated by the CNS/MET SG/5, the ICAO Secretariat included the requirement for 24-hour operations of the VAACs in the draft proposal for amendment of Annex 3 (Amendment 73).

VAAC areas of responsibility

2.2 The VAAC areas of responsibility have been defined in the FASID Table MET 3, Part II. The APANPIRG adopted the proposal for some changes in the areas of responsibility of VAACs and the amended FASID Table MET 3, Part II, renamed as FASID Table MET 3B, was included in proposed amendment of the ICAO Asia/PAC FASID, Serial No. APAC 02/5-MET. The amendment proposal has been sent for comments to States.

2.3 One objection to this proposal was received from New Zealand indicating that the southern boundary of the Wellington VAAC shall be kept at 60°S.

Status of Volcanic ash SIGMETs SIP

2.4 As a follow up of the APANPIRG conclusion 11/33, calling that ICAO considers urgently a proposal for a Special Implementation Project a proposal has been developed and submitted to the ICAO, Montreal in December 2001. The objective of the SIP was to identify and

propose solutions to deficiencies related to the implementation of the IAVW procedures for the provision of SIGMET messages for volcanic ash clouds. The scope of the project was formulated as to cover:

- a) States which host VAACs, to identify the problems in implementation of the warnings procedures in the area of responsibility of the particular VAAC;
- b) States with active volcanoes in their flight information regions (FIRs); and
- c) States in adjacent FIRs that may be affected by the volcanic ash hazards and across which the busy international air routes lie.

In view of the vast geographical area and the large number of States to be covered by the project, it was proposed that a team be attached to the ICAO Regional Office comprising of two meteorologists. It was foreseen that these experts would carry out their work by means of short visits (2 to 5 days) to States as follows :

- a) one expert would visit States in the Tokyo VAAC area of responsibility (China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam); and
- b) another expert would visit States in the areas of responsibilities of Darwin and Wellington VAAC (Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines and Singapore).

2.5 The proposal for the SIP was submitted to the HQs and it was expected that the project could be initiated in 2002. However, due to the high budget required to fulfill the task, the Council Standing Group on Implementation did not approve it for the year 2002. Thus the SIP was to be reconsidered in order to reduce its budget to an acceptable figure. The secretariat would expect advice from the meeting on the way the scope of the SIP would be change in order to fit into the reduced budget.

Volcanic Ash Advisory and SIGMET in graphical form.

2.6 In regard to the APANPIRG conclusion 12/32, that addressed the need for the improvement of the graphical presentation of the volcanic ash advisories and warnings, the meeting may wish to note that a new recommendation regarding the graphical VAA in BUFR code form has been included in the draft proposal for amendment of Annex 3 (Amendment 73).

Volcanic Ash WG

2.7 The Meeting may wish to recall that the Volcanic Ash warning ad-hoc working group had been established by decision of the COM/MET SG/2 Meeting, held in 1994 (Decision 2/17) and consisted of experts from Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States. The tasks of this group had been formulated as shown in the p. 9.9 of the COM/MET SG/2 Meeting Report (see Attachment 1).

2.8 The meeting may wish to note with satisfaction that the Volcanic Ash warning WG has been providing an excellent input to the COM/MET and CNS/MET sub-groups throughout the years and to express its gratitude for the fine work done.

2.9 Since this WG was created on an “ad-hoc” basis and as such it has completed its tasks, the meeting may wish to consider to disband it. At the same time, taking into account the importance of the tasks, related to the IAVW and the need for a regional group to assist the secretariat in the coordination of the activities on IAVW, it is proposed to establish a Volcanic ash Task Force to replace the Volcanic ash ad-hoc WG, with revised TORs, as follows:

- to review procedures for notification of volcanic activity from observing sources or aircraft to the ACCs, MWOs and VAACs in the region and to propose actions for their improvement;
- to investigate the deficiencies in the dissemination of the VA advisories, NOTAMs and SIGMETs and to propose actions for their improvement;
- to review the techniques used for forecasting the volcanic ash plumes and prepare comparative analyses;
- to investigate the need of the States for guidance and/or training related to the implementation of IAVW;
- to follow the development of the graphical warnings for VA and to coordinate the regional activities on this matter;
- to report on its work to the CNS/MET SG/7.

2.10 The VA TF should consist of core members nominated by the States that host VAAC: Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and USA; participation of experts from the States situated in the volcanically active areas, like the Philippines, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. Participation of IATA and WMO should be encouraged.

2.11 It is intended that this group coordinate the activities mainly through correspondence but it is felt that at least one meeting will be necessary in order to review and finalize the material prepared by the TF members.

2.12 States in the core membership shall each have an area of responsibility. The experts from these states shall act as focal points for any Volcanic ash related issues within their area of responsibility.

3. Action by the meeting

3.1 The meeting is invited to :

- a) note the progress in implementation of the IAVW in the ASIA/PAC Regions and suggest further actions to be taken by States and the Secretariat for improvement of the system;
- b) agree that the VAW ad hoc WG be disbanded due to the completion of its task;
- c) Review the proposal for establishment of VA TF with the TORs as given in the 2.8 above and if agreed to adopt the following decision:

Draft Decision 6/x – ASIA/PAC Volcanic ash Task Force (VA TF)

That,

- a) an Volcabnic ash Task Force (VA TF) be established with the terms of reference as given in the Appendix xx to the Report;
- b) the Task Force consists of members designated by Australia, Japan, New Zealand USA, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines and ...,with the member from ... acting as Rapporteur of the TF;
- c) the Task Force is expected to report on the results of its work at the CNS/MET SG/7 Meeting in 2003.

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9.9 The meeting agreed that the exchange of information on the study of shortcomings mentioned in para 9.5 above, particularly between the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centres in the ASIA/PAC Regions would contribute to improving the overall quality of the service provided to aviation. In order to facilitate the exchange of this information and to consider further action to be taken to foster implementation of the volcanic ash warning system, the meeting agreed to establish ad-hoc working group comprising representatives of the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centres in the ASIA/PAC Regions. Member nominated by New Zealand was designated to act as the Rapporteur. It was also agreed that IATA and IFALPA be invited to assist the ad-hoc group in its work. The following decision was formulated:

Decision 2/17 - Volcanic ash warning ad-hoc working group

That,

- a) an ad-hoc working group consisting of members nominated by Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the United States is established to deal with tasks related to volcanic ash warning system in the ASIA/PAC Regions as outlined in paragraph 9.9 above;
- b) ad-hoc working group should carry out its work by correspondence; and
- c) the ad-hoc working group submit the result of its studies to the COM/MET Sub-Group.

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