



International Civil Aviation Organization

The First Meeting of the Asia/Pacific Air Traffic Flow Management Steering Group (ATFM/SG/1)

Tokyo, Japan, 08 – 10 December 2010

Agenda Item 3: Review of Relevant Information/Meetings

Global ATFM Manual

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper presents information on the status of work underway at ICAO Headquarters to produce global guidance material for Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ICAO Doc 9750 (*Global Air Navigation Plan*) Global Plan Initiative 6 (GPI-6) requires the development of ATFM measures, whenever demand exceeds capacity constraints (and presumably when other measures to increase capacity are not available or are not appropriate).

1.2 The need for Air Traffic Flow Management as a means of balancing demand and capacity has long been recognized, and has already been implemented in a number of States. The current ICAO provisions and guidance for ATFM can be found in Section 3.7.5 of *Annex 11 – Air Traffic Services*, Section 3.2 of the *Procedures for Air Navigation Services – Air Traffic Management* (PANS-ATM, Doc 4444), and Part II Chapter 1 of the *Air Traffic Services Planning Manual* (Doc 9426).

1.3 Annex 11 and the PANS-ATM both indicate that ATFM should be implemented on the basis of regional air navigation agreement, or through multilateral agreements. As we move towards the future environment envisaged in the *Global Air Traffic Management Concept* (Doc 9854) and the *Manual on Global Performance of the Air Navigation System* (Doc 9883), it becomes apparent that ATFM, as a component of Demand and Capacity Balancing, will need to be coordinated across more than adjacent States or Regions. It is therefore becoming increasingly important that ATFM procedures, terminology and message formats are standardised. ICAO HQ is seeking to provide globally harmonised guidance in respect of ATFM systems and procedures, to ensure compatibility in a seamless ATM environment. The development of global guidance material for ATFM is a step towards this.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 GPI-6 is as follows:

(GPI-6) AIR TRAFFIC FLOW MANAGEMENT

Scope: The implementation of strategic, tactical and pre-tactical measures aimed at organizing and handling traffic flows in such a way that the totality of the traffic handled at any given time or in any given airspace or aerodrome is compatible with the capacity of the ATM system.

1.37 The implementation of demand/capacity measures, commonly known as air traffic flow management (ATFM), implemented on a regional basis where needed, will enhance airspace capacity and improve operating efficiency.

1.38 In the event that traffic demand regularly exceeds capacity, resulting in continuing and frequent traffic delays, or when it becomes apparent that forecast traffic demand will exceed the available capacity, the appropriate ATM units, in consultation with aircraft operators, should consider implementing steps aimed at improving the use of the existing system capacity and developing plans to increase capacity to meet the actual or forecast demand. Any such planning to increase capacity should be undertaken in a structured and collaborative manner.

1.39 Where warranted, States and regions should evolve to a collaborative-based approach to capacity management. The ATM Operational Concept envisages a more strategic approach to ATM overall, and through collaborative decision-making, a reduction in the reliance on tactical flow management. It is inevitable that tactical flow intervention will continue to be required; however closer coordination between airspace users and ATM service providers can reduce the need for routine tactical intervention which is often disruptive to aircraft operations.

2.2 The approach being taken to the development of the global ATFM guidance material has been to gather information concerning current ATFM implementations regionally and within States, with a view to accommodating existing procedures as far as possible. The initial draft of the document was produced by the FAA, and is largely based on the procedures in use between the North American (NAM) Region and the Caribbean and South American (CAR/SAM) Regions.

2.3 The current status of the guidance material is that the latest draft from the FAA has been forwarded to Eurocontrol for their comments and additional input. Further development of the document is awaiting the Eurocontrol response.

2.4 Headquarters ATM Section has also received copies of existing Regional guidance material, including the CAR/SAM ATFM Manual, the CAR/SAM CONOPS, and the ASIA/PAC ATFM Communications Handbook. There is also information about the European Region's ATFM procedures in the European Facilities and Services Implementation Document (FASID).

2.5 There are some areas where these documents contain additional information and examples, and/or more detailed explanations, than we have in the current draft. Once the comments from Eurocontrol are received, a detailed comparison of all the available documents and comments will be made, and the relevant information from all these sources will be incorporated into the document.

2.6 A further concept that will be incorporated in the guidance material is that ATFM is just one component of Demand and Capacity Balancing. Where there are capacity problems in the system, preference should be given to increasing capacity wherever possible, rather than imposing restrictions on air traffic. The implementation of flexible use of airspace as envisioned in the *Global Air Traffic Management Concept* is one way this may be achieved.

2.7 One of the potential problem areas that have already been identified is standardization of abbreviations for use in the ATFM environment. Of the documents that have been reviewed so far, no two have a completely common set of abbreviations. Some abbreviations will be specific to one or two regions; for example the abbreviation PACOTS would only be needed in North American and Asian TFMUs. However, many of the abbreviations should be common to all. This is something that will need to be addressed before the global guidance material is finalised.

2.8 The current target for completion is by the end of 2011. However, further external support will still be required to finalise the document.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- (1) note the information on the current status of the global ATFM Manual; and
- (2) discuss how the draft Manual will affect any ATFM regional guidance material.

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