



International Civil Aviation Organization
Eastern and Southern African Office

**Thirteenth Meeting of the Air Traffic Management/Aeronautical
Information Management/Search and Rescue Sub-Group
(ATM/AIM/SAR SG/13)
(Nairobi, Kenya, 16 - 19 September 2013)**

Agenda Item 11: ICAO 2012 Flight Plan Format – Post Implementation

ICAO 2012 FLIGHT PLAN FORMAT – POST IMPLEMENTATION

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper presents the outcome of the Fifth and Sixth meetings of the AFI Flight Plan Transition Task Force and provides information of developments and follow-up action undertaken by States leading up to the implementation date of 15 November 2012. The paper also provides information on post-implementation challenges identified by States' air navigation services providers (ANSPs) in relation to flight plan transmission.

Action by the meeting is at **paragraph 3**.

REFERENCES

APIRG/18 Report
FPLT TF/5 and FPLT TF/6 Reports

This Working Paper is related to Strategic Objectives: **A**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Sub-Group will recall that the APIRG/17 meeting (Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 2-6 August 2010), established the FPLT Task Force with the objective to coordinate States preparedness, facilitate coordination in the AFI Region and with other ICAO Regions and provide guidance in order to enable harmonized implementation of the provisions of Amendment 1 to the 15th Edition of PANS-ATM (Doc 4444), as part of the overall requirement for a regional and global implementation of the new ICAO model flight plan, and to facilitate effective and successful transition.

1.2 The Fifth meeting of the AFI Flight Plan Transition Task Force (FPLT TF/5) was held at the Conference Room of the ICAO WACAF Regional Office, Dakar, Senegal, from 31 July to 3 August 2012.

1.3 The sixth meeting of the AFI Flight Plan Transition Task Force (FPLT TF/6) was held at the ICAO ESAF Regional Office at the United Nations compound in Nairobi, Kenya, from 3 to 5 October 2012.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The Task Force was provided with updates on the latest developments in the preparation for implementation of the NEW flight plan format. It was noted that in many respects, most ICAO Regions had completed the preparatory phases leading up to 14 November 2012.

2.2 The Task Force took note of the AIC template that had been developed by the EUR Region for the introduction of the NEW FPL and established a small working group to review the material in conjunction with the NOTAM template that had been developed by the AFI FPLT TF/4 meeting for distribution to AFI States. It was agreed that the material would be useful for States that had not already published such introduction of the NEW FPL, and accordingly, the group formulated the following Draft Conclusion:

Draft Conclusion 5/1

That AFI States that have not already issued comprehensive AICs introducing Amendment 1 to Doc 4444 15 edition, issue the AIC and consider the template at Appendix 2B to this report for such AIC.

2.3 The Task Force recalled that during the period of April to May 2012, four Flight Plan Coordination Workshop / Meetings (FCWMs) had been convened with the objective of establishing the status of readiness and facilitating coordination between States, in particular between air navigation service providers (ANSPs) hosting the AFI Rationalized AFTN Main Communication Centres, and those hosting the related Tributary Centres. The FCWMs were convened as follows:

- a) Addis Ababa, 17-18 April 2012.
- b) Nairobi, 24-25 April 2012.
- c) Johannesburg, 8-9 May 2012.
- d) Dakar, 22-23 May 2012.

2.4 The FPLT TF/6 noted that only twenty-six States had published aeronautical information circulars (AICs) or aeronautical information publication (AIP) supplements, even though AFI States had clearly indicated to ICAO that they would be ready for the roll-over date of 15 November 2012. States that had not done so, were urged to make the appropriate publications, taking due cognizance of the time remaining to the implementation date.

2.5 The Task Force highlighted the need for States/ANSPs to provide specific procedures as soon as practical to meet their testing processes and facilitate the optimum participation by users, and had formulated the following Draft Conclusion:

Draft Conclusion 5/2

That, in order to facilitate airspace user participation the NEW FPL implementation readiness process, AFI States:

- (a) that have not already done so, are encouraged to schedule to accept and process both PRESENT and NEW FPL from the AIRAC date of 20 September 2012; and**
- (b) if unable to accept both PRESENT and NEW FPL with effect from the AIRAC date of 20 September 2012, be encouraged to do so as soon as practical after that date.**

2.6 The Task Force agreed on the need for ANSPs to develop contingency plans for the implementation of the NEW FPL. Information was provided on actions that were being considered by some States and Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) that were behind schedule, which would allow them to achieve the necessary readiness to accept and transmit the NEW flight plan by 15 November 2012. It was agreed that States/ANSPs categorized as having 'Medium Risk' to 'High Risk' should provide weekly updates on progress to the ESAF and WACAF Regional Offices as of Friday 12 October 2012. Furthermore, the Task Force urged AFI States and ANSPs to expedite signing of LOA/Ps between them.

2.7 The Task Force also discussed the matter of 'submission of flight plans' extensively and it was acknowledged that the main causal factors to missing flight plans were due to lack of proper filing of flight plans (syntax errors) by ANSPs and users, in addition to deficiencies in communication facilities between AIS/ATC units.

2.8 The Secretariat provided information about the ICAO FPL 2012 Coordination Centre which was being set up at ICAO Headquarters, in partnership with the Civil Air Navigation Services Organization (CANSO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which had as objective to monitor the global roll-over developments and to provide coordination as necessary. The meeting may wish to note that the ICAO 2012 Flight Plan was successfully coordinated and implemented on the 15 November 2012, with only a few missing flight plans being reported during the first forty-eight hours of implementation.

2.9 The Task Force also reviewed its terms of reference (TOR) as approved by the APIRG/18 meeting, and agreed that the TOR continues to adequately guide the group in discharging its objectives. The Task Force also discussed the need for its continuity after the 15 November 2012 implementation date and agreed that based on foreseeable circumstances there was no need for the Task Force to remain active after that date. It was further agreed that future challenges concerning missing flight plan could be adequately addressed through other APIRG subsidiary bodies, such as Air Traffic Management Coordination Meetings (ATM/CM) or Task Forces of APIRG. In support of this agreement, the following Draft Decision is hereby proposed for endorsement by APIRG:

Draft Decision 13/1

That the AFI Flight Plan Transition Task Force be dissolved as of 31 October 2013 and that all future matters pertaining to missing flight plans be addressed through other subsidiary bodies of APIRG.

FPL 2012 - Post Implementation

2.10 The Air Traffic Management Coordination Meeting for Southern AFI Flight Information Regions (ATM/CM-SAF) which was held in Swaziland (17 to 19 June 2013) discussed operational issues regarding the processing of flight plans since the implementation of the new ICAO flight plan template on 15 November 2012. It was noted that even though remarkable success had been achieved, the rate of missing flight plans was still high. It was noted that since the implementation of ICAO FPL 2012, collected data and information indicated that from as November 2012 to January 2013, the prevalence of missing flight plans remained fairly constant compared to February 2013, where the situation involving missing flight plans had deteriorated. Furthermore, the rate of response by communication centres receiving Supplementary Messages such as Request Flight Plan (RQP) had been significantly low.

2.11 Comparing the statistics collected for 2012, which averages 109 missing flight plans per month with the average so far for 2013 which is 157 per month, it was evident that the missing flight plan prevalence was increasing at a significant rate. The meeting noted that South Africa had also been monitoring the prevalence of rejected flight plans, which contributed approximately to 7-10% of the missing flight plans monthly. The Southern AFI FIRs contributed nearly 82% of the rejected flight plans experienced by Johannesburg. The rejections were mainly due to the following reasons:

- a) Incorrect entry equipment in item 10a and 10b. Not conforming to Amendment 1 of Doc 4444.
- b) Syntax errors. Not including the waypoint entry/exit point on/off a route, incorrectly formatted co-ordinates, using "Oscar" instead of "Zero" and vice versa.
- c) Route errors. Using withdrawn or non-existent navigational aids and waypoints as well as incorrect route names.
- d) Mismatch with requested flight level and intended ATS route. That is, requested flight level is too high (or too low) for the requested ATS route designator.
- e) Non-provision of critical data in item 18. Missing estimated elapse times (EET) to Flight Information Region (FIR) boundaries. Missing or incorrect PBN capability data. Missing Communication (COM), Navigation (NAV) and/or Data (DAT) information when this is required as indicated in item 10a and 10b.
- f) Missing or incorrect nomination of search and rescue requirements.

2.12 States were urged to review the procedures that could lead to the use of outdated information from the AIPs and ICAO Documents such as Doc 7910, and ensure that operational staff were provided with the necessary awareness and training for proper processing of flight plans.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information provided on the progress leading up to the successful implementation of the ICAO 2012 flight plan on 15 November 2012; and
- b) take necessary action to address the issue of missing flight plans; and
- c) support Draft Decision 13/1 for the dissolution of the AFI Flight Plan Transition Task Force.
