



Agenda Item 1: OPMET exchange

COMMUNICATIONS REQUIREMENTS AT METEOROLOGY UNITS FOR OPMET INFORMATION EXCHANGE

(Presented by Argentina)

SUMMARY	
<p>The purpose of this working paper is to draw the attention of civil aviation authorities with regard to communications requirements at meteorology units for OPMET information exchange and that communications service providers are of the importance of their function.</p>	
REFERENCES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAR/SAM ANP (Doc 8733), Volume II – FASID; • Guide for the preparation and transmission of OPMET information in the CAR/Sam Regions; • Guidelines on the Use of the Public Internet in Aeronautical Applications (ICAO Doc 9855; and • Annex 3, Seventeenth edition. 	
ICAO strategic objectives:	<p><i>A – Safety</i> <i>C – Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development of Air Transport</i></p>

1. Background

1.1 The main route for the transmission of meteorological information (METAR, TAF, SPECI, SIGMET, AIREP) in the SAM Region is through the Aeronautical Fixed Telecommunications Network.

1.2 As alternate route for the transmission of meteorological information, from the originator to the user or the collecting centre, is in some cases the Intranet network or the facilities provided by the public Internet, although, this does not seem to be sufficiently efficient when the information in transit is of vital importance.

1.3 When addressing the presentation of this working paper it taken into consideration that as of 15 November 2012, Annex 3, standard 2.2.3, related to QMS/MET implementation, will be in force.

1.4 Within the QMS/MET framework, aeronautical communications acquire major importance, and for meteorology units, which should work in the continuous improvement of the products, intended to satisfy aeronautical users' requirements, the demand for these services will increase.

2. Discussion

2.1 In the last OPMET control, carried out from 10 to 16 June 2012, it was observed, with great concern, an important lack of TAF information from the States of the CAR and SAM Regions, data which is very useful for flight planning departing from Argentina.

2.2 It is not easy to identify the reasons that cause the deficiencies shown in these controls, but the truth is that: seven (7) States of the CAR Region have 0% efficiency, other four (4) are below 50%, while in the SAM Region, two (2) States have 0% and one (1) below 50%.

2.3 The lack of this information on due time is replaced, most of the times, with the Brasilia and Washington international OPMET databanks, however, it is noted that this means an additional workload for the meteorological operator, becoming worse when meteorological conditions are adverse for the normal development of the aeronautical activity.

2.4 It has been proved that an important percentage of airports do not have in the Aeronautical Meteorological Station (AMS) an AMHS terminal of the aeronautical fixed circuit, having to issue their METAR, SPECI reports through alternate circuits with the consequent delay and sometimes absence of the data for the users.

2.5 This is because some airports are closed during the night or have a restricted schedule, while the AMS work H24. A reminder on the need to have an AMHS terminal available at the meteorological office would assist in the improvement of OPMET information availability.

2.6 Another important issue is that related to the lack of communication point to point between the AMS and the air traffic units concerned (TWR-ATC).

2.7 A great number of aeronautical meteorological stations do not have a point to point data transmission system, required between the control tower (TWR) and the MET unit that originates the report, capable of ensuring the transmission of MET REPORT and SPECIAL reports, in a proper and timely manner, and that provides a record of the date and hour the report was issued.

2.8 Most airports have an internal telephone. This service is conditioned that at the other side of the line the call is answered, thus, this procedure is not advisable, specially, given the need to communicate alerts of a sudden worsening of meteorological conditions for safety reasons. Currently, in the most important airports this is covered with portable radios (HT) which facilitates the communication but not the record.

2.9 Within the framework of QMS/MET implementation, it would be a very advisable contribution that aeronautical communications providers be aware of the essential need of restoring the service without delay in case of and eventual malfunctioning, basically considering the composition of the system: hardware, software and connecting link between terminals and/or collecting centres, besides the human factor.

2.10 In this context it is also considered as an important contribution for the better performance of the meteorological task, that the States that have not yet done so consider the need to take the measures expressed in GREPECAS Conclusion 6/33, which text is presented in the **Appendix** to this working paper.

3. **Action required**

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) take note and consider the information presented in this working paper, as well as in the Appendix;
- b) analyze any other aspect considered necessary with regard to this issue; and
- c) agree and formulate other action as necessary.

APPENDIX

**CONCLUSION 6/33 BETTER AFTN COMMUNICATIONS ACCESS FOR
METEOROLOGICAL OFFICES**

That States, in order to improve the AFTN communications access for the meteorological offices, consider the need to take the following measures:

- a) at sites where an automatic AFTN COM centre exists, necessary coordination and agreements be established between COM and MET authorities, in order that the meteorological offices be equipped with a personal (PC) micro-computer type intelligent terminal, connected to an automatic AFTN COM centre, to carry out the required OPMET exchange; and
- b) at sites where AFTN stations or torn-tape AFTN tributary centres exist and there is no efficient communications for the OPMET information to be timely deposited for its transmission by the AFTN, at least a point-to-point circuit of teleprinters between the AFTN station and the meteorological office be implemented.