



Agenda Item 3: Harmonization of contingency plans among States involved

Harmonization of contingency plans

(Presented by the Secretariat)

Summary

This working paper presents some general guidelines for the harmonization of contingency plans, as well as the definition of aspects that must be integrated in the operational letters of agreement between adjacent States and the means for publication of operational matters inherent to contingency plans.

References:

- Attachment C to ICAO Annex 11
- Doc 9426, Manual on ATS Planning
- ICAO Annex 15

1. Introduction

1.1 The objective of the contingency plans is that other facilities and services work when facilities and services indicated in the air navigation plan are temporarily interrupted. Also, it is recognised that the State responsible for the provision of ATS services, is the main responsible in case this type of events occurs and therefore should implement measures to ensure continuity of safety and provide alternatives of facilities and services required.

1.2 However, it is also recognised that interruption of the services has a significant effect in international air traffic, depending on the degree of affectation in the duration of measures imposed and the circumstances of its application. Therefore, measures adopted by a State, normally may not be implemented in an isolated manner, quite the opposite, must be adopted in common agreement among States and users of the airspace that may be involved by these measures.

1.3 It should be kept in mind that the State handling an interruption at any level of air navigation services, should have the support of ICAO and adjacent States and the requirements of such State, as far as possible, should be taken into account by adjacent ATC units. In other words, contingency plans should mainly take into account the State's requirements where the contingency has occurred, since services rendered by it could be significantly reduced.

2 Discussion

2.1 States should make sure that their contingency plans are known by ICAO, by adjacent States and users. In this connection, it has been considered appropriate that operational aspects of the contingency plan be incorporated in the operational letters of agreement, especially in those cases where one way or another air navigation plan is modified. It should be kept in mind that every modification involving a change in the CAR/SAM ANP must be submitted before its implementation, to the approval by the ICAO Council.

2.2 In some cases, contingency plans only permit entrance to a specific FIR by determined reporting points, in other cases longitudinal separations applied between aircraft at the same flight level are increased regarding those normally used by adjacent Control Centres. Also, communications means or frequencies to be used could differ from those normally used, procedures for approval of over-flight clearances may vary; that is to say, there is a range of eventual changes that must be known by adjacent ATC units, as well as by users of the airspace.

2.3 This situation leads to the conclusion that many of the aforementioned aspects must be incorporated into the operational letters of agreement between adjacent Control Centres, either in the body or if it is preferable as an Appendix to the same. These aspects should also be published for knowledge of all users through the corresponding means either AIP supplement or aeronautical information circular (AIC).

2.4 Operational letters of agreement should incorporate some of the following matters related to contingencies, is they differ from those normally applied:

- a) Airspaces which have been delegated, if such were the case;
- b) Special coordinations;
- c) Aircraft that would be exempt from the application of contingency measures;
- d) Communications means for transferences of responsibilities

- e) Communications means between available ACCs involved;
- f) Transference of communications;
- g) Automated systems, if applicable;
- h) Surveillance system if applicable;
- i) Requirements for flight plan, if available;
- j) New re-routing of air traffic;
- k) Approval procedures of over-flights, if applicable;
- l) Other issues that States deem pertinent.

2.5 As previously indicated, and in order that airspace users be sufficiently informed on the contingency plans of the Region, States should publish the most relevant operational aspects of contingency plans. Due to the volume of the information, the Meeting could define the convenience to use an aeronautical information circular (AIC) for its publication.

3 **Suggested action**

3.1 The meeting is invited to take note of the information provided in this working paper and evaluate the issued dealt with in paragraph 2.4 of this working paper, and if such were the case, conclude in:

- a) Including in the corresponding operational letters of agreement the appropriate information so that in case of applying contingency plans, safety is kept at the desired levels; and
- b) Publish most relevant operational aspects through an aeronautical information circular (AIC) or the AIP (SUP).
