



International Civil Aviation Organization

CAR/SAM Regional Planning and Implementation Group (GREPECAS)

**Eighth Meeting of the GREPECAS Aeronautical Meteorology Subgroup
(AERMETSG/8)**

Santiago, Chile, 9 to 13 October 2006

AERMETSG/8 – WP/22

17/09/06

Agenda Item 4: Implementation of the issuance of SIGMET in the CAR/SAM Regions

CAR/SAM SIGMET AND AIRMET

(Presented by IATA)

SUMMARY

AIRMET's and SIGMET's are information issued by a meteorological watch office (MWO) concerning the occurrence or expected occurrence of specific en-route weather phenomena, which may affect the safety of aircraft.

In Appendix 6, Table A6-1 to Annex 3 to the Convention on the International Civil Aviation a template for the required format of a SIGMET message is given. It is requested to apply this standard format accordingly for all CAR/SAM SIGMET's and AIRMETS.

1. Introduction

1.1 SIGMET's contain information issued by a meteorological watch office (MWO) concerning the occurrence or expected occurrence of specific en-route weather phenomena, which may affect the safety of aircraft.

1.2 AIRMET's contain information issued by a meteorological watch office (MWO) concerning the occurrence or expected occurrence of specific en-route weather phenomena, which may affect the safety of aircraft during low-level aircraft operations and which has not already been included in the forecast issued for low-level flights in the flight information region concerned or in a sub-area thereof.

1.3 Details about AIRMET and SIGMET can be found in Appendix 6 to Annex 3 to the Convention on the International Civil Aviation.

2. Discussion

2.1. Every day thousands of OPMET messages are issued globally. Due to the huge amount of data messages it is impossible to check all data manually. Therefore automated systems have been developed. A basic requirement for such automated systems is the standardisation of all message formats.

2.2. ICAO, in cooperation with WMO, has developed templates for nearly every message type. It is the obligation of each State to apply the agreed format for each message type accordingly without any deviations.

2.3. Amendment 73 of ICAO Annex 3 became effective in November 2004. Since then several States have implemented the changes. Many States however did not recognise the requirement for updating their procedures.

2.4. The most important change was the inclusion of the FIR location indicator at the beginning of the second line of both SIGMET and AIRMET.

2.5. In order to describe more precisely the area of phenomena in a SIGMET and/or AIRMET, it is allowed to specify the location of that area by using details described in Appendix 6, Table A6-1 of Annex 3 to the Convention on the International Civil Aviation.

2.6. IATA requests that the area of phenomena is described as a closed line of co-ordinates or location indicators of waypoints or airports. This is the only method of area description, which allows the airlines to generate a graphical output and to identify affected flights for information provision. All other methods are not precise enough.

2.7. Since safety relevant severe weather phenomena do not disappear at a FIR boundary, it is of high relevance to airlines that it is possible to issue SIGMET's and AIRMET's where the area of these phenomena is crossing FIR boundaries and that the description of this area is not limited to the FIR of the issuing MWO. This procedure requires close co-ordination between all MWO's concerned. Additionally all involved MWO's will have to issue the same SIGMET or AIRMET at the same time.

2.8. The group may wish to formulate the following conclusion:

DRAFT

CONCLUSION 8/XX

**APPLICATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEMPLATE
FOR SIGMET AND AIRMET**

That ICAO be invited:

- a) to request States, as a matter of priority, to implement the insertion of the FIR location indicator at the beginning of the second line of SIGMET's and AIRMET's;
- b) to consider amending the template for SIGMET and AIRMET in Annex 3 to allow only the use of a closed line of co-ordinates, location indicators of waypoints or airports in order to describe the area of phenomena in a SIGMET and/or AIRMET; and
- c) to consider developing provisions in Annex 3 in order to allow the issuance of SIGMET's and AIRMET's not limited to the FIR of the responsibility of MWO.

3. Action by AERMETS/8

3.1 AERMETS/8 is invited:

- a) to note the contents of the Working Paper, and
- b) to decide on the draft conclusion proposed for the group's consideration.