



Agenda Item 6: Any other business

FLEXIBILITY WITH SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE

(Presented by IATA)

SUMMARY

Special Use Airspace can compromise the efficient use of airspace by limiting routings available for commercial aircraft. This inherent inefficiency is largely due to the traditional nature by which they are designed affecting costs and environmental impact. Improved coordination between stakeholders can deliver significant benefits to airlines/operators by ensuring the maximum use of available airspace is made without significantly compromising the users of SUA

1. Introduction

1.1 The increase in air traffic has meant that airspace capacity is at times tested. Technological advancements have gone some way to alleviate the pressure with the advent of reduced separations, ATM automation, etc. Airspace design and utilization however have fundamentally remained unchanged, particularly with regards to Special Use Airspace (SUA).

2. Discussion

2.1 Special Use Airspace was designed to enable “special” operations while minimizing impact to ordinary operations. With traditional route structures, this methodology worked well allowing SUA to be designated as active either H24 or for extended periods. They also allow a significant range of altitudes, often encompassing all suitable cruising levels.

2.2 Flexible routings however, such as UPRs, can be severely limited by SUA. While ordinary users recognize the necessity of SUA, its use must be re-examined to ensure maximum flexibility and advantage is available for all airspace users.

2.3 Most flight planning systems restrict the ability to plan through SUA, therefore accurate figures are difficult to quantify. However, evidence suggests that savings of 8-10 min. may be achievable during certain times of the year. The corresponding significant saving in fuel, reduced emissions and increased payload capacity are too large to be forsaken, especially during these difficult times our industry is facing.

2.4 ANSPs must consult with their States's defense agencies and discuss issues such as location, altitudes and validity periods of specific SUA to maximize the efficient use of airspace for all operators.

2.5 The potential improvement of SUA usage exists in most of the region. It is the responsibility of all ANSPs and DGACs to review their SUA utilization with appropriate consultation. IATA will offer their support in any evaluation of efficiencies associated to specific SUA.

3. Recommendation

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information contained within this paper.
- b) ANSPs and DGACs to consult with stakeholders regarding SUA to enable maximum efficiency for all airspace users.