



**Twenty First Meeting of the Africa-Indian Ocean Planning and Implementation Regional Group  
(APIRG/21)  
(Nairobi, Kenya, 9 – 11 October 2017)**

---

**Agenda Item 5: Regional Air Navigation deficiencies**

**GROOMING AND UPDATING OF THE ICARD DATABASE FOR THE AFI REGION**

[Presented by ASECNA]

**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this working paper is to share with the meeting the difficulties encountered in the use of the ICAO database (ICARD), in particular with regard to the effective and safe implementation of the five-Name letter code (5NLC), a unique pronounceable code assigned to a significant point on a route for air traffic purposes. It emphasizes the need for good coordination at regional level by the Member States in the use of the ICARD database and proposes the effective establishment of a network of focal points at the level of the AFI States with a view to have a more reliable ICARD database.

**Actions by the meeting :**

The meeting is invited to :

- recall the need for a coordinated approach at the regional level to groom the ICARD database with respect to 5NLC assigned to significant points on ATS routes in order to address the non- conformity with the provisions of Annex 11;
- urges States to communicate to the regional offices with due diligence the names and contacts of national focal points with a view to establishing an online platform of focal points for the updating of the ICARD database;
- request the WACAF and ESAF Regional Offices to coordinate this activity of grooming and updating the ICARD database in the AFI region, in coordination with the other regions of the world, as appropriate, in accordance with the procedure set out in state letter AN 11 / 45.5-17 / 101 of 11 August 2017 from the Secretary General of ICAO.

**REFERENCE(S):** State letter AN 11 / 45.5-17 / 101 of 11 August 2017 from the Secretary General of ICAO,

- ICAO Annex 11 and 15; Report of the Workshop on the use of the ICARD Database, held in September 2012, in Nairobi, Kenya by ICAO.

**Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s):** This Working Paper is related to Strategic Objectives: A & C

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The effectiveness air navigation either conventional based on ground-aids or using satellite technologies (GNSS), is linked to the materialization of significant points of routes;

1.2 Given the importance of these routes for flight safety and to avoid confusion both on board by pilots and on the ground by ATS personnel, the provisions of Annex 11 to the Chicago Convention, appendix 2 and Annex 15, establish that a unique five named letter code (5NLC) that can be pronounced, is assigned to each significant point routes;

1.3 Since October 1995, EUROCONTROL and the EUR / NAT office have worked together to develop a website to facilitate the selection and award of 5NLC;

1.4 In September 2008, this application was updated and accepted by ICAO as an international support for the allocation of 5NLCs in the air navigation plan.

1.5 In September 2012, after four years of using the ICARD database, ICAO organized a meeting in Nairobi, Kenya for the follow-up and harmonious use of the ICARD database by all ICAO States. AFI region;

1.6 The meeting considered the implementation problems of the 5LNCs resulting in inconsistencies in the ICARD database. It emerged as follows:

- (a) The existence of the same codes used by different regions;
- (b) The use in the same area of different codes but of similar pronunciations;
- (c) The disparity in the geographical coordinates of the same point coded in the publications of neighboring States;
- (d) The use of non-ICAO code names, ie. which are not in the ICARD database.

1.7 The meeting recommended ICAO to take appropriate measures to improve the ICARD data base;

## 2. DISCUSSIONS

2.1 By State letter AN 11 / 45.5-17 / 101 of 11 August 2017, the ICAO Secretary General Informed States and international organizations of the completion and launch of the new ICARD platform in March 2017 and, through an annex to this letter, provides guidance for updating the said database;

2.2 This updated ICARD database system, accessible through ICAO's secure portal, replaces the previous platform and will meet the needs of States to support the efficient and safe implementation of 5LNCs;

2.3 The analysis of this new ICARD database has revealed a number of significant inconsistencies, which are non-conformities to ICAO Annex 11, including:

- (a) the large number of identical codes (in particular, double, triple or quadruple);
- (b) near-sound codes used at close range or on the same flight plan route;
- (c) differences between the 5NLC data in the ICARD and the national aeronautical information (AIP) data;

2.4 The operation of the new ICARD database by ASECNA shows that 53 5NLC registered in the ASECNA member states are duplicated either in the same country or in another State or Region of the world;

2.5 Appropriate actions are ongoing with ICAO to correct duplications in the ASECNA member states, in respect with the procedure outlined in the Secretary-General's State letter;

2.6 The FIRs meeting in 2018 will focus on this matter with neighboring FIR to address the issue

2.7 With regard to duplications involving other States in the AFI region or outside the AFI Region, the correction of such inconsistencies requires good coordination with all the stakeholders in order to ensure the effectiveness of such an operation;

2.8 It is necessary to recall that a very few States in the AFI region have effectively appointed ICARD focal points, as requested by ICAO;

2.9 A network of ICARD focal points, led by ICAO regional offices, could conduct this exercise through on-line or, where appropriate, face-to-face meetings, to address the urgent need for harmonization and clean-up of inconsistencies the ICARD database.

### **3 ACTION BY THE MEETING**

The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the actions taken by ASECNA to address this issue
- b) recall the need for a coordinated approach at the regional level to groom the ICARD database with respect to 5NLC assigned to significant points on ATS routes in order to address the non- conformity with the provisions of Annex 11;
- c) urges States to communicate to the regional offices with due diligence the names and contacts of national focal points with a view to establishing an online platform of focal points for the updating of the ICARD database;
- d) request the WACAF and ESAF Regional Offices to coordinate this activity of grooming and updating the ICARD database in the AFI region, in coordination with the other regions of the world, as appropriate, in accordance with the procedure set out in state letter AN 11 / 45.5-17 / 101 of 11 August 2017 from the Secretary General of ICAO.