



International Civil Aviation Organization

MID Region ATM Enhancement Programme Steering Committee

Second Meeting (MAEP SC/2)
(Cairo, Egypt, 20-22 October 2015)

Agenda Item 2: MAEP Project/working packages

**COOPERATION COUNCIL FOR THE ARAB STATES OF THE GULF (GCC) UPPER FIR
PROJECT**

(Presented by Bahrain on behalf of GCC States)

SUMMARY

The aim of this paper is to provide an update on the GCC's Upper FIR project and to seek the support of ICAO Member States.

Action by the Meeting is at paragraph 4.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The airspace of the GCC Member States is some of the busiest and most congested in the MID Region. The GCC Air Navigation Committee (GCC ANC) has identified the need to work together to improve interoperability and harmonise airspace and service provision arrangements.

1.2 The GCC ANC has initiated a project to establish a single Upper Flight Information Region (UFIR) in the airspace of participating GCC Member States. The prime aims of the project are as follows:

- Develop a fully integrated Air Traffic Management (ATM) system in the GCC States;
- Enhance aviation safety and expand airspace capacity in the GCC States;
- Accommodate high growth in air traffic movements in the region; and
- Standardise Air Traffic Services (ATS) operation in the participating GCC Member States.

1.3 A dedicated Task Force (UFIR TF) comprising focal points from all GCC Member States has been established to oversee and implement the project.

2. APPROACH

2.1 The first phase of the project is the development of a detailed study and implementation plan. The study will be undertaken by the UFIR TF and Helios being the selected firm to provide the consultancy services for the project. It was initiated on 8 October 2015 and is scheduled to complete in January 2017.

2.2 The study will be based on two operational scenarios:

- An initial operational scenario that will focus on arrangements that increase interoperability and seek to harmonise existing service provision. The arrangements need to be implementable and enable the delivery of benefits in the short term. This scenario will consider the broadest definition of a UFIR and will seek to identify opportunities for developing common standards, operational concepts and improving operational and technical interoperability and, where appropriate, the standardisation of supporting functions. The progressive implementation of this scenario will be a critical first step and enable to provide the 'seamless' airspace envisaged by the GCC.
- A target operational scenario will build on the initial operational scenario to provide the GCC with a credible route to increasingly harmonised airspace, ATM/CNS infrastructure and potentially, the shared delivery of ATS.

The study will consider operational, technical, institutional and other organisational and functional arrangements for each scenario and, by comparing the scenarios to existing arrangements and develop an implementation plan and roadmap for the initial operational scenario and a transition plan to the target operational scenario. The target operational concept will be aligned to the ICAO's Aviation System Block Upgrade (ASBU) initiative and deliver the required capacity and operational efficiencies.

3. STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

3.1 It is essential that the study engages with a broad range of stakeholders and takes into account of other regional (including the MAEP projects), sub-regional and national projects to ensure that the UFIR can be implemented most effectively.

3.2 The GCC UFIR project TF is therefore seeking support from ICAO MID, GCC Member States, airspace users and industry bodies to develop the requirements for the UFIR and to baseline current arrangements. A number of workshops are planned in GCC Member States during November 2015.

4. ACTION BY THE MEETING

4.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) take note of the contents of this Working Paper; and
- b) encourage Adjacent Member States to support the GCC UFIR project throughout the project life cycle.