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ICAO NEWS RELEASE

COM 18/12

DRIVING MOMENTUM ON GLOBAL AIR NAVIGATION'S "HIGHEST PRIORITY"

MONTRÉAL, 22 October 2012 – Supporting ongoing efforts by States and industry to increase global air transport system efficiency and capacity, reduce aircraft noise and emissions and bolster aviation's already enviable safety record, close to 400 participants gathered at ICAO Headquarters last week for a special four-day Symposium on performance-based navigation (PBN).

"PBN implementation is the global aviation community's highest air navigation priority," stressed Nancy Graham, Director of the ICAO Air Navigation Bureau. "It's a key building block for airspace improvements and a framework that leverages the full capabilities of existing technologies. This Symposium reinforced the already good stakeholder collaboration that we're seeing in this area and maintains the sector-wide focus we've been driving on delivering clear, measurable results."

PBN adoption involves a wide range of industry players, including aircraft manufacturers, air navigation service providers (ANSPs), airlines, regulators, ATC system manufacturers, avionics designers, air traffic controllers, pilots, the military, aeronautical information companies and instrument procedure designers. Participants to the ICAO Symposium sought to resolve current barriers to implementation, both regulatory and otherwise, and helped accelerate industry-wide efforts now underway to establish PBN capabilities.

"We need to make sure that regulation does not get in the way of PBN implementation," highlighted the event's keynote speaker and Divisional Senior Vice-President of Flight Operations at Emirates Airlines, Captain Alan Stealey.

More than 50 speakers and moderators covered a wide-range of topics at the Symposium and its two targeted workshops. The event coincided with the publication of a new ICAO PBN Manual and several other documents which have been developed to better integrate PBN objectives into the ICAO Block Upgrade air navigation modernization strategy.

"The new PBN Manual and a wide range of additional supporting documentation were provided to Symposium participants in a new PBN iKit, or implementation kit," added Nancy Graham. "These are USB-based and feature an interactive HTML 5.0 interface that lets each type of PBN specialist find the documentation and other ICAO resources specifically applicable to their area."

Five instrument procedure design organizations were also endorsed by ICAO at the Symposium, in order to provide its Member States with greater confidence when seeking external support on implementing PBN capabilities.

“ICAO’s main objective at this stage is to move forward instrument procedures with vertical guidance for all instrument runway ends,” concluded Graham. “Implementation of Continuous Climb/Descent Operations (CCO/CDO) are also priorities, as both of these initiatives can realize significant environmental benefits.”

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 191 Member States.