



AOP/SG/6-WP/5.1

**INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION**  
**SIXTH MEETING OF THE AERODROMES**  
**OPERATIONAL PLANNING SUB-GROUP (AOP/SG/6)**  
**(Nairobi, Kenya, 11 – 13 May 2005)**

**Agenda Item 5: Status of the NLA/TF**

*(Presented by Secretariat)*

**SUMMARY**

In the early 1990s, the major aeroplane manufacturers announced plans for the development of aeroplanes larger than the B747-400 which until now was the largest passenger aeroplane. As the physical, technical and operational characteristics of the new larger aeroplane (NLA) have become known, ICAO introduced in Annex 14, Volume I a new code letter F to cover aeroplanes with wingspans from 65m up to but not including 80m, and an outer-main gear wheel span from 14m up to but not including 16m. This introduction required the development of new code F specifications including the need for CAT 10 RFF coverage.

The AOP/SG/4 meeting when discussing these developments observed that although many aircraft operators in the AFI would not acquire these NLAs in the near future, some of the airports in the AFI Region would receive them as destination and/or alternate aerodromes. In view of the substantial financial outlay required to prepare existing airports for the operation of the NLAs, a task force was formed to review the impact they would have.

The TF has held two meetings and this paper reviews the progress it has made and to facilitate discussion on the need for its continuity or otherwise.

Action by the Meeting: As at paragraph 7:

**Reference:**

NLA/TF/1 Report  
AOP/SG/5 Report  
NLA/TF/2 Report

1. Following the discussions at AOP/SG/4 in Dec 2000 whilst reviewing the expected impact of new larger aeroplanes (NLA) at aerodromes in the AFI Region, it was agreed that the issue was complex and required a comprehensive technical review. Consequently it was adopted that an NLA/TF be set up to evaluate the likely impact of the NLAs on aerodromes in the AFI Region and

advise States on the appropriate action in order to facilitate forward planning. A conclusion to this effect formulated at APIRG/13 was subsequently approved by the ICAO Council.

2. The NLA/TF was formed and held its first meeting at Dakar, Senegal in March 2003 and comprised experts from Algeria, France, (Réunion) Nigeria, Tunisia, Uganda and ASECNA. The delegation from France included also an expert from AIRBUS who provided essential technical information.

3. This meeting also discussed what it considered to be the additional work of the TF in order to complete its mandate. It was noted that at that time the manufacturers had not yet fully developed the aircraft operations manual even though some characteristics of the aircraft had been précised. On the other hand, ICAO was also still developing the relevant SARPS and guidance material. Further, the meeting was of the view that as 2006 approaches, more airports other than Capetown, Johannesburg and St. Denis would be identified as possible recipients of the A380 as more and more aircraft operators acquire the aircraft. The meeting therefore agreed that the NLA/TF should continue to monitor the developments and revisit this discussion at its second meeting. This position was endorsed by the AOP/SG/5 and consequently APIRG/14 and the Council.

4. Currently the A380 is under production and several aircraft operators have placed orders. The major carriers operating in this region which have placed orders include Air France, Emirates, Lufthansa and Qantas. At this stage, all the physical and operational characteristics are available.

5. On its part, ICAO developed in May 2003 a two fold action plan for the introduction of NLAs into international civil aviation service (Ref. State Letter No. 4/5.7 – 03/80 of 25/07/03). This entailed the development and the publication of a circular on New Larger Aeroplane Operations at Existing Aerodromes. This has been published as Circular 305 – AN 177 in June 2004. The second part was expected to entail the review of current Annex 14, Volume I, code F requirements, considering the results of studies conducted within and outside ICAO.

6. In order to facilitate the introduction of NLA on existing airports, several European Civil Aviation Authorities have launched specific studies. The Airbus A380 Airport Compatibility Group AACG (comprising UK, France, Germany and Netherlands) was formed in order to ensure the recommendations and guidance materials are issued in a coordinated manner. At the end of 2002, this group issued the Common Agreement Document which considers ways to facilitate the introduction of the A380 for safe and harmonized operations on existing airports not meeting code F requirements. Further, the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) has established an internet site which contains details of several aeronautical studies. Its address is: [www.ecac.org/nla-forum](http://www.ecac.org/nla-forum).

7. This meeting is expected to consider if there is additional work that it can perform to assist the AOP/SG develop appropriate recommendations to States.

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