Twenty Third Meeting of the
Informal South Pacific ATS Co-ordinating Group (ISPACG/23)

FANS Interoperability Team Meeting (FIT/16)
Santiago, Chile, 24-25 March 2008

Agenda Item 8: INMARSAT SATCOM Performance

SATCOM VOICE FOR ATC

(Presented by Airbus)

SUMMARY

Airbus has initiated avionics HMI design changes to enhance crew awareness of SATCOM calls from ATC in the cockpit, on the basis of the ICAO North Atlantic SATCOM Voice Task Force group (SVTF) outputs. This paper describes the ground rules upon which the pertinence for avionics design changes depends.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1   The ICAO North Atlantic SATCOM Voice Task Force was tasked to assess the usability of SATCOM voice for routine ATS communications.

1.2   The group work ended with a live trial over the NAT, which proved security measures for the use of SATCOM are adequate and if globally implemented that SATCOM voice is a viable means for ATS communications in the NAT.

1.3   The SVTF report recommends that

"Communication Service Providers (CSPs) that want to provide SATCOM voice communications ensure that priority Q12 is only being used for ATS purposes".

2. DISCUSSIONS

2.1   Airbus has initiated avionics HMI design changes for their A380 and forthcoming A350 to provide direct information in the cockpit when a SATCOM voice call is being received from ATC. Those changes might be considered for other aircraft families. However, they should not be considered as mandatory for operations.

2.2   These design changes require a continuation of the action initiated by the SVTF with the help of CSPs to restrict Q12 priority assignment to ATSPs. Note that the viability of the crew procedures developed by the SVTF also depends upon this action.

2.3   The EASA certification for the use of Satcom voice for routine ATC communications is on its way and will be granted for the A350 Entry into service. It should then be extended to other a/c family.

3.   ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1   The Group is invited to:

-    Consider the use of Satcom for routine ATC communications as a replacement of HF.
-    Take actions to obtain guarantees from CSPs with regards to Q12 priority assignment.