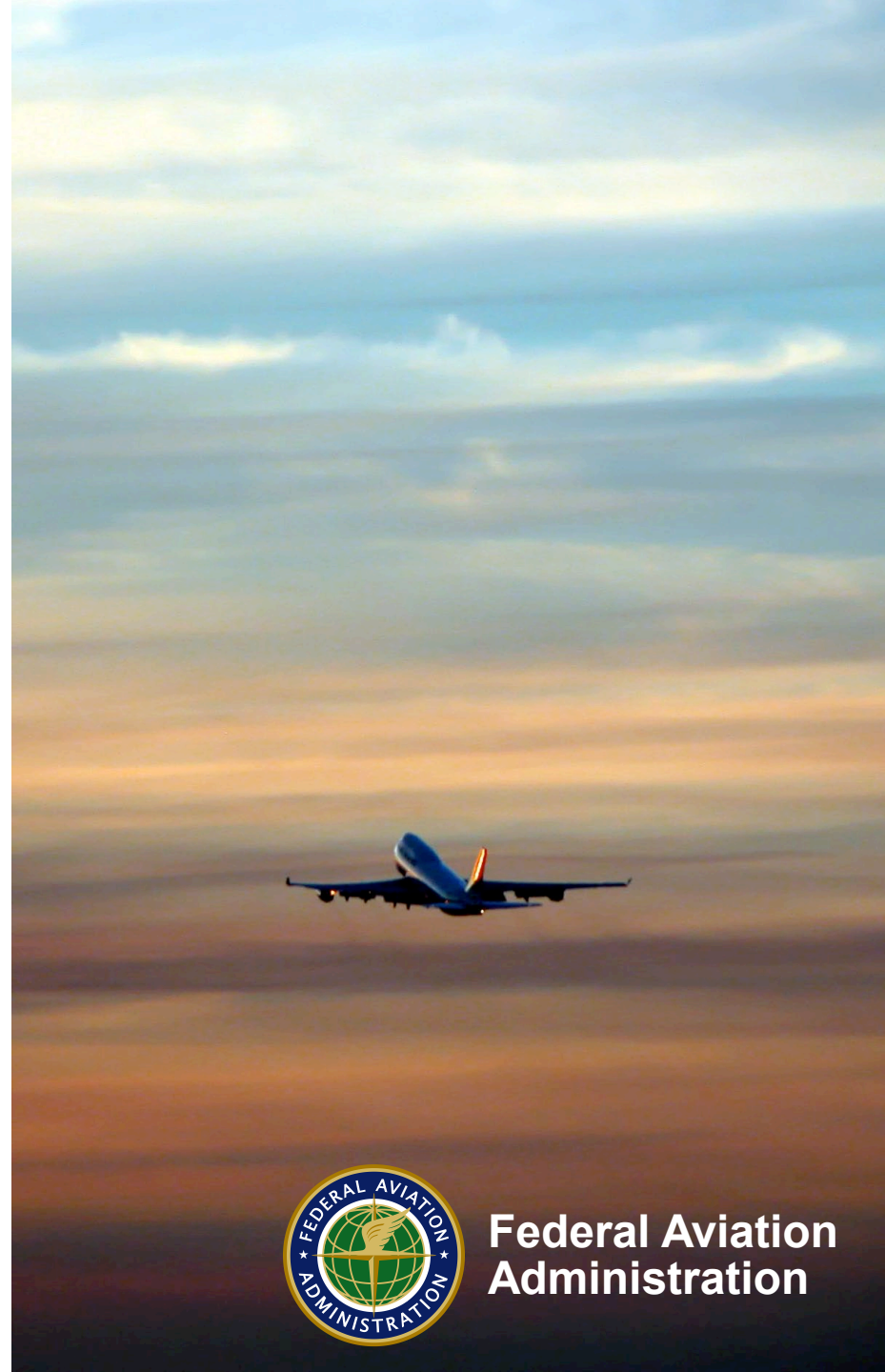


# IPACG VOLPAC 2023

Presented to: IPACG/48  
By: Ahmad Usmani  
Date: 25 September 2023



**Federal Aviation  
Administration**



# Background

- **The last volcanic ash exercise held in the North Pacific (NOPAC) was VOLKAM 2019, led by Russia**
- **Anchorage Center wanted to hold another exercise for the NOPAC**
- **Due to the war in Ukraine, it was unlikely that FAA would participate in an exercise led by Russia**
- **JCAB and FAA agreed to hold the Volcanic Ash Exercise in the Pacific (VOLPAC) as part of IPACG**



# Background (continued)

- **Kiska Volcano in the western Aleutian Islands was selected for the exercise**
- **Anchorage VAAC ran simulations to generate exercise VAAs, VAAGs, and SIGMETs**
- **Exercise was set for 2200 UTC on 24 July 2023**
  - Decided to hold the exercise virtually, so everyone could participate from their work location



# Pre-Exercise Actions

- **Alaska Volcano Observatory (AVO) issued VONAs to change the aviation color code for Kiska volcano from green to YELLOW to ORANGE**
- **AVO, Anchorage VAAC, and FAA agreed on exercise “script”**
  - Script and VAAs sent to JCAB for sharing with Tokyo VAAC
- **US NOTAM Office sent preparatory NOTAM**
- **Coordination meeting held one week before exercise**
- **“Go/No-Go” decision made four hours before exercise**



# Exercise Highlights

- **Anchorage VAAC issued three sets of VAAs/VAAGs/SIGMETs at 2200, 0000, and 0135 UTC**
  - Last set moved forward from 0200
- **AVO issued updated VONAs**
- **Tokyo VAAC rebroadcast VAAs**
- **JCAB AIS Center recalculated eastbound PACOTS**
- **Operators analyzed weather products and latest weather information to identify affected aircraft**
  - Requested reroutes for several aircraft
  - Planned several diversions to add fuel



# Operator Actions

- **ANA requested pre-departure reroutes for several eastbound flights and an airborne reroute for a westbound flight**
- **American considered diverting to ANC for a westbound aircraft, but the crew would have timed out**
  - Also might have had to jettison fuel
- **FedEx said they would land in DEN to add fuel**
- **Finnair made no changes because R220 was still available**



# Operator Actions (continued)

- **Nippon Cargo requested a pre-departure reroute for an eastbound flight heading to ANC**
- **United considered a reroute for a westbound flight in the Edmonton FIR, but it didn't have enough fuel**
  - Diverted another westbound flight to ANC for fuel
  - Rerouted another westbound flight to the south



# Discussion

- **Exercise feedback: Positive? Negative?**
- **Future exercise?**
- **If so, additional participants?**
  - ANSPs
  - Weather providers
  - Other types of operators
- **Other scenarios?**
  - Rocket launches
  - Flight plan issues
  - Communications issues

