**Seventeenth Meeting of the Cross Polar Trans East Air Traffic Management Providers’ Work Group (CPWG/17)**

(Samara, Russia, 3-6 June 2014)

**Agenda Item 5: Provide Status on CPWG/16 Actions**

**Volcanic Ash Contingency Plan - Update**

**(Action Item #15-08)**

(Presented by Isavia)

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| SUMMARY  This working paper presents update to CPWG on amendments to NAT Volcanic Ash Contingency Plan following the amendment of PANS ATM 15.8 which is scheduled to take effect in November 2014. |

1. **Introduction**

# The International Volcanic Ash Task Force (IVATF) agreed to transfer the responsibility for Volcanic Ash (VA) avoidance or the decision to fly or not to fly into area of known or forecast VA contamination from Air Traffic Management (ATM) to Aircraft Operators (AO).

# Subsequently an amendment to *Procedures for Air Navigation Services - Air Traffic Management* (ICAO DOC 444, PANS-ATM) was approved by the Air Navigation Commission (ANC) and pending the ICAO Council approval it was expected to take effect in November 2014.

# The purpose of this working paper is to update Cross Polar Working Group with discussions and decisions made by NAT management groups on amendments to NAT Volcanic Ash Contingency Plan.

1. **Discussion**

# The PANS-ATM amendment signals a significant change in procedures concerning VA where the responsibility of VA avoidance is transferred to the Aircraft Operators (AO). Following such a change there is a requirement to amend the Air Traffic Management (ATM) VA contingency plan to reflect the amended procedures where the role of ATM will no longer focus on decision-making but instead be the distribution of information and provision of assistance when requested.

# The new proposal is based on the Air Traffic Management Volcanic Ash Contingency Plan Template published by ICAO, containing all relevant guidance concerning the handling of volcanic eruptions and taking into account of the shift in responsibility of VA avoidance (see appendix A).

# The new proposal addresses the following main revisions/amendment to the current NAT Volcanic Ash Contingency Plan:

1. Establishment of a Danger Area (airspace closed) at the start of eruption while information is not available;
2. NOTAM distribution to include the notification of increased volcanic activity (eruption imminent), start of eruption, significant changes in the volcanic activity and end of eruption. NOTAMS will also list sources of information available to airspace users;
3. ATM to pass SIGMET information to aircraft in flight. SIGMET to be distributed as well through other channels to Meteorological (MET) data banks and AOs. For flight planning purposes AOs can use the advisories issued by the Volcanic Ash Advisory Centres (VAACs);
4. ATM to impose traffic flow restrictions as necessary to handle the air traffic safely;
5. The NAT Organized Track System (OTS) should normally be designed to remain outside forecast contaminated areas. It was understood that any aircraft penetration into contaminated areas would be based on specific safety assessments that were expected to vary between aircraft operators. Therefore it was expected that ATM would not be able to take these into account in the OTS design. Designing an OTS through a contaminated area would also falsely lead operators to believe that operation on a published track within the contaminated area had been deemed to be safe without an (operator-specific) safety assessment.

# The new proposal is still a working draft, not yet approved by NAT SPG.

# Considering that the responsibility for VA avoidance would be transferred to the airspace users, the need for regional ATM VA exercises would need to be reassessed and the role and format of ATM VA exercises should be reevaluated.

1. **Action by the Meeting**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

* 1. note the information contained in this Working Paper;
  2. review the information contained in the proposed NAT Volcanic Ash Contingency Plan, Appendix A to this working paper.

**Appendix A – PROPOSED NEW NAT DOC 006, PART II VOLCANIC ASH CONTINGENCY PLAN EUR AND NAT REGIONS**

Provided as a separate document

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