

IBAC Technical Report Summary

Subject: NAT Operations and Air Traffic Management

Meeting: North Atlantic (NAT) Future Air Navigation Systems Implementation Group (NAT FIG) 15th Meeting

IBAC File:

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Summary: NAT FIG/15 was held in Paris, France, 19–23 February 2007. Mr Don Harris chaired the meeting and Mr Elkhan Nahmadov and Mrs Nikki Goldschmid from the Paris ICAO EUR/NAT office provided secretarial support. The adopted Agenda was as follows: a) Report on activities since NAT FIG/14 b) Updates concerning the Data Link Trials and reports from the FCMA c) Updates to the Data Link Guidance Material d) Report on SATCOM Voice developments e) Develop a draft communications strategy for the NAT Region; f) Develop a transition plan for the implementation of Phase IV CPDLC; g) Examine ways and means to enhance the use of data link technologies; h) Data link initiatives for the NAT Region i) Updates to the NAT Common Co-ordination Interface Control Documents j) Updates to the NAT Data Link Guidance Material k) Any other business

The principal objectives of this meeting were to address the work programme established for it by the NAT IMG, reviewing the results of the data link operational trials and the report of the FANS Central Monitoring Agency (FCMA), initiate planning for the transition to CPDLC Phase IV implementation, determining how Satellite Communication (SATCOM) voice could be used for routine Air Traffic Services (ATS), initiate work on the development of a NAT Region communications strategy, examining how regional safety management processes can take advantage of information provided by data link applications; and developing a work programme on the basis of the directives provided by the NAT Implementation Management Group (NAT IMG).

The FIG agreed, for future meetings, beginning with FIG16, to adopt the working practice of providing documentation well in advance, (at least by the end of the business hours of the last Wednesday before the meetings).

NAT SPG tasked the ATMG and FIG Groups to expand on the use of incentives to hasten data link implementation and to determine if incentives could speed up the implementation of Future Air Navigation Systems (FANS) avionics to support data link applications and HF regression. The FIG will ask NAT IMG for more detailed direction on this topic.

The Group noted that NAV CANADA and a limited number of airlines conducted a successful proof of concept trial to assess the feasibility of using SATCOM voice for routine ATS communications in the northern portion of the Edmonton FIR. SATCOM Voice was proven to be a viable and reliable medium for conducting routine ATS communications. However, routine use of SATCOM Voice is contingent upon the

utilization of robust operational procedures and the availability of an automated system which is capable of secure, efficient and accurate SATCOM dialling.

The NAT SATCOM voice task force (SVTF) has scheduled a NAT SAT voice trial for May-June of 2007. This trial will include a selected number of airlines. The FIG recommended that the SVTF should report to the FIG in future. The next SATCOM Voice Task Force is tentatively planned for Santa-Maria (Portugal) on 10-14 September 2007. This will allow sufficient time to report to the next NAT FIG Meeting.

The FIG began development of the NAT regional communication strategy. The strategy takes account of the communication services that need to be provided in the near, medium and long term in order to support the requirements of Air Traffic Management. A draft matrix containing steps and milestones which might need to be achieved over the next ten to fifteen years was produced and will be attached to the FIG15 report. It was noted that the communication system is the enabler for remaining components of the Air Traffic Management system. The need for defined timeframes and avoidance of unnecessary equipage is essential from the airspace users' point of view.

The FIG reviewed the issues and resolutions identified by the ATN Accommodation Drafting Group (ADG) of the ICAO Data link Steering Group (DLSG) related to the accommodation of ATN aircraft in a FANS 1/A environment. The FIG noted the ADG's intention to provide inputs for potential changes in ADS-C functionality in the ICAO Manual on Data links. The FIG intends to monitor the progress of the ADG work. An update on the ADG and DLSG work will be provided at the next meeting of the FIG (16) by the United Kingdom.

IATA expressed concern at the use of the word "BY" in ATC clearances. This is an issue for non-native English speaking pilots. It was noted that this problem had already been recognised and highlighted in training which had been made available to the airline community. However the Group felt that the issue should be brought to the attention of the IMG for consideration.

The FIG highlighted the importance of precise knowledge of the rate of avionics equipage and its evolution. This information is required in order to help facilitate decisions to implement and/or to mandate new systems and new procedures. The lack of precise data could become an obstacle preventing the NAT community from reaching a consensus and making informed decisions. The FIG felt that regular analysis of the current equipage and airlines plans for equipage are essential to the strategic planning.

The Strategic Lateral Offset Procedure (SLOP) is still not being conducted in the NAT as it was intended. Therefore full benefits have not yet been achieved. The FIG called attention to the importance of the issue and agreed that ATMG should be notified accordingly.

The FIG recommends to the NAT IMG that NAT FIG16 be held in Reykjavik (Iceland) in Sept 25-28, 2007.

Implication for Business Aviation: Note the development of the new NAT regional communication strategy. Business aviation should provide timely input, where necessary, to the communications strategy and needs to be aware of the defined timeframes in order to avoid unnecessary equipage.

Business Aviation should note the comments concerning the Strategic Lateral Offset Procedure (SLOP) and ensure that the SLOP is being applied by their aviation departments as a standard operating procedure while flying in the NAT.

The Business aviation community should acquire and provide information to the appropriate ICAO Group(s) on the degree of current avionics equipage and plans for future avionics equipage of the business aviation fleet.

The Business Aviation community must keep informed on developments within the North Atlantic Region and participate where and when it is possible to assist in development of future technologies.

Decisions Required: IBAC should adopt (i.e., if not already adopted) the working practice of providing documentation well in advance of meetings. This would require documentation at least by the end of the business hours of the last Wednesday before a meeting starts on the following Monday.

IBAC members should look at possible incentives, for Business Aviation Operators in particular, that would facilitate more rapid deployment of the Future Air Navigation Systems (FANS) avionics to support data link applications and HF regression.

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