

**FIFTH MEETING OF BANGLADESH-INDIA-MYANMAR-THAILAND ATM
COORDINATION GROUP
New Delhi – India / 19 September 2017**

Agenda Item 4: ATM Matters – ATS Co-ordination

**DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR DIVERSION
MANAGEMENT
(Presented by IATA)**

SUMMARY

This paper provided inputs to BIMT for developing ATC-Co-ordination SOP for effective
Diversion Management.

1 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 Need of improved co-ordination among neighboring FIRs for effective diversion management was identified at BIMT/4 meeting.
- 1.2 BIMT/4 agreed to consider developing a joint Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for ATC Co-ordination for safe and efficient handling of aircraft diversions across FIRs.
- 1.3 This paper provides certain inputs/ considerations that might be useful in developing SOP.

2 DISCUSSION:

- 2.1 In Bay of Bengal surrounding states (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar and Thailand – BIMT states) there are two scenarios of diversions:
 - a) Diverting to neighboring country's airspace (for weather avoidance, increased congestion due to drop in visibility, adverse weather).
 - b) Diverting to an airport in neighboring country.
- 2.2 Both scenarios would need structured planning and identified processes to ensure effective ATC co-ordination. Suggest following considerations for this process:
 - a) Timely decision for diversion planning saves fuel and avoids safety issues due to fuel emergencies.
 - b) In absence of MET information about possible/predicted improvement; arriving flights may tend to continue holding for longer duration and decide diversion when holding fuel is nearing exhausted.
 - c) Arrival traffic if informed enroute, can save fuel by routing to an alternate even from TMA boundary/ suitable enroute position.
 - d) Judiciously planned diversions based on present conditions and forecast can save large amount of fuel and emissions.
 - e) Diverted flight can save approximately 30 minutes of holding and enroute fuel when situation is unlikely to improve in near future.

f) International flights may have specific “suitable” alternate airport preference for diversions.

2.3 Several international flights operating in BIMT states plan destination alternate in neighboring country (for example: Kolkata – Dhaka, Yangon – Bangkok, Chiang Mai).

2.4 Annexure A to this paper provides certain specific inputs that may facilitate discussions for developing a Joint SOP for Diversion management.

2.5 It is also suggested that respective FIRs may consider conducting parodic Tabletop exercises for Diversion management (within FIR as well as across FIRs).

3 ACTION BY MEETING:

3.1 The meeting invited to:

- a) Discuss the elements for ATC- Coordination Joint SOP for Diversion Management.
- b) Consider drafting / developing a Joint SOP for diversion management between BIMT states in collaborative manner.
- c) Consider conducting table top exercise for evolving the Joint SOP for ATC-Co-ordination for diversion management.

ANNEXURE - A

Inputs to facilitate discussions for Developing ATC Coordination Joint SOP for Diversion Management.

Scenario 1: Diverting to neighboring country's airspace for weather avoidance/increased congestion due to drop in visibility, adverse weather.

- It may be treated like a contingency plan of airspace management between two neighboring countries FIRs.
- Process of co-ordination/airspace management between the ATCs for contingency airspace utilization to be established, portion of bordering airspace can be identified and included in the LOAs –if possible.
- Respective FIR to ensure air defense co-ordination during such contingencies.

Co-ordination process and actions:

- **With approaching Adverse Weather:** ATC (WSO) keeps airspace management contingency plan ready when there are clear indications of approaching adverse weather. But the plan need not be activated at this stage.
- Activities at this stage: Diversion planning and coordination:
 - o Based on MET reports, observations, diversion planner to identify flights that may need to be routed through bordering airspace of neighboring country.
 - o ATC Coordinator provides heads up information of possible contingency re-routing through neighboring country's bordering airspace and reviews, exchanges traffic situation with neighboring FIR.
 - o Coordinator in neighboring country FIR to ensures heads up information of activation of contingency airspace management plan in the bordering airspace to the Air defense authorities as well as alerting ATCOs on traffic management on possible airspace related diversions.
 - o Remember that it is a contingency plan thus avert any further formal approvals etc for execution of contingency plan; except for the air traffic management need to happen in coordinated manner.

Activation of Diversion management plan: Trigger point: When forecast doesn't indicate improvements; based on traffic situation a decision need to be taken to route flights through neighboring country's FIR as per the coordinated contingency plan.

Scenario 2: Diverting to an airport in neighboring country:

Diversion Management Process with Approaching Adverse Weather: It is important that the ATC (WSO) keeps the Diversion management plan ready when there are clear indications of approaching adverse weather. But the plan need not be activated at this stage.

Activities at this stage: Diversion planning and coordination:

- Diversion planner to list arrivals within the TMA and identify filed alternate airports for each flight.
- Coordinator provides heads up information of possible diversions to neighboring country's ATC and gets data about aerodrome conditions, available parking bays.
- Coordinator in neighboring country FIR to ensures heads up information to the Air defense authorities as well as alerting airport management on possible diversions.

Activation of Diversion management plan: Trigger point: When forecast doesn't indicate improvement in next 30 minutes, a decision need to be taken to divert the arrivals.

- Ensure close co-ordination with neighboring Country FIR for handling actual flight diversions.
- Update situation to aircraft (TMA as well as enroute) and assist with diversion situation (available and suitable alternates),
- Flow Control restrictions may be activated to stop the departing flights destination to the affected airport,
- Co-ordinate with Flights enroute for their preferred alternate and advice respective FIRs,
- International flights may have specific "suitable" alternate airport preference for diversions.