

IBAC Technical Report Summary

Subject: ICAO Flight Plan Study Group (FPLSG)

Meeting: 6TH and Final Meeting

IBAC File:

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Summary:

The ICAO Flight Plan Study Group (FPLSG) conducted its 6th and final meeting in Montreal during the week of October 22 through October 26, 2007. The FPLSG findings and recommendations will transfer to the Air Traffic Management Requirements and Performance Panel (ATMRPP) for their review.

There was considerable discussions about the repetitive flight plan (RPL) remaining with the future flight plan concept. The group agreed that the RPL should remain because of certain cost savings to scheduled Airline operators. The RPL is more of a scheduled airline function than it is for business aviation and does not have any impact on business aviation in the foreseeable future.

There was a lengthy discussion about how far in advance a flight plan should be filed. The group agreed that 120 hours should be the maximum allowable filing time in advance of the estimated time of departure (ETD) to prevent problems from occurring mainly because of the AIRAC cycle (the various monthly airway and navigation updates). A date of flight (DOF) will need to be added if filed more than 24 hours in advance and messages related to date of flight such as change (CHG) messages, and delay (DLA) messages will be impacted and therefore will require some formatting adjustments.

The main thrust and time of the meeting concentrated on the elements of the flight plan in the PANS ATM Document 4444 under Appendix 2 concerning the Flight Plan form. Much consideration was given to the new technologies that will need to be defined in the flight plan form and how they should be presented to Air Traffic Management and Air Traffic Control. Several tables and schema were constructed by the FAA team (several members of the group) that established codes for these latest technologies and how they should be conveyed on the flight plan form and eventually transmitted to ATC.

New codes for various technological advances in navigation, communications, and surveillance equipment capabilities such as ADS B, CPDLC, and GLS, and Performance Based Navigation (PBN) specifications such as RNP and RNAV were offered and the group agreed with the codes. Where the codes should be

presented on the flight plan form will be up to the ICAO Secretariat but the group offered two options for consideration which were to insert the codes in item 10 or to insert them in item 18.

The changes on the flight plan form are significant but provide for the latest technological advances in the future aviation environment. Moreover, all facets of the aviation industry and the impact on it, in relation to the flight plan form, were carefully considered.

The target date for implementation was not determined.

Implication for Business Aviation:

Since the latest technologies will be coded and transmitted to Air Traffic Control through a revised flight plan form, it is certain to be of great benefit to business aviation. Preferential routings, better altitude capabilities and improved communications with ATC will be realized in the future saving the business aviation community money in operating time and fuel costs and, in general, will create a much more efficient system for the aviation industry as a whole.

Decisions Required:

None.

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