



International Civil Aviation Organization

**MIDANPIRG Air Traffic Management Sub-Group**

**Fourth Meeting (ATM SG/4)**

*(Amman, Jordan, 29 April – 3 May 2018)*

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**Agenda Item 6: ATM Safety Matters**

**CALL SIGN CONFUSION INITIATIVE**

*(Presented by IATA)*

**SUMMARY**

The aim of this paper is provide an update on the MAEP project addressing regional Call Sign Confusion/Similarity as it relates to commercial flights.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

**REFERENCES**

- ATM SG/3
- ICAO State Letter Ref.: AN 6/34-14/332
- ICAO State Letter Ref.: AN 6/34-16/173
- MAEP Board/2 Report
- MAEP SC/1 Report
- MIDANPIRG/15 Report
- MIDANPIRG/16 Report
- RASG-MID/5 Report
- RASG-MID SAFETY ADVISORY – 04

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The use of similar call signs by aircraft operating in the same area and on the same radio frequency has potential to flight safety incidents, also known as “call-sign conflicts” or “call-sign confusion”. The danger of an aircraft taking and acting on a clearance intended for another aircraft due to call sign confusion is a common occurrence.

1.2 During CNS SG/5 Tehran, Iran, 9 – 11 September 2014 was highlighted that, in order to reduce the level of operational call sign confusion events, and therefore improve levels of safety, several Airline operators have changed their philosophy of only using a numeric (commercial) call-sign (e.g. UAE503) to that of applying an ‘alpha-numeric’ call sign(e.g. UAE59CG). This is now common practice in the European Region.

1.3 ICAO issued state survey AN 6/34-14/332 tasking States to provide information as it relates to acceptance of alpha numeric commercial flight identification numbers to include ATC systems and regulatory approvals.

1.4 The MAEP SC/1 meeting held Dubai, UAE, 20- 22 January 2015 identified call sign confusion would be a suitable project to present possible solutions for the region.

- The project identified Etihad Airways to lead a project that would provide regional solutions and testing to address the safety concern.

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 To address the call sign confusion initiative the project has utilized a 2 phased project approach. The project manager during this project was Etihad Airways with the support of IATA. This was also presented to the RASG-MID/4 Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, 30 March - 1 April 2015.

2.2 Phase one of the project was addressing regional Air Traffic Management systems to include Air Traffic Control , State Overflight Approvals and Aerodrome landing/departure permissions and there acceptance on the use of alpha-numeric within a commercial flight plan i.e.(UAE20AA) utilizing flight plan testing.

2.3 Phase two of the project was run in parallel to phase one as to identify means and processes for identifying and de-conflicting current and future airline call signs within the region.

2.4 The meeting may wish to note that a coordination meeting was held at Etihad Headquarters in Abu Dhabi, UAE on 24 August 2016, between IATA, ICAO and several air operators. The meeting reviewed the progress of the CSC Initiative and agreed on the launching of second phase of trials. Additional airlines joined Etihad Airways in the testing of the flight plans starting from this year winter schedule. Accordingly, States have been invited to cooperate and report feedback in order to ensure successful implementation.

2.5 The meeting may wish to note that Qatar Airways will assume the role of project lead with immediate effect and will continue to provide project assistance to both airlines and states as needed. The Qatar's point of project contact will be: Mr. Rafal Kazimierz Marczewski - rmarczewski@qatarairways.com.qa and Mr. Milan Stefanik, PhD. - mstefanik@qatarairways.com.qa

2.6 ICAO issued State Letter Ref.: AN 6/34-16/173 dated 26 June 2016, requesting States to implement MIDANPIRG Conclusion 15/2 and report call sign similarity/confusion cases using the template provided.

2.7 The Meeting may wish to take note that airlines have experienced challenges when filing for alpha numeric call sign flight plans with some that even had been previously approved. With only one state or airport denial will require the airlines not to use at all for that flight. We would ask that states assure that departments providing flight plan approval be briefed on the acceptance of such for all airlines.

2.8 The meeting may wish to take note that Appendix A provides an update on the international airport testing for the Mid Region, IATA expects that all international airports will have been tested prior to end of Q4 2018 at which time would expect states to publish within their AIP the acceptance of alpha numerical call signs with any national requirements that are not covered under the Eurocontrol publications that was presented to the ATM SG/3 meeting and RASG Safety Advisory 4.

**3. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to encourage States to:

- a) support the CSC initiatives ensuring effective cooperation during the testing and implementation phases;
- b) support the airport testing as per **Appendix A**; and
- c) report call similarity to the following email addresses: [MIDCSC@icao.int](mailto:MIDCSC@icao.int) and [MENACSSU@iata.org](mailto:MENACSSU@iata.org).

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APPENDIX A

Country	Overflight Approved and OK	Destination	Destination Approved and tested	Remarks	Country Status
			Yes		
BAHRAIN	✓	OBBI BAHRAIN/Bahrain Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
EGYPT	✓	HEAX ALEXANDRIA/Alexandria Intl			
		HEBA ALEXANDRIA /Borg El-Arab Intl			
		HESN ASWAN/Aswan Intl			
		HEAT ASYUT/Asyut Intl			
		HEAZ CAIRO/Almaza Intl			
		HECA CAIRO/Cairo Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
		HEAR EL-ARISH/EI-Arish Intl			
		HEGN HURGADA/Hurghada Intl			
		HELX LUXOR/Luxor Intl			
		HEMA MARSA ALAM/Marsa Alam Intl			
		HEPS PORT-SAID/ Port- Said Intl			
		HEOW SHARK EL OWEINAT/ Shark El Oweinat Intl			
		HESH SHARM EL-SHEIKH/ Sharm El Sheikh Intl			
		HESC ST.CATHERINE/St. Catherine Intl			
HETB TABA/Taba Intl					
IRAN	✓	OIKB BANDAR ABBAS/Bandar Abbas Intl			
		OIFM ESFAHAN/Shahid Beheshti Intl			
		OIMM MASHHAD/Shahid Hashemi Nejad Intl	✓	Tested by QR	
		OISS SHIRAZ/Shiraz Intl	✓	Tested by QR	
		OITT TABRIZ/Tabriz Intl			
		OIIE TEHRAN/Emam Khomains Intl	✓	Tested by EY and QR	
		OIII TEHRAN/Mehrabad Intl			
ZAHEDAN/Zaheda n Intl					

IRAQ	✓	ORBI BAGHDAD/Baghdad Intl	✓	Tested by QR	
		ORMM BASRAH/Basrah Intl	✓	Tested by QR	
		ORER ERBIL/Erbil Intl	✓	Tested by QR	
		ORSU SULYMANIYAH/ Sulaymaniyah Intl	✓	Tested by QR	
		ORNI AI Najaf/AI Najaf Intl	✓	Tested by QR	
JORDAN	✓	OJAI AMMAN/Queen Alia Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
		OJAQ AQABA/ King Hussein Intl			
KUWAIT	✓	OKBK KUWAIT/Kuwait Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
LEBANON	✓	OLBA BEIRUT/R. B. H - Beirut Intl	✓	Tested by EY and QR	
OMAN	✓	OOMS MUSCAT/Muscat Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
		OOSH SOHAR			
		OOSA SALALAH/Salalah			
QATAR	✓	OTBD DOHA/Doha Intl	✓	Tested by EY and QR	
SAUDI ARABIA	✓	OEDF DAMMAM/Kind Fahid Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
		OEJN JEDDAH/King Abdulaziz Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
		OEMA MADINAH/Prince Mohammad Bin Abdulaziz Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
		OERK RIYADH/King Khalid Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
SUDAN	✓	HSKA KASSALA/Kassala			
		HSSS KHARTOUM/Khartoum	✓	Tested by EY	
		HSPN PORT SUDAN/Port Sudan Intl			
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	✓	OMAA ABU DHABI/Abu Dhabi Intl	✓	Tested by EY and QR	
		OMAL AL AIN/AI Ain Intl	✓	Tested by EY	
		OMDB DUBAI/Dubai Intl			
		OMFJ FUJAIRAH/Fujairah Intl			
		OMRK RAS AL KHAIMAH/Ras Al Khaimah Intl			
		OMSJ SHARJAH/Sharjah Intl			
		OMDW DUBI, AI Maktoum Int'l			