

CONFERENCE ON THE ECONOMICS OF AIRPORTS AND AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES

(Montreal, 19 - 28 June 2000)

Agenda Item 5.2: Elements for consideration with regard to ICAO policy

COST RECOVERY OF AERONAUTICAL METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES

(Presented by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO))

1. Introduction

1.1 The World Weather Watch (WWW) Global Observing System (GOS) provides the basic data for numerical weather prediction (NWP) models including the application of aviation NWP models run by the two World Area Forecast Centres (WAFCs). The overall cost of the WWW GOS has been estimated at 3 to 4 billion US Dollars per year excluding special investments required to upgrade, such as the new GPS radiosonde wind finding equipment needed in 1998 because of the termination of the OMEGA Navigational System. The large amount of basic data used in running the application of aviation NWP models are timely transmitted to the two WAFCs, London and Washington, by the WWW Global Telecommunication System (GTS).

1.2 In the mid-1990s, the ICAO Air Navigation Services Economics Panel (ANSEP) unanimously agreed on guidance for determining the cost of aeronautical meteorological service. This Guidance was published in the ICAO Manual on Air Navigation Services Economics (ICAO Doc 9161/3 in late 1997, and in the WMO Guide on Aeronautical Meteorological Services Cost Recovery (WMO-No.904) in 1999. No party to the development of the Guidance including IATA expressed reservation when the Panel completed its work. The proposal submitted by IATA to review the agreed current arrangement now appears to violate the spirit of the recently agreed upon Guidance.

2. The WMO position

2.1 WMO opposes the IATA proposal to review the current provisions relating to the determination of the cost of aeronautical meteorological service for the following main reasons:

- The IATA document does not address the most important aspect of the provision of aeronautical meteorological service, namely air safety. Air safety must remain the highest priority in air navigation, even when economic efficiencies are compromised. Furthermore, the global meteorological infrastructure is largely provided by the WMO

World Weather Watch that supports most of the facilities and capabilities of the World Area Forecast System. Aviation pays only a small fraction of the costs of this infrastructure, but is one of the largest users.

- The suggestion of competition by IATA could result in both increased risk to air safety when competing and perhaps contradictory weather warnings are issued for the same airspace and increased costs when considering the potential for duplication by establishing parallel facilities and services that would replace the 3 to 4 billion US Dollar global meteorological infrastructure of the WWW.
- Costs for Satellites and some other WWW GOS basic facilities and services that support aeronautical meteorological services are not included in the present cost recovery guidance of the ICAO Manual. However, these elements also contribute significantly to the safety, regularity and efficiency of international air navigation.
- The ANSEP process included the participation of all stakeholders including the aviation industry, Contracting States, and WMO. The process is just being completed with the recent publication of the ICAO Manual on Air Navigation Services Economics (Doc 9161/3) and the WMO Guide on Aeronautical Meteorological Services Cost Recovery (WMO-No. 904). Training of WMO Members/ICAO Contracting States on the use of these two publications is still underway.
- Increasing the financial burden beyond already escalating costs to National Meteorological Services that are Designated Meteorological Authorities, or those that strongly support these Authorities by the removal of the core services from the present cost recovery arrangement would result in serious negative impacts to the quality of aeronautical meteorological service.
- Cost recovery to international aviation under the new ICAO Manual is based on a principle of fairness and equality to all users. Changes to this mechanism after such a recent agreement could cause major problems in the viability of many National Meteorological Services particularly those Services in Developing Countries that are most dependent on recovering a portion of their costs for international aviation.
- The IATA statement that Meteorological Services are usually government-owned or form part of the government organisation, is increasingly becoming invalid for a growing number of Meteorological Services. Previous full public funded sectors, including NMSs, are often becoming autonomous entities with a substantial decline of the level of public funding.

3. **Conclusion**

3.1 WMO acting on behalf of National Meteorological Services that are also Designated Meteorological Authorities, and those providing support to the Authorities, proposes that the Conference recommends to the Council:

- a) That the existing text setting out ICAO's policy with regard to the recovery of costs of providing aeronautical meteorological service as expressed in the Statements by the Council to Contracting States on Charges for Airports and Air Navigation Services, Appendix 2 (DOC 9082/5), be retained; and
- b) That the Guidance determining the costs of aeronautical meteorological service contained in the ICAO Manual on Air Navigation Services Economics (DOC 9161/3) be retained.

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