INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

AFI PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL GROUP
THIRTEENTH MEETING (APIRG/13)
(Sal, CapeVerde, 25-29 June 2001)

Agenda item 4.3.   **Air Traffic Management**

5 letter name code designators

(Presented by IFALPA)

1. Introduction

1.1   As early as May 1997, during the Abuja AFI/7 RAN Meeting, IFALPA proposed that all Airway Crossings be given names according the 5 letter name code designator system. This, to allow both controllers and pilots to identify points of potential conflict and to be able to assess the time at which such points will be passed.
This is essential in a non-radar environment and even more so when direct pilot-controller communications (VHF) are non-existent.

The AFI/7 RAN Meeting recorded this on page 5-7 under para 5.8.2 stating: "The meeting highlighted the need for assigning five-letter name-code designators to all points of intersection of ATS routes within the AFI Region. The ICAO Regional Offices concerned would assist in identifying those points and allocating five-letter name-codes for their easy identification."

2. Follow-up

2.1   In May 1998 IFALPA, in an informative way, copied Mr. M. Heijl, then Deputy Director of the Air Navigation Division, ICAO Montreal, of this proposal. This was acknowledged through a letter by Mr J. Howell, Secretary to the Air Navigation Commission, ICAO Montreal, to the ICAO Representatives in Dakar and Nairobi. This letter was dated 10 August 1998 and states full support for the IFALPA request and asks that action be taken to assign five letter name codes to intersections identified in the attachment and to be kept informed of progress.

3. Subsequently

3.1   The IFALPA proposal, expanded as an in depth survey of all AFI FIR's with regard to points of intersection then not having five-letter name-code designators, was submitted to the 5th meeting of the ATS/AIS/SAR sub-group, Nairobi, 5-9 October 1998.

3.2   This meeting, in its report on page 5, acknowledges the issue in its Draft Conclusion 5/4, that:
Draft Conclusion 5/4 - Five Letter name codes for airway intersections.
That States in consultation with the ICAO Regional Office, ensure that five letter name code designators are allocated to all ATS routes intersections within the AFI Region

4.   APIRG/12

4.1   The APIRG/12 meeting, Tunis 21-25 June 1999, in its report on page 4-10 and 4-11, on the review ATS/AIS/SAR/5 meeting report, recognizes " It was therefore necessary to re-emphasize the need for States to take urgent action in order to address these non-implemented problems. Among these, major areas of concern were:

vi) The assignment of five-letter name-code designators to ATS route intersections."

4.2   APIRG/12 did not formulate this requirement into a Conclusion.

4.3   APIRG/12 did, however, create the establishment of an Airspace Management Task Force in which IFALPA became a member.

5.   ASM TF/1

5.1   The ASM TF/1 was convened in Nairobi, on April 5-7 2000. IFALPA re-submitted its earlier proposal, re-edited using December 1999 Airway Charts.

5.2   The study by IFALPA was accepted and forwarded to the ATS/AIS/SAR/6 meeting

6.   ATS/AIS/SAR/6 Meeting

6.1   This meeting, held in Dakar from 8-12 May 2000, has in its report an extensive attachment, detailing the meeting comments and agreement on the many points identified in the IFALPA proposal. Furthermore, the ATS/AIS/SAR/6, meeting, in its report recognizes the link between many airprox incidents and the lack of names in airway crossings (page 16).

7.   Last opportunity

7.1   The last opportunity for IFALPA to "air" its concern was at the meeting of Directors General in Nairobi on 23 and 24 January 2001. In WP/21 the issue of five letter name code designators is one of the topics of IFALPA's submission.

8.   Today's realities

8.1   Studying airway charts published in 2001 reveal little change from those of 1997, at least not under the topic at hand.   Specific improvements are noted in the FIR's under ASECNA's area of responsibility, although some details still deserve attention In one particular FIR the points identified have indeed been given a non compulsory reporting point status, but are identified as geographical coordinates rather than a five letter name code. In the vast majority of FIR's there is however no change whatsoever.

9.   Conclusion

9.1   It would appear, that naming an identified crossing point that at this moment has no name, and where it is agreed that it is a useful and safety enhancing exercise, that this exercise would receive some kind of attention within the administrations/authorities responsible. It would also appear that it is more or less an administrative exercise, possible to be accomplished in a mere morning or afternoon. Perhaps IFALPA is naive in assuming this.