



## INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

### SECOND MEETING OF THE AFI REGION AIM IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

(Nairobi, Kenya, 17 – 19 December 2012)

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#### AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (AIM) AIRAC ADHERENCE

Aeronautical information is constantly changing: airspace structures and routes are revised, navigation aids change, SIDs and STARs are amended, runway and taxiway information changes. It is essential, for both efficiency and safety, that Pilots, Air Traffic Controllers, Air Traffic Flow Managers, Flight Management Systems and Aviation Charts all have the same data set.

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This can only be achieved by following the AIRAC.

#### What is AIRAC?

AIRAC stands for Aeronautical Information Regulation And Control and steps from the Annex 15 - Aeronautical Information Services (AIS) document and defines a series of common dates and an associated standard aeronautical information publication procedure for States.

In short it defines that in all instances, information provided under the AIRAC system shall be published in paper copy form and shall be distributed by the AIS unit at least 42 days in advance of the effective date with the objective of reaching recipients at least 28 days in advance of the effective date. Whenever major changes are planned and where additional notice is desirable and practicable, a publication date of at least 56 days in advance of the effective date should be used.

Three dates are to be remembered from this:

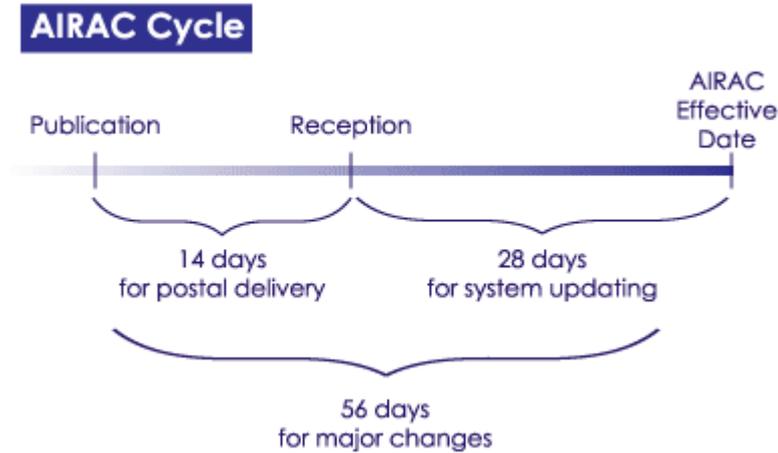
Effective Date	<b>Date at which changes take effect.</b>
Publication Date	<b>Date at which the AIS organization sends out the information.</b> -> Should be at least 42 days (56 for major changes) before effective date.
Reception Date	<b>Date at which the user should receive the publications.</b> -> Should be at 28 days before the effective date.

The two weeks between Publication date and Reception date is basically to allow for postal distribution of the (mostly) paper publications.

### The AIRAC cycle

The AIRAC cycle was adopted in 1964 and further improved over the years.

Key are the worldwide effective dates with 28 days intervals (e.g. 4 August 2005, 1 September 2005, 29 September 2005, ...). Effective days are always on a Thursday.



It may look indeed like a long period, 28 days, or even 56, but it should be understood that aeronautical information changes (mostly published through so called AIRAC Amendments) require

1. Changes to local systems which includes interpreting, re-typing and re-coding the information.
2. Verification and Correction as publications are unfortunately seldom perfect.
3. Validation against other data; Flight Plans are just one example.
4. Re-distribution. Hereby think of Charts and Flight Management Systems to a fleet which can be anywhere in the world.

### The AIRAC effective dates

The AIRAC effective dates are published in ICAO Doc 8126, the Aeronautical Information Services Manual, 'Table 2-1. Schedule of AIRAC effective dates'. They are also referred to in most national AIPs when providing the data delivery dates for data originators.

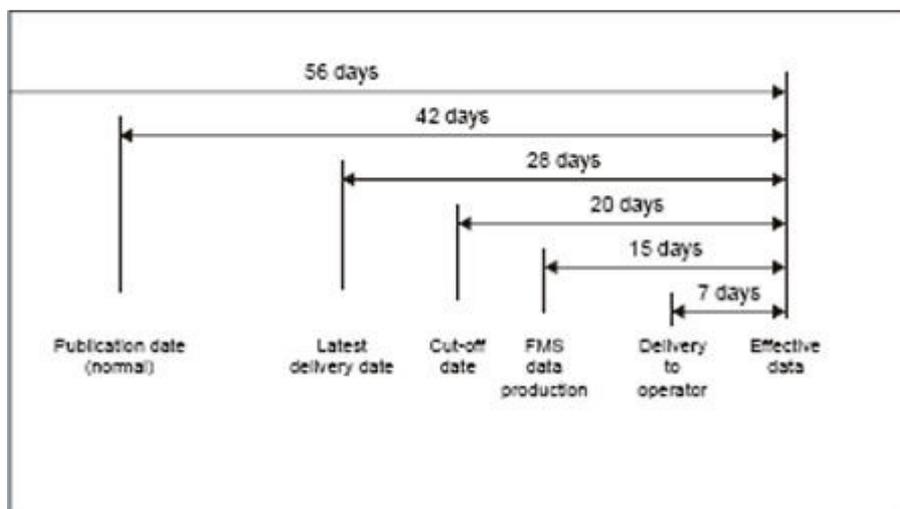
2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
15 January	14 January	13 January	12 January	10 January
12 February	11 February	10 February	9 February	7 February
12 March	11 March	10 March	8 March	7 March
9 April	8 April	7 April	5 April	4 April
7 May	6 May	5 May	3 May	2 May
4 June	3 June	2 June	31 May	30 May
2 July	1 July	30 June	28 June	27 June

30 July	29 July	28 July	26 July	25 July
27 August	26 August	25 August	23 August	22 August
24 September	23 September	22 September	20 September	19 September
22 October	21 October	20 October	18 October	17 October
19 November	18 November	17 November	15 November	14 November
17 December	16 December	15 December	13 December	12 December

### 'Freeze' dates

Each recipient has an internal date, called 'freeze' date or Cut-off date, before the effective date after which he can not accept changes anymore. For example, Aircraft Flight Management Systems need the data often 20 days before the effective date to allow for the information re-coding, information uploading and distribution.

Note that these freeze dates are strictly speaking the recipients own business, however they become important in the context of AIRAC Non-adherence as illustrated on the following timeline:



### Christmas and New Year

ICAO Annex 15 - Chapter 6 is clear: "The use of the date in the AIRAC cycle which occurs between 21 December and 17 January inclusive should be avoided as an effective date for the introduction of significant changes under the AIRAC system".

And in ICAO Doc 8126 – Chapter 4, because of reduced staffing and increased postal delays, "it is recommended that the AIRAC cycle date occurring in the 28-day period from 21 December to 17 January (both dates included) no longer be used as an AIRAC effective date for the introduction of significant operational changes. States experiencing similar problems during other holiday periods may wish to adopt a comparable system".