



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Second Meeting of the AFI Volcanic Ash Steering Group (AFI VOLCEX/SG2)

(Virtual, 18 July 2023)

Agenda Item 3 – AFI VOLCEX 23 Framework

WP3.1 3.1. Update on the Guidelines provided in Appendix F of Doc 9766 and AFI OPINS

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY
<p>This paper provides an update on the guidelines developed to assist States in conducting volcanic ash exercises in the AFI region.</p> <p>Action by the meeting in paragraph 3</p>
<p>REFERENCE(S):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APIRG/24 Report • APIRG/25 Report • Doc 9766 Handbook on the IAVW • ToR of AFI VOLCEX SG
<p>Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A – Safety, B – Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Volcanic ash exercises should be conducted by ICAO on a regional basis in order to practice and develop inter-agency response to volcanic activity, in order to maintain safety, regularity and efficiency of aviation in the event of a volcanic eruption.
- 1.2. To facilitate the conduct of volcanic ash exercises intended to develop and practice the response to volcanic activity in the various regions, ICAO has developed guidance provided in the Appendix F to the Handbook on the International Airways Volcano Watch (IAVW) (ICAO Doc 9766) detailing appropriate guidance to be followed by States and stakeholders involved.

2. DISCUSSIONS

- 2.1. In accordance with the provisions of the Appendix F to Doc 9766, volcanic ash exercises should be facilitated via the ICAO Regional Office concerned and support the regular assessment of system performance (in accordance with quality management principles), the assessment of the safety performance which is required by ICAO safety management provisions. The frequency and scope of volcanic ash exercises is the responsibility of the ICAO region concerned. Where frequent volcanic

activity results in adequate information about system performance, exercises may be omitted or constrained to infrequent, extraordinary situations or be held only to test revised procedures.

- 2.2. A volcanic ash exercises steering group may be established by a PIRG to coordinate all aspects of the organization and conduct of the exercises. The steering group should have representatives from, as a minimum, the volcanic ash advisory centres (VAACs) concerned, air navigation service providers (ANSPs), airspace users and regulators.
- 2.3. The Twenty-fourth Meeting of the AFI Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APIRG/24), through the Decision 24/02 relating to the establishment of a Volcanic Ash Exercises Steering Group in the AFI Region, approved the terms of reference of the AFI VOLCEX/SG to power the Steering Group to coordinate all the aspects related to conduct of the volcanic ash exercises in the AFI region.
- 2.4. Furthermore, the Decision 24/28 of APIRG/24 endorsed the AFI Volcanic Ash Exercise Operational Instructions (OPINS) and Directives to guide the planning and conduct of the volcanic ash exercise. The AFI OPINS is provided in Appendix A to this working paper.
- 2.5. In accordance with the provision of the OPINS, the volcanic ash exercise should be conducted every two years in the AFI Region. The exercise is led by and Exercise Leader supervising the work of a Directing Staff in charge of negotiating and designing the exercise scenario, conducting the exercise, debriefing the exercise, and writing the Initial Exercise Report.
- 2.6. The APIRG/25 meeting, through Decision 25/33, approved the candidature of the Democratic Republic of Congo to lead the regional VA Exercise 23/01

3. ACTIONS BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information contained in this working paper.
- b) Encourage the Democratic Republic of Congo, in their capacity of the 2023 Exercise Leader to take appropriate actions to conduct the volcanic ash exercise by the end of December 2023.

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