



ICAO

# INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

A UN SPECIALIZED AGENCY

Workshop on the provision of  
information on volcanic eruptions  
and ash clouds

*(Yaoundé, Cameroon, 16 – 20 June 2025)*



# Action to be taken by VAACs or MWOs regarding volcanic ash SIGMET test procedures

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*ICAO WACAF Office*

By the Secretariat

# Outline

1. Purpose and Scope of VA SIGMET Tests
2. Participating Agencies, Roles and responsibilities
3. Reporting on Volcanic Ash SIGMET Tests
4. Level of Participation in the VA SIGMET Tests, 2019 to 2023
5. Conclusion



# Purpose and Scope of SIGMET Tests

- In **2002**, the **Meteorology Divisional Meeting (Recommendation 1/12 b))** called on the AFI Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APIRG) **to regularly conduct SIGMET tests, particularly for volcanic ash (VA).**
- **Purpose**  
These tests assess Meteorological Watch Offices (MWOs) **awareness of ICAO requirements** for issuing SIGMETs and ensure **State procedures align with ICAO SARPs and regional guidelines.**
- **Scope**  
Tests also evaluate **coordination between Volcanic Ash Advisory Centres (VAACs) and MWOs**, where applicable. When testing WV SIGMET issuance, MWOs **should base their TEST SIGMETs on TEST advisories issued by the relevant VAAC.**

## Participating Agencies

### Procedure for VA SIGMET involves :

- ICAO Regional Offices (EASF and WACAF Offices for the AFI Region)
- Volcanic Ash Advisory Centre (**VAAC**);
- Regional OPMET Data Banks (**RODB**);
- Meteorological Watch Offices (**MWO**) (Table MET II-1, AFI eANP refers)
- World Area Forecast Centre (**WAFC London**)

# Role of the Participating Agencies

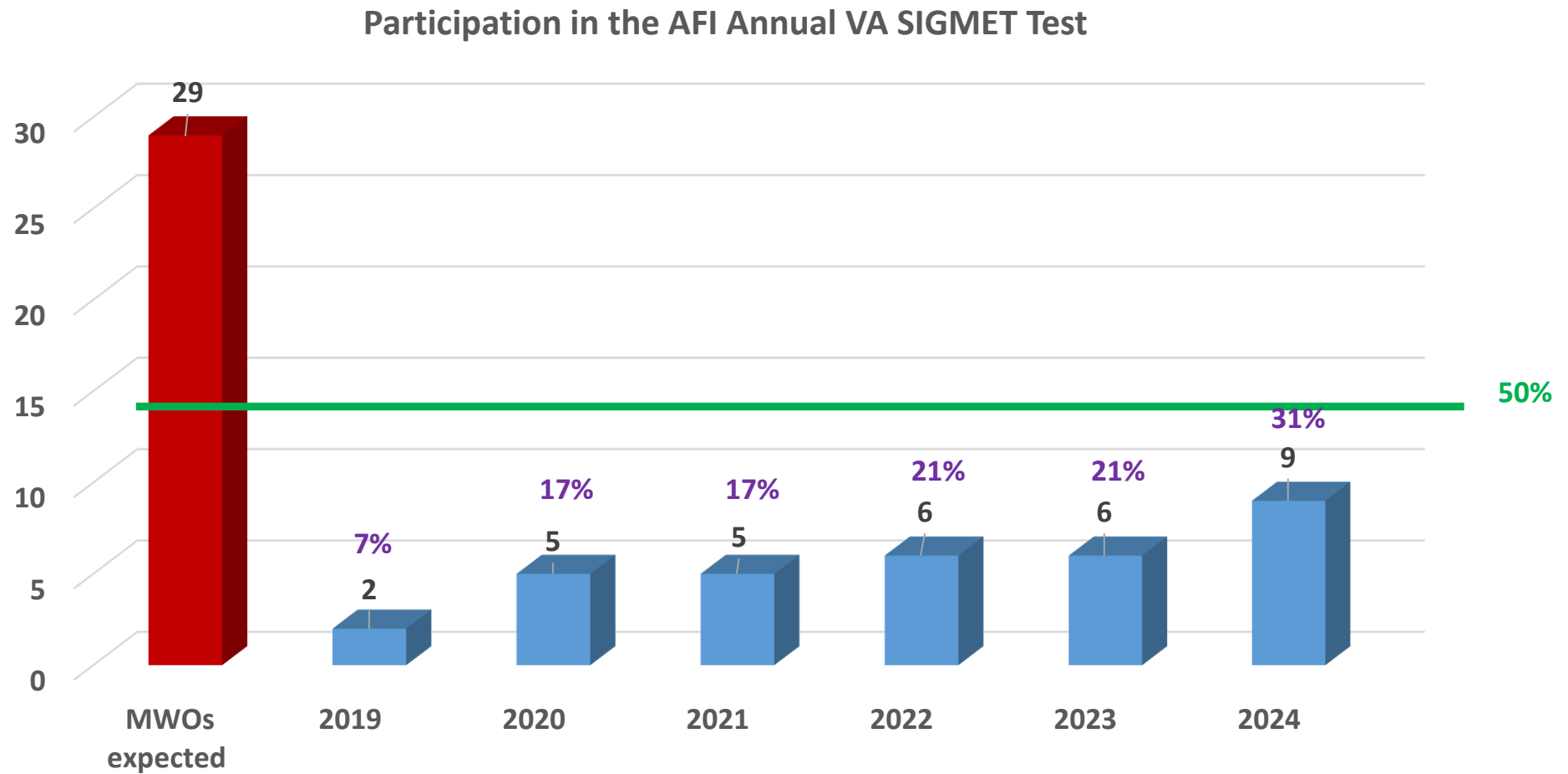
- **ICAO Regional Offices** design the **Scenario of SIGMET Tests** and **coordinate the dates of the Tests** with the associated VAAC (VAAC Toulouse).
- **At the agreed date and time**, participating VAACs issue a **TEST volcanic ash advisory** following Annex 3 format, clearly indicating as “TEST” and send it to their MWOs.
- MWOs should notify associated ATS units in advance of the tests
- MWOs should respond by issuing a **corresponding TEST SIGMET** containing the word “TEST” or “EXER”, indicating it is **not for operational use**.
- All TEST SIGMETs should be disseminated as per **requirements provided in Annex 3 and Regional Air Navigation Plan** (WACFs, OPMET Data Banks, NOTAM Offices, etc.).

# Reporting on Volcanic Ash SIGMET Tests

- After each test, RODBs compile **preliminary reports** and send them to ICAO Regional Offices (ESAF and WACAF for the AFI Region) for consolidation into the **final report**.
- The final SIGMET test report outlines **participation levels, compliance with relevant SARPs, identified shortcomings, and recommended actions**.
- States and stakeholders **are urged to promptly address identified issues** requiring their attention

## Leven of Participation in the VA SIGMET Tests, 2019 to 2024

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## Conclusion

- Participation in the VA SIGMET Tests from 2019 to 2023 **averaged between 7% and 31%**, highlighting areas of concerns
- States and MWO service providers **are strongly encouraged to take part in the annual SIGMET tests** and implement the resulting recommended actions.



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Thank You!