



ARMA SAFETY COMMUNIQUE BASED ON 2007 SAFETY ASSESSMENT & 2008 RVSM IMPLEMENTATION

INTRODUCTION

The AFI Regional Monitoring Agency in executing its duties on behalf of ICAO periodically communicates essential safety information to RVSM role players in an attempt to manage the reduction of operational errors and to report pertinent RVSM information. Although the AFI region has reported a reduction in vertical incidents the ARMA urges all participants to be RVSM vigilant as there could very well be under reporting of vertical incidents. AFI could even experience an increase of vertical incidents after the implementation of RVSM on 25 September 2008. Unrelated to RVSM is the concern of horizontal incidents being captured by the ARMA which will need a concerted effort by all to reduce these incidents.

SHORT SUMMARY OF THE 2007 SAFETY ASSESSMENT

The 2007 Total Vertical Collision Risk assessment measured against the Target Level Safety (TLS) provided the AFI RVSM Project Management Team with an indication that the collision risk had yet again improved based on available data submitted for the safety assessment. Armed with this information the decision to implement RVSM in the AFI Region, after following due process, was made. The following pertinent information has been extracted:

- The Technical Vertical Collision Risk Assessment was calculated to be below the Technical TLS for the third consecutive assessment.
- The Total Vertical Collision Risk Assessment was calculated to have exceeded the TLS by a factor of 1.3 - 2.2 depending on the assumption made with regard to missing data.
- The assessment was difficult to complete as many States did not submit the required data.
- During the processing of the data it became evident that some submitted data was incomplete or not in the required format.
- Vertical incidents showed a decrease from the previous assessments
- Horizontal incidents showed no improvement.

OPERATIONAL ERRORS LEADING TO LARGE HEIGHT DEVIATIONS

It should be recalled that operational errors are influenced by;

- An error in the altimetry or altitude-keeping systems of aircraft
- Turbulence and other weather-related phenomena
- An emergency descent by an aircraft without the crew following established contingency procedures

- Responses to airborne collision avoidance systems (ACAS) advisories
- An error in following a correctly issued ATC, clearance, resulting in flight at an incorrect flight level
- An error in issuing an ATC clearance, resulting in flight at an incorrect flight level
- Errors in coordination of the transfer of control responsibility for an aircraft between adjacent ATC units, resulting in flight at an incorrect flight level.

FLIGHT PLANNING

Aircraft Operators are reminded to ensure that the “W” is inserted in the correct field on flight plans for both standard flight plans and RPL’s for RVSM approved aircraft only. Initially various problems were experienced with the filing of flight plans for RVSM operations.

STATES & ANSP ARE REMINDED OF THE FOLLOWING:

Non – RVSM approved civil aircraft may not be cleared into RVSM airspace. State Civil Aviation Authorities are urged to ensure that all RVSM State Operational Approvals are issued as a matter of urgency to Aircraft Operators on application and forwarded to ARMA on the official ARMA F2 form, “Record of Approval to operate in RVSM Airspace”. States and ANSP should recall the procedure for RVSM operations above FL410 and requested Operations of non-approved RVSM State Aircraft within the RVSM band traffic permitting.

States and ANSP’s are reminded to be vigilant and identify “hot spots” as soon as possible and address with the appropriate mitigations. Assistance may be sought from the ARMA in this respect.

Large Height Deviations ARMA F1 must be completed and submitted monthly to the ARMA.

AIRCRAFT OPERATORS ARE REMINDED OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Flight crews must adhere to operating practices and procedures as published and amended.
- Flight plans must be filed in accordance with RVSM flight plan requirements
- Operators must ensure that they obtain State Civil Aviation Authority RVSM Operational Approval prior to flight planning for RVSM operations.

SUBMISSION OF AFI RVSM SAFETY ASSESSMENT DATA TO ARMA

All AFI States/ANSP/FIR/ACC are reminded to submit ALL their RVSM safety assessment data every month to ARMA. This will ensure that the required safety assessments can be conducted as required by the AFI RVSM Safety Policy.

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