

Seychelles Civil Aviation Authority

Safety and Security Regulation Department

Flight Operations and Flight Crew Licensing Inspectorate

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31 August 2023

FLIGHT OPERATIONS NOTICE

Number: OPS/N/2023/005

Aircraft Tracking

Flight Operations Notices are intended to provide advice and guidance to illustrate a means, but not necessarily the only means, of complying with the Regulations, or to explain certain regulatory requirements by providing informative, interpretative and explanatory material. Flight Operations Notices should always be read in conjunction with the relevant regulations.

1. Purpose

The principal intent of the requirements for aircraft tracking is to ensure that operators develop and implement the operational control capability to track their aeroplanes throughout the area(s) of operations defined in the air operator certificate (AOC) and related operations specifications. This aircraft tracking capability is defined in the standards of ICAO Annex 6, Part I and refers to a capability that maintains and updates, at standardized intervals, a ground-based record of the position of individual aircraft commensurate with their intended operations.

The standards were adopted by the Council to expedite the implementation of a near-term and routine aircraft tracking solution. The content of this notice is intended to support the implementation of operator aircraft tracking policies, processes and procedures. Its purpose is to provide information for operators on the implementation of the requirements for aircraft tracking.

2. Applicability

This notice is applicable to commercial air transport operators required to track their aircraft in accordance with Annex 6, Part I, 3.5 – Aircraft tracking.

3. References

- ICAO Doc 8168 Procedures for Air Navigation Services, Aircraft Operations (PANS-OPS), Volume III, Aircraft Operating Procedures
- ICAO Circular 347 Aircraft Tracking Implementation Guidelines
- United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

4. Additional Information/Clarification/Queries

Any queries, requests for guidance/clarification or additional information subsequent to this publication should be addressed to General Manager Safety and Security Regulation by mail dalabrosse@scaa.sc or by contacting the SCAA Safety and Security Regulations Flight Operations and Flight Crew Licensing Inspectorate (telephone 4384271).

5. Effective Date

31 August 2023

6. Cancellation

This Notice will remain in force until revoked or replaced by the Authority.

7. Aircraft Tracking

7.1 Definitions

- (a) *Aircraft Tracking*. A process, established by the operator, that maintains and updates, at standardized intervals, a ground-based record of the four-dimensional position of individual aircraft in flight.
- (b) *Air traffic service (ATS)*. A generic term meaning variously, flight information service, alerting service, air traffic advisory service, air traffic control service (area control service, approach control service or aerodrome control service).
- (c) *4D/15 Service*. In the provision of air traffic services an ATS unit receives four-dimensional (latitude, longitude, altitude, time) position information at 15-minute intervals or less from suitably equipped aircraft.
- (d) *4D/15 Tracking*. The operator obtains four-dimensional (latitude, longitude, altitude, time) aircraft position information at 15-minute intervals or less.
- (e) *Flight Operations Officer/Flight Dispatcher*. A person designated by the operator to engage in the control and supervision of flight operations, whether licensed or not, suitably qualified in accordance with Annex 1 — Personnel Licensing, who supports, briefs and/or assists the pilot-in-command in the safe conduct of the flight.
- (f) *Flight Plan*. Specified information provided to air traffic services units, relative to an intended flight or portion of a flight of an aircraft.
- (g) *Oceanic Area*. Airspace which overlies waters outside the territory of a State.
- (h) *Operational Control*. The exercise of authority over the initiation, continuation, diversion or termination of a flight in the interest of the safety of the aircraft and the regularity and efficiency of the flight.
- (i) *Operational Control Personnel*. Flight operations officers, flight dispatchers or other appropriately trained individuals designated by the operator to engage in the control and supervision of flights and/or be assigned operational control responsibilities, duties, or tasks.
- (j) *Operational Flight Plan*. The operator's plan for the safe conduct of the flight based on considerations of aeroplane performance, other operating limitations and relevant expected conditions on the route to be followed and at the aerodromes concerned.

Note: Information relevant to determining the extent that waters form part of the territorial sea may be found in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

7.2 Background

7.2.1 Following the loss of an airliner on 8th March 2014, a special multidisciplinary meeting on global flight tracking (MMGFT) was held at the Headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) on 12 and 13 May 2014. Participants included States represented on the ICAO Council and States having nominated members to the Air Navigation Commission, as well as representatives of industry and ICAO panels. The participants in the meeting were invited to explore, among other things:

- (a) the need and means available to track all airline flights;
- (b) the need for ICAO guidance on global aircraft tracking; and
- (c) the potential for strengthening ICAO provisions.

7.2.2 Upon completion of this special meeting, consensus was reached among Member States and representatives of the international air transport industry on a near-term strategy to track flights, regardless of their location or destination. The meeting also established a Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS) framework for future medium- and long-term efforts.

7.2.3 Routine aircraft tracking under normal conditions is a core component of GADSS. Aircraft tracking is a near-term objective of GADSS. It is the first step necessary to move from current systems towards the GADSS target concept, which addresses the growing consensus in the global aviation community that the location of an aircraft should always be known. Aircraft tracking is a near-term solution intended to leverage existing technologies to:

- (a) assist in the timely identification and location of aircraft;
- (b) reduce the reliance on the procedural methods used for determining aircraft position;
- (c) help to ensure the availability and sharing of accurate aircraft position data (with the relevant entities); and
- (d) help to improve the effectiveness of air traffic services unit (ATSU) alerting and support SAR.

7.2.4 One objective of the aircraft tracking requirements is to set an automated four-dimensional position reporting interval of 15 minutes or less (recommended in all areas of operation and required in oceanic areas). This standardized reporting interval is intended to ultimately reduce the time necessary to resolve the status of an aircraft or, when necessary, help to locate an aircraft.

7.3 Operator Responsibilities

7.3.1 Operators are required to establish and document:

- (a) a training programme for flight operations officers/flight dispatchers, or other personnel nominated by the operator for the control and supervision of flights, on the policies and procedures for aircraft tracking; and
- (b) procedures for the monitoring of automated aircraft position reports, including actions to take in the event of a missed position report.

7.3.2 When information regarding a missed position report is required to be transmitted to an ATS unit, the aircraft tracking missed position report message template in Appendix 1 below should be used.

Note: Further information on operator processes for aircraft tracking can be found in ICAO Circular 347 Aircraft Tracking Implementation Guidelines.

7.3.3 Operators should provide and maintain up to date their operational contact details in the ICAO OPS Control Directory (OPS CTRL) to facilitate contact between operators and ATS units when responding to a tracking related event.

Note: The OPS CTRL can be accessed at: www.icao.int/safety/globaltracking.

Appendix 1 Aircraft tracking missed position report message template

<p>Aircraft tracking position report message</p> <p>From: _____</p> <p>To: _____</p> <p>This message provides information regarding potential uncertainty as to the safety of an aircraft. This is a request for action to resolve this uncertainty.</p> <p>Please contact _____ at _____ with details of action taken.</p>	
Required information	
1	Initial or subsequent notification indication
2	Aircraft identification in Field 7 of filed flight plan
3	Aircraft type
4	Last known position (Time, Latitude and longitude or bearing and range)
5	Time of last communication
6	Last known flight level or altitude
7	Next expected position (if known), and estimate
8	Name of air traffic services unit notified
9	Name of operator
10	Contact details of operator primary point of contact for this event
Supplementary information, if available	
11	Contact actions attempted, including frequency channel and SATCOM numbers
12	Aircraft registration (if different from aircraft identification in 2 above)
13	Information contained in Item 19 of the filed flight plan
14	If not included in 13 above, fuel endurance or fuel endurance remaining at last know position
15	Total persons on board
16	Alternates or possible alternates
17	Any other relevant information (e.g., dangerous goods on board etc.)

Note: Contact details for air navigation services providers (ANSPs) and operators can be obtained from the OPS CTRL directory, accessed at www.icao.int/safety/globaltracking.