



Meteorological Services for International Aviation

Information for Part 129 Foreign Operators

20 January 2015

1. Background – Routine Meteorological Services

1.1 The Chicago Convention

Under the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation and as set out in ICAO Annex 3 to that convention, Meteorological Services for International Air Navigation, it is intended that signatory States, such as New Zealand, fulfil an obligation to facilitate the provision of meteorological services and products for international civil aviation.

States are expected to supply information, such as aerodrome forecasts (TAF), aerodrome weather reports (METAR/SPECI), information on weather phenomena which may affect the safety of aircraft operations (SIGMET), upper air sounding information; aircraft reports (AIREPs) etc, into international databases so other States can provide meteorological information for flights inbound to the States supplying such information.

Section 1, 9.1 of Annex 3 to the Chicago Convention sets out that (précis):

- (a) Each State is to ensure that its registered operators obtain sufficient meteorological information for each flight, including: route winds / temperatures, tropopause SIGWX, METAR, SPECI, TAF etc.
- (b) The specified meteorological information is to be supplied by the Meteorological Authority of the State in which the flight is originating.
- (c) The meteorological information is to be supplied at location/time as agreed between operator and Meteorological Authority.

1.2 World Area Forecast System

The ICAO World Area Forecast System (WAFS) has been developed to provide forecasts of enroute conditions. Currently the World Area Forecast Centres (WAFCs) in London and Washington produce certain products for this purpose. States are expected to access this information for the production of part of their meteorological packages for international civil aviation. A Meteorological Office (MO) is not expected to issue any WAFS product as part of a meteorological package without checking or validating the content and timing of that product against other information and systems.

1.3 Meteorological Authority

Each State is required to designate a Meteorological Authority (MA) whose task is to ensure that the State fulfils its Annex 3 obligations. Specifically, Meteorological Offices (MO) and Meteorological Watch Offices (MWO) are to provide international aviation with certain information including that for flight planning. It is expected that the MO's use WAFS material and all other information available to them to ensure the best and most timely possible products are issued to international operators.

1.4 Assignment of Authority

States are at liberty to decide how they meet their Annex 3 obligations. Some States have a government meteorological organisation undertake the work while a few States contract commercial organisations.

In New Zealand, the Civil Aviation Authority is the Meteorological Authority, and it contracts Meteorological Service of New Zealand Ltd (MetService) to meet most of the operational Annex 3 requirements.

There is no material funding by the New Zealand Government of any aviation meteorological service or product, domestic or international. MetService is free to charge for such services. It should be noted however, that such charges not only cover the cost of the upfront delivery of meteorological packages to international operators, but also the cost of providing various information into the international data bases for use by other States.

1.5 Certification of Meteorological Service Organisation.

In New Zealand, unlike many other States, all organisations providing meteorological services to aviation must be certificated under Civil Aviation Rule (CAR) Part 174, Aviation Meteorological Service Organisations. This Rule was introduced to ensure that services and products provided by such organisations meet prescribed standards. In many ways the New Zealand standards are more stringent than the standards stipulated by ICAO in Annex 3. There are currently 2 organisations certificated under Part 174, MetService and Airways Corporation of New Zealand (Airways NZ).

1.6 Foreign Operators

Foreign operators to New Zealand must hold a CAR Part 129 – Foreign Air Transport Operator certificate. This certificate essentially recognises that the operator meets international requirements and that the State of Registry has sufficient oversight of the particular operation.

Inherent in this is the recognition that the State of Registry also meets international requirements vis ICAO Annexes (including meteorological access and use). If this were not the case then the CAA would have difficulty in issuing or allowing such certificates to continue to be held.

2. CAA Requirements – Access to Routine Meteorological Services

2.1 New Zealand International Operator Obligations

Part 121 and 125 New Zealand registered international operators are bound by their respective rules to access meteorological information in New Zealand from a Part 174 certificated meteorological services organisation.

2.2 Foreign Operator Obligations

Part 129 international operators are obliged through their State of Registry status, under the Chicago Convention, to access their obligatory meteorological information needs from the Meteorological Authority, or service provider authorised by the Meteorological Authority, of the State from which the flight (sector) departs. This means that:

- (a) Part 129 Foreign Operators have a specific ability to use meteorological information for flights **inbound** to New Zealand from whatever source demonstrably approved by the State of Registry Civil Aviation or Meteorological Authority.
- (b) Part 129 Foreign Operators may use any aviation meteorological supplier for the provision of prerequisite standard meteorological products and services for flights **outbound** from New Zealand, providing that supplier is certificated under New Zealand CAR Part 174 Aviation Meteorological Service Organisations, or as otherwise approved by the Director of Civil Aviation in recognition of the CAA's Meteorological Authority responsibilities.
- (c) Part 129 Foreign Operators definitely cannot use a third party, not formally approved by the State of Registry or the New Zealand CAA, for the provision of any aviation meteorological information for either **inbound outbound** flights from New Zealand

2.3 Pre-flight Meteorological Information Supplier

As MetService is contracted to provide this information on behalf of the New Zealand Meteorological Authority, it is expected that all Part 129, 125 and 121 international operators will make suitable arrangements with MetService to obtain all relevant meteorological information to plan and conduct outbound flights from New Zealand.

Should operators not meet these requirements, the issue would need to be escalated to discussion on the matter between the respective Meteorological and Aviation Authorities of the State of departure (New Zealand) and the State of Registry.

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