

May 5, 1989

Report
of the Meeting of Experts
on Air Safety in Antarctica
(Paris, 2 to 5 May 1989)

Report on the Meeting and Proposals

Annexes

- Annex A: List and Membership of the Delegations
- Annex B: Recommendation XIV-9
- Annex C: Opening Address
- Annex D: Agenda
- Annex E: Summary of Answers to the Questionnaire of Recommendation XIV-9

1. Report on the Meeting

1. As called for by Recommendation XIV-9, adopted at the Antarctic Treaty Consultative meeting held at Rio de Janeiro in October 1987, a meeting of experts on the safety of air operations in Antarctica was held in Paris on May 2 to 5, 1989.

The participants included the following Consultative Parties: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the German Democratic Republic, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uruguay.

Other participants, invited by the Consultative Parties to attend as observers, were the representatives of the following organizations: ICAO, ITU, SCAR, INMARSAT, COSPAS-SARSAT, and WMO. The meeting benefitted from the participation and background information, including written material, provided by these representatives

The list of participants and the membership of the delegations are to be found in Annex A.

2. The meeting was opened by Mr. Puissochet, director of legal affairs at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Speaking in the name of the French Government and of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Puissochet extended a warm welcome to the participants. Reminding his audience of the objective of this meeting of experts, defined by Recommendation XIV-9, he expressed the wish that it would provide the occasion to draw up a set of proposals to be presented at the next Consultative Conference (Paris, October 1989).

The texts of Recommendation XIV-9 and of the opening address are to be found in Annexes B and C, respectively.

3. Upon a motion by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, seconded by the representative of Spain, Mr. Pailhas, head of the French delegation, was designated as Chairman of the meeting. Mr. Godard and Mr. Vuillermet (France) were designated as secretaries.

4. The draft agenda was approved without comment. No participant requested any entry under "Other Business". The agenda is to be found in Annex D.

5. In connection with Item 4 of the agenda (presentation of information collected in accordance with paragraph 4 of Recommendation XIV-9), the questionnaire annexed to Recommendation XIV-9 had been sent to all the Consultative Parties in January 1989. Fourteen answers were received by April 20, 1989. They were gathered in a dossier given to each participant at the beginning of the meeting. This dossier also included, under reference IP/1, a table drawn up by the French delegation as a summary of the answers received.

As some answers were received after April 20, the summary table was completed accordingly. At the request of certain participants, the table will mention the original language of the answer to the questionnaire (some inaccuracies were caused by the successive translations of the original document into several languages).

The summary table is to be found in Annex E.

The answers collected were considered to provide a good overview of air operations in Antarctica. However, some participants remarked that this overview covered only air operations connected with government activities. They emphasized that flights connected with non-governmental activities must also be taken into account as work progresses. They believed that the measures to provide for increased safety of air operations in the Antarctic Treaty Area should apply to all flights (both governmental and non-governmental).

6. Under Items 5 and 6 of the Agenda, the delegations of Australia, France and the Federal Republic of Germany, and the United States of America introduced working papers contained in documents IP9, WP13, and IP8, respectively.

Based on these documents there was a broad discussion on the current situation with respect to air operations in the different regions of Antarctica, following which the Chairman developed draft proposals addressing some aspects of improving air safety in Antarctica.

These proposals were referred to an open-ended working group under the Chairmanship of Dr. Heinz KOHNEN.

Simultaneously, the plenary continued discussions on the remaining aspects of the agenda.

The deliberations in the working group resulted in 5 draft proposals which were submitted to the plenary for consideration.

The meeting adopted these proposals with revisions, together with 5 additional proposals which resulted from plenary discussion.

7. The text of the 10 proposals follows:

PROPOSAL 1

The Representatives,

Recognising that measures for improved air safety should apply to all flights in Antarctica;

Propose to their Governments, for their consideration, that measures to improve air safety in Antarctica contained in the following proposals should be elaborated by reference to ICAO concepts taking due account of the specific features of Antarctica as well as of existing practices and services.

Proposal 2

The Representatives,

Recognising that the safety of air operations in the Antarctic Treaty Area would be improved by the exchange of information on an annual basis about planned air operations ;

Propose to their Governments, for their consideration, that by 1 September each year all operators exchange information about their planned air operations in the standardized format attached to this proposal (1).

(1) The format will be dispatched to the Consultative Parties before the XVth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting October 1989.

PROPOSAL 3

The Representatives,

Recognising that the safety of Antarctic air operations would be improved if national Antarctic programmes operating aircraft in Antarctica and their air crews were to be provided with a compendium ("Handbook") describing ground facilities, aircraft and aircraft operating procedures and associated communications facilities operated by each national programme ;

Recognising that helicopters are used to reach stations which are not accessible by fixed wing aircraft;

Recognising that such information must be kept up to date;

Noting that while every effort will be made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in the Handbook, no liability will arise from its use;

Noting that Appendix I to Annex 15 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation provides a useful checklist for the content of such a Handbook;

Propose to their Governments, for their consideration, that :

(i) the preparation of such a Handbook be undertaken as a matter of urgency ;

(ii) they consider with their national Antarctic programme operators whether the preparation of such a Handbook would be facilitated by collective action through the medium of the Managers of National Antarctic Programmes (MNAP) affiliated to SCAR ;

(iii) a loose-leaf format be adopted in which information provided by each national operator is kept separate (unless facilities are jointly operated) so as to facilitate updating of information ; and

(iv) information provided by national Antarctic operators for the purposes of the Handbook should include information and be arranged in accordance with the Annex to this proposal.

A N N E X TO PROPOSAL 3

ANTARCTIC AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION HANDBOOK

CONTENTS

1. GENERAL (arranged by the name of countries in their internationally accepted order in the language of the document).
 - 1.1 The postal address of the National Antarctic Operator including telephone, telex and telefax numbers;
 - 1.2 An indicative description of the parts of the Antarctic Treaty Area in which the aircraft of the operator operate ;
 - 1.2.1 frequently
 - 1.2.2 infrequently
(Maps may be used where this would facilitate understanding of the description).
 - 1.3 The primary station (PAIS) or stations from which the national operator co-ordinates his aircraft operations;
 - 1.3.1 the role played by the operators' secondary stations (SAIS).
 - 1.4 Ships carrying helicopters or which have designated on board facilities for operating helicopters.

2. GROUND FACILITIES (arranged by the alphabetical order of the name of each station. All stations and field camps are to be included which operate for more than one Antarctic summer season).
 - 2.1 Runways, skiways and helipads (Information to be provided using paragraphs 2-43 of section 2.2. of Appendix I to Annex 15 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation as a guideline).

2.2 Communications .

(Information to be provided using paragraphs 2-14 of section 3.2 and paragraphs 2-10 of section 3.3 of Appendix I to Annex 15 as a guideline).

2.3 Meteorology

Information to be provided using paragraphs 2-11 of section 4.2. of Appendix I to Annex 15 as a guideline).

2.4 Aircraft operating procedures.

2.5. Alerting and search and rescue procedures.

PROPOSAL 4

The Representatives,

Recognising that the safety of air operations in the Antarctic Treaty Area would be improved by enhancing mutual awareness of current air operations ;

Propose to their Governments for their consideration that :

(i) for the purpose of exchanging information about current air operations they should each designate a Primary Air Information Station or Stations ;

(ii) for the purpose of this proposal:

a) Primary Air Information Stations (PAIS) coordinate their own air information and information from their Secondary Air Information Stations (if any) for the purpose of notifying current air operations to other PAIS. These PAIS should have adequate communication facilities able to transmit "hard copy" information by means of an agreed HF data mode and/or INMARSAT;

b) Secondary Air Information Stations (SAIS) comprise stations/bases (including field bases and ships) which provide air information to their parent coordinating PAIS.

PROPOSAL 5

The Representatives,

Recognising that avoidance of air incidents in areas beyond the range of VHF radio coverage of primary and secondary stations would be facilitated by ensuring communication between aircraft within VHF range of each other ;

Propose to their Governments, for their consideration, that outside the areas covered by primary or secondary stations, aircraft use a specific radio frequency to apply the "TIBA" procedure laid down in Annex 11 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

PROPOSAL 6

The Representatives,

Recalling the provisions of Article VII, paragraph 5 of the Antarctic Treaty and also Recommendation X-8, paragraph IV;

Propose to their Governments, for their consideration, that a reminder of the above provisions should be given to all pilots filing a flight plan for flights to Antarctica, and that they should keep one another informed about non-governmental flights.

PROPOSAL 7

The Representatives,

Recognizing that WMO is working to improve the collection from, and exchange within, Antarctica of meteorological data and information;

Propose to their Governments, for their consideration, that :

(i) this work should be encouraged;

(ii) steps be taken to improve meteorological services available in Antarctica, specifically to meet aviation requirements.

PROPOSAL 8

The Representatives,

Recognising the importance for air safety of ensuring effective communications between Primary Air Information Stations (PAIS);

Propose to their Governments for their consideration that they ensure that their PAIS have adequate facilities for communicating with other PAIS, and in this connection that they should bear in mind the INMARSAT system.

PROPOSAL 9

The Representatives,

Recognising the importance of locating aircraft in distress in Antarctica and the possibilities offered by the COSPAS-SARSAT system for the location of Emergency-Locator-Beacons-Aircraft transmitting on 406 Mhz;

Propose to their Governments, for their consideration, that they designate points of contact which are to be the addressees of emergency location messages relating to air operations in Antarctica generated by the COSPAS-SARSAT system.

PROPOSAL 10

The Representatives,

Recognising that a satellite communication and navigation system being developed in the framework of ICAO may improve air safety in Antarctica;

Propose to their Governments, for their consideration, that at a suitable time studies should be undertaken aimed at making use of such a satellite communication and navigation system in Antarctica.

8. The representatives expressed their deep appreciation to the government of France for organizing the meeting and to Mr. PAILHAS and to Dr. KOHNEN for their efforts in chairing the meeting and the working group, respectively.