

REPORT OF THE BULLETIN MANAGEMENT GROUP

TWENTYFIFTH MEETING

(De Bilt, 14-16 March 2006)

List of participants

Mr. Roland Elentner	Austria
Mr. Herman Swinnen	Belgium
Mr. Wim Demol	Belgium
Mr. Johnny Funder	Denmark
Mr. Patrick Simon	France
Mr. Bernd Richter	Germany
Mr. Wilfried Ruiner	Germany
Mrs. Annemiek den Uijl	Netherlands
Mr. Willem Koetse	Netherlands
Mrs. Valentina Laletina	Russian Federation
Mr. Juerg Spaar	Switzerland
Mr. Mike Williamson	UK
Mr. Kevin Loy	UK (Rapporteur)
Mr. Laurentiu Brojboiu	Romania (Sec.)

0. Agenda

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Actions from previous meeting
3. Information from other groups
4. EUR OPMET Data Update procedure and data monitoring and reporting.
5. Addressing of EUR and Non-EUR OPMET data
6. Performance Indices
7. SIGMET Issues
8. Documentation
 - a) EUR OPMET Data Management Handbook
 - i) Current v Future collection/distribution
 - b) PHP
 - c) Reference Database
9. METAR/TAF Timeliness
10. BUFR
11. AOB

Agenda Item 2: Actions from the previous meeting

The list of actions established at the end of BMG/24 was revised. The completed tasks were erased from the list.

Agenda Item 3: Information from other groups

XXXXXXX Summary of discussions

The BMG was informed about a proposal for the establishment by the EANSPs of a Pan European Network (PEN) by making use of the Internet Protocol. The applications that are intended to be transported by PEN include AMHS, OLDI, radar data, etc.

That it was noted to be of importance for the group.

It was mentioned that BUFR data will be possible to be transferred via AMHS in the future by making use of a file attachment procedure.

Agenda Item 4: EUR OPMET Data Update procedure and data monitoring and reporting

WP 11 – EUR OPMET Data Update Procedure

As concluded at BMG24 (BMG24-9-1), the EUR OPMET Data Update Procedure was modified such as to include provisions for the declaration of the TAF validity changes (according to the format agreed at BMG22-Madrid). The description of the METNO message format was amended and corresponding examples were included as well.

WP 10 – EUR OPMET Data Update Procedure – Activity Report

The group was presented with the inventory of the activities performed following the EUR OPMET Data Update Procedure.

It was recalled that, in order to reduce the workload, it was previously agreed that the updates of SUG 2 & 3 are to be done only twice a year.

The requests for additional non-EUR OPMET data were revised. A proposal was made for the renaming of the last column of the table (“Accepted”) into “Feed-back received”, with possible values: blank (no feed-back), “Y” (accepted) and “N” (not accepted).

As no response was received for the requests (or negative response in one case), the issue shall be addressed further to IATA and ICAO Paris.

Action BMG25-4-1: Switzerland will inform IATA on the negative response received regarding the availability for requested data (Porto Seguro). The Rapporteur will inform also ICAO Paris on the status of the requests.

Action BMG25-4-2: The relevant parts of the Activity Report will be included in the report presented to SADISOPSG and METG.

WP 9 – SIGMET Monitoring

There were presented to the group the results of the last SIGMET monitoring exercise.

It was noted that this time the SIGMETs from the Russian states were monitored as well and also was noted the first participation of Macedonia to the test.

As a general view, the number of missing data is decreasing, confirming a continuous improvement of the routing. The action plans have been sent to the concerned centres for addressing of identified routing problems. Other reasons for the missing data were identified to be due to minor editorial errors of the inventory sheet, or the usage of the same AHL for multiple FIRs/UIRs (especially by some Russian data). The states were encouraged again to use different AHL for every FIR. The following action was concluded:

Action BMG25-4-3: Herman Swinnen will produce an inventory list of all the bulletins that use the same AHL for different FIR/UIR. The states originating those bulletins will be notified to address the problem.

It was noted again the difficulty to automatically monitor the FIR indicator within the text of the message, so that until proper implementation of the Amendment 73, the ATSU indicator shall be used instead of the FIR/UIR indicator.

WP 4 – ASIA/PAC Sigmet Monitoring

The group was presented with the results from the European states of a monitoring exercise that took place in Jan-Feb 2006 for the SIGMET messages issues by states in the ASIA/PAC region. The group appreciated that the results have been presented by the focal point in a very suggestive manner, making it easy to identify the routing deficiencies (either from outside or inside the region) that lead to missing data or duplication.

It was pointed out that some of the participants to the test reported only the first reception of a bulletin and ignored the further reception of a bulletin with the same AHL. As this could give good indication on the duplication deficiencies, it was agreed by the group that for the next exercises, all bulletins received should be reported, along with their sources and network links.

It was not noted a general distribution scheme so that every bulletin routing should be analysed and routing corrected if necessary.

A flimsy containing the series of actions to improve the routing was prepared and presented to the group.

Action 25-4-4: From the list of actions in Flimsy 1, an action plan will be derived for Austria, France and UK and will be attached to the present report.

IP 12 - ASIA/PAC Sigmet Monitoring

The group was presented with the result of the monitoring of the above exercise at the SADIS Gateway. It was mentioned that the main reason the messages were rejected was the unrealistic validity period used.

IP 9 – Activity Report of the ODAG Group

The Brussels and Toulouse databanks announced the availability of VA and TC Advisories in the DBs, according to the proposal endorsed at METG15. At the same time, GAMETs will also be made available. Implementation date for Brussels : 16/3/2006, for Toulouse : May 2006. The Vienna DB plans to implement the same changes by the end of 2006.

Agenda Item 6: Performance Indices*WP 3 – AFTN Performance indices*

The results of the AFTN performance indices generated for the monitoring period in Feb 2006 were presented. A comparison of the following three indices was developed by type of message and region: monitored at EBBR, EGGY and the SADIS Gateway.

On analysing the graphs presented, some discrepancies were noticed:

- A drop in the AFI data availability on AFTN. This was explained by the fact that the data is received directly from GTS at the SADIS Gateway and is not distributed by DAAG to the other MOTNE centres. It was noted the poor AFTN link between Algeria and France and that previous requests addressed to Algeria were followed by the lack of response.

Action BMG25-6-1: The BMG focal point will produce a list of the bulletins originated from Algeria. France will make arrangements for the proper collection of these bulletins from Algeria and will distribute them to the MOTNE centres.

- A significantly lower availability on AFTN than SADIS for the short TAFs from Italy, Turkey, Azerbaijan. Again this was explained by the data being received directly from GTS and not distributed correctly by the responsible MOTNE centre to the other centres in the EUR region.

Action BMG25-6-2: Mike Williamson will contact the corresponding MOTNE centres and will provide them the details of the specific missing data on AFTN.

- A significantly higher availability on SADIS comparing to AFTN for the long TAF bulletins from NAT/NAM. This was explained by the fact that the US FT bulletins are too long to be distributed on AFTN. There is a need for their segmentation.

Action BMG25-6-3: UK will analyse the possibility to implement a method of segmenting the long bulletins received via GTS from US.

- A higher regularity of the MID data monitored at EGGY than EBBR and SADIS. This was most probably related to the Pakistan data and the validity of FT bulletins from this region.

Action BMG25-6-4: Austria, in coordination with UK will address the Pakistan (and Turkish) bulletin issues. The outcome will be a set of actions to be presented to the appropriate bodies (ICAO MID Region and the states concerned).

WP 2 – SADIS Performance Indices

The group was presented the results of the latest set of performance indices.

It was noted that the results obtained from EHDB monitoring were still slightly higher, most probably a consequence of not properly recording of NIL reports.

Action BMG25-6-5: UK will inform NL and together will analyse and sort out the problem of NIL reports recording.

An extract of both sets of performance indices will be presented to the next SADISOPSG meeting (caution to the way of presenting the data: scaling of graphs, etc).

Agenda Item 8 Documentation

WP 12 – MOTNE Centres Review

The group was presented with a number of issues regarding the role and responsibilities of a MOTNE centre and also the structure and functionality of the future communications network, as follows:

- There are MOTNE centres which use at this time SADIS as the main source of OPMET data.
- the role and responsibilities of MOTNE centres, as stated in the EUR OPMET Management Handbook. This includes also the responsibility to provide 24/7 manned service in order that corrupt data are repaired and distributed.
- The easier transition to BUFR when lesser centres are involved
- The use in the future of the PEN network will take into consideration that the more bandwidth is required in a meshed topology and thus higher costs are implied.

Taking into account the above issues, the following actions were agreed:

Action BMG25-8-1: The Rapporteur will contact ICAO Paris in order to obtain details on the SES concept – what is known at the present time and the way it can affect the group.

Action BMG25-8-2: The BMG members will have themselves a look to see in detail how the SES implementation will affect the group activity.

Action BMG25-8-3: The Rapporteur will prepare a document with the reasons and justification for cutting down the number of MOTNE centres – including facts and figures related to efficiency, bandwidth, etc.

Action BMG25-8-4: UK, Austria and France will co-ordinate by correspondence on the back-up procedures to be used for each centre (particularly for the MOTNE centres and IROGs).

Action BMG25-8-5: By the end of April, all the MOTNE centres should respond to the specific questions raised about their compliance and commitment to fulfil the role of a MOTNE centre. The Rapporteur will send the WP12 to the MOTNE centres Rome and Madrid (not present to BMG25) in order to have their answer too.

WPkg 3 - Problem Handling Procedure

As concluded at BMG24, the members of a taskforce met in Brussels in February 2006 in order to address the way of implementing the problem handling procedure. The outcome of that meeting consisted of a revised procedure, simplified and easy to implement, bringing also further benefits related to the general aspects of the quality

management. The coordinator of the WPkg3 was nominated Mr. Patrick Simon (replacing MR. Will van Dijk – retired).

In support of the procedure, a possible solution using a ticketing system was suggested. The Belgocontrol trouble ticketing system was presented to the group and the following remarks have been made:

- such a system contains most of the features needed for the PHP; minor adjustments are though needed
- it automates the process to a great extent
- it provides continuous feed-back to the reporter
- it makes use of target dates for solving the problems
- it makes use of specific forms and offer fully traceability
- it is made available on a continuous basis to all authorised users via the internet

The BMG expressed a very positive reaction to such an implementation of the PHP. As a way forward, the following actions were agreed as necessary:

Action BMG25-8-6: Evaluation of the necessary resources – the quantification of the costs. Although expected not significant, the resources shall be evaluated along with the commitment to support the PHP. Belgium will present BMG26 the evaluation.

Action BMG25-8-7: Further possibilities shall be investigated in order to obtain the necessary resources for the implementation of the procedure.

As the Problem Handling Manager (PHM) was nominated Mr. Willem Koetse, while Mr. Patrick Simon will act as a back-up.

IP 8 – EUR OPMET Handbook

The group took note that the handbook was presented to ICAO Paris Office and it is expected to be made available on the ICAO website after converted to the specific ICAO format. There was expressed the need for inclusion of the following amendments to the handbook, prior to its publication:

- the description and examples of the SIGMET messages format should be in accordance with the Amendment 73 to Annex 3.
- The handbook should include explicit provisions regarding the necessity that the MOTNE centres should be able to address the rejected data (repair and forward them) on a 24/7 basis.

Mr. Mike Williamson presented further during the meeting a proposal for the above amendments of the Handbook, as follows:

- chap. 3.4.3 – provisions for the 24/7 manual supervision of the MOTNE centres
- chap. 3.8 – SADIS and ISCS
- chap. 11.3.4 – provisions for the FIR loc. Indicator; examples to be brought in line with Amendment 73.

Action BMG25-8-8: Austria will contact ICAO Paris Office to obtain the version of the Handbook prior to be published on the web site. After inclusion of the above amendments, the handbook will be circulated to the BMG members for comments and finally will be submitted to ICAO Paris for publishing.

The handbook will be kept from that point on in the ICAO specific format.

Action BMG25-8-9: Mr. Roland Elentner will analyse the SADIS section of the ICAO website and extract some guidelines on how to publish the OPMET Handbook (similar to the SADIS information). The suggestion will be provided to Mr. Guillermo Vega.

Agenda Item 9: METAR/TAF Timeliness

WP 8 – Timeliness of Regular Bulletins in the EUR Region

As it was concluded at BMG24, Austria, Belgium, France, Switzerland and United Kingdom took part into an exercise for the investigation of possible improvement of the timeliness for the bulletins. As a consequence, the results monitored by Netherlands show an improvement of the METAR bulletin timeliness by all the states involved. The following actions were agreed:

Action BMG25-9-1: Anemiek den Uijl and Kevin Loy will work to prepare a draft paper for BMG26, to be reviewed by the group and submitted to METG. The paper should state the issue that has been raised regarding the timeliness of the bulletins and the way it was addressed by the participants.

Action BMG25-9-2: In order to reflect the improvement, the results from the sept 2005 and feb 2006 should be registered too – Patrick Simon.

Action BMG25-9-3: The Rapporteur will contact ICAO Paris in order to determine if any ICAO document should be amended with regard to the timeliness issue.

Action BMG25-9-4: Study the possibility that in the BMG monitoring process, to increase the number of performance indices calculated and introduce a new indice related to timeliness. The compatibility of the monitoring tools should be checked first. Responsible: James Randall, Mike Williamson, Patrick Simon and Herman Swinnen.

Agenda item 7 SIGMET Issues

WP 5 – Amd 73 SIGMET Compliance

The group was presented with the results of two surveys carried out over a 24 hour period each, in December 2005 and in February 2006 respectively. The results show that the compliance to the Amendment 73 SIGMET format (FIR identification) is slowly improving although a significant number of states did not modify the SIGMET format in line with the amendment.

Action BMG25-7-1: A monitoring for the compliance of the SIGMETs will be carried on – Herman Swinnen will liaise with James Randall (copy Mike Williamson). The results will be discussed at BMG26 and be presented further to METG.

WP 7 – VAA Test Feb 2006

The group was informed that the results of the VAA test from Feb 2006 are rather non-satisfactory – only a small percentage of acknowledgements and VA SIGMETs were received. In order to improve things, the following were agreed:

Action BMG25-7-2: The MOTNE centres should confirm the AFTN address used for reception of the VAA. That info should be provided to Patrick Simon to address the issue at the joint meeting of the VAACs in April.

Action BMG25-7-3: The MOTNE centres should check the routing within their area of responsibility with regard to the VAA and VA SIGMET distribution.

IP 11 – Questionnaire on the Volcanic Ash Exercise

The group was informed about an ICAO state letter circulated with the intention to gather Information from the states with the intention to identify the reasons for failure in some states for receiving-sending the information.

Action BMG25-7-4: All states should respond to the ICAO questionnaire on the volcanic ash.

IP 14 – The results of the SIGMET tests in the Russian Federation

BMG was presented with the results of the participation of MWOs from the Russian Federation to the three SIGMET tests carried this year.

The group was extremely impressed with the number of Russian Federation states participating to the tests, and congratulated them for the valuable input in the process of improving the distribution of the SIGMET messages through the EUR Region.

WP 13 – Differences in the rules and procedures for the SIGMET test in the EUR and ASIA/PAC regions

The group was notified about the differences in the format of the messages used during the SIGMET monitoring exercises performed in the two regions. It was expressed that these differences cause difficulty in conducting the participation and monitoring and consequently an uniform procedure for both regions should be desirable.

With this respect, the group was informed that an official letter was sent from the ASIA/PAC region to the ICAO Office Paris.

It was mentioned also that during the joint meeting of the two VAACs in Europe (April 2006) the issue will be raised and is expected that the outcome of the meeting will come with a proposal for the format of the messages used in the testing procedure.

A preliminary analysis will be carried on identifying the differences and the way to harmonising the procedures.

Action BMG25-7-5: With all the data above gathered at BMG26, a proposal with the response to the ASIA/PAC letter shall be completed and submitted to ICAO Paris.

Agenda Item 10 BUFR

WP 06 – BUFR Activity

The group was informed about the progress registered. An important issue was considered the proposal that came during the meeting of the Coordination Team in Geneva, to use the first letter of the AA sequence in the AHL for defining the data type. This was regarded as a radical change for the organisation of bulletins and their routing.

Agenda Item 10 – Any other business

SIGMETs with multiple FIRs using the same AHL

The group recalled that, following a BMG14 conclusion, a recommendation was submitted at METG13 that states use different AHL (TTAAii) for issuing SIGMETs for multiple FIRs. Following that, an official ICAO State letter has been circulated.

The group expressed the need to provide feed-back again to METG in order to highlight the improvements that have been achieved so far on one hand and the particular cases where there still are non-compliant.

Action BMG 25-4-3: Herman Swinnen will produce a listing of the SIGMET bulletins that use the same AHL for multiple FIRs. The paper will be presented to BMG26 and will contain also recommendations on what "ii" range should be used for the SIGMET bulletins.

TAF Validity changes

Germany informed the group that will start from July 2006 to produce TAF forecasts compliant with the new validity hours. Also it was stated that Germany has already switched to the SIGMET format compliant with the Amendment 73.

Belgium will switch to the new validity changes in June 2006, subject to prior confirmation from Luxembourg.

Action BMG25-10-2: Both TAF validity changes above will be announced according to the Update Procedure.

Installation of a new MSS in Vienna

The group was informed that the MOTNE centre Vienna successfully installed a new MSS. The change introduced also the new request/reply procedure (according to the

EUR OPMET DB Specification), while the old format will still be kept until the end of 2007. It was noted that the old format would be accessed using a RQX message.

Action BMG25-10-3: Roland Elentner will coordinate with Herman Swinnen for the issuance of a METNO98 bulletin to announce the change to the states.

Dates and location of the next meetings.

The BMG/26 meeting was confirmed for 29-30 June 2006 in Edinburgh.

The BMG/27 meeting was proposed to be held on 3-5 October in Brussels – to be confirmed

The BMG/28 meeting was proposed for 20-22 March 2007 in Germany (Hamburg/Langen)

The BMG/29 meeting was proposed for June 2007 in Moscow.

Papers

The draft report of the meeting should be available by 22 March. The comments are expected until 31 March. The version of the report including the amendments will be circulated for one more week and after that the final version will be endorsed.

For the next meeting all working papers should be submitted at least two weeks in advance for a better preparation of the meeting.

List of actions

Ag.Item/BMG	Action item	Responsible	Target date
5/22	Inventory of data from the AMBEX region	P. Simon	BMG/25
BMG24-7-4	Verify the routing to Prague-Moscow of FVs from Anchorage	M. Pichler	
BMG25-4-1	Inform IATA on negative response regarding data from SAM	Switzerland	BMG26
BMG25-4-2	Include Upd. Proc. Activity report for SADISOPSG	M. Williamson	SADISOPOSG
BMG25-4-3	Inventory list of SIGMET bulletins for multiple FIR	H. Swinnen	BMG26
BMG25-4-4	Action plan for ASIA/PAC SIGMET improvement	Austria France UK	BMG26
BMG25-6-1	Address OPMET bulletins from Algeria	H. Swinnen P. Simon	BMG26
BMG25-6-2	Contact Italy, Turkey, Azerbaijan for missing data	M. Williamson	BMG26
BMG25-6-3	Segmentation of US long bulletins	UK	BMG26
BMG25-6-4	Address missing data from MID region	Austria UK	BMG26
BMG25-6-5	SADIS monitoring - NIL report recording	UK Netherlands	BMG26
BMG25-8-1	Obtain details on SES concept from ICAO	K.Loy	BMG26
BMG25-8-2	Analyse the SES implications	All members	BMG26
BMG25-8-3	Rationale for MOTNE centres rationalisation	K. Loy	BMG26
BMG25-8-4	Back-up procedures for MOTNE centres	Austria France UK	BMG26
BMG25-8-5	Respond to questions on MOTNE centre compliance	MOTNE centres	End April
BMG25-8-6	Evaluation of resources necessary for PHP implementation	Belgium	BMG26
BMG25-8-7	Find resources for PHP implementation	All members	BMG27
BMG25-8-8	Handbook update prior to publishing	Austria	
BMG25-8-9	Provide guidance on publishing on ICAO website	Austria	
BMG25-9-1	Prepare paper regarding bulletin timeliness	A. den Uijl K. Loy	BMG26
BMG25-9-2	Timeliness improvement resulted from sept+feb monitoring	P. Simon	BMG26
BMG25-9-3	Contact ICAO Paris for timeliness issues	K. Loy	BMG26
BMG25-9-4	Introduce PI for timeliness	J. Randall M. Williamson P. Simon H. Swinnen	
BMG25-7-1	Monitor Amd 73 compliance of SIGMETs	H. Swinnen J. Randall	BMG26
BMG25-7-2	Confirm AFTN address used for VAA reception	MOTNE centres	24 March
BMG25-7-3	Investigate distribution of VAA and WV in AoR	MOTNE centres	BMG26
BMG25-7-4	Respond to ICAO questionnaire on VA	All states	23 March
BMG25-7-5	Prepare response for harmonisation of SIGMET monitoring procedures		BMG26

BMG25-10-1	Announce the TAF validity changes	Belgium Germany	June 2006 July 2006
BMG25-10-2	Announce Vienna DB reply format change	Austria	