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INFO MEMO

12 Nov 2003

FOR: Ambassador Darrell Trent

FROM: [REDACTED] Ass't Senior Advisor to Civil Aviation

SUBJECT: Trip Report on Reduced Vertical Separation Minima (RVSM) Conference

SUMMARY: Traveled 1-7 Nov 03 to Paris, France to attend a pre Nov 27 RVSM Conference. November 27 is the implementation date for RVSM in the Middle Eastern Region. Iraq is the stand alone Arab nation not able to implement RVSM at this time because all airspace up to FL290 is considered combat airspace controlled by the Combined Forces Air Component Commander at Al Udeid in Qatar. Budgeting and Visa preparation was again a factor is [REDACTED] disapproval for this trip.

PURPOSE: The RVSM conference was the final approval meeting of the Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum Task Force meeting to appraise the status of conclusions and decisions for controller readiness, safety assessment of the MID Air Traffic System route network to reduce commercial aircraft separation from 2,000 ft to 1,000 ft. This change to aircraft separation will more effectively use airspace and create tremendous cost savings for the airlines.

BACKGROUND: All Arab nations within MID Eastern region is coordinating with approval to establish and input RVSM into operation beginning 27 Nov 03. Iraq is currently not prepared at this time to establish RVSM procedures. The airspace over Iraq is still under military control and currently used as combat airspace. When CFACC transitions military combat airspace to civilian control, RVSM will be implemented after controller training is completed.

ACTIONS TO TAKE:

1. Until RVSM is established within Iraq, transition altitudes are identified and will be used for safety application and RVSM will be seamless. The transition altitudes will prevent aircraft from having to change altitudes while flying overhead and then returning to RVSM altitudes when leaving Iraq. Additionally, there is not enough airspace above Kuwait to accomplish the altitude transition in Kuwaiti airspace.
2. Re design and build a revised Iraqi airway system to accommodate and facilitate the flow of aircraft traffic going north to south and east to west. Most importantly is to build a parallel airway structure to assist European traffic to overfly Iraq enroute to Kuwait. The MID Eastern Region and International Civil Aviation Organization representatives that attended the conference totally endorsed CPA efforts on transition altitudes and the added parallel airways.

RECOMMENDATION: Coordinate with Air Traffic Services Cell in Al Udeid for approval of transition altitudes and establishment of the two parallel airways from North to South.

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PARTICIPANTS:

[REDACTED]

ATTACHMENTS: Proposed Draft transition to RVSM implementation

COORDINATION:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Ass't Senior Advisor for Civil Aviation

[REDACTED]

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