

 <p>AIP services phone: +41 (0) 43 931 61 68 fax: +41 (0) 43 931 61 69 AFTN: LSSAYOYX aip@skyguide.ch</p>	<p>AIC</p> <p>Schweiz Suisse Svizzera Switzerland skyguide, swiss air navigation services ltd AIP services ch-8602 wangen bei dübendorf</p>	<p>A</p> <p>020/05 DEC 29</p>
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INDICATION OF VHF CHANNELS IN RADIOTELEPHONY COMMUNICATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Communication problems arising from the mistuning of VHF channels represent an important safety and security risk to air traffic management.
- 1.2 The implementation of 8.33 kHz channel spacing in the ICAO EUR Region in October 1999 introduced a requirement to specify 8.33 kHz channels, in VHF radiotelephony communications, using all 6 digits of the channel name preceded by the term "CHANNEL"; while procedures associated with the indication of 25 kHz channels, specified in 4 or 5 digits, were unchanged.
- 1.3 When using radio management panels displaying 6 digits, situations have arisen where flight crews have been uncertain as to whether a '0' or a '5' was to be tuned as the sixth digit of the VHF channel when issued with a 5-digit 25 kHz frequency.

2. REVISED PROCEDURES

- 2.1 Amendment 80 to the ICAO Annex 10, Volume II (Communication Procedures) has now been promulgated to mitigate against the risk of mistuning. These procedures require VHF channels in radiotelephony communications to be indicated in 6 or 4 digits, irrespective of whether 25 or 8.33 kHz channel spacing is used. The procedures became applicable from 24th November 2005 and will come into effect on 16th March 2006 in Swiss airspace.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 In line with the aforementioned ICAO amendment, Air Traffic Services in Switzerland, will indicate VHF channels in air-ground voice communications by:
 - Four (4) digits, for channels ending in two zeros (i.e. fifth (5th) and sixth (6th) digits both zeros), and
 - Six (6) digits, for all other channels.
- 3.2 In addition, the use of the term "CHANNEL" in radiotelephony, previously associated with 8.33 kHz channels, is discontinued.

Examples:

132.000 **ONE THREE TWO DECIMAL ZERO**
132.100 **ONE THREE TWO DECIMAL ONE**
132.050 **ONE THREE TWO DECIMAL ZERO FIVE ZERO**
132.055 **ONE THREE TWO DECIMAL ZERO FIVE FIVE**

4. 25 kHz ONLY CAPABLE RADIOS

- 4.1 Situations may arise outside the area of 8.33 kHz mandatory carriage where an aircraft is equipped with a radio management panel displaying 5 digits only, and the flight crew receives a communication transfer for a 25 kHz channel specified in 6 digits. In such cases, caution must be exercised by the flight crew to select the first five digits only.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 5.1 Flight crews are urged to pay particular attention to both the understanding and tuning of all VHF channels indicated to them during air-ground voice communications. Full "readback" to ATS personnel of VHF channels is also encouraged.
- 5.2 Material pertaining to ATS personnel and flight crew training/awareness, in the form of an e-learning tutorial training package, can be reviewed at <http://elearning.eurocontrol.int/opencourses.htm>
- 5.3 For additional information, please contact:
Skyguide, Swiss Air Navigation Services
E-mail: rod.mcgregor@skyguide.ch

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