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AIC
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20 JUL 2017

CHANGE IN THE USE OF CEILING AS WEATHER INDICATOR FOR DETERMINING IFR OPERATION AT AERODROMES

Effective from 20 JUL 2017 to PERM.

1 PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS

1.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this AIC is to inform all Airspace users about the change in the use of ceiling information published in air navigation charts as weather indicator for determining IFR operations in Brazil aerodromes, as of 20 JUL 2017.

1.2 SCOPE

The provisions of this AIC apply to all SISCEAB units and users involved with IFR operations at aerodromes.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The changes described in this AIC have been developed to promote global harmonization of the actions implemented in Brazil with the principles and techniques of international air navigation implemented by ICAO.

2.2 The first studies concerning the non-use of ceiling as an indicator for IFR operations started in 1966, through the Obstacle Clearance Panel (OCP), currently the Instrument Flight Procedures Panel (IFPP), whose objective was to review and update the criteria for preparing air navigation procedures. The OCP results were incorporated into Doc 8168 PANS OPS/611, through amendment 13, in 1979.

2.3 Since then, the ceiling information reported to pilots in the DEP and ARR IFR operations is not considered representative for assessing the visibility conditions encountered during the initial stages of a takeoff or in the final stages of an approach and landing procedure, especially in dynamic and marginal weather conditions.

3 GENERAL PROVISIONS

3.1 According to Doc 9365 AN/910 (*Manual of All-Weather Operations*), of the International Civil Aviation Organization, the safety of the approach and landing operations is ensured by establishing limits at the IFR approach, called decision altitude/height (DA/H) or minimum descent altitude/height (MDA/H), and determining minimum horizontal visibility. In this way, an approach may be carried out without visual reference up to the DA/H or MDA/H, rendering the ceiling information unnecessary, since safety is ensured by establishing DA/H or MDA/H at the time of development of the IFR approach procedures.

3.2 In accordance with CIRCEA 100-54/2012, it is pointed out that the measurements of the cloud base normally do not provide a good indication of the height at which the pilot will obtain visual contact with the ground, for several reasons, including the following:

a) Measurements are normally made at the final approach position where the pilot establishes visual contact with the runway or beacon lights.

b) Clouds normally do not have a levelled base;

c) The final approach position may coincide with a hole in the cloud;

d) The distance that the pilot can see while inside a cloud will vary depending on the thickness of the cloud and the visibility below the cloud.

3.3 Removing ceiling as a weather indicator for determining IFR operations at a given aerodrome intends to maximize the capacity of the aerodrome in all-weather conditions, meeting the global ATM recommendations, by increasing accessibility. As a result, it will contribute to reduce the number of unnecessary cancellations of aerodrome operations for weather conditions, while maintaining safety.

3.4 The ceiling information will continue to be informed, but the aircraft operators shall be responsible for deciding about the approach and landing operations by analyzing the ceiling informed and the minimum obstacle clearance height (OCH) regarding the aerodrome.

3.5 The IAC and SID charts published as of the amendment of JAN 2018 will no longer contain the required ceiling information in the space destined to weather conditions. However, the OCH information concerning the aerodrome will continue to be published in the IAC, as well the information about horizontal visibility required to accomplishment of the approach procedure.

3.6 Therefore, as of the publication of this Circular, determination of the operating conditions for approaching an aerodrome shall only be made based on the visibility information published in IAC. The determination of the operational ceiling required to proceed for landing after DA/MDA shall be the responsibility of the aircraft operator and shall under no circumstances be lower than the published OCH for the procedure in use.

3.7 Concerning the determination of the take-off operating conditions, it shall also be made based on the visibility information at the aerodrome, which should be obtained according to the legislation in force, considering that the ceiling information shall no longer be a determining factor for establishing the take-off operating conditions of said aerodrome.

NOTE: In the cases in which the take-off ceiling is published in view of obstacles in the take-off area, it shall continue to be used for determining the operating conditions of the aerodrome. In this case, the aerodrome operating minima shall be those published in Chapter 2, or in item 3.1.6 of the Initial Part of AIP Brasil, or else, in the aeronautical charts.

3.8 The SID and IAC charts in force on the effective date of this Circular shall contain the required ceiling information, until they are submitted to the scheduled periodic reviews.

3.9 DECEA regulations involving the use of ceiling as a requirement for IFR operations at a given aerodrome shall be duly updated until the end of 2017.

4 FINAL ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 This AIC will become effective on 20 JUL 2017, revoking on this date AIC A 09/17, dated 22 JUN 2017.

4.2 Suggestions for continuous improvement of this publication should be sent by accessing the specific link to the publication, through the electronic address http://publicacoes.decea.intraer/ or http://publicacoes.decea.gov.br/.

4.3 Cases not provided for in this Circular shall be settled by the Head of DECEA's Operations Subdepartment.