

ASIA PACIFIC REGIONAL MEETING (APRM) 2012, NEW DELHI

ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS ASSOCIATION OF SRI LANKA (SLATCA) 2011/12

The Air Traffic Controllers Association of Sri Lanka takes great pleasure in presenting a brief description to this forum, of various Professional, technical & welfare activities that featured in it's calendar during the past 12 months.

Professional Activities

- SLATCA arranged for a symposium to be held at a leading hotel in Colombo to educate it's members on the subject of accident investigation by acquiring the services of 2 ICAO accident investigation experts. The knowledge imparted by these 2 gentlemen could only be of immense benefit to our local ATC's in what could be described as a sort of 'Grey' area in the discharge of ATC duties.
- The unexpected breakdown of the Radar Simulator at the local Civil Aviation Training Centre, was a major setback suffered in the process of training ATC's in radar procedures. However, SLATCA through it's intervention was able to convince the Company Management the necessity of having a continuous radar training program to train the local ATC's and thereby was instrumental in obtaining the services of a foreign training academy to train 3 of our ATC's last year. SLATCA will continue to monitor the developments in respect of the radar simulator and ensure the radar training process continues unhindered.
- SLATCA welcomes the installation of a modern ATM System at the Area Control Center, Colombo. In this respect 10 senior ATC's were sent on equipment training provided by the manufacturer to Canada. SLATCA's efforts to obtain more training slots for our members at the factory site proved unsuccessful as the equipment supplier instead opted for onsite training for the rest of the ATC's. The operations using the new system is scheduled to commence early next year and until such time SLATCA in co-ordination with the ATC management would be involved closely in monitoring the progress of trial operations and providing valuable feedback.

Technical Matters

The members of SLATCA was able to contribute with their knowledge and experience to the following technical issues.

Colombo ACC: The only ACC for Colombo FIR consisting of 2 sectors were modernized with a new ATM system from INTELCAN, Canada. Since March 2012 the ACC is functioning in a temporary ACC, with minimum facilities. The ACC is handling around 250 aircraft movements by the two sectors. The TMA and the Oceanic. Unfortunately in the TMA no Radar services are provided due to the non availability of the **Recording Feature** in the system. This was brought to the notice of the Chairman of the ANSP (AASL) and the engineering department was instructed to make the Radar available as early as possible, with the addition of the recording feature. It appears that the engineers are working on it, with no results up to now.

When the Site Acceptance is completed at the modernized ACC all the facilities such as Radar, ADS- C and also ADS – B in the future will be available for Safe and Efficient Air Traffic Control.

Ratmalana(RMA) Airport: The RMA airport which was the first International Airport in Sri Lanka lost its International Status in 1947, when the present Bandaranayake International Airport (BIA) was commissioned. RMA was a joint Civil-Military airport until August 2012. In August it was upgraded to International status as a City Airport for Medium and Small range aircraft operations. The RWY was resurfaced and the Tower Consol was modified.

Hambanthota International Airport(HIA): The new HIA, located 100nm south/South East of Colombo was a dream coming true for a small county like Sri Lanka. The project is almost completed. The length of the RWY is 3050 m and the width is 60m, which is capable for the A380 to land. Flight Calibration is in progress at the moment and all of us are waiting for the auspicious day to start operations. Adequate staff has been recruited and trained to be deployed at the new airport.

Flex Tracks: Flex Tracks system was introduced with Male FIR and Melbourne FIR and a number of airlines from the Middle East and Australia are using these tracks.

User Preferred Route (UPR) Trials: Colombo ACC was able to contribute and support for UPR Trials which was a success so far without any confusions.

ICAO Safety Audit: All the ATC Centers contributed for the successful implementation of Safety Standards within the Colombo FIR. Sri Lanka was ranked 4th in the Asia & Pacific Region and 19th in the World in the implementation process.

Welfare Activities

- This time around SLATCA organized an evening out for it's members and their families at a chic hotel in the suburbs of Colombo replacing the traditional day outing which has been the norm in the recent past. However, judging by the participation at the event it appeared, that, at least the kids favored the day outing as they missed the fun & frolic at the swimming pool and the rest of the outdoor activities.
- The gym equipment purchased by SLATCA a few years back for the recreation of it's members have seen better days and needs replacement. Furthermore, with the significant increase in staff in recent times necessitated as a result of increase in traffic, the need for a proper recreational facility is a must. SLATCA intends pursuing the matter with the company management.

General

100 years of Aviation in Sri Lanka: The records indicate that a German aviator did the maiden flight in our paradise isle. It was the second plane that arrived on our shore by ship. The first one owned by an Englishman was only for display, where people bought tickets to see the flying machine. On record is that Von Hester owned the second plane, whether he flew or someone else did is an unanswered question. The plane took off, glided and crashed, thus recording Lanka's first flight. It was in 1912 and that makes our nation's aviation history a hundred years old in 2012. Few celebrations will be held in Colombo to mark this historic event.

In conclusion, SLATCA wishes to emphasize, that, it has and always will act to safeguard the professional rights and privileges of it's members and in doing so will not hesitate to seek the assistance of IFATCA ,as a member nation, whenever the need arises.

Finally, SLATCA would like to take this opportunity to wish all the delegates a happy and a fruitful regional meeting, whilst thanking the host nation India for their warm & friendly hospitality in the conducting of a very successful 29th APRM.