

UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC  
AND  
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.  
LIMITED

E/CONF.53/L.43  
30 August 1967

Original: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE  
STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES  
Geneva, 4-22 September 1967  
Item 10 of the provisional agenda

Dual distribution

GEOGRAPHICAL TERMS

Submitted by the International Civil Aviation Organization

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is vitally interested in the work of the Conference in the standardization of geographical names primarily because of its aeronautical charting programme, in the designation of locations where various facilities or services for international air navigation are to be made available, and in the use of a shortened form of names of geographical features to facilitate communications and automatic data processing. The ICAC regulatory material relevant to this matter is given in the Appendix to this paper. The general rule is, that in charts and publications prepared by States for use in international aircraft operations, the names of places and geographical features are to be spelled in the form officially used by the country concerned and transliterated where necessary into the Roman alphabet. In ICAO's own publications this transliteration is based on the usage of the working language in which ICAO communicates with the individual State concerned.

As far as ICAO is concerned, the particular system or method to be recommended by the Conference in respect of geographical names is not of prime importance as long as uniformity is achieved. However, there is one matter on which it is desired that some special action be taken by the Conference in the interest of simplified map construction and interpretation, i.e. the development of standard abbreviations for natural and cultural features, such as cape, mountain, cliff, river, sand dune, dam, pipeline, etc. for use on charts. It is presumed that this matter is appropriate for consideration under Agenda Item 10. Here again, ICAO's primary interest is in standardization in the ultimate product and it appears unnecessary for us to take part in its formulation. If, however, some special committee or other organ is set up to perform this particular task then this Organization is prepared to assist by providing at least a list of terms which are of particular importance in the aeronautical field.

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APPENDIX

EXTRACT OF ICAO DOCUMENTS RELATING TO UNIFORMITY  
IN THE USE OF PLACE NAMES AND IN THE FORMULATION  
OF ABBREVIATIONS

- (i) International Standards and Recommended Practices for Aeronautical Charts -  
Annex 4 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation  
Annex 4  
"2.7 - Spelling  
of Geographical Names  
2.7.1 Roman script shall be used for all writing.  
2.7.2 The names of places and geographical features in countries which  
officially use varieties of the Roman alphabet shall be accepted in their  
official spelling, including the accents and dia-critical marks used in the  
respective alphabets.  
2.7.3 Where geographical terms such as cape, point, gulf, river, are  
abbreviated on any particular chart, that word shall be spelled out in full  
in the language used by the publishing agency, in respect of the most important  
example of each type. Punctuation marks shall not be used in abbreviations  
within the body of a chart.  
2.7.4 RECOMMENDATION. - In areas where romanized names have not been officially  
produced or adopted, and outside the territory of Contracting States, names  
should be transliterated from the non-roman alphabet form by the system  
generally used by the producing agency."
- (ii) International Standards and Recommended Practices for Aeronautical Information  
Services - Annex 15 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation  
Annex 15  
"3.4.2 Place names shall be spelled in conformity with local usage, trans-  
literated, when necessary, in the Latin alphabet."
- (iii) Procedures for Air Navigation Services - ICAO Abbreviations and Codes (Doc 8400)  
Doc 8400 (para. 2, Foreword)  
"2. - Principles for Formulation of Abbreviations

The principles applied in the formulation of ICAO abbreviations are:

- (a) that allocation of more than one signification to a single abbreviation should be avoided except where it can be reasonably determined that no instances of misinterpretation would arise;
- (b) that allocation of more than one abbreviation to the same signification should be avoided even though a different use is prescribed;
- (c) that abbreviations should make use of the root word or words and should be derived from words common to the three working languages except that where it is impracticable to apply this principle to best advantage, the abbreviation should follow the English text;
- (d) that the use of a singular or plural form for the signification of an abbreviation should be selected on the basis of the more common use;
- (e) that an abbreviation may represent grammatical variants of the basic signification where such application can be made without risk of confusion and the desired grammatical form can be determined from the context of the message.

With respect to the latter principle, several variants are given for a number of abbreviations where it might not be obvious that the variant is appropriate or acceptable."

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