ICAO NEWS RELEASE

MONTREAL, CANADA

FOR RELEASE A.M. 6 September 1956

# ICAO JOINT SUPPORT CONFERENCE MEETS IN GENEVA

MONTREAL, 6 September 1956 — A Joint Support Conference convened by the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization will meet in Geneva on Thursday 6 September, to revise the existing Danish and Icelandic arrangements and examine the draft simplified model arrangements prepared by the ICAO Joint Support Committee.

Under the terms of the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, each state undertakes to provide air navigation facilities and services in its own territory. The problem, however, is more involved than this, for certain services and facilities must also be provided in regions of undetermined sovereignty and on the high seas, and no one nation is charged with this responsibility. Furthermore, navigation aids are complex and costly, and states sometimes cannot afford to operate them or even to provide a sufficient number of technicians to man the installations.

The Convention recognizes these difficulties, and makes provision for them. It lays down the basic principles for "joint support" action if a state applies to ICAO for financial or technical aid, or if the Council acts upon its own initiative in order to remedy a situation which might impair the safe, regular, efficient and economical operation of international air services.

## Air Navigation Services in Iceland

Although not frequently used by most transoceanic air services when fair weather permits non-stop transatlantic flights, aerodromes in Iceland become indispensable whenever flight conditions in the North Atlantic become so unfavourable, particularly in the case of strong headwinds, as to make a direct crossing possible only at the cost of considerable reduction of payload. In addition, the use of the pressure pattern method of navigation results in many aircraft being routed northward towards Iceland. Such aircraft then use Icelandic airports as alternates in case they encounter any incident obliging them to land.

It is generally during unfavourable meteorological conditions that the greatest numbers of aircraft operate in the vicinity of Iceland and that traffic there becomes sufficiently congested to require full utilization of the air traffic control and flight information services that must be kept available for the safe operation of international air services in the North Atlantic.

The major storm tracks converge very near Iceland and that area of the Atlantic is also favourable to the re-development of certain types of storms and to the formation of secondary depressions. Under these circumstances, observations in Iceland provide indispensable indications of changing conditions. When used in conjunction with observations from ocean weather stations, upper air soundings in Iceland provide the necessary information to enable meteorologists to determine the strength of the pressure gradient and the winds along the most travelled routes in the North Atlantic.

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

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Requirements of air traffic control and meteorological services give rise to the need for fixed telecommunication services over the Reykjavik-Prestwick-Shannon-Gander-Stavanger-Stockholm network. These circuits must be immediately available for the communication of operational and air traffic control messages and meteorological information. In addition, provision must be made for communications with aircraft in flight.

A joint support arrangement on air navigation facilities in Iceland was concluded on 26 June 1948 by the ICAO Conference on Air Navigation Services in Iceland to provide for the services described above. These services cost in the neighbourhood of $600,000 a year to maintain and operate; considering the fact that the vast majority of air lines using these services are non-Icelandic, this would be a heavy and unjustified burden to place on the population of the island. An earlier joint support arrangement, concluded in 1947, provided for the financing of the LORAN station at Vik, Iceland. This arrangement was sponsored by ICAO between Iceland and other states whose air lines made use of LORAN. In July 1953 the LORAN arrangement was incorporated into the general arrangement on air navigation services in Iceland.

Participants in the Icelandic arrangements are: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States.

Air Navigation Services in Greenland and the Faeroes

Greenland, stretching some 1,300 miles between the latitudes of 60° and 83° North, is at the northern boundary of the main cyclonic storm tracks. Its topography, being essentially a great ice-covered plateau averaging about 8,000 feet elevation, exerts a profound influence on the storm tracks and the weather régimes over the whole of the North Atlantic, and for the same reasons it imposes difficulties in the establishment of observation stations necessary in completing the day-to-day picture of weather developments in the North Atlantic flight area. While the bulk of trans-Atlantic flights pass to the south of Greenland, knowledge of the pressure distribution well to the north of the main routes from Europe to America is essential in making wind forecasts and in deciding the route to be taken by any particular flight. More particularly, weather observations from Greenland are of direct importance to the operation of its aerodromes and those at Reykjavik and Keflavik in Iceland.

An arrangement providing for the joint financing of ten meteorological stations in Greenland was adopted in May 1949 in London. This arrangement also provided for financing the necessary communication services and for a LORAN station at Skuvanes in the Faeroe Islands. In 1952 the LORAN station at Frederiksdal in Greenland was added to this agreement. The latest additional service is a ground wave transmitting station at Prins Christians Sund.

Participants in the arrangements on Greenland and The Faeroes are the following: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States. The Federal Republic of Germany, which became a member of ICAO on 8 June 1956, has also contributed to the financing of the Danish and Icelandic joint support arrangements.

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