

# Antarctic Flight Information Manual (AFIM) also known as e-AFIM (electronic-AFIM)



## Procedures

Version November 2023. Review every 6 months.

### 0.0 Background

0.1 The Antarctic Flight Information Manual (AFIM) is produced by the Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programs (COMNAP) as a tool towards improving air safety in the Antarctic Treaty area.

0.2 The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) adopted in 1989 Recommendation XV-20 (no longer current), then ATCM Resolution 1 (2013) (no longer current), then ATCM Resolution 6 (2021) (no longer current) and now under ATCM Resolution 3 (2022), which recommends (paragraph 3) that:

“...all operators, governmental and non-governmental, operating aircraft or managing air-related infrastructure, camps or aviation facilities or services in the Antarctic Treaty area should be provided, at the request of their Competent Authority or National Antarctic Programme...the “AFIM”...(out of the use of which questions of liability will not arise)...”.

And (paragraph 3(c)):

“...Antarctic operators to provide timely, current and accurate information for the purpose of maintaining the AFIM”.

0.3 Since 21 February 2014, the AFIM has been produced as an electronic edition (e-AFIM) and, at least, two releases are published by the COMNAP Secretariat each year. The first yearly release is scheduled before the beginning of the Antarctic summer season, generally 15 September, and the second publication is in December, when many operators are at the height of their seasonal activity. If need be, a third release is published in February before the end of the summer campaigns. Depending on particular circumstances, the e-AFIM can be released more than three times per year.

### 1.0 Data Provision

All Antarctic operators to provide timely, current and accurate information for the purposes of maintaining e-AFIM.

#### 1.1 National Antarctic Programmes (NAPs)

1.1.1 Each NAP conducting air activities, inclusive of the use of fixed and rotary-wing personned aircraft, inter- and intra-continently, and/or operating or maintaining an airfield or air operations facility including a helipad or heliport, should appoint an e-AFIM Point of Contact (POC) tasked to provide timely, current and accurate information for the purpose of maintaining the e-AFIM.

1.1.2 Data provision can be done by way of the e-AFIM Data Dashboard. A NAP can request a username/password for the Data Dashboard at <https://applications.pgc.umn.edu/comnap/dashboard/register/>.

Requests are approved, or declined, by the COMNAP Engagement, Information and Project Manager.

1.1.3 Once approved, the e-AFIM POC is responsible for review and edit (when needed) of their programme's information in the database by way of the e-AFIM Data Dashboard accessed here: <http://applications.pgc.umn.edu/comnap/dashboard/login/> (username/password required).

1.1.4 All e-AFIM POCs with access to the AFIM Data Dashboard are able to review the air activities information of their programme at any time. The currency of the information becomes critical 10 to 15 days before the scheduled e-AFIM release dates.

## 1.2 Non-Governmental Operators (NGOs)

1.2.1 NGOs who operate aircraft and/or maintain aviation-related infrastructure in the Antarctic Treaty area and that do not carry out operations for NAPs do not have access to the e-AFIM Data Dashboard but can request subscriber access to e-AFIM.

1.2.2 COMNAP requests that through the relevant Competent Authority each NGO requesting subscriber access to e-AFIM provide basic information to COMNAP on planned Antarctic Treaty area activities in order to inform e-AFIM (see Annex 1). Preliminary information from all operators is required before subscription to e-AFIM commences, then, thereafter based on reviews in support of e-AFIM release timeframe (see below).

1.3 The COMNAP Executive Secretary keeps the master list for all e-AFIM POCs in the COMNAP Quickbase database, field "Users"; POCs email addresses are also kept in the COMNAP database. Additionally the COMNAP Executive Secretary is responsible for overseeing the production of e-AFIM before the release to "subscribers" (see below).

1.4 The COMNAP Engagement, Information and Project Manager is responsible for supporting POCs to conduct their tasks in case technical assistance is needed. Additionally, the COMNAP Engagement, Information and Project Manager is responsible for validating information provided by POCs and following up with them if required. The information provided by POCs into the COMNAP Data Dashboard serves multiple tables in the COMNAP database. These tables, which are used also for other COMNAP products, are National Antarctic Programmes, Facilities, Airfields, Heliports, Communication Centers, and Meteorology Centers. Some of the information is shared with the Antarctic Treaty Secretariat.

## 2.0 e-AFIM Releases: Timeframe

2.1 Annually, the e-AFIM releases are published in PDF format at the following times of the year.

### 2.1.1 September:

- Mid- to late-August – NAP POCs and those NGOs that support NAP operation under contract to an NAP, will receive a reminder email to review their programmes' data in the COMNAP Quickbase database.
- All NGO subscribers with a designated POCs, that do not have access through the Data Dashboard, to submit updated information to the COMNAP Secretariat by way of information template (Annex 1).

- 10 September – usual deadline for review of data and input/saving of any updated information by way of the Data Dashboard.
- 15 September – e-AFIM release to all subscribers.

#### 2.1.2 December:

- Mid- to late-November – NAP POCs and those NGOs that support NAP operation under contract to an NAP, will receive a reminder email to review their programmes' data in the COMNAP Quickbase database.
- All NGO subscribers with a designated POCs, that do not have access through the Data Dashboard, to submit updated information to the COMNAP Secretariat by way of information template (Annex 1).
- 10 December – usual deadline for review of data and input/saving of any updated information by way of the Data Dashboard.
- 15 December – e-AFIM release to all subscribers.

2.1.3 If there is a need to publish a third release, it is usually in February. The timeframes for this release are:

- Late January – NAP POCs and those NGOs that support NAP operation under contract to an NAP, will receive a reminder email to review their programmes' data in the COMNAP Quickbase database.
- All NGO subscribers with a designated POCs, that do not have access through the Data Dashboard, to submit updated information to the COMNAP Secretariat by way of information template (Annex 1).
- 10 February – usual deadline for review of data and input/saving of any updated information by way of the Data Dashboard.
- 15 February – e-AFIM release to all subscribers.

2.2 For all releases, the five days between the deadline for submission of revisions and the release to all the subscribers are used to compile all the information on air activities that comprise the e-AFIM and by the COMNAP Secretariat to check the final product.

### **3.0 Subscribers/Request access to releases**

All operators, governmental and non-governmental, operating aircraft or managing air-related infrastructure, camps or aviation facilities or services in the Antarctic Treaty area should be provided, at the request of their Competent Authority or National Antarctic Programme, the e-AFIM.

3.1 Those who have access to the e-AFIM are called “subscribers”.

3.2 All COMNAP Member NAPs can request and will be granted subscriber status.

3.3 All NGOs can request subscriber status through a NAP if they are contracted as an operator for that NAP, or through their Competent Authority, meaning, the governmental entity that is permitting the NGO that requires e-AFIM in relation to their proposed activity in the Antarctic Treaty area.

3.4 All Rescue Coordination Centres (RCC) with Antarctic coordination and response responsibilities are granted subscriber status through their POC.

3.5 The IAATO Secretariat is considered a subscriber of e-AFIM with releases shared for the purpose of information exchange. The IAATO Secretariat is not responsible for sharing of the document with IAATO Members and Associates, if they wish to, those Members and Associates must make a request for access to e-AFIM as a subscriber through a NAP, or through their Competent Authority.

3.6 The COMNAP Secretariat will not grant subscriber access to an NGO making a direct request.

3.7 The subscribers list is maintained by the COMNAP Executive Secretary. It is updated on an annual basis, meaning, each season subscribers must renew their request for access.

3.8 Access to e-AFIM for subscribers:

3.6.1 All NAP subscribers can access the latest release of the e-AFIM at any time through their username and password access to the COMNAP Members' Only Website and through a GoogleDrive link.

3.6.2 All NGO subscribers, including the IAATO Secretariat and all RCC subscribers will be provided with a GoogleDrive link to access e-AFIM.

3.9 When a new release of e-AFIM is available the COMNAP Engagement, Information and Project Manager will send an email to the complete subscriber list to announce the release availability. The COMNAP Engagement, Information and Project will also update the general information/text on the COMNAP webpage regarding e-AFIM to make current for each release.

#### **4.0 Data Policy/Data Confidentiality**

4.1 The e-AFIM is considered a "restricted", controlled, document. All subscribers agree that by having access to e-AFIM, they will use the document for its intended purpose only, will not make it publicly available by way of copying, sharing on the internet, or through any form of social media and will keep secure the contact information contained in the document to the best of their ability.

4.2 The publication of the details of the facilities, services and supplies described in any e-AFIM release does not imply any right of use of those facilities, services or supplies. Being an e-AFIM subscriber and having access to e-AFIM does not give any right of use whatsoever of facilities, services and supplies in Antarctica. The facilities, services and suppliers are established and maintained by NAPs and other operators strictly for their own use - they are not designed or provided for use by others. Prior agreement must be obtained to use facilities maintained by another operator, and requests must comply with the procedures for prior approval, advanced notification and the use of the Antarctic flight plan as described in e-AFIM Appendix 2.

4.3 Being domiciled in New Zealand, the COMNAP Secretariat follows the data management policy that complies with the legislation of the New Zealand Government. The COMNAP Secretariat considers itself the "steward" of the data in the COMNAP Quickbase database that informs e-AFIM. Subscribers of e-AFIM are considered "users" of the data as contained in e-AFIM. Both the steward and the users have a shared responsibility to ensure that the data be protected from unauthorised access, use and modification.

4.4 Neither COMNAP, the COMNAP Secretariat and staff, nor the NAPs and NGOs that provide the information that informs AFIM (e-AFIM) can be held liable for the information and use of that information whatsoever. Antarctic conditions are subject to change without notice.

## **5.0 Technical Specifics**

5.1 The e-AFIM is released in PDF format. Each release can be between 50–100MB in file size. Requests can be made to access the e-AFIM in two parts. This request should be made in advance of each release.

5.2 Access to GoogleDrive will be required for some subscribers to e-AFIM. The COMNAP Secretariat cannot be responsible where an organisation's or a country's data access policies or technical capabilities will not permit access and downloading of e-AFIM.

## **6.0 Miscellaneous**

6.1 Providing information to inform the e-AFIM does not replace, nor in any way affect, the requirements for prior approval, advance notification and the transmission and filing of an Antarctic flightplan.

6.2 The Polar Geospatial Center, University of Minnesota, USA, is supporting COMNAP in the technical aspects of maintenance and production of the e-AFIM. These technical aspects include, but are not limited to, the maintenance of the COMNAP Data Dashboard in Quickbase used to compile the tables with e-AFIM related information in a unique file that will ultimately become the e-AFIM releases. The Polar Geospatial Center therefore has full access to the data in the COMNAP Quickbase database and in the e-AFIM.

6.3 Immediately prior to the time of each release, the COMNAP Engagement, Information and Project Manager requests the Polar Geospatial Center AFIM Project Manager for a compilation and "push out" to an e-AFIM PDF file that becomes a "release". Each new release is sequentially numbered as YY-0x (where YY is the year, example 23 is for 2023; and where 0x is the number of the release during that year, example 02 would be the second e-AFIM release of the year 2023).

## Annex 1: e-AFIM Subscribers Information Request from the COMNAP Secretariat

Please complete the information below and email to [sec@comnap.aq](mailto:sec@comnap.aq).

<b>Information about you</b>
Your name:
Your company's name:
Your contact email:
Please confirm that you wish to be the e-AFIM Point of Contact for your company. YES or NO
If you answered NO above, meaning, you are not the e-AFIM Point of Contact, please provide Point of Contact name and contact email address here:

<b>Information about your proposed Antarctic Treaty area activity</b>
Does your proposed activity include fixed-wing aircraft? YES or NO
Does your proposed activity include rotary-wing aircraft? YES or NO
Does your proposed activity include Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems? YES or NO
Are you operating from a vessel? YES or NO. If yes, vessel name:
What dates (or date range) will activity take place:
What region/part of Antarctica will activity take place (be as specific as you can):
What is the closest/nearest Antarctic station(s) to your proposed activity:
What gateway do you operate out of:
While activity is taking place in Antarctica, what is the name(s) of the primary contact person, their contact details and dates of operation? (Example Joan Smith (EL); <a href="mailto:joan@vessel1.com">joan@vessel1.com</a> ; 1 Nov 2021 – 16 Dec 2021. Bob Yellow (EL) <a href="mailto:byel@vessel1.com">byel@vessel1.com</a> ; 22 Dec 2021 – 15 Jan 2022.)

Please provide any further information that you wish here:

Thank you.