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AIC

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**HARMONISATION OF THE APPLICATION OF ICAO AIRSPACE CLASSIFICATIONS
THROUGHOUT ECAC AIRSPACE AT AND BELOW FL 195**

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Aeronautical Information Circular is to present information in respect of the plan to harmonize the application of ICAO Airspace Classifications at and below FL195 throughout ECAC Airspace.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The increase in demand for the use of airspace by all airspace user groups is expected to continue. Current forecasts show an increase of 50% in commercial transport flights throughout Europe by 2012 based on 2000 traffic levels. It has been recognized that airspace capacity within Europe must be increased in order to satisfy this demand. One of the main areas for change highlighted in ATM 2000+ Strategy concerns the organization of European airspace. A major obstacle to producing more capacity is that the present European airspace structures are complex and disparate.
- 2.2 The EUROCONTROL Airspace Strategy for the ECAC States addresses this complexity by establishing a set of strategic objectives and actions necessary to provide a simplified and harmonized airspace structure throughout ECAC airspace up to 2015 and beyond. Such simplification and harmonization will facilitate capacity enhancing measures whilst maintaining or improving levels of safety.
- 2.3 The EUROCONTROL Airspace Strategy for the ECAC States identifies, in particular, the need for a simplified airspace organization and seeks first to establish a harmonized ICAO Airspace Classification above common agreed level throughout ECAC airspace; this has been achieved during the period since 27 November 2003 by the application of Class C Airspace above FL 195. *This change was promulgated in AIC 038-2003 dated 17 June 2003.*
- 2.4 Following the application of Class C Airspace above FL 195, the process of the simplification and harmonization of airspace classification is now extended to the airspace at and below, to the surface. This Aeronautical Information Circular describes these changes.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ICAO AIRSPACE CLASSIFICATIONS TO BE APPLIED

In accordance with the EUROCONTROL Airspace Strategy for the ECAC States, the ICAO Airspace Classifications to be applied at and below FL 195, to the surface, will be selected from Class C, Class D and Class G Airspace Classifications.

These Airspace Classifications are defined at ICAO Annex 11, Chapter 2.6.

- 3.1 *Class C Airspace and/or Class D Airspace will be applied at and below FL 195 to above FL 095.*
- 3.2 *Airspace Classes C and/or D and/or G will be applied at and below FL 095 to the surface.*
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4. VFR FLIGHTS

Within the Class C and/or Class D Airspace at and below FL 195 to the surface, General Air Traffic flights will be accommodated in:

- In Reserved Airspace (temporary Segregated Airspace or its equivalent) or
- In accordance with ATC Clearance, or
- In accordance with a specific arrangement that may be required by the appropriate ATS Authority, or
- In a corridor of airspace established, either permanently or temporarily, for the use of aircraft flying under VFR.

5. DESCRIPTION OF AIRSPACES CHANGES

This harmonization will not change ICAO airspaces classes in use in Lisboa FIR. Portuguese AIP will be amended accordingly.

6. IMPLEMENTATION TIMESCALES

It was intended to implement this harmonization in Europe from 13 April 2006.
For Portuguese Airspace this will occur on 31 August 2006.

7. REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- ICAO Annex 2 - Rules of the Air
- ICAO Annex 11 - Air Traffic Services
- EUROCONTROL Airspace Strategy for the ECAC States
- Transition Plan for the implementation of the EUROCONTROL Airspace Strategy for the ECAC States - Vols 1 & 2
- AIP Portugal

8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Further information on policy, planning and implementation issues for the application of a harmonized and simplified application of ICAO Airspace Classifications below FL 195 to the surface can be obtained from:

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