



The CDM News

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

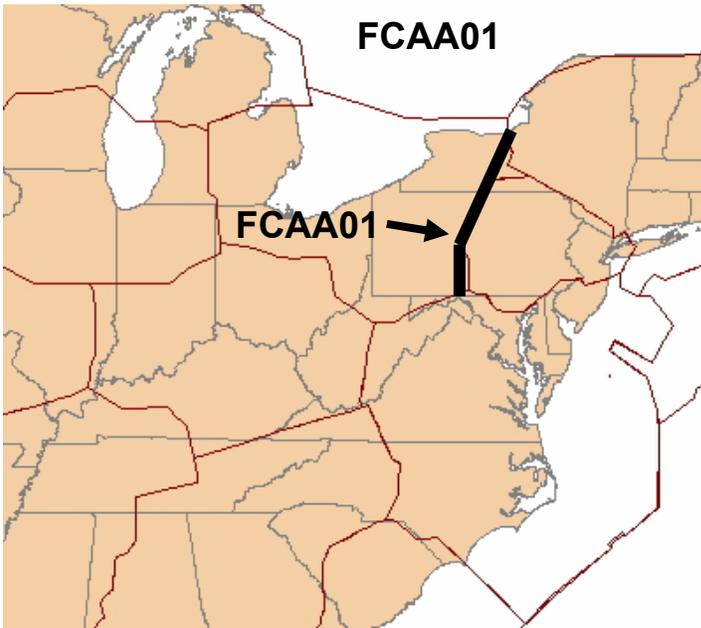
1 - AFP

2, 3, 4 - AFP Q&A

4 - Weather Evaluation Team

Airspace Flow Programs (AFP)

The major functionality to be fielded in April 2006 as part of ETMS 8.2 is the Airspace Flow Program (AFP). An AFP is a traffic management initiative that identifies constraints in the en route system, develops a real-time list of flights that are filed into the constrained area, and distributes Expect Departure Clearance Times (EDCTs) to meter demand through the area. Current traffic management tools do not allow efficient control of air traffic volume through constrained areas of airspace, particularly during severe weather (SWAP) events. The currently used method is to implement multiple ground delay programs (GDP) for a number of airports to control demand. The problem with this is that it often controls the wrong set of flights to solve the en route constraint. AFPs will provide another option to provide flexible, equitable metering of traffic through a constrained area of airspace.



FCAA01 is defined by the western boundary of ZNY and extending to Lake Erie.

Altitude Filters: 120 – 600

Arrival Filters: ZNY & ZBW

Departure Filters: None

Likely weather for use: Weather close in to or moving toward the N.Y. Metro area.

Weather Triggers: Intense weather that is close in or moving toward the N.Y. Metro area and is or will likely directly impact the N.Y. Metro airports.

NESP Rate Guidelines

Flow through ZOB:

Low Weather Impact: 90 – 100 Rate/Hour

Med Weather Impact: 80 – 90 Rate/Hour

High Weather Impact: 70 – 80 Rate/Hour

Image: FCAA01 would be used to develop an AFP that would manage traffic flowing through ZOB toward the N.Y. Metro area. Additional pre-planned Flow Constrained Areas (FCAs) to be used for the 2006 SWAP season can be found at:

http://cdm.metronaviation.com/Workgroups/route_eval.html#key

National En Route Spacing Position (NESP)

A new, planned position at the Air Traffic Control Systems Command Center (ATCSCC) called the National En Route Spacing Position (NESP) will be the focal point when implementing an AFP. The NESP will be activated by the National Operations Manager (NOM) after determining a need based on collaborative planning with other resources such as the Severe Weather National Traffic Management Officer (NTMO) and other area NTMOs. Activation of the position will be announced on the planning telcon (PT) as well as through a numbered advisory. The NESP will use all available information, ad hoc telcons with field facilities and customers, as appropriate, to determine that an AFP is the best option to mitigate the constraint. The NESP will then plan, model and implement the AFP and send the associated Advisory. He or she will then monitor the AFP and revise or cancel as appropriate.

AFP Questions and Answers

What is an Airspace Flow Program?

An AFP is a traffic management process that identifies constraints in the en route system, develops a real-time list of flights that are filed into the constrained area, and distributes expected departure clearance times (EDCTs) to meter the demand through the area. The constraint area is identified by creating an FCA that is associated with the AFP. Examples of constraints include thunderstorm activity, turbulence, and periods of excess demand. The list of flights includes aircraft that have filed flight plans, filed early intent flight plans, or operate in the constrained area based on historical flight plan data. Traffic managers use a software tool called Flight Schedule Monitor (FSM) to balance air traffic capacity and demand when en route airspace becomes constrained. FSM has been modified for planning, modeling and monitoring AFPs.

Why was AFP developed?

Current traffic management tools do not always allow efficient control of air traffic volume, particularly due to severe weather (SWAP) events. Airport ground delay programs (GDP) for 9 or 10 select airports have been used in the past to manage the demand throughput in Cleveland and Washington Centers. This method provided an imbalance because GDPs did not always control the correct set of flights to solve the constraint problem. Traffic managers recognize that, while GDPs are a necessary component of SWAP, there is a better way to manage the demand. The AFP tool has been developed and combines the use of current FCA and GDP-related technology to control air traffic through constrained airspace.

What benefits are provided by AFP?

AFP provides:

- More precise control of airspace demand by avoiding the imposition of unnecessary delay on flights that do not use the constrained airspace.
- An equitable distribution of delays among flights filed through the constrained airspace.
- Customers with more predictability, flexibility, and options during SWAP.

Who developed the AFP concept?

Dating back to the summer of 2004, a group has been working to identify better methods for managing en route congestion in the National Airspace System. This group consists of representatives from airlines, general aviation, NAVCANADA, industry and FAA and falls under the oversight of the national Collaborative Decision Making structure. The group is called the Flow Evaluation Team and a history of their work and the development of AFP can be found at: <http://cdm.metronaviation.com/>

How does AFP affect my flight?

When the air traffic demand in a constrained area is projected to exceed capacity, traffic managers at the Air Traffic Control System Command Center (ATCSCC) will follow a predefined coordination process and may issue an AFP for the constrained airspace. If an AFP is issued and a flight is included, the pilot will receive an EDCT.

What is an EDCT?

An EDCT is a time generated by the Flight Schedule Monitor software program that specifies when a flight is expected to depart. Meeting the departure time is important because it allows traffic managers to properly meter flights through a constrained area.

Next CDM Meeting:

February 8 - 9, 2006 Fair Lakes, VA



AFP Questions and Answers cont.

How do I find out if my flight is included in an AFP?

When an AFP is issued the FAA will send an Advisory that is accessible at: <http://www.fly.faa.gov/adv/advAdvisoryForm.jsp>

The AFP will also appear on the Operational Information System (OIS) page at: <http://www.fly.faa.gov/ois/>

Your flight may be included if it falls within the parameters of the Advisory – between the specified altitudes, crossing the FCA, and destined to the specified areas. For example, FL240-600, crossing the AFP and landing New York Center (ZNY).

How do I find out if my flight has an EDCT?

At airports with an airport traffic control tower, controllers will provide you with the EDCT. If you are departing an airport without a control tower, you must determine if your flight has an EDCT. You may visit the ATCSCC's website at www.fly.faa.gov to determine if your flight has an EDCT. This website will provide information regarding the location and reason for an AFP. It will also provide a "Look Up" function to determine if your flight has received an EDCT.

What if I depart VFR, pick up my IFR clearance when airborne, and then discover I have an EDCT?

First, it is important for you to check the ATCSCC website – before you depart -- to determine if your flight is included in an AFP and may have an EDCT.

If you do depart VFR, and depending on the severity of the constraint behind the AFP, you may:

- Be assigned airborne holding to provide the delay necessary for your flight to arrive at the AFP to meet the controlled time of arrival; or
- Be rerouted to avoid the AFP altogether; or
- Be allowed to enter the AFP with minimal delay.

What if I miss the assigned EDCT or need to arrange a different time?

You have a window of time in which to depart and not miss the EDCT. Flights are asked to depart as close to the time as possible. If conditions warrant, you may depart 5 minutes before the EDCT and up to 5 minutes after. If you are unable to depart within this window, you can exercise the following options:

- If your company is a CDM member, flight operations has a protocol for contacting the ATCSCC to request a new time.
- At airports with a control tower, the controller has a protocol for requesting a new time and can assist you.

At airports without a control tower, you may:

- Contact Flight Service.
- Contact the Tactical Customer Advocate at the ATCSCC. The TCA can be reached at (703) 925-5306 or 5356.

What options do I have besides taking a ground delay?

One option is to route out of the AFP. If there is another acceptable route available that would take the flight out of the AFP, you may choose to refile the flight plan. The software will recognize that the flight is no longer in the AFP and will assign an EDCT of 0900 to indicate the assigned delay has been lifted.

Another option could be to make a stop en route. You may elect to land at an intermediate airport to provide the delay necessary for the flight to arrive at the AFP controlled time of arrival. If you choose this option, coordination with the Tactical Customer Advocate is required to avoid assignment of additional delay. CDM members may contact the TCA through the web page. Otherwise, the TCA may be contacted at (703) 925-5306 or 5356.



AFP Questions and Answers cont.

What happens if I file a new flight plan into an existing AFP?

If you file a new flight plan into an existing AFP, the flight will be treated as a popup. Your flight will be assigned an EDCT consistent with the delay received by other flights filed to enter the AFP at about the same time.

What happens if I route out of one AFP and into another AFP?

If you file a flight plan out of an AFP and into another, the flight will be treated as a popup. Your flight will be assigned an EDCT consistent with the delay received by other flights filed to enter the AFP at about the same time. In addition, you will forfeit the arrival slot in the original AFP.

What happens when my flight already has an EDCT for an airport ground delay program?

If your flight is included in both an airport ground delay program and an AFP, the EDCT for the ground delay program will take precedence.

What happens when weather conditions change and the capacity in an AFP changes?

It is recognized that the predicted capacity or rate (AAR) through an AFP will be fluid based on changing weather conditions and other variables. Demand through the constrained airspace may exceed or fall below capacity as weather conditions in the airspace worsen or improve. When the conditions warrant, traffic managers will take steps to coordinate and implement revisions to the AFP. In a revision, AFP entry slots are recomputed so that demand is again metered to meet capacity and new EDCTs are sent to the en route centers, the control towers, and the customer flight operation centers.

If the weather that necessitated the AFP dissipates or if the demand falls well below capacity, the AFP will be cancelled and all flights will be issued an EDCT of 0900 to indicate the delay has been lifted.

Weather Evaluation Team

The CDM Stakeholders Group (CSG) has authorized and tasked a new sub group called the Weather Evaluation Team (WET). The assigned tasks are:

- Assess the current performance of the CCFP and re-define user requirements with the intent of improving verification process, granularity and accuracy.
- Consider/establish draft requirements for a terminal, TRACON, or “hub” area forecast to allow better planning in terminal areas with major flows.

Danny Sims is the FAA Lead and Tom Fahey of Northwest Airlines is the Industry Point of Contact (POC).

Send Newsletter Comments & Suggestions to:

Paul.Eure@ngc.com - (703) 453-8875

Jim.Houde@ngc.com - (703) 453-8891

