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AIRCRAFT RADIO REPLACEMENT PROJECT OVERVIEW

Introduction

To ensure that aircraft utilised by the Agencies are Simoco P25 radio compatible the State Aircraft Unit (SAU) has commenced the replacement of the existing Simoco radios fitted to State Fleet aircraft with new Simoco P25 Digital radios as part of the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) radio replacement project.

DEPI have commenced replacing their existing Analogue Motorola radio terminals with Digital P25 radio terminals.

The Country Fire Authority (CFA) completed their radio replacement project in Early 2013.

At the completion of the DEPI radio replacement project, CFA and DEPI will be in a position to migrate to P25 Digital fire ground communications which will provide clearer communications and additional channels.

The timeline to migrate to digital fire ground communications is yet to be determined by CFA and DEPI.

Radio Replacement

All existing SAU supplied and operator owned Simoco SRM9000 series radios fitted to aircraft will be replaced with new Simoco SRM9000 P25 Radios. The new radios will remain the property of the SAU.

Radios owned by aircraft operators will be returned. These radios will not be able to be utilised for Victorian operations.

Operators wishing to fit radios to additional aircraft will need to apply for allocation of radios to the SAU Technical Systems Coordinator.

Allocation of radios will be determined on acceptance to the Panel of Providers (PoP) and operational justification.

BRIEFING NOTE

Project Timelines

Phase 1 of the project comprises the activities listed below and is planned to be completed before the commencement of Aircraft contracts for the 2013-14 season.

- Replacement of the current analogue Simoco simplex radio, with a Simoco P25 Digital radio during the 2013-14 Season.
- A firmware modification of the existing Simoco Trunk radio to ensure compatibility with the new digital simplex radio
- Conversion of the Aviation Fleet Trunk Numbering system from MPT1327 (233 4001 XXX) to ANN Dialling (7335 XXX)

Phase 2 activities listed below are due to commence in 2014 and be completed for the 2014-15 season.

- Replacement of the Simoco analogue Trunk radio with a Simoco P25 Digital Trunk Radio
- Development of a P25 version of RATS

Replacement of the Simplex radio will enable compatibility between Aircraft, CFA and DEPI analogue and digital radio channels.

Portable Aircraft Radio Kits

Five prototype portable aircraft radio kits are being developed to replace the existing CFA and DEPI Kits in use.

These kits are based on the current Pelican case kits in use in Gippsland which permits limited integration into the aircraft intercom system.

These kits are expected early 2014, with field based trials to be undertaken during 2014.

Regional Radio Dispatch System

Currently aircraft radio communications are out of scope of the Regional Radio Dispatch System (RRDS).

SAU are currently working with the RRDS team to identify the operational requirements for aircraft on RRDS.

Based on the timeframes involved, aircraft will not be able to operate on RRDS channels and will continue to operate on the interim dispatch channels as required for the 2013-14 fire season.

Further Information

Adam Damen
Technical Systems Coordinator
adam.damen@depi.vic.gov.au