



WORKING PAPER

**SPECIAL AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN (AFI)
REGIONAL AIR NAVIGATION (RAN) MEETING**

Durban, South Africa, 24 to 29 November 2008

Agenda Item 4: Current status of aviation safety and related activities in the Africa-Indian Ocean (AFI) Region (Safety Committee)

REGIONAL COOPERATION IN INVESTIGATIONS

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper outlines a means by which States in the AFI Region could pool resources to meet their needs for accident and incident investigation through the establishment of regional accident and incident investigation agencies.

Action by the meeting is in paragraph 4.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 States lacking the resources to carry out the investigation of major accidents often can rely on other interested States (e.g. the States of Design and Manufacture) that may assist and provide support to the State of Occurrence. However, many States also lack the capability to investigate other accidents and serious incidents and the support of other interested States may not always be available. For those States, the availability of a regional accident investigation organization, or the creation of a regional pool of qualified investigators might be the best option to enable the establishment of an effective accident and incident investigation system.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The Convention on International Civil Aviation allocates responsibility for aviation safety to individual States. Each State bears responsibility for the continuing airworthiness of aircraft; safe and efficient aircraft operations; the licensing and/or certification of personnel; safe air traffic flow within its airspace, sufficient airport infrastructure; and adequate investigations of aircraft accidents and incidents.

2.2 ICAO has long been aware of the difficulties experienced by some Contracting States in implementing Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and has tried to assist them accordingly.

Safety oversight audits conducted under the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) have highlighted the extent of deficiencies encountered by those States in meeting their safety oversight obligations. In many cases, these deficiencies are the result of insufficient resource allocation to the national civil aviation authority. Consequently, such States are unable to comply in full with national and international requirements concerning the safety of civil aircraft operations.

2.3 It is to be recalled that ICAO, as part of its AFI Comprehensive Implementation Programme (ACIP), has developed a programme to enable States to acquire the necessary capability for safety oversight through the development and establishment of Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs). The establishment of RSOOs would enable States to meet their international obligations by joining forces and sharing resources that otherwise may be impossible to have. It is believed that such cooperation can also be extended to the establishment of Regional Accident Investigation Agencies (RAIA) enabling States to meet their international obligations in the area of accident investigation and prevention.

2.4 In the area of accident and incident investigations some findings include, inter alia, a lack of training systems for investigators; a lack of equipment to conduct investigations and a lack of procedures, processes and guidelines for accident investigations. Audit findings and other sources of information convinced ICAO that it should further assist Contracting States in the development of regional safety oversight systems, as well as provide them with related guidance material to deal with identified deficiencies.

2.5 Annex 13 — *Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation* (Standard 5.1 refers) requires that “[t]he State of Occurrence shall institute an investigation into the circumstances of the accident and be responsible for the conduct of the investigation, but it may delegate the whole or any part of the conducting of such investigation to another State by mutual arrangement and consent.” Furthermore, Annex 13 recommends (Recommended Practice 5.1.1 refers) that “[t]he State of Occurrence should institute an investigation into the circumstances of a serious incident. Such a State may delegate the whole or any part of the conducting of such investigation to another State by mutual arrangement and consent.”

2.6 In 2006, ICAO published the *Safety Oversight Manual, Part B — The Establishment and Management of a Regional Safety Oversight System* (Doc 9734-Part B). The manual provides guidance on the establishment and management of a regional safety oversight organization (RSOO) and outlines the duties and responsibilities of ICAO Contracting States with respect to the establishment and management of a regional safety oversight system. Doc 9734-Part B, however, does not specifically address regional aircraft accident and incident investigations.

2.7 In many areas of regional cooperation, States could produce economies of scale leading to increased efficiency due to the possibility of sharing and pooling of human and financial resources. Participating States would also increase their capacity to develop harmonized regulations adapted to their local environment and in compliance with SARPs. In the international arena, the existence and effective operation of regional organizations is a demonstration of regional solidarity and increases the involvement of individual States in aviation activities relating to the region or subregion.

2.8 During the last Accident Investigation and Prevention (AIG) Divisional Meeting in October 2008, the topic of regional cooperation in accident and serious incident investigations was discussed. The meeting was invited to recommend that ICAO develop guidance material for States on how to establish and manage a regional accident and incident investigation system.

3. **CONCLUSION**

3.1 The establishment of RAIAs should be supported by the meeting, taking into consideration the recommendations of the AIG Divisional Meeting held in October 2008.

3.2 Establishing such agencies will require an amendment to Annex 13 to enable the delegation by the State of Occurrence of the whole or any part of the conducting of an accident investigation to a RAIA. On this basis, the meeting is invited to adopt the following recommendation:

Recommendation 4/x — Establishment of Regional Accident Investigation Agencies

That the Special AFI RAN Meeting recommends the establishment of Regional Accident Investigation Agencies alongside the development and establishment of Regional Safety Oversight Organizations.

4. **ACTION BY THE MEETING**

4.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the content of this working paper; and
- b) approve the draft Recommendation at paragraph 3.2 above.

— END —