



Strategy

guiding
international civil
aviation
into the 21st century

International Civil Aviation Organization

ICAO

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) was founded through the Convention on International Civil Aviation signed on 7 December 1944. It is the United Nations Specialized Agency responsible for establishing international standards, recommended practices and procedures covering the technical, economic and legal fields of international civil aviation operations. ICAO has its Headquarters in Montreal, Canada, and has seven Regional Offices located in Bangkok, Cairo, Dakar, Lima, Mexico City, Nairobi and Paris.

ICAO makes it safer and easier to fly from one country to another. It encourages the use of safety measures, establishes visual and instrument flight rules for pilots and crews, develops aeronautical charts, co-ordinates aircraft radio frequencies, sets uniform regulations for the operation of air services and promotes simpler customs procedures.

ICAO issues a wide variety of technical, economic and legal publications, as well as films, video tapes, slides, diskettes and posters, to assist government authorities, manufacturers and operators in the aviation community and their partners in other sectors in ensuring a safe, orderly and efficient air transport system worldwide.



Foreword by the President of the Council

The adoption of this Strategic Action Plan by the ICAO Council on 7 February 1997 is a milestone in the history of the Organization. The Plan represents the first comprehensive re-evaluation of ICAO's mission since the Organization was formed through the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation in 1944. The fundamental aims and objectives of the Convention remain as relevant in these times of change and adaptation in civil aviation as when they were conceived in Chicago over 50 years ago. The Strategic Action Plan is designed to ensure that the Organization responds to the major challenges for civil aviation in the coming years and meets the needs of all its Contracting States, which have grown from the 52 that attended the Chicago Conference to 185 at the time of adoption of the Plan.

Never has there been a greater need for a strong and active ICAO. Civil aviation has been swept up in the wave of commercialization, globalization and transnationalization, with implications for safety and security that have to be addressed. Regulation of safety and security is, under the Chicago Convention, the responsibility of individual States; as ownership and operation of airlines, airports and air traffic control devolve from governments and cross-border involvement becomes more common, the need for seamless co-ordination beyond national and regional borders becomes even more fundamental.

Indeed, the time may have come for ICAO to play a more active role in the uniform application of the safety and security Standards and Recommended Practices in the Convention and its Annexes. ICAO, as the world body responsible for civil aviation, needs to be empowered to check closely the implementation of safety and security standards and to carry out regular inspections. The new focus of the Organization contained in its Strategic Action Plan, incorporating ICAO's Safety Oversight and Unlawful Interference programmes as fundamental elements, already provides a quantum step forward in the continued efforts of the Organization to ensure a safe, orderly and efficient international air transport system.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Assad Kotaite". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Assad Kotaite



Secretary General

The ICAO Strategic Action Plan will drive the work programme and associated prioritization and budgetary processes of the Organization into at least the early part of the 21st century. A programme of implementation action and a systematic planning process for the present three-year cycle are already in place, incorporating objectives, priorities, target dates and reporting processes for each of the key activities identified in the Plan. The Secretariat has also developed internal management tools common to implementation of the Plan, the Organization's Programme Budget and the associated planning process.

The Strategic Action Plan represents a renewed commitment by ICAO, on behalf of all its Contracting States, to continue to discharge successfully in a changing world both traditional and new responsibilities. I am proud to have been associated over my six years in office with the development of the Plan to the point of fruition, with the emphasis now towards implementation.

Philippe Rochat



Secretary General Designate

I am taking up office on 1 August 1997, at a time when the winds of change are sweeping through international civil aviation. I believe the Strategic Action Plan to provide the foundation for ICAO to react rapidly and efficiently to these changes. I also believe that the Plan will need to be kept under review to ensure that it remains alive to the changing needs of all ICAO's Contracting States.

Achievement of the far-reaching objectives in the Strategic Action Plan will require the efforts of each and every member of the Secretariat. I intend to play my part in ensuring that the initiative and promise of the Plan are fulfilled effectively by the Organization, for the benefit of the aviation community and its clients worldwide.

Renato Cláudio Costa Pereira

Context



The Convention on International Civil Aviation, signed at Chicago on 7 December 1944, established certain principles and arrangements in order that international civil aviation develop in a safe and orderly manner and that international air transport services be established on the basis of equality of opportunity and operated soundly and economically.

The Convention formed the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) with aims and objectives to develop the principles and techniques of international air navigation and to foster the planning and development of international air transport so as to:

- ensure the safe and orderly growth of international civil aviation throughout the world
- encourage the arts of aircraft design and operation for peaceful purposes
- encourage the development of airways, airports and air navigation facilities for international civil aviation
- meet the needs of the peoples of the world for safe, regular, efficient and economical air transport
- prevent economic waste caused by unreasonable competition
- ensure that the rights of Contracting States are fully respected and that every Contracting State has a fair opportunity to operate international airlines
- avoid discrimination between Contracting States
- promote the safety of flight in international air navigation
- promote generally the development of all aspects of international civil aeronautics.

The Convention came into effect upon ratification by 26 States, on 4 April 1947, and by the end of 1996 had been ratified by 185 States, making it one of the world's most widely accepted international legal instruments.

The Convention has proved resilient by providing a sufficiently flexible framework to enable ICAO to fulfil successfully the responsibilities assigned to it in a changing world.

While the fundamental aims and objectives of the Convention remain as relevant today as when they were conceived in 1944, at no time has there been a greater need for ICAO to adapt within the framework of the Convention to rapidly changing circumstances epitomized by:

- globalization and transnationalization of markets and operations
- emergence of regional and sub-regional trading and regulatory blocs
- commercialization of government service providers
- diversification of fiscal measures to respond to budgetary needs
- liberalization of economic regulation
- potential evasion of safety regulation (along with labour, competition and other regulation) as a consequence of blurring of sectoral boundaries and responsibilities of related authorities
- recognition of and response to environmental concerns
- emergence of new technology
- approach of physical limits to infrastructure capacity.

These developments are common to all economic, industrial or service sectors, but the implications for international civil aviation are notable. For example, globalization and transnationalization have implications for the regulation of aviation safety which, under the Convention, is the responsibility of individual Contracting States; the emergence of regional regulatory blocs enables devolution of some of this responsibility in a common regional approach but adds a new dimension to the setting of common worldwide aviation standards; the commercialization of service providers necessitates both prescribed delegation of operational functions by governments and changed regulatory functions of governments, not least because under the Convention the provision of airport and other air navigation facilities and services is the responsibility of States; as regards fiscal matters, in addition to the implications of trends towards “user pay” and “polluter pay” there is a tendency to regard civil aviation as a ready source of funds for non-aviation purposes; as for economic liberalization, the implications for aviation are unique in that the sector remains regulated at the international level largely by bilateral agreements between governments; potential evasion of safety regulation is associated with all the above implications and is a fundamental issue for governments, given their responsibility for safety regulation irrespective of devolution of operational functions and increased public pressure for a safer civil aviation system with strong regulatory oversight; as for the environment there is a perception that the aviation sector may be contributing unduly to both existing and emerging problems; the evolution and application of satellite technology in particular has extensive ramifications for aviation; and limits on the capacity of airports, airspace and the radio communications spectrum have particular implications for a sector with continued above average growth.

This Strategic Action Plan, adopted by ICAO’s Council on 7 February 1997, is designed to adapt the vision of ICAO’s founders in Chicago and ensure that the Organization responds to the major challenges that such implications represent for international civil aviation in the coming years and meets the related needs of all its Contracting States.

Objectives

A blurred image of an aircraft cockpit instrument panel at night. The panel is illuminated with various lights, including a prominent yellow light on the left and a blue light on the right. The word "Objectives" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image. The background shows a dark blue sky and a blurred view of the ground or water below.

Strategic Objectives

The objectives of this Strategic Action Plan are to further the safety, security and efficiency of international civil aviation and promote the principles enshrined in the Convention on International Civil Aviation. They will be achieved by developing the vision for harmonious development of international civil aviation on a national and regional basis and reflecting this vision in global planning, by creating and fostering the implementation of common aviation standards and practices and by encouraging the economic design and operation of aircraft and aviation facilities while avoiding discrimination between Contracting States and optimizing the utilization of human, technical and financial resources. To this effect, the International Civil Aviation Organization will:

- A Foster the implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices to the greatest extent possible worldwide
- B Develop and adopt new or amended Standards, Recommended Practices and associated documents in a timely manner to meet changing needs
- C Strengthen the legal framework governing international civil aviation by the development of new international air law instruments as required and by encouraging the ratification by States of existing instruments
- D Ensure the currency, co-ordination and implementation of Regional Air Navigation Plans and provide the framework for the efficient implementation of new air navigation systems
- E Respond on a timely basis to major challenges to the safe and efficient development and operation of civil aviation
- F Ensure that guidance and information on the economic regulation of international air transport is current and effective
- G Assist in the mobilization of human, technical and financial resources for civil aviation facilities and services
- H Ensure the greatest possible efficiency and effectiveness in the operations of the Organization, *inter alia* to meet the above objectives.



Action

Action to Achieve the Strategic Objectives

The Strategic Action Plan will drive the work programme and associated prioritization and budgetary processes of the Organization into at least the early part of the 21st century. For each of the eight strategic objectives listed above, the Council has identified key activities of the Organization and issues which need to be addressed in the evolution of these key activities, either by ongoing consideration in general terms as work progresses or by means of specific study. Some key activities are pertinent to more than one strategic objective and are identified accordingly; for example the Safety Oversight and Unlawful Interference programmes are key both to implementation of Standards and to resolving problems in the safe and efficient development and operation of civil aviation, and they therefore appear below under both Strategic Objective A and Strategic Objective E. Neither the key activities nor the strategic objectives themselves are listed in any order of priority; they reflect rather a logical order of sequencing.

Prior to each triennial programming cycle the Council will, in conjunction with preparing the Programme Budget for the triennium, develop a complementary document to the Strategic Action Plan, defining action programmes for the triennium for each of the key activities. This document will include, in each case, specific objectives, expected results, priorities and target dates, thereby enabling the Council to define and assess progress in relation to implementation of the Plan and take remedial or other action as required. At the end of each triennium, the Council will report to the Assembly on progress in the key activities and action on the related issues.

ICAO's work programme will thus be integrated with the Strategic Action Plan in an evolutionary manner. The Plan will also be kept under review to ensure that it remains alive to the changing needs of States in an ever-changing environment for civil aviation.

Strategic Objective A

Foster the implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices to the greatest extent possible worldwide

Key activities:

- A.1 Safety oversight programme
- A.2 Responding to identified safety shortcomings in the air navigation field
- A.3 Unlawful interference programme
- A.4 Seminars, workshops and symposia
- A.5 Technical co-operation programme

Issues to be addressed: Development of definitive evaluations of the status of implementation of Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and the extent of differences to Standards; development of systematic analysis of the reasons for non-implementation of SARPs. Development of additional practical documentation to assist States in discharging their safety oversight responsibilities. Responding to potential fragmentation of standard setting and implementation because of: increasing division of regulatory and operational functions in States; sovereign responsibilities of States vis-à-vis their human, technical and financial capacity (responsibilities remain the same but the human, technical and financial resources can be vastly different); development of regional aviation authorities (such as the Joint Aviation Authorities in Europe); differences in provisions applying to domestic and international services, especially where the former have implications for the latter (for example in relation to unlawful interference); and inadequate identification of, and/or widespread differences in, economic benefits.

Strategic Objective B

Develop and adopt new or amended Standards, Recommended Practices and associated documents in a timely manner to meet changing needs

Key activities:

- B.1 Maintaining the currency of 18 existing Annexes to the Convention and developing new Annexes as required
- B.2 General review of the structure of ICAO Annexes and the development and consultation process regarding SARPs and amendments thereto

Issues to be addressed: Increased responsiveness of ICAO to developments in civil aviation. Improved efficiency and time-frame of the consultation process and adoption procedures. Restructuring of Annexes to ensure that Annex material is restricted to essential requirements and formulated in broad terms. Establishment of an appropriate status for detailed technical specifications. Improvement of usability of SARPs material.

Strengthen the legal framework governing international civil aviation by the development of new international air law instruments as required and by encouraging the ratification by States of existing instruments

Key activities:

- C.1 Development of new instrument on air carrier liability which would modernize and consolidate the “Warsaw System”
- C.2 Development of a legal framework with regard to long-term Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS)
- C.3 Ratification of Articles 3*bis*, 83*bis*, and other amendments, of the Convention
- C.4 Consideration of legal action to combat acts or offences of concern to the international aviation community and not covered by existing air law instruments
- C.5 Ratification of, or adherence to, and implementation of the International Air Services Transit Agreement and other international air law instruments

Issues to be addressed: Modernization, consolidation and acceptability of the legal regime to govern air carrier liability. How to reach a universally acceptable consensus on an international legal framework with regard to Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS). Legal aspects of the ICAO Communications, Navigation and Surveillance/Air Traffic Management (CNS/ATM) concept. Provisional application of amendments to the Convention. Administrative action to accelerate entry into force and rate of ratification of international air law instruments. New legal challenges in the area of aviation security. Legal aspects relating to aviation safety including safety oversight assessment programme. New formula for final clauses in and provisional application of non-Convention air law instruments.

Ensure the currency, co-ordination and implementation of Regional Air Navigation Plans and provide the framework for the efficient implementation of new air navigation systems

Key activities:

- D.1 Improvement of over-all efficiency of regional air navigation planning mechanism
- D.2 Further development of sub-regional approach and integration of planning and implementation process for CNS/ATM into regional air navigation planning mechanism
- D.3 Enhancement of inter-regional co-ordination for integrated and co-ordinated implementation of Regional Air Navigation Plans
- D.4 Co-operation with other international bodies for the establishment of civil GNSS
- D.5 Development and follow-up of the Global Plan, regional and national plans for CNS/ATM
- D.6 Assistance to States in development of capacity of their air navigation system, and in cost-recovery and organizational arrangements for the provision of air navigation services
- D.7 Responding to identified safety shortcomings in the air navigation field
- D.8 Creation of data bases and dissemination of information on CNS/ATM

Issues to be addressed: Strengthening the degree of autonomy given to the regional planning process while ensuring adequate co-ordination at the global level. Application of Chapter XV of the *Convention* and the possible development of additional Joint Financing or other co-operative arrangements in addressing the provision, maintenance and financing of air navigation facilities and services. Development of rational relationship between current CNS/ATM systems and advanced space technology; and between ICAO and the other international organizations concerned.

Strategic Objective E

Respond on a timely basis to major challenges to the safe and efficient development and operation of civil aviation

Key activities:

- E.1 Unlawful interference programme
- E.2 Safety oversight programme
- E.3 Flight safety and human factors programme
- E.4 Controlled flight into terrain prevention programme
- E.5 Responding to identified safety shortcomings in the air navigation field
- E.6 Environmental protection programme
- E.7 Airport and airspace congestion
- E.8 Air navigation contingency planning
- E.9 Technical co-operation programme

Issues to be addressed: The need and ability for ICAO to continue to react rapidly and effectively to new challenges. Early identification of emerging challenges and timely development of ICAO strategy to address them. Dynamic allocation of the Organization's resources to face new challenges. Identification of extra-budgetary resources.

Strategic Objective F

Ensure that guidance and information on the economic regulation of international air transport is current and effective

Key activities:

- F.1 Regulation of international air transport services
- F.2 Airport and air navigation services (including charges and cost recovery)
- F.3 Air transport product distribution
- F.4 Trade in services
- F.5 Environmental protection (economic aspects)
- F.6 Taxation
- F.7 Statistics

Issues to be addressed: Continued orderly and non-discriminatory evolution of international air transport. The need to ensure the effective participation of States through reliable and sustained involvement in the international air transport system against the general goal of gradual, progressive, orderly and safeguarded change towards market access in international air transport regulation.

Strategic Objective G

Assist in the mobilization of human, technical and financial resources for civil aviation facilities and services

Key activities:

- G.1 Technical co-operation programme
- G.2 TRAINAIR programme
- G.3 Seminars, workshops and symposia
- G.4 Evaluation of economic impact of civil aviation on States
- G.5 Practical application of cost/benefit analysis

Issues to be addressed: Evaluation and fostering of new avenues to assist States to discharge their responsibilities vis-à-vis the Convention. Development of more routine assessment of economic aspects during development of technical requirements for aircraft, airport and air navigation facility certification or operation. Integration of technical co-operation into "regular" programme.

Ensure the greatest possible efficiency and effectiveness in the operations of the Organization

Key activities:

- H.1 Working methods and procedures of the Assembly
- H.2 Decision-making processes, working methods and procedures of the Council and its subsidiary bodies
- H.3 Managerial and administrative reform of the Secretariat
- H.4 Systematic programme planning processes
- H.5 Transparent and fully-allocated programme budget
- H.6 Programme oversight mechanism

Issues to be addressed: Advancement of human resources management aimed at maintaining an international Secretariat of the highest calibre and motivation. Diversification of funding sources (including consideration of user charges, voluntary contributions, market pricing of publications and charging for selective services rendered), while maintaining accountability to States. Measures to achieve cost savings including, where appropriate, more extensive use of outsourcing. More clear and precise identification of programmes and priorities, their objectives and expected results. Improved information management and communications with Contracting States, including more widespread use of electronic transmission. Establishment of a world wide web service for collection, exchange and dissemination of electronic data. Higher public profile and more catalytic role of the Organization in co-ordinating and representing civil aviation. Examination of relationship between the Organization and other bodies (aviation and relevant non-aviation, global and regional) with a view to defining respective areas of responsibility, eliminating overlap and, in accordance with Article 65 of the Convention, establishing joint programmes where relevant; development of partnership with all interested parties in the aviation community, including service providers and industry (without compromising the autonomy of policy making and, in particular, of the Standard-setting process).

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