



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION
Fourth Meeting of AFI Region Directors General of Civil Aviation (DGCA/4)
(Esibayeni Lodge & Conference Centre, Matsapha International Airport, Matsapha,
Manzini, Swaziland, 8 to 9 November 2010)

Agenda Item 4: Air Navigation
4.1: Challenges in addressing long-standing air navigation deficiencies

CHALLENGES IN ADDRESSING LONG-STANDING AIR NAVIGATION DEFICIENCIES

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper highlights some of the persistent issues relating to deficiencies in the air navigation field which have been unresolved or been recurring for a long time, and notes concerns expressed within ICAO including Regional forums as well actions taken by the bodies. It discusses common and recently observed challenges in eliminating the deficiencies as well as high policy level proposals for addressing such deficiencies and generally improving the Regional performance in the implementation of international civil aviation provisions.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

REFERENCES

- APIRG 16 Report
- APIRG 17 Report
- SP AFI/8 RAN Report

This Working Paper is related to Strategic Objectives: **A.** Safety - Enhance global civil aviation safety and **D.** Efficiency - Enhance the efficiency of aviation operations

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In accordance with definition approved by the ICAO Council:

“a deficiency is a situation where a facility, service or procedure does not comply with a regional air navigation plan approved by the Council, or with related ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices, and which situation has a negative impact on the safety, regularity and/or efficiency of international civil aviation.”

1.2 The sixteenth meeting of APIRG (APIRG 16), Rubavu, Rwanda, 19 – 23 November 2007 on reviewing the list of air navigation deficiencies in the AFI region, was reminded of the concern expressed by ALLPIRG/5 (Montreal, 23-24 March 2006), the Air Navigation Commission and the ICAO Council about persistent deficiencies, in particular those impairing safety. The meeting agreed that priority should be given by States to eliminate the most common and persistent deficiencies.

1.3 The SP AFI/8 RAN meeting, Durban, South Africa, 24-29 November 2008 expressed the same concerns raised by the Commission and the Council on the serious impact of unresolved deficiencies on safety, and agreed that States concerned should with extreme urgency, take concrete measures to eliminate all deficiencies impacting on safety in the region. In view of the foregoing, and in order to address the most urgent deficiencies, the SP AFI/8 RAN agreed on the following Recommendation:

Recommendation 6/25 — Elimination of air navigation deficiencies in the AFI Region

That:

- a) *APIRG adopt the Performance Objective: Elimination of Air Navigation Deficiencies in the AFI Region as contained in the performance framework form in Appendix J to the Report on Agenda Item 6;*
- b) *States develop their national action plans, aligned with the regional performance objective, to eliminate their relevant deficiencies in the fields of aerodromes and ground aids (AGA), air traffic management (ATM), aeronautical information services (AIS), communications (CNS), meteorological (MET) and search and rescue (SAR), priority being given to the deficiencies as contained in the performance framework form in Appendix J to the Report on Agenda Item 6; and*
- c) *States take steps to seek assistance where required for the implementation of their action plans through ICAO mechanisms such as Technical Co-operation Bureau (TCB), International Financial Facility for Aviation Safety (IFFAS), special implementation projects (SIPs) and from industry stakeholders and donor agencies.*

1.4 There are shortcomings that may not be classified as air navigation deficiencies, but which are administrative in nature, and are closely related to air navigation deficiencies.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The APIRG/17 meeting, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 2-6 August 2010, on discussing several aspects related to implementation of Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and Regional requirements, noted that there had been long standing deficiencies in the Region, to which in many cases there were also common challenges.

2.2 The APIRG 17 meeting observed that the existing list of deficiencies developed within the framework of APIRG does not by itself reflect the extent of deficiencies in States, as it should, owing to several reasons including low reporting by States and users (of the air navigation services). However, DGCA may wish to note, beyond the APIRG lists of deficiencies, a high level of deficiencies is notable from such activities as the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit (USOAP) Programme, the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) gap analysis, technical missions to States carried by Regional Offices, and indications by States, of their inability to meet various SARPs and Regional requirements. The following issues seem to feature predominantly in cases of most of the existing deficiencies:

Communication between ICAO and States

2.3 In order to facilitate general communication with States civil aviation authorities and to ensure follow up on technical matters, States have been requested to provide specific contact and focal points as follows:

- a) Primary point of contact between ICAO and the State, usually Director/Director General/Chief Executive Officer, although in some States the level of Ministry is preferred.
- b) Focal point, for non formal correspondence and technical communication to facilitate speedy exchange of technical information
- c) Programme managers, being persons of specific qualifications that the State is requested to assign responsibilities for a particular programme of SARPs (requirements) implementation. The person also becomes a focal point in relation to that programme.

2.4 In addition to being the responsibility of a State to inform ICAO about changes in these contact points, from time to time ICAO sends communication requesting updates.

2.5 Notwithstanding the above, States' responses to State Letters, be they invitations, surveys or other requests for other action, is low. This matter also affects action that States are urged to take as a result of outcome of Regional meetings. Upon follow up, many DGCA's report that they did not receive the letters in question. Over the past year, Regional Offices have increased telephone and e-mail follow-up activities, however, with limited success.

Expertise development

2.6 From time to time there are courses, seminars and workshops, which are held at the Regional Offices or hosted by States, the need for which would have been identified by States, within the framework of APIRG, Regional Offices or ICAO Headquarters. The development and implementation benefits realized from these efforts, however, are limited, owing to various reasons including the following:

- a) low States participation in the activities whereby it is not uncommon for a seminar introducing a new concept, or one convened at the specific request of States to address a specific lack of knowledge or skill, to be attended by as few as 14 (26%) or at most 25 (42%) of the 53 AFI States. Although some States subsequently send officials for training in institutions in other ICAO Regions (albeit at significantly higher cost), it is evident that many States do not avail themselves to available training;
- b) despite information on target audience for the training, many of the participants tend to lack the basic background essential to benefit from the training, or are in job functions that have little or no relationship to the need for the training;
- c) human resources planning in States does not lend itself to training persons that will be retained in the field of responsibilities for which they are trained; and
- d) on-the-job (OJT) training, recurrent training and specialized training generally receive low priority. Except where OJT is required in the SARPs, such as Annex 1 to the Chicago Convention, it is not carried out or is unstructured. A typical example is in installation, maintenance and operation of new CNS systems. SAR, AIS, PANS-OPS are also affected.

Lack of, or inadequate follow-up and implementation of APIRG Conclusions and AFI/RAN Meeting's Recommendations

2.7 Outcomes of RAN Meetings as well as meetings held within the framework of APIRG are recorded in the form of Reports, which are forwarded to States and concerned international organizations, in addition to being posted on the ICAO website. Certain Recommendations or

Conclusion may, furthermore, be highlighted to States through a State Letter, in response to urgency, need for harmonization of activities, etc.

2.8 Generally, States' follow up and implementation on the RAN Recommendations and Conclusions formulated within the framework of APIRG, are limited. In many cases awareness of the existence of the Conclusions and their relevance is lacking among officials who would be expected to act upon them or follow-up with other (relevant) entities.

2.9 In order to facilitate follow-up, it is proposed that the *Recommendations/Conclusions Tracking Form* such as the one at **Appendix A** to this working paper be used as a management tool by Administrations, to ensure follow up and action as necessary.

2.10 The intention is that the *Tracking Form* would be populated with RAN Recommendations and Conclusions formulated within the framework of APIRG, on which States' actions is relevant, and presented to States within two months of an APIRG meeting. Directors General would then use the form to track progress by requiring that relevant officials/entities use it for reporting. Two times a year (e.g. in June and December) the Form, updated as necessary by the State, would be forwarded to the ICAO Regional Office accredited to the State. It is important that the DGCA's themselves accept accountability on this application; delegate execution but not responsibility for delivery and certainly not accountability.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information in this working paper;
- b) propose specific policy remedies to addresses challenges highlighted in this working paper; and
- c) agree on the *Recommendations/Conclusions Tracking Form* at **Appendix A** to this working paper and its application in accordance with paragraph 2.10.
