

Global Strategy and Action Plan for the Improvement of Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs) and the Establishment of a Global System for the Provision of Safety Oversight

Context

1. The participants at the Global Forum on Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs) for Global Aviation Safety, held in Swaziland from 22 to 24 March 2017, approved a global strategy and action plan for the improvement of RSOOs and the establishment of a global system for the provision of safety oversight.
2. In doing so, the Forum took note of the outcomes and recommendations of previous ICAO meetings on RSOOs, to include the Symposium on RSOOs, held in 2011 and the Second High-level Safety Conference, held in 2015. The Forum also noted Resolution A39-14, adopted by the ICAO Assembly in 2016.
3. Assembly Resolution A39-14, in particular, encourages ICAO Member States to foster the creation of regional or sub-regional partnerships to collaborate on the development of solutions to common problems to build State safety oversight capability, and to participate in, or provide tangible support for, the strengthening and furtherance of sub-regional and regional aviation safety, and safety oversight bodies, including RSOOs.
4. The Forum acknowledged that over the last decade, the number and importance of RSOOs have been expanding. Presently, there are seventeen RSOOs, ranging from relatively informal safety oversight bodies that offer advisory services to their Member States to more formally institutionalized organizations that carry out safety oversight tasks and functions by formal delegation by their States.
5. The strategy and action plan for the improvement of RSOOs, and the establishment of a global system for the provision of safety oversight represents the outcome of discussions at the Forum on potential solutions to many of the challenges faced by RSOOs, foremost of which is the need to ensure their sustainable funding and adequate empowerment, with respect to the tasks and functions they carry out for their members. The strategy and action plan seek to put in place solutions that will enhance the effectiveness of the existing RSOOs, as well as better align them with the global and regional programmes of ICAO.
6. At the same time, there is a need for safety oversight to meet the challenges posed by growing air traffic, which is expected to double over the next fifteen years, and changing aircraft ownership, registration and user business models. To this end, the Forum reached agreement on the need to go beyond the current prevailing concept of national and regional-based safety oversight systems to a globally based system that would be composed of a range of safety oversight providers, including the RSOOs. RSOOs will be recognized as an integral part of a global aviation safety oversight system led by ICAO, within the framework of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP), and maintaining the States' obligation and responsibility for safety oversight under the Convention of International Civil Aviation.
7. Improving the performance of RSOOs also entails strengthening cooperation and information sharing between RSOOs, and establishing a cooperative platform for this purpose.

Strategic Objectives

8. The strategy agreed to by the Forum consists of the following three objectives:
- to improve and strengthen the RSOOs' capacity to carry out safety oversight tasks and functions on behalf of their Member States and to actively contribute to ICAO's global and regional programmes and activities;
 - to implement a global system for the provision of safety oversight that improves the efficiencies of current safety oversight programmes, and enables the continuous monitoring of a State's safety oversight in a more effective and coordinated manner.
 - to establish an RSOO cooperative platform aimed at bringing RSOOs together to exchange best practices, share and collaborate on the development of manuals and checklists, cooperate on providing technical assistance, and assist ICAO in related provisions development and global programme implementation.

Improvement and Strengthening of RSOOs

9. An evaluation of RSOOs in general will be conducted in order to update information on major challenges faced in relation to their improvement. In addition, and upon request, a more in-depth gap analysis can be conducted on an individual RSOO in order to determine the actions that need to be taken for strengthening it. For the purpose of carrying out both the evaluation and the gap analysis, the following five criteria have been defined:

- **Relevance:** This will assess the RSOO's mission, goals, programmes and activities, and their alignment with those of its Member States or donors as well as ICAO. Is the RSOO meeting the expectations and needs of its Member States and stakeholders, and is it well integrated into the strategic plans and programmes of its Member States?
- **Effectiveness:** This will assess the extent to which an RSOO is able to meet its goals and objectives. Is the RSOO sufficiently empowered to carry out its mission? Has it been given international legal personality that enables it to establish agreements and working arrangements with other international organizations (including ICAO) and third-party States? Have formal delegations of authority been established that will enable the RSOO to carry out safety oversight duties and functions on behalf of its Member States? Have common standards and practices been established in the region? Is the RSOO sufficiently resourced to enable it to meet its programmed activities?
- **Efficiency:** This will assess the use of human and financial resources, and make a comparison of the RSOO's outputs and the costs incurred. Unnecessary overlap and duplication of programmes and activities between the RSOO and its member States, ICAO and other international organizations are to be avoided.
- **Sustainability:** This will assess the long-term viability of the RSOO, particularly in respect to legal authority, human resources and financial viability and sustainability. How effective is the management of the RSOO in terms of the organization's strategic development and quality assurance? Has a mechanism been established for the sustainable funding of the RSOO?
- **Adaptability:** This will assess the ability of the RSOO to adapt to an evolving environment, brought about by a rapidly expanding aviation industry, changing technologies, scope and processes.

10. All gap analyses of individual RSOOs will be conducted on a cost recovery basis.

11. Integral to the strengthening and improvement of RSOOs will be the establishment of an RSOO cooperative platform. The RSOO platform will interface with ICAO, facilitate the supply of technical assistance and support to RSOOs and provide RSOOs with a common pool of experts. In general, it will greatly enhance cooperation between RSOOs by enabling the exchange of information and sharing of best practices. Any RSOO recognized by ICAO or having a clear roadmap towards ICAO evaluation, may become part of the cooperative platform.

Development and implementation of an ICAO Global Aviation Safety Oversight System

12. The primary objective of the global aviation safety oversight system is the implementation of an enhanced safety oversight model that resolves the challenges faced by current regional and national based models, caters for future challenges posed by a rapidly expanding air transport industry and offers practical and affordable options in the area of safety oversight.

13. Under the global aviation safety oversight system, an ICAO recognized safety oversight provider will be any international, regional or sub-regional aviation safety oversight body that carries out tasks and functions on behalf of a State or group of States. Suitably empowered and strengthened RSOOs and other State safety oversight providers will constitute the building blocks of a global safety oversight system.

14. On a voluntary basis, safety oversight providers may request recognition from ICAO in respect to competencies to carry out the specific tasks and functions. Each task and function will be mapped to a USOAP CMA protocol question (PQ) or set of PQs. A Safety oversight provider may receive several levels of recognition for various tasks and functions.

15. The following three levels are defined, based on the complexity of tasks and functions performed:

- **Level 1** – advisory, consultancy and coordinating tasks and functions
- **Level 2** – operational assistance tasks and functions
- **Level 3** – certifying agency tasks and functions

16. For level 1 and 2 tasks and functions, ICAO recognition will be based on an initial assessment to evaluate the capabilities of the provider.

17. For a provider to receive ICAO recognition for Level 3 tasks and functions, it will have to first undergo an activity under the ICAO USOAP CMA.

18. ICAO recognition will be renewed at a determined frequency, on the basis of a re-assessment for Levels 1 and 2, and will depend on USOAP CMA results for Level 3.

19. All ICAO recognized safety oversight providers will have to demonstrate competence in the tasks and functions that they provide, in order to qualify for ICAO recognition, and ICAO will maintain an inventory of competent safety oversight providers, and the tasks and functions that they provide. An ICAO recognized safety oversight provider could include the civil aviation authority of a State that provides assistance to another State, or an RSOO that carries out safety oversight tasks and functions.

ATTACHMENT

Action Plan for the Improvement of Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs) and the Establishment of a Global System for the Provision of Safety Oversight

No.	Objective	Activity	Implementing Entity	Supporting Entities	Deadline
1	Improvement and strengthening of RSOOs	1. Develop a classification of RSOOs based on levels of empowerment of tasks and functions	ICAO	RSOOs	April 2017
		2. Complete a gap analysis and evaluation of existing RSOOs, including the further specification of performance criteria, development of questionnaires and tools for the collection and analysis of information, and reporting results.	ICAO	RSOOs	June 2017
		3. Revise the RSOO Manual Doc. 9734, Part B			July 2017
		4. Conduct gap analysis and evaluation of individual RSOOs, including surveys and the collection and analysis of information and data, on request and cost recovery basis.	ICAO	RSOOs	From July 2017 onwards
		5. Implement RSOO corrective actions on a case-by-case basis	RSOOs	ICAO/EASA/ Donor States, funding agencies	Ongoing
2	Develop and implement an RSOO cooperative platform	1. Launch concept of the RSOO cooperative platform	TBD, RSOOs	ICAO, RSOOs	March 2017
		2. Draft ToR, identify suitable actions and hold first meeting	RSOOs	RSOO Platform	September 2017
		3. Endorse the ToRs	SANIS	ICAO	December 2017
		4. Establish Cooperative Platform	RSOOs	ICAO, Donor RSOOs	December 2017
		5. Hold second meeting	RSOOs	RSOO Platform	April 2018
3	Develop and implement a global system for the provision of safety oversight	1. Establish a working group of stakeholder experts	ICAO	Stakeholders	May 2017
		2. Complete a feasibility study on the development and implementation of a global aviation safety oversight system	ICAO	Stakeholders	October 2017

No.	Objective	Activity	Implementing Entity	Supporting Entities	Deadline
		3. Present the global aviation safety oversight system to SANIS	ICAO		December 2017
		4. Develop the global aviation safety oversight system			2018 - 2019
		5. Recommendation to AN-Conf/13	ICAO		November 2018
		6. Endorsement of the global aviation safety oversight system by the Assembly	ICAO		October 2019
		7. Taking account of the information and data collected from RSOOs, review and, as required, amend ICAO provisions, programmes (e.g. the USOAP) and existing guidance material (e.g. Doc. 9734, Part B).	ICAO	RSOO Platform	November 2020
		8. Assess and/or audit RSOOs in respect to tasks and functions and related levels of empowerment.	ICAO	RSOOs	December 2020

Proposed RSOO Cooperative Platform

1. A platform will be established to facilitate greater cooperation between RSOOs. The detailed objectives of this Platform are to
 - facilitate inter-RSOO Communication
 - become an information hub and facilitate the exchange of information and sharing of best practices, including the establishment of common or harmonised definitions, standards and specifications relevant to RSOOs
 - facilitate the exchange of data and common data analysis
 - facilitate the supply of technical assistance and support to RSOO
 - interface with ICAO on topics of mutual interest for RSOO
 - receive tasks from ICAO that concerns development of the RSOO community
 - provide an RSOO pool of experts
 - nurture the continued stability and progression of RSOO
2. Any RSOO recognized by ICAO or RSOO having a clear roadmap towards ICAO evaluation may become part of the cooperative platform. Consideration shall be given to supporting other recognized regional mechanisms and platforms such as COSCAPs in development towards becoming an RSOO.
3. The interim Platform should develop progressively and initially i) develop Terms of Reference describing its tasks and governance scheme, ii) organize regular meetings among and between RSOOs, adjacent to other relevant forums, and iii) develop a web-based application and other tools to support this. It should also study the outcomes of the 2017 RSOO Forum to determine, in coordination with ICAO, where it could provide support in the follow-up of the Forum actions and in strengthening RSOOs. The nature of tasks should be expanded progressively; overlaps with existing ICAO, regional or State activities is to be avoided.
4. The resources necessary should be supported by contributions by the RSOOs or their member States as well as ICAO Voluntary Funds. Additional forms of funding should be further explored.
5. The Platform's secretariat, as addressed by the Terms of Reference, should regularly report to its members as well as the ICAO Secretariat and may be reported on to the ICAO Governing bodies through existing reporting mechanisms regarding its activities and the actions undertaken. The Platform will not replace the representation of the RSOO member States to ICAO. It will cooperate closely with the State representatives to ICAO in order to coordinate positions.

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