Riga (Latvia), 19 September 2008 - In response to the ICAO State letter of 30 June 2006 (AN 12/46-06/52) proposing to States assistance in implementing the safety management systems (SMS), the Latvian Civil Aviation Agency invited ICAO to conduct an SMS course in Latvia.

The ICAO SMS Implementation course has now been successfully conducted in Riga from 15 to 19 September 2008. Thanks to the efforts and investments from the State authority and their diligent staff, the course was provided with excellent conference facilities and manpower support.

Thirty-two (32) participants from the civil aviation authorities of Latvia, including representatives of the CAA, flight operators, airport and ATC service provider (30 participants) and Estonia (2 participants) successfully completed this course.

Upon the request received by ICAO, the European and North Atlantic Office is considering the possibility of delivering another course in the Russian language for the Eastern part of the ICAO European Region before the end of December 2008.

The ICAO SMS training courses are targeting the regulatory functions of the States, the aim being to develop participants’ knowledge of safety management concepts and ICAO SARPs on safety management in Annex 6 – Operation of Aircraft, Annex 11 – Air Traffic Services, and Annex 14 – Aerodromes.

Specific emphasis is on improving knowledge and skills to certify and oversee the implementation of safety management systems by operators and service providers, in compliance with ICAO requirements and national regulations.

The courses should therefore be considered as an initial reply to the needs of States (civil aviation regulators) regarding implementation of SMS.