



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

**Regional Aviation Safety Group - Middle East**

**Fifth Meeting (RASG-MID/5)**  
*(Doha, Qatar, 22-24 May 2016)*

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**Agenda Item 2: Global Developments related to Aviation Safety**

**RASG ORGANIZATIONAL GUIDELINES**

*(Presented by the Secretariat)*

**SUMMARY**

This Information Paper presents the ICAO Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) Organizational Guidelines document (see **Appendix A**) that was developed in collaboration with ICAO Headquarters and ICAO Regional Offices.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Council during the 190th Session considered and approved C-WP/13558, in which the ANC proposed the establishment of Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) in all regions. It was envisioned that the RASGs would serve as a regional cooperative forum integrating global, regional, sub regional, national and industry efforts in continuing to enhance aviation safety worldwide. In addition, RASGs would provide inter-regional harmonization related to aviation safety issues and a means to monitor worldwide implementation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP). RASGs serve as ICAO's focal point for safety issues in the Regions.

**2. DISCUSSION**

2.1 During a RASGs Coordination meeting which was held at ICAO Headquarters in Montréal, Canada, on 27 November 2015, it was agreed that RASGs were maturing and a single document providing guidance and standardization was needed. This document would provide consistency in RASG working methodologies and would assist in the alignment of objectives, prioritization of activities and outputs, and define the level of Secretariat support.

2.2 In addition, this guidance document would reinforce the role that the RASGs play in relation to the implementation of the GASP, and the No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative.

2.3 The guidance document is meant to be a “living document” that can be revised to improve the contents or expanded to add additional information in the event of any changes in the ICAO RASG organizational structure.

2.4 Each RASG has its own Procedural Handbook which defines the objectives, membership, organization and working methods. In order to account for individual RASG Terms of Reference (TORs) and Procedural handbooks and/or manuals, this document has been formulated in a generalized manner to allow for the harmonization of regional differences and to address the particular circumstances of each RASG while meeting the overall ICAO GASP Objectives.

2.5 The complementary RASG Guidelines Document will serve to reinforce RASGs role in harmonizing regional implementation of safety initiatives and will encourage the sharing of knowledge, experience and expertise, lessons learned, best practices & different approaches to harmonization.

### **3. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to note the information in this Information Paper.

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**International Civil Aviation Organization**

# **Regional Aviation Safety Groups**

## **(RASGs)**

# **Organizational Guidelines**

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# ***1. Introduction***

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ICAO Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) serve as a regional cooperative fora for integrating global, regional, sub regional, national and industry efforts in continuing to enhance aviation safety worldwide. RASGs provide a formal reporting channel allowing ICAO to monitor the worldwide implementation of the GASP and to facilitate the implementation of regional safety initiatives. RASGs coordinate their respective analysis and monitoring efforts as well as facilitate the implementation of SARPs in each region. RASGs promote efforts to harmonize all activities undertaken to address aviation safety issues on a regional basis. The RASGs will build upon the achievements of existing safety organizations and facilitate the exchange of best practices, cooperation and collaboration.

## ***1.1 Purpose of the RASG Guidelines***

The main purpose of these Guidelines is to clearly define RASG objectives and support requirements which are necessary to ensure the successful implementation of efforts to harmonize and coordinate activities which are aimed at improving international civil aviation safety and efficiency. In order to account for individual RASG Terms of Reference (TORs) and Procedural handbooks and/or manuals, this document has been formulated in a generalized manner to allow for the harmonization of regional differences and to address the particular circumstances of each RASG while meeting the overall ICAO GASP Objectives.

## ***1.2 Scope***

This document provides information which is meant to be used as guidance for establishing and maintaining a structure and work program that meets the objectives for which the RASGs were established. In addition, it is meant to provide a framework of standardization to ensure global safety initiatives are addressed in a manner consistent with ICAO objectives and the implementation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP). RASGs are the ICAO dedicated regional mechanism to monitor progress, coordinate actions among States and make recommendations to ICAO to facilitate GASP strategies and safety implementation activities.

## 2. Guidance

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### 2.1 GASP Implementation

The GASP is built on the principle of multilateral cooperation and, as such, it is essential that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the development and implementation of any activities aimed at improving safety under the RASG umbrella. Together with ICAO, the stakeholders in the civil aviation sector are States, airlines/operators, airports, air navigation service providers, aircraft and equipment manufacturers, maintenance and repair organizations, regional organizations, international organizations, training organizations and industry representatives. The commitment of all stakeholders is fundamental for success in improving safety.

Using the GASP, the RASGs will continue to build on the work already done by States, existing sub regional organizations such as the Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programs (COSCAPs) and Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs). RASGs may also develop additional action plans based on future ICAO GASP objectives and strategic priorities and support the establishment and operation of a performance-based safety system for the region by:

- a) serving as the regional focal points for collecting, exchanging and analyzing relevant safety information and identifying risks to civil aviation at the regional level;
- b) reviewing and coordinating the action plans developed within the region to address identified risks with regional and global aviation stakeholders.
- c) collaborating with regional stakeholders to prioritize implementation activities in the region by providing the necessary safety intelligence;
- d) facilitating the sharing of safety information, best practices and experiences among all stakeholders;
- e) ensuring that all safety activities at the regional and sub regional level are properly coordinated and monitored to avoid duplication of efforts;

- f) ensuring that the appropriate level of participation from a CAA and/or partner organization is clearly defined in the RASG TORs and/or Procedural handbook/manual to ensure the proper level of decision making authority is present to affect the desired results of RASGs or contributory bodies.
- g) reducing duplication of efforts by encouraging collaboration, cooperation and resource sharing;
- h) conducting follow-up and monitoring of GASP and regional safety activities as required;
- i) coordinating with respective PIRG on safety issues; and
- j) providing feedback to ICAO to continually improve and ensure an up-to-date global safety framework.

RASGs will support ICAO's Strategic priorities established through the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) which include the three areas of aviation activity which are global priorities: improving runway safety; reducing controlled flight into terrain (CFIT) accidents; and reducing loss of control in-flight (LOC-I) accidents.

## ***2.2 No Country Left Behind***

RASGs will promote the "No Country Left Behind" initiative by focusing on States with the greatest needs and coordinating requests for assistance. The No Country Left Behind (NCLB) campaign highlights ICAO's efforts to assist States in implementing and complying with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). The main goal of this work is to help ensure that SARP implementation is better harmonized globally so that all States have access to the significant socio-economic benefits of safe and reliable air transport. Prioritized set of implementation-focused recommendations, with the goal of maximizing socio-economic benefits at minimum cost. The NCLB effort also promotes ICAO's efforts in resolving Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs) brought to light through ICAO's safety oversight audits as well as other safety, security and emissions-related objectives.

## ***2.3 Terms of Reference (TORs) and Procedural Handbooks***

The RASG TORs were adopted by the ICAO council during the 190th Session, 4th Meeting and are attached as **Appendix A** to this guidance document. The council in approving the TORs felt that depending on the

regional situation, sufficient flexibility can be exercised in determining the specific membership of each of the RASGs.

In order to facilitate it's work, the RASGs have developed Procedural handbooks/manuals which are published by the Secretariat, adopted by the RASG membership and intended to provide, for ease of reference, a consolidation of material, particularly of a procedural nature, about the work of RASG contributory bodies. It also contains the working arrangements and internal instructions developed by the Group for the practical application of its Terms of Reference. This handbook and/or manual should be reviewed periodically and updated. It should also be made available to all RASG members to maintain transparency.

#### ***2.4 Guidance on Format and Content for RASG Meeting Reports***

The primary audiences of the RASG meeting reports are the States and International Organizations. All regions are different in nature and the modus operandi of the meetings and report style is therefore also different. However, one element all meetings have in common are action items referred to as 'Conclusions' and 'Decisions'. The guidance in **Appendix B** aims to ensure that these are clear and that any action for ICAO is clearly identified.



## ***3. Support to RASGs***

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### ***3.1 ANB Support***

ICAO HQ, through the ANB/IMP-SAF section will serve as the interface between the RASGs and the Air Navigation Commission and support the review of reports of RASG meetings by the Commission/Council.

Additionally, ANB will provide the RASGs with the following resources:

- a) support in the preparation of the yearly consolidated PIRG/RASG report to Council;
- b) support ANC review of reports.
- c) sharing of essential information and lessons learned as best practices;
- d) provide RASGs with subject matter material;
- e) maintain transparency on RASG activities by maintaining up to date information on ICAO web site.
- f) support RASG meeting agendas by providing IP/WPs on current ICAO activities and initiatives;
- g) provide input and comments on RASG Reports, Outputs, SEI's and DIPs;
- h) encourage adoption of best practices and harmonization;
- i) consolidation of RASG global efforts;
- j) coordinate and support the PIRG/RASG bi-annual coordination meeting;
- k) provide RASG meeting support and participation;
- l) provide support to RASG Aviation Safety Summits; and
- m) coordination and follow-up of HQ actions for RASGs.

### ***3.2 Regional Office Support***

In order to ensure the necessary continuity in the RASG work programme, each ICAO RASG Secretariat shall provide the necessary secretariat assistance to the Group and serve as its communication link with all interested parties. In order to achieve this, the Secretariat will support the

RASGs by providing administrative, coordination and technical support as required. In particular, but not all inclusive, the Secretariat should:

- a) ensure alignment of RASG activities with the GASP;
- b) track, monitor and facilitate action items and report status to Chairpersons;
- c) coordinate meeting logistics;
- d) develop meeting agendas;
- e) ensure meeting agendas, documentation and summaries are provided to members;
- f) ensure meeting summaries, notices, and related documents are posted online in a timely manner;
- g) maintain communication with the Co-Chairs, Executive Committee members and RASG members;
- h) identify required administrative support; and
- i) manage the work programme.

To support the resources of the ICAO Secretariat, and to support the effective and efficient operation of workgroup meetings, RASG Members shall assume the duties and responsibilities of ensuring the normal conduct of business of the group and sub-groups to the extent possible.

RASGs should strive to work with a minimum of formality and paper work (paperless meetings). To achieve this aim, the rules of procedure for the conduct of meetings should be flexible yet ensure oversight and follow-up of activities.

## ***COUNCIL APPROVED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUPS (RASGs)***

### **1. ESTABLISHMENT**

1.1 Consistent with the Planning and Implementation Regional Group (PIRG) mechanism, the Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) may be established in the following regions by the Council of ICAO. The meetings of the RASGs will be convened as required.

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan American (RASG-PA) for Caribbean, South American and North American Regions; (based on the existing arrangements put in place by States.)

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Europe (RASG-EUR) for the European Region;

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Asia Pacific (RASG-APAC) for APAC Regions;

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Africa (RASG-AFI) for the African Region;

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Middle East (RASG-MID) for the Middle East Region.

### **2. MEMBERSHIP**

2.1 Contracting States entitled to participate as members in a RASG meeting are:

- a) Those whose territories or dependencies are located partially or wholly within the geographical area to be considered by the meeting;
- b) Those located outside the area:
  - i. which have notified ICAO that aircraft on their register or aircraft operated by an operator whose principal place of*

- business or permanent residence is located in such States, operate or expect to operate into the area; or*
- ii. *which provide facilities and services affecting the area.*

2.2 Contracting States not meeting the above criteria and non-Contracting States are entitled to participate in RASG meetings as observers. The aircraft operators, international organizations, maintenance and repair organizations, regional organizations, training organizations, aircraft manufactures, airport and air navigation service providers and any other allied organizations/representatives will be invited to attend RASG meetings in the capacity of observers. The members and observers will serve as partners of RASG and their joint commitment is fundamental for success in improving aviation safety worldwide. The Regional Director will serve as the Secretary of the RASG. Wherever two Regional Directors are involved, they would alternate serving as Secretary of the RASG and PIRG to balance the Secretariat responsibilities between these two regional groups.

### **3. RESOURCES**

3.1 An officer from Headquarters (ANB) will participate and provide support to the RASG meetings. The ANB officer will serve as the interface between the RASG and the Air Navigation Commission and present the reports of RASG meetings to the Commission/Council for review and harmonization.

### **4. WORK PROGRAMME**

4.1 The RASG will develop and implement a work programme that supports a regional performance framework for the management of safety on the basis of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and the Global Aviation Safety Roadmap (GASR). The reports of RASG meetings will be reviewed by the Commission on a regular basis and by the Council as deemed necessary.

4.2 Using the GASP and GASR, the RASG will build on the work already done by States, existing sub regional organizations such as the Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programmes (COSCAPs) and Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs) and support the establishment and operation of a performance-based safety system for the region by:

- a) analyzing safety information and hazards to civil aviation at the regional level and reviewing the action plans developed within the region to address identified hazards;
- b) facilitating the sharing of safety information and experiences among all stakeholders;
- c) ensuring that all safety activities at the regional and sub regional level are properly coordinated to avoid duplication of efforts;
- d) reducing duplication of efforts by encouraging collaboration, cooperation and resource sharing;
- e) conducting follow-up to GASP/GASR activities as required;
- f) coordinating with respective PIRG on safety issues; and
- g) providing feedback to ICAO to continually improve and ensure an up-to-date global safety framework.

# GUIDANCE ON FORMAT AND CONTENT FOR PIRG/RASG MEETING REPORTS

## 1. REPORT SUMMARY

In order to support the analysis by the ANC of the report, the Secretariat is requested to prepare a brief summary of the main conclusions of the PIRG/RASG meeting report. This summary is normally informal and not a part of the report. It should be available five working days prior to the SRP meeting in which they will be discussed. The report summary should contain the following:

- a) a summary of the main conclusions of the meeting, including current progress and specific concerns and challenges<sup>1</sup> of the regions in the context of the discussions of the meeting.
- b) why are these of specific concern and what actions are being taken?

Any other points that the Regional Office/ANB specifically wishes to draw to the attention of the ANC, such as inter-regional and intra-regional PIRG/RASG coordination issues, SARP implementation issues, specific items for ANC consideration and the implementation of best practices or matters that could be of a global nature.

## 2. DRAFTING OF CONCLUSIONS AND DECISIONS

- a) Conclusions should be clear and understood stand-alone. They should be developed applying the principles of specifying **Who**, **What** and by **When** of the action in the Conclusion text. They should be preceded by a paragraph that includes a brief rationale for the conclusion – the **Why**.
- b) The text of Conclusions and Decisions should be summarised separately in a table which includes the **Who**, **What** and by **When**. Conclusions that were considered by the meeting to require action from ICAO HQ should thus be clearly identifiable. Examples of such conclusions are those considered to

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<sup>1</sup> These could be in the areas of Safety, Efficiency, Capacity or Interoperability.

require action on SARPs, require feedback from the ANC, merit Council attention or have relevance for other regions.

- c) Draft Conclusions and Decisions proposed by contributory bodies which are subsequently accepted by the PIRG/RASG plenary meeting should be included in the PIRG/RASG meeting report and the table summarising the Conclusions and Decisions.

### **3. PUBLICATION OF REPORT**

- a) The final report and supporting documentation should be published within 45 days of the meeting in the languages used at the meeting and should be made available on the ICAO web site without password protection.
- b) In cases where the PIRG/RASG plenary does not meet on an annual basis, the ANC should receive from the Secretariat an annual update on the PIRG/RASG (e.g. GREPECAS PPRC meeting reports).

- END -