



International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG/19 and RASG-MID/9 Meetings

(Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 14-17 February 2022)

Agenda Item 2.4: Regional Projects (MENA-RSOO)

OUTCOMES OF THE 2ND MENA RSOO TECHNICAL MEETING

(Presented by Saudi Arabia)

SUMMARY

The aim of this paper is to present an update on the establishment and progress of the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) Regional Safety Oversight Organization (RSOO). Saudi Arabia, as the hosting State of the MENA RSOO, underlines its commitment to the success of this Organization which will improve regional safety levels by means of cooperation and synergy of MENA States. Therefore, Saudi Arabia calls upon ICAO MID States to take active participation in the MENA RSOO implementation process to achieve ICAO objectives in aviation safety.

Action by the meeting is in paragraph 3.

REFERENCES

- First MENA RSOO Steering Committee Report
- DGCA-MID/5 Report
- MENA RSOO Technical Meeting Report
- RASG-MID/8 Report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ICAO Assembly Resolution A37-8 highlighted that RSOOs foster collaboration of Member States in building safety oversight capabilities and developing solutions to common problems. In this context, an RSOO should perform its duties and functions within the framework of the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Program (GASP) and be fully aligned with the Regional Aviation Safety Group's (RASG) priorities and objectives.

1.2 The DGCA-MID/4 meeting (held in Muscat, Oman, 17-19 October 2017) supported the proposals of Saudi Arabia made during the RASG-MID/6, and agreed to Conclusion 4/5 "Establishment Process of the MENA RSOO." In this context, it was resolved that:

- a) The MENA RSOO be governed by a Steering Committee composed of the MENA RSOO member States, whereby both ICAO and Arab Civil Aviation Organization (ACAO) will be observers of the Steering Committee;
- b) The Steering Committee decides on all details related to the establishment and operation of the MENA RSOO (organization, funding, etc.); and

- c) Saudi Arabia (the host State) was invited to organize the first meeting of the MENA RSOO Steering Committee as soon as possible.

1.3 The first MENA RSOO Steering Committee (DG level) was held on 1st October 2018, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, back-to-back with the fourth MID Region Safety Forum, which was hosted by the General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA). Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia had established and equipped the RSOO premises in Riyadh and allocated USD 1.7 million with the commitment to continue supporting the MENA RSOO.

1.4 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the second MENA RSOO Technical Committee meeting, scheduled to take place on 9th March 2020, was rescheduled to 13th February 2022. Likewise, the second MENA RSOO Steering Committee meeting is tentatively planned for Q2 2022.

2. Discussion

2.1 In the framework of the RASG-MID, the establishment of MENA RSOO will encompass the following strategic objectives and functions:

- a) Enhance Member States' safety oversight capabilities by conducting on-site safety audits and inspections in the areas of Personnel Licensing (PEL), Flight Operations (OPS), Airworthiness (AIR), Aerodromes (AGA) and Air Navigation Services (ANS);
- b) Promote the harmonization of aviation regulations in the region and develop guidance material;
- c) Organize and conduct training, as requested/agreed by Member States;
- d) Undertake advisory/consultative work and carry out relevant activities to support the implementation of the State Safety Program (SSP), as requested/agreed by Member States; and
- e) Undertake, on request by Member States, advisory/consultative work in the critical area of aviation sustainability to facilitate and support Member States in the planning and implementation of environmental protection, including the ICAO CORSIA program and any other related objectives, standards or frameworks.

2.2 The initially discussed Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) was significantly revised to address various concerns and proposals from MENA States, and to:

- a) Safeguard MENA RSOO's reliability, integrity, objectivity and efficiency by introducing transparent processes and procedures, clear roles and responsibilities, and a set of well-defined functions;
- b) Promote a sound and solid governance structure along the principles of ICAO Doc 9734 Safety Oversight Manual. Part B — The Establishment and Management of a Regional Safety Oversight Organization;
- c) Ensure MENA RSOO's viability and longevity as a multinational Organization by defining a clear, fair and sustainable financial contribution scheme for its Member States; and
- d) Outline a pay-scale that provides the best dividend in terms of attracting and retaining talented professionals, while keeping the MENA RSOO budget at acceptable levels.

2.3 All MENA countries were encouraged to embrace and support this effort in order to strengthen the MENA aviation ecosystem. The solid commitment of Saudi Arabia's leadership to support the establishment of the new MENA RSOO for the benefit of all States in the region was reiterated.

2.4 The following items were addressed during the 2nd MENA RSOO Technical Committee meeting held in Riyadh on 13th February 2022:

- a) Discussion of the revised MoA by the prospective Member States in order to achieve the widest possible consensus and participation in the MENA RSOO. During this discussion, ICAO MID Office representative proposed to add an appendix to MoA on the role and responsibilities of ICAO in the operation of MENA RSOO
- b) It was highlighted that the budget of the MENA RSOO depends on a number of critical parameters, such as the total number of Member States involved, the number of functions and phasing of the MENA RSOO activation, the potential revenue streams from consulting services provided to Member States, and the activities of the MENA RSOO annual work plan. In this context, an "indicative range" of the anticipated financial contribution by Member States for the first fiscal year(s) was presented based on information provided by ICAO 2021 document regarding RSOOs budgets.
- c) The subject of "in-kind" contribution was addressed to explore the intention of Member States to support the MENA RSOO with resources other than contribution to the budget, which will be deducted from their annual financial contribution;
- d) A "pay scale," based on the existing UN/ICAO system, was presented and discussed for the MENA RSOO staff with the aim to incentivise talented professionals from Member States to join the MENA RSOO.
- e) A proposal for the selection of the MENA RSOO Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Managing Director was presented. It was recommended that the logistics of the selection process are handled by the Secretary of the Steering Committee (SC) with both ACAO and ICAO participating as observes in all phases of the process. In this context:
 - All Member States were invited to submit to the Secretary of the SC, copying both ACAO and ICAO, the detailed CV's of their nominated candidates no later than the 31st March 2022.
 - The Secretary of the SC will then forward to all Member States signing the MoA the CVs of all nominated candidates, in order to cast their votes (one for the Chairman and one for the Managing Director), copying both ACAO and ICAO.
 - The vote will take place during the next MENA RSOO SC meeting upon the signature of the MoA. It will start by election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, then the Managing Director. The election results will be announced by the Secretary of the SC.
 - The MENA RSOO official launch will then be announced via a well-prepared press conference by ACAO.
- f) It was proposed that once the MENA RSOO Chairperson and Managing Director are selected, they will have to prioritize the establishment of the Organization as an international legal entity in Saudi Arabia, and develop a timeline for the way forward. This shall include the following items:

- Recruitment of MENA RSOO staff at all levels;
 - Decide on a consultant (if needed) to draft the RSOO financial plan and budget;
 - Decide on a consultant (if needed) to draft the RSOO internal processes and procedures;
 - Prepare the timeline for the full RSOO activation strategy (phasing); and
 - Prepare the work plan for the first year of operation (2022).
- g) ICAO and ACAO clarified their important role in the MENA RSOO in safeguarding the integrity of processes, reviewing the credentials of prospective MENA RSOO staff and experts, and providing expert opinion and advice for the logistics and operation of the Organization.

2.5 The following recommendations and resolutions were reached by the MENA RSOO technical committee:

- a) Submit the proposal of a new Appendix to MoA on ICAO role and responsibilities to the Steering Committee (SC) for review and endorsement. A copy of this Appendix is attached as **Appendix A**;
- b) Consensus on the revised Memorandum of Agreement and the proposed financial contribution scheme by participating States and submit this proposal to the Steering Committee (SC) for consideration and adoption;
- c) Invite Member States to update/nominate focal point to participate in the activities of MENA RSOO technical committee;
- d) Unanimous consensus on the “pay scale” for the MENA RSOO staff and submit this proposal to the Steering Committee (SC) for consideration and adoption;
- e) Unanimous consensus on the selection process for the MENA RSOO Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Managing Director; and
- f) Consensus on the proposed action plan for the implementation of MENA RSOO and submit this proposal to the Steering Committee (SC) for consideration and adoption .

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to embrace the finalization of the establishment process of the MENA RSOO and more specifically, the prospective Member States to:

- a) sign the revised Memorandum of Agreement as soon as possible; and
- b) nominate, if they wish, their two candidates for the roles of the Chairman and Managing Director of the MENA RSOO by the 31st March 2022, notwithstanding that the nominated Managing Director does not have to be a national of the proposing Member State.

Annex I to the MENA RSOO MOA

THE ROLE OF ICAO

In accordance with ICAO DOC 9734, Part B “**The Establishment and Management of a Regional Safety Oversight Organization**”, ICAO MID Regional Office works closely with MENA RSOO by assisting not just in the establishment of the MENA RSOO, but also in its ongoing management, as follows:

- Maintain close coordination between the ICAO MID Regional Director and the Chairman of the MENA RSOO Steering Committee (Executive Board) related to establishment process and ongoing management activities;
- Support the MENA RSOO during the initial start-up and ongoing operations by providing technical assistance missions;
- Ensure the MENA RSOO work plan is aligned with:
 - i. ICAO’s Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP);
 - ii. ICAO MID Regional Aviation Safety Plan (MID-RASP) as well as the RASGs’ priorities; and
 - iii. ICAO MID Region Safety Management Roadmap.
- Coordinate the conduct of technical assistance missions and capacity building activities in line with MID Region NCLB Strategy including action plans in order to avoid duplication of efforts and for cost efficiency;
- Support the recruitment process of the Managing Director and Technical Experts;
- Participate in the MENA RSOO Steering Committee (Executive Board) meetings; and
- Support the monitoring of the MENA RSOO performance and work plan implementation.

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