



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

**FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE  
ASIA/PACIFIC AIR NAVIGATION PLANNING AND  
IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL GROUP (APANPIRG/15)  
Bangkok, Thailand, 23 to 27 August 2004**

**Agenda Item 2.4: Other Air Navigation Matters**

**EXPANSION AND CONTINUATION OF THE ICAO UNIVERSAL  
SAFETY OVERSIGHT AUDIT PROGRAMME**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

**SUMMARY**

This paper contains proposals made by the Council of ICAO for the continuation and expansion of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) for 2004 and beyond. Paragraph 2 addresses the concept of a comprehensive systems approach for USOAP as an evolution from the Annex-by-Annex approach which has been followed since the inception of the Programme. Paragraph 3 illustrates the approach to its implementation. Paragraph 4 details the agenda and scheduling of a seminar/workshop on this subject in Montreal in September 2004.

Action by APANPIRG is contained in paragraph 5 of the paper.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) was established in 1999, pursuant to Assembly Resolution A32-11, with the objective of promoting global aviation safety through the conduct of regular and mandatory safety oversight audits of all Contracting States. In this regard, as of 31 March 2004, audits of 181 Contracting States and five territories have been conducted, as well as 133 audit follow-up missions.

1.2 In accordance with Assembly Resolution A33-8, the Secretariat conducted preparatory work towards the expansion of USOAP to Annex 11 — *Air Traffic Services*, Annex 13 — *Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation* and Annex 14 — *Aerodromes*, slated to start in 2004. This work confirmed that the implementation of the provisions contained in Annexes 11 and 14 is interrelated with the implementation of numerous provisions in various Annexes, and especially with those contained in Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing*, Annex 2 — *Rules of the Air*, Annex 4 — *Aeronautical Charts*, Annex 10 — *Aeronautical Telecommunications*, and Annex 15 — *Aeronautical Information Services*. The conduct of audits relating to Annexes 11 and 14 cannot be done effectively in isolation, and auditing Annex 13 by itself would not be cost-effective.

## **2. EXPANSION OF USOAP – COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS APPROACH**

2.1 Safety oversight audits performed thus far have been planned and conducted on an Annex-by-Annex basis, starting with Annexes 1, 6 and 8 and with a view to progressively introducing other Annexes. While this approach served its purpose and proved effective for the establishment of the Programme and the initial audits, it has become clear that continuing along the same line to assess the capabilities of Contracting States for safety oversight and the implementation of safety-related provisions would be both lengthy and expensive.

2.2 The challenge faced by the Organization is to firmly establish and maintain an effective and efficient safety oversight audit programme, while keeping the overall operating expenses at an acceptable level. On the basis of the experience gained so far, it is time for USOAP to evolve from an Annex-by-Annex to a comprehensive systems approach, which would focus on the States' overall safety oversight capabilities. The comprehensive systems approach would cover all safety-related Annexes and would provide an improved and cost-effective approach to auditing.

2.3 In view of the above, the Council on 12 February 2004 ( Council 170/12 refers) decided to present to the 35th Session of the Assembly (28 September – 8 October 2004) a proposal for further expansion of USOAP to include safety-related provisions in all safety-related Annexes effective 2005.

2.4 While the Programme has been successful in identifying safety concerns and in increasing States' overall safety oversight capabilities, it has also placed an important workload on both ICAO and its Contracting States as audit and follow-up missions are planned, prepared, conducted and reported on. With the foreseen expansion of USOAP to cover sixteen of the eighteen Annexes to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* (Doc 7300), and as the Programme moves toward the implementation of a comprehensive systems approach for the conduct of audits commencing 2005, it is inevitable that the workload placed on ICAO and on States will increase significantly.

## **3. IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS APPROACH**

3.1 The envisioned comprehensive systems approach to the conduct of safety oversight audits would consist of two phases. In the first phase, the implementation of Annex provisions and the identification of differences would be determined through the review of the duly completed State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ) and Compliance Checklists for all relevant Annexes, and through the review of documents developed by a State to assist it in the implementation of SARPs, as well as in maintaining an effective safety oversight system. In the second phase, the State being audited would be visited by an ICAO audit team, which would validate the information provided by the State and also conduct an on-site audit of the State's overall capability for safety oversight. This would include an audit of the organization, processes, procedures and programmes established and maintained by the State to help it fulfil its safety oversight obligations.

3.2 Under the proposed comprehensive systems approach, and given the wide range of subjects to be covered in every audit, it is envisaged that, in many States, ICAO will have to deal with several entities responsible for safety oversight tasks, in addition to the Civil Aviation Authority. Much emphasis will be placed on the preparatory phase of an audit, which will be extended over several months, and during which documentation submitted by States will be reviewed and analysed by ICAO before the actual on-site audit. Effective communication and coordination with States will be essential.

3.3 To facilitate the task, and in order to ensure proper communications and coordination with Contracting States during all phases of the audit process, the Safety Oversight Audit Section (SOA) has already requested States, through the SAAQ, to appoint a National Safety Oversight Coordinator, whose responsibility will be to coordinate among the various authorities or departments responsible for safety oversight within the State, and to ensure that the applicable questionnaires, compliance checklists, and audit protocols are appropriately completed and submitted to ICAO by the specified time. Important among his/her assignments will also be to coordinate the development of the State's corrective action plan and to follow-up on its implementation.

#### 4. SEMINAR/WORKSHOP ON COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS APPROACH

4.1 Because of the invaluable support that an appropriately informed National Safety Oversight Coordinator would be to the management of an effective State's safety oversight system, ICAO Secretariat, on the instruction of the Council, intends to conduct a one-and-a half-day seminar/workshop for national safety oversight coordinators on 26 and 27 September 2004, prior to the opening of the 35th Session of the Assembly. This period has been chosen for two main reasons: first, to allow States to bring their coordinators as part of their delegation to the Assembly, making it possible for a large number of coordinators to attend; second, members of the national delegations interested in having a better understanding of the future audits would also have an opportunity to attend the seminar. In addition, as the preparatory work necessary for the expansion of the Programme would have been completed by that time, participants will have the opportunity to provide comments on the prepared material and contribute to its refinement. All in all, the seminar would enable all participants to gain valuable knowledge and understanding on the process and implementation of the comprehensive systems approach-based safety oversight audits

4.2 The seminar/workshop will, inter alia, address the following items:

- a) USOAP's aims and achievements;
- b) State obligations for safety oversight under the Doc 7300.
- c) the comprehensive systems approach for conducting safety oversight audits: processes and procedures;
- d) audit tools and their use:
  - i) SAAQ;
  - ii) compliance checklists; and
  - iii) audit protocols;
- e) duties and responsibilities of National Safety Oversight Coordinators:
  - i) preparation for audits;
  - ii) development of the State's corrective action plan;
  - iii) implementation of the action plan; and
  - iv) liaison with the SOA.

4.3 As the auditing system to be established will mostly be electronic and web-based, the National Safety Oversight Coordinators will also be presented with information and training, as the case may be, on how the web-based auditing system operates and on how to access and use it effectively.

4.4 Accordingly, the Safety Oversight Coordinator assigned by each State's Administration as a member of the delegation to the 35th Assembly is recommended to attend so that he/she can benefit from the Safety Oversight Seminar/Workshop and also from the discussions on the continuation and expansion of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme.

**5. ACTION BY APANPIRG**

**5.1** APANPIRG is invited to:

- a) note the proposal about expansion of USOAP from an Annex-by-Annex to a comprehensive systems approach; and
- b) urge States to include the Safety Oversight Coordinator assigned by each State's Administration as a member of the delegation to the 35th Assembly in order to attend the workshop mentioned in paragraph 4 and to participate in the discussions.

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