



International Civil Aviation Organization

**Fifteenth Meeting of the APANPIRG ATM/AIS/SAR Sub-Group
(ATM/AIS/SAR/SG/15)**

Bangkok, Thailand, 25 – 29 July 2005

Agenda Item 10: Any other business

**UPDATE OF THE UNIVERSAL SAFETY OVERSIGHT
AUDIT PROGRAMME (USOAP)**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper provides an update of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USAOP), including tentative dates for audits in the Asia and Pacific Region during 2006.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 During its 35th Session (2004), the ICAO Assembly resolved (Resolution A35-6) that the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) be further expanded to include the safety-related provisions contained in all safety related Annexes to *the Convention on International Civil Aviation*, as of 2005. The Assembly further requested that USAOP be restructured to adopt a comprehensive systems approach in conducting safety oversight audits in all Contracting States.

1.2 The objective of the USOAP is to promote global aviation safety through auditing Contracting States, on a regular basis, to determine States' capability for safety oversight by assessing the effective implementation of the critical elements of a safety oversight system and the status of States' implementation of safety-relevant ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), associated procedures, guidance material and safety-related practices.

1.3 In simple terms, the USOAP involves the conduct of structured audits of all 188 ICAO Contracting States during a recurring 6 year cycle, in order to assess a State's capability for the safety oversight of civil aviation operations. In terms of the 35 States of the Asia and Pacific Region, on average 6 States would be audited each year in order to address the broad goal of completing audits of all States during each 6 year cycle. Full audit reports, including State corrective action plans aimed at addressing audit findings, are made available to all ICAO Contracting States via an ICAO website requiring password access.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Under the comprehensive systems approach, audits are conducted in consideration of the safety related provisions of 16 of the 18 ICAO Annexes, rather than Annexes 1, 6 and 8 as were considered during previous ICAO audit regimes. The two Annexes not considered by USOAP are Annex 9 (Facilitation) and Annex 17 (Aviation Security) – Annex 17 is subject to a separate ICAO audit programme and Annex 9 considers matters other than direct operational safety issues. In

addition, the comprehensive systems approach considers ICAO PANS and guidance materials in respective of State safety oversight capability, not just Annex provisions.

2.2 During the 35th Assembly of ICAO, Assembly Resolution A35-6 was formulated, covering the following aspects:

- USOAP to be further expanded to include the safety-related provisions in all safety-related Annexes;
- USOAP to adopt a comprehensive systems approach in conducting safety oversight audits;
- PEL, OPS, AIR, ATS, AGA and AIG to constitute the core elements (subjects) of the audit Programme.
- Final audit reports to be made available to all Contracting States;
- USOAP to continuously ensure the maintenance of the quality assurance system.
- States to second qualified and experienced technical staff to ICAO on long- or short-term basis;
- States to submit, in a timely manner, and keep up-to-date, all information and documentation associated with the preparation and conduct of an audit;
- Audit reports to reflect the critical elements of a safety oversight system;
- States to cooperate with ICAO and, as much as possible, accept audit missions as scheduled by ICAO;
- States to accept the primacy of USOAP audit results as meeting the established SARPs; and
- ICAO Secretary General to foster coordination and cooperation between USOAP and other audit programmes (IATA, EUROCONTROL, etc - Assembly Resolution A35-7 refers).

Audit tools developed by the ICAO Safety Oversight Audit office include:

- SOA Quality Manual;
- State Aviation Activities Questionnaire (SAAQ);
- Compliance Checklist (CC); and
- Audit Protocols (standardised audit questions)

2.3 The SAAQ and CC comprise comprehensive written (electronic) questionnaires that designed to be completed by States and forwarded to ICAO HQ by 31 May 2005, and updated by States well prior to the commencement of the on-site audit. As the SAAQ and CC provide a thorough 'picture' of a States' civil aviation activity and level of compliance with some 9500 Standards and Recommended Practices, initial feedback from States has highlighted the substantial workload involved in the completion and ongoing update of these documents. States are urged to make adequate resource provision to enable the completion and updating of these documents in a timely and ongoing manner.

2.4 Assessment and reporting of the level of State safety oversight capability is conducted against the eight critical elements of a safety oversight system, as identified by ICAO and described in the *Safety Oversight Manual* (Doc 9734 Part A and Part B) and the *Safety Oversight Audit Manual* (Doc 9735). In summary terms the eight critical elements of a safety oversight system are:

- Primary Aviation Legislation;
- Specific Operating Regulations;
- State Civil Aviation System and Safety Oversight Functions;
- Technical Personnel Qualifications and Training;

- Technical Guidance, tools and the provision of Safety Critical Information;
- Licensing, Certification, Authorization and Approval Obligations;
- Surveillance Obligations; and
- Resolution of Safety Concerns.

2.5 Since the commencement of the expanded programme – the comprehensive systems approach to auditing the provisions of all safety related annexes - commenced in 2005, four States have been audited – Canada, Germany Thailand and Malaysia. The ICAO USOAP tentative work programme includes proposed dates for audits of States of the Asia and Pacific Region during 2006 as described below. It should be carefully noted that these are tentative dates only and are therefore subject to change, both in the dates listed and the States identified for audit. Enquiries in relation to audit dates should be made directly to ICAO's Safety Oversight Audit Section via email to soa@icao.int.

- January 2006 Fiji, Vanuatu (including PASO)
- March 2006 New Zealand, Solomon Islands
- October 2006 Bhutan, India

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information provided in respect to the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP);
- b) note the submission date of 31 May 2005 for State Aviation Activity Questionnaires
- c) consider the level of awareness of the USOAP amongst States of the Asia and Pacific Region; and
- d) identify mechanisms to increase awareness of the USOAP and facilitate State preparedness for safety oversight audit, including completion of State Aviation Activity Questionnaires and Compliance Checklists.
