



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

North American, Central American and Caribbean Office

**Second Meeting of North American, Central American and Caribbean Directors of Civil Aviation (NACC/DCA/2)**

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**Agenda Item 2: Safety Oversight matters**  
2.1) USOAP

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICAO UNIVERSAL SAFETY OVERSIGHT AUDIT PROGRAMME (USOAP)**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

**SUMMARY**

This Working Paper contains a progress report on the implementation of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) from April to October 2004. It also provides an **additional update** on the transition of USOAP to a comprehensive system approach for the conduct of audits, pre-audit documentation procedures and training dates for auditors, as resolved by the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly.

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the ICAO Assembly (Resolution A-35-6 refers) resolved that the USOAP be further expanded to include the safety-related provision in all safety related Annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. The Assembly further requested the Secretary General, from 1 January 2005 to restructure USOAP to adopt a comprehensive system approach in conducting safety oversight audit in all Contracting States.

1.2 On the basis of information extracted from the Audits Findings and Differences Database (AFDD), this paper presents the results of the audit follow-up missions and the progress made by States in the implementation of critical elements of safety oversight systems and the resolution of safety concerns identified during the initial audits. The paper also provides information on the actions taken and/or planned to ensure the effective transition of USOAP to a comprehensive system approach for the conduct of audits, as requested by the Assembly.

## **2. Progress of the Programme**

### **2.1 *Follow-up missions on the validation of the implementation of States' corrective action plans and reports***

**2.1.1** Follow-ups audits conducted as of as of 31 December 2004 included the following States: **Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, United States and States' Territories: Netherlands Antilles, Bermuda and Turks and Caicos Islands.**

**2.1.2** As of 31 October 2004, 152 audits follow-up summary reports have been prepared and sent to the States concerned for final comments prior to their publication. One hundred and thirty six of these reports had already been published and distributed to all Contracting States.

## **3. Results from the Audit Findings and Difference Database (AFDD)**

**3.1** The analysis of 162 follow-up missions showed that Contracting States continue to make progress in the implementation of their corrective Action Plan and the resolution of safety concerns. As shown in the **Appendix** to this working paper, the average lack of effective implementation of the eight critical elements of a safety oversight system identified during the initial audits for the group of the 162 States declined from 29.8 per cent to 13.64 per cent. When these results are used to recalculate the average lack of effective implementation of the critical elements at the global level, the rate diminished from 32.62 percent to 17.46 per cent. Also, the use of the Compliance Checklist was proven to be very rewarding.

**3.2** While these results continue to show progress, the audit follow-up missions have also revealed that thirty-six States, or approximately 24 per cent of the 152 Contracting States analyzed so far, have not made much progress in resolving the deficiencies identified during the initial audits. In this regard, the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the ICAO Assembly (Resolution A35-7 refers) strongly supported a unified strategy to resolve safety related deficiencies, where the improvement can be accomplished through active collaboration of all stake holders and an assistance of the Technical Cooperation Bureau to States in need (Reference WP/06).

## **4 Transition of USOAP to a Comprehensive Systems Approach**

### **4.1 *Activities undertaken during the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly***

**4.2** At the request of the Council, an information session on the implementation of USOAP and the transition to a comprehensive system approach for the conduct of future safety oversight audit was held at ICAO Headquarters on September 26, 2004. Approximately 250 participants attended this information session.

**4.3** During the 35<sup>th</sup> Session of the Assembly a selection was made of the first Contracting States to be audited in 2005. Twelve contracting States agreed in principle to undergo the audits during 2005, among them Canada, Panama and Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, two International Organizations, which conduct safety oversight activities on behalf of their Member States, have also agreed to be audited by ICAO in 2005 as part of the USOAP audit. They are EUROCONTROL and European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA).

4.4 In the CAR Region, in an effort to assist States with their Safety Oversight responsibilities, two agencies have been established, Agencia Centroamericana para la Seguridad Aeronáutica (ACSA) in Central America and Regional Aviation Safety Oversight System (RASOS) in the Caribbean. Audits of member States of the agencies, at least initially, will include an audit of ACSA and RASOS. (Information to be presented by ACSA and RASOS).

## **5. Development of audit tools**

5.1 Successful implementation of the comprehensive system approach will depend on the effective application of a series of audit tools designed to assist both Contracting States and ICAO in the preparation for, and conduct of safety oversight audits. These tools include the State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ) compliance checklist for each Annex concerned and Audit Protocol for each area of audit. A CD-ROM containing an initial version of several of these tools is available and can be accessed through the ICAO-Net under SOA page: [www.icao.int/icaonet/index\\_ie.html](http://www.icao.int/icaonet/index_ie.html).

5.2. The SAAQ has been revised to address all the areas to be audited under the comprehensive system approach, it has been distributed to all Contracting States. It is designed to enable ICAO to collect information on the organization and the system established by the State to meet its safety oversight obligations. SAAQ submitted by States will allow ICAO to maintain an up-to-date database of States' aviation activities and will assist ICAO in the scheduling of audits and in determining the duration of the audits and the expertise required. The completed SAAQ should be received by SOA no later than 31 May 2005.

5.3 Compliance Checklist for each Annex concerned have been prepared to assist States in ascertaining the status of implementation of Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and in identifying any difference that may exist between national regulations and the corresponding ICAO Annex provisions. Compliance Checklist submitted by States will enable ICAO to maintain an up-to-date database on the level of compliance by States with ICAO SARPs and facilitate the preparation for, and conduct of standardized audits of all Contracting States. The Completed Compliance Checklist should have been received by 31 May 2005.

5.4 Audit protocols for all the areas have been developed with the cooperation of the relevant sections of the Air Navigation Bureau. Audit protocol constitutes the primary tools for the conduct of on-site safety oversight audits. They enable auditing against the critical elements of a safety oversight system, and can also be used by Contracting States both in preparation for an ICAO audit and in the conduct of internal audits.

## **6. Auditor Training Courses and Seminars/Workshops for Safety Oversight Coordinators**

6.1 In preparation for the launching of safety oversight audits under the comprehensive system approach in 2005, ICAO conducted a series of National Safety Oversight Coordinator training courses, both at ICAO HQ and in the Regional Offices. The objective of these courses was to train a sufficient number of auditors, both from ICAO and seconded by States. Five courses were held in 2005, one at ICAO HQ and four at ICAO Regional Offices. In the NACC Regional Office in Mexico City an event took place during 10 to 11 of March 2005 with an attendance of 50 participants from the ICAO NACC States. Additional Training of Safety Oversight Coordinators is scheduled to be held in Mexico in early 2006 date to be yet announced.

## **7. ICAO GASP Unified Strategy- Safety Concerns**

7.1 The ICAO Assembly, at its 35 Session recognized the challenges faced by some Contracting States in implementing their safety oversight systems and corrective measures emanating from their action plans.

7.2 In adopting Resolution A35-7, the Assembly strongly supported a Unified Strategy to resolve safety related deficiencies, and requested the Council to implement strategy based on the principles of increased transparency, cooperation and assistance and to foster, where appropriate partnership among the States, users and air navigation service providers, industry financial institutions and other stakeholders in order to assist States in resolving safety-related deficiencies. (Reference WP/06 and WP/24).

## **8. Conclusion**

8.1 A systems approach to conduct safety oversight audits would address safety-related provisions contained in safety related Annexes by focusing on the States overall safety oversight capability and specific safety critical areas, while assessing the implementation of all provisions through the review of the SAAQ and Compliance Checklist. It also offers the potential for cost saving in the long term, when compared to the Annex-by-Annex approach.

8.2 The introduction of the comprehensive systems approach, and in order to ensure proper communication and coordination with Contracting States during all phases of the audit process, ICAO has invited States to appoint a person responsible of this matter to liaise with the various authorities or departments responsible for safety oversight within the State, and to make sure that all audit-related documentation is appropriately completed and submitted to ICAO in a timely manner.

**9. Action by the Meeting**

9.1 The Directors are invited to:

- a) note the information provided in this Working Paper;
- b) take note of the available audit tools and required pre-audit documentation and compliance with its prescribed procedures; and
- c) urge States/Territories/International Organizations to adequately prepare for the expanded USOAP System Audit Programme;

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# Critical Elements of a Safety Oversight System - Lack of Effective Implementation (%) Comparison of Audit and Audit Follow-up Results

