



FOREWORD

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Today we celebrate the first ever World Statistics Day as proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly.

In civil aviation, as in most industries, statistics are fundamental to learning from the past, managing the present and planning the future.

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At ICAO, we have long promoted the systematic collection and usage of reliable, complete and up-to-date statistical data and information as a valuable management tool for civil aviation administrations and industry stakeholders.

The framework for our involvement in this activity was established early on by ICAO's charter - the Chicago Convention. Since 1948, the ICAO Statistical Division has guided our work in setting the standards and charting the path for the creation and maintenance of a quality and accessible global air transport statistical system.

Thanks to the collective effort of Member States, various air transport industry stakeholders and specialized organizations, ICAO has been able to gather process and disseminate aviation statistics and data for more than 60 years across all States and regions of the world.

In our own work, statistics have proven indispensable for the development of indicators to monitor progress in the realizations of the Organization's three strategic objectives: safety, security and environmental protection and sustainable development of air transport.

For example, air travel safety data are analysed and reported on the ICAO integrated and web-based safety trend analysis and reporting system, or iSTAR. iSTAR contains detailed accident and incident data, results from our Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) and traffic information. The combinations of these sets of safety data are displayed on interactive maps and can be shared for the benefit of all stakeholders, to help identify trends and to allow for integrated analysis and various correlation studies.

In the area of security, ICAO has since 1970 maintained a database on acts of unlawful interference in civil aviation. This makes it possible to disseminate information on acts of unlawful interference in a more efficient and effective manner. It also allows us to monitor the overall level of security and to provide Member States with a better understanding of the threat faced by civil aviation.

The need for reliable, timely and substantive data is especially important when dealing with the adverse effects of aviation on the environment, particularly climate change. We need this kind of information to establish goals and measure our progress in achieving them. One case in point is the comprehensive resolution adopted by the 37th Session of the ICAO Assembly and which established a goal of 2 percent annual improvement in fuel efficiency up to 2050. This target was based on sound data and will rely on updated information for constant monitoring.

And so, there is no doubt of the critical importance of statistics and data to the performance of the global air transport system and to its constituent parts. For States, strengthening national statistical capacity remains a priority. In some cases, however, developing countries often find themselves at a disadvantage, lacking the required funds to adequately train staff for collecting and processing data effectively. At ICAO, we are committed to assisting them in connecting to the global network of aviation statistical knowledge.

Let this World Statistics Day become an annual reminder of the power of numbers to enhance our ability for improving the quality and efficiency of air travel around the world.