



**WORKING PAPER**

**SECOND HIGH-LEVEL SAFETY CONFERENCE 2015 (HLSC 2015)  
PLANNING FOR GLOBAL AVIATION SAFETY IMPROVEMENT**

Montréal, 2 to 5 February 2015

**Theme 1: Reviewing the current situation**

**Topic 1.2: Emerging safety issues**

**NEXT STEPS RELATED TO GLOBAL AIRCRAFT TRACKING**

(Presented by the International Air Transport Association (IATA))

**SUMMARY**

Following the efforts by both ICAO and the aviation industry to identify ways in which global aircraft tracking can be improved, airlines continue to advocate a performance-based approach that considers the roles of airlines, ANSPs, governments, service providers, manufacturers, and any other key stakeholder associated with the provision of aircraft tracking. The airline industry believes that given the complexities associated with the issue of global aircraft tracking that information derived from operational experience would provide the basis for effective and efficient ICAO provisions and that additional assessment by all key stakeholders is needed.

**Action:** The conference is invited to:

- a) agree that additional technical, operational, and procedural assessment on aircraft tracking needs to be undertaken and that a reasonable trial phase to conduct this assessment needs to be established;
- b) agree that there are multiple ways in which aircraft tracking can be provided and that a performance based approach must be considered;
- c) agree that in order to develop an effective and sustainable global flight tracking capability airlines, air navigation service providers, States, service providers, and manufacturers need to work together; and
- d) note the intent of the airline industry to contribute to the aforementioned trial phase.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Following the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370, and the Multi-disciplinary Meeting on Global Flight Tracking held at ICAO Headquarters on May 12-13 2014, the industry established an Aircraft Tracking Task Force (ATTF). The objective of the ATTF was to identify near term options to enhance global aircraft tracking. As a result of its deliberations the ATTF developed a report which contains performance criteria and recommendations to provide guidance for routine aircraft tracking implementation or enhancement. The ATTF Report was submitted to ICAO on December 8 2014.

1.2 In parallel with the development of the ATTF report, ICAO produced the Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS) document to address a series of shortcomings in

aircraft incident emergency management. GADSS describes the concept of operation from early identification of an abnormal situation through the coordination of resources across all concerned organizations such as States, air navigation service provider (ANSP), airlines, search and rescue (SAR), and accident investigation.

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 This working paper addresses some of the critical aspects that need to be considered by both governments and industry when developing provisions for enhanced global aircraft tracking.

2.2 Given a culture of continuous safety improvement the industry came together voluntarily to determine what options exist to enable enhancements to global aircraft tracking.

2.3 Aircraft tracking is one of several ways to locate an aircraft and there are multiple ways to provide aircraft tracking capabilities.

2.4 The performance criteria described in the ATTF Report were designed to be achievable in the near-term using current technologies, existing equipment, and established procedures. They may not constitute an ideal long-term solution.

2.5 The ATTF Report highlights that there are numerous capabilities available today to enable aircraft tracking and that entities seeking to implement or improve aircraft tracking capabilities do so using a performance-based approach.

2.6 Both the ATTF Report and the GADSS document recommend that operational experience be gained which could, in turn, be used in the development of ICAO provisions on global aircraft tracking.

2.7 Recent incidents have underscored the urgency to implement some of the recommendations contained in the ATTF Report as quickly as possible. These include the need for:

- a) better delineation of responsibilities among Air Traffic Service Units, aircraft operators, and Rescue Coordination Centres;
- b) established communications protocols between these entities;
- c) adjustments to provide shorter time reaction when in an emergency situation; and
- d) periodic exercises.

## 3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Redundant aircraft tracking solutions are inefficient and will limit practical implementation.

3.2 The airline industry, ANSPs, governments, and other key stakeholders must work together to collect specific information derived from operational experience in order to develop achievable and sustainable aircraft tracking provisions. The airline industry is committed to supporting this approach and to ensuring that any provisions that come as a result of this further assessment are performance based.

3.3 Additional technical, operational, and procedural assessment on aircraft tracking needs to be undertaken and a reasonable trial phase to conduct this assessment needs to be established.

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