



**WORKING PAPER**

**LEGAL COMMITTEE – 37th SESSION**

(Montréal, 4 to 7 September 2018)

**Agenda Item 2: Consideration of the General Work Programme of the Legal Committee**

**ESTABLISHING UAS TASK FORCE/WORKING GROUP WITHIN  
THE LEGAL COMMITTEE**

(Presented by China and Italy)

**SUMMARY**

As the ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices for Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) are being adopted and becoming effective in a very short period, domestic legislation and international guidelines for international operation of Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) are delivered gradually. The integrated international operation of RPAS will gradually become normal practice. The Convention on International Civil Aviation and other international civil conventions are typically designed for manned aircraft. Therefore, it is necessary to establish an Unmanned Aircraft System Task Force/Working Group within the Legal Committee to conduct a comprehensive review on the existing international civil aviation conventions and advice the Legal Committee for the interpretation, revision and updating of the conventions considering distributive characteristics of UAS/RPAS and other disruptive changes of the UAS/RPAS operation.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The work of the RPASP (Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems Panel) is reaching the deliverable stage. The draft of Standards and Recommended Practices for Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems (RPAS) is being reviewed by the Air Navigation Commission and the Council and will take effect from 2022. The integrated international operation of RPAS will gradually become normal practice.

1.2 The Unmanned Aircraft Systems Advisory Group (UAS-AG) is undertaking the work to facilitate the operation of other unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) beyond the international IFR operation of type certified RPA in an international coordinated and harmonised regulatory and technical framework.

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 With the Convention on International Civil Aviation and its Annexes, as well as other international civil aviation conventions, the rules for international operation of manned aircraft are well-established and the safety, order, efficiency and sustainability values of the international civil aviation have been safeguarded in the past decades.

2.2 Since the remote pilot will not be on board the remote piloted aircraft (RPA), remote pilot stations (RPS) located anywhere in the globe could manoeuvre the RPA, through command and control (C2) datalink connected via satellite. Therefore, new service providers will emerge for the RPS and for the C2 link. In order to fill the regulatory gap brought by the distributive characteristics of UAS/RPAS and other disruptive changes of the UAS/RPAS operations, the revision and updating of the technical rules, e.g. the SARPs, are necessary but not enough.

2.3 The emerging large-scale unmanned civil aviation operations demand a comprehensive review of the Convention on International Civil Aviation and other civil aviation conventions to determine whether the international conventions, specific rules or mechanisms are still applicable to Unmanned Aircraft Systems. Certain existing norms may need to be abolished, revised or supplemented.

## 3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note and review this working paper;
- b) establish an Unmanned Aircraft System Task Force/Working Group (UAS-TF/WG) in the Legal Committee to address legal challenges related to the international operation of UAS/RPAS and advise the Legal Committee for the interpretation, revision and updating of the Convention on International Civil Aviation and other international civil aviation conventions; and
- c) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

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