



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 38TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 31: Aviation Safety – Emerging Issues

CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINTS

(Presented by the United States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ICAO has included the issue of child safety restraints (CRS) in the 2012-2015 work programme for the Cabin Safety Group. The United States agrees that this is topic that needs to be addressed and wants the Assembly to emphasize its importance and offer direction to the Cabin Safety Group.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) establish an international recommended practice encouraging air carriers to use CRS appropriate to each child's size and weight on airplanes;
- b) provide recommendations and guidance that address the use of different types of CRS and effective operator procedures; and
- c) accommodate innovations in CRS based on future research and design.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Not applicable
<i>References:</i>	Not applicable

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 To ensure the safe carriage of infants and young children on commercial airplanes the United States believes that these passengers should be restrained in an age/size appropriate child restraint system (CRS).

1.2 It is now commonplace in many places in the world to find laws requiring young children to be restrained when traveling in automobiles. In fact, in most cases, persons traveling with young children will be required to use child restraint systems when traveling to and from the airport. Everyone on board an airplane should be afforded the protection of being secured in a restraint appropriate to both their age and size.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 In 2012 the executive director of the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) wrote the director of the Air Navigation Bureau at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) inquiring whether ICAO had planned any action regarding CRS. The letter noted the prevalence of international code share agreements and the challenges that traveling parents face trying to sort out what methods are authorized to protect their young children. Of note, the letter raised the concern that parents traveling with their children, “expect to be asked to apply consistent aviation safety rules worldwide” and sought ICAO involvement in this area to help. Specifically, the executive director’s letter stated, “... ICAO involvement in this matter would certainly be the most efficient way to achieve what is expected by the traveling public. I trust that any rulemaking activity and/or recommendations by aviation authorities would be much better understood and implemented by air travellers, and better perceived and supported by operators, if ICAO would take a coordinating, or even better, a leadership role.”

2.2 It is safer for every passenger, regardless of age or size, to be restrained in a size-appropriate device. In the past 30 years, attitudes in the United States have changed with respect to CRS in automobiles. Parents and caregivers now understand the safety benefit and purchase and use these devices on a daily basis. Within the United States, most of the 50 states have adopted CRS laws that have boosted compliance even further.

2.3 It is important to acknowledge that children are safer in an approved CRS that is appropriate for their size and weight. Government agencies once again must lead the way by setting sound policy and removing technical barriers to ease the transition and harmonize with other countries to avoid sending mixed safety messages to passengers traveling with young children internationally, as a result of inconsistent rules. Airlines, trade groups, unions, and other air safety organizations must echo the importance of this issue and do their part to support and aid parents and caregivers in their travels.

— END —