



**Tenth Meeting of the APIRG Air Traffic Services, Aeronautical  
Information Services and Search and Rescue Sub-Group  
[Dakar, Senegal 12 – 15 May 2009]**

**Agenda Item 11: Consideration of specific air navigation planning and implementation  
problems and the review of deficiencies in the ATS, AIS and SAR fields**

Addressing Air Navigation Deficiencies in the AFI Region  
(Presented by the International Air Transport Association)

**Summary**

This paper highlights the need to coordinate and harmonise regional safety and efficiency initiatives in the AFI Region, in order to avoid duplication of efforts and develop effective synergy for the timely identification and resolution of air navigation deficiencies.

References:

- APIRG Reports
- SP AFI RAN (2008) Report

**1. Introduction**

*Definitions*

1.1 According to ICAO definition, “A *deficiency* is a situation where a facility, service or procedure does not comply with a regional air navigation plan approved by the Council, or with related ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices, and which situation has a negative impact on the safety, regularity and/or efficiency of international civil aviation”.

1.2 “The term *‘implemented’* means that services and facilities specified in the Air Navigation Plan (ANP) are provided, installed, functioning and operated in accordance with appropriate ICAO specifications and procedures.”

**2. Initiatives to address air navigation deficiencies**

*APIRG mechanism*

2.1 APIRG is responsible for assessing the status of implementation of AFI ANP requirements, and accordingly *reviewing and updating the list of deficiencies* prepared by ICAO Secretariat based on reports on missions to States, review of aircraft accidents and incidents reports to detect *systems or procedures deficiencies*, review of air navigation services users’ reports, in particular IATA and IFALPA. A *database of AFI deficiencies* has been developed; however, this database is not current due to difficulties in getting timely feedback from States.

*DGCA mechanism*

2.2 To address air navigation safety related issues in the AFI Region, APIRG/14 Meeting (June 2003) adopted its Conclusion 14/53 on the establishment of a mechanism within the scope of the meetings of Directors-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Conclusion 14/53 reads as follows:

**CONCLUSION 14/53: ESTABLISHMENT OF A MECHANISM FOR AIR NAVIGATION SAFETY IN THE AFI REGION**

That, acknowledging the need for the *reduction and elimination of deficiencies* in the AFI Region:

- a) ICAO establish a mechanism for air navigation safety in Africa;
- b) The mechanism come within the scope of the formalized meetings of the Directors General of Civil Aviation of the Region and be placed under the aegis of ICAO. As such,
- c) The DGCA meetings would consistently and regularly place on their agendas an item on the identification, updating and *resolution of deficiencies*;
- d) The DGCA meetings would be tasked with the air navigation safety mechanism, including the following:
  - 1) To evaluate, validate, monitor and follow-up those *deficiencies* in the AFI Region, which are classified as urgent (U) and develop appropriate remedial action to be taken. To this effect, the DGCAs will receive from ICAO the updated lists of *urgent deficiencies* well in advance and from stakeholders through the ICAO Regional Offices;
  - 2) To promote the timely corrective actions to be taken by concerned States at the highest level in order to resolve specific *deficiencies* in their respective areas of responsibility; and
  - 3) To assist, through the relevant ICAO Regional Office, an individual State, a group of States or an executing body in identifying resources to resolve an *urgent deficiency* through advocacy of relevant high-level government officials, regional institutions, bilateral/multilateral cooperation and/or donor organizations.

*ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP)*

2.3 The Comprehensive Systems Approach of ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) covers 16 safety related Annexes, of which 8 Annexes pertaining to Air Navigation Services<sup>1</sup>. The audits had revealed many difficulties in implementing SARPs and correcting identified *safety-related deficiencies* by States, thus creating potential safety gaps and sources of risk to aviation safety. Experience gained from USOAP audits shows that in many cases, there is close relationship between safety oversight findings and operational deficiencies.

2.4 The ICAO Regional Offices, users representatives such as IATA, and some other stakeholders are not involved in the development and implementation of USOAP Corrective Action Plans, to ensure consistency with regional policies. For example, very few States have implemented ICAO requirements for safety management systems (SMS) for air traffic services (ATS), aerodromes, and aircraft operations, and quality management systems (QMS) for aeronautical information services (AIS) and meteorological (MET) services.

2.5 At the same time, the APIRG list of air navigation *deficiencies* does not reflect USOAP findings. Some States are shown as not having deficiencies in certain areas, or even all areas, while it should normally not be the case.

*Unified Strategy for resolving safety-related deficiencies*

2.6 Mindful of States difficulties in solving safety-related deficiencies, the 35th Session of ICAO Assembly (2004) had adopted Resolution A35-7 requesting ICAO to implement a unified strategy based on the principles of increased transparency, cooperation and assistance and to foster, where appropriate, partnership among States, users, air navigation service providers, industry, financial institutions and other stake holders to analyze causes, establish and implement sustainable solutions in order to *assist States in resolving safety related deficiencies*.<sup>1</sup>

*ATS Incidents Analysis Group (AIAG)*

2.7 The ATS Incident Analysis Group (AIAG) was established to provide a forum to various aviation organisations and stakeholders to review reported incidents and formulate recommendations to prevent similar incidents in the AFI region.

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<sup>1</sup> Annexes 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12 and 15

*Comprehensive Implementation Plan for Safety for Africa (ACIP)*

2.8 ICAO has developed a comprehensive Implementation Plan aimed at sustained improvement in aviation safety throughout the African continent. It was expected that ACIP would be built on tangible implementation initiatives already occurring in the AFI Region. APIRG/16 considered that “it represented the most coordinated and inclusive effort, to date, to address the very serious safety challenges facing Africa”, and adopted the following conclusion:

**CONCLUSION 16/65:                    COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR AVIATION SAFETY IN AFRICA (AFI PLAN)**

That:

- a) States support the implementation of the AFI Plan and closely coordinate their efforts with ICAO in order to ensure optimum benefits to aviation safety in Africa and to reduce duplication of efforts;
- b) The Programme Leader, as a start, follow up on specific offers to train aviation officers in the region and, as a priority, initiate the process to address known gaps;
- c) The Regional Offices accredited to States in Africa inform States on a regular basis regarding actions taken under the AFI Plan.

*Status of implementation of ANP requirements from users perspective*

2.9 There is no coordination and no synergy between the various initiatives aimed at addressing safety-related deficiencies in the AFI Region. As a result, there are still *a significant number of deficiencies listed by APIRG* in air navigation fields. This is confirmed by reports on IATA technical missions to some AFI States, showing that a number of services and facilities are *not implemented* in accordance with ANP requirements.

2.10 There is need to vigorously take remedial actions in the Region on the *deficiencies* identified and where a State is unable to take appropriate action, it should be given the necessary assistance and support.

*Tactical Action Group (TAG)*

2.11 The Special AFI RAN (2008) established the Tactical Action Group (TAG) to carry out an ongoing safety assessment of operations. The assessment will include *any deficiencies and all aspects related to the operational environment* in the AFI airspace including but not limited to ATC loop errors, communications problems, navigation and surveillance issues and any other item affecting the safety of operations.

*Implementation Coordination Groups (ICGs)*

2.12 In accordance with AFI FASID (GEN), Implementation Coordination Groups (ICGs) have been established for each routing area and for each area of affinity. Members are all those providers and users alike, required *to implement systems either on the ground or airborne on the area of routing concerned*, i.e., States and/or Organizations responsible for the provision of services in the FIRs concerned, and the Users Organizations. ICG coordinators have also been designated for CNS/ATM elements. Notwithstanding APIRG Decision 16/29 on the resumption of ICGs' activities, ICGs have remained inoperative since 2003.

### 3. Conclusion

3.1 In view of the foregoing, the Sub-group is invited to:

- a) Establish a comprehensive list of deficiencies consistent with ICAO definition;
- b) Acknowledge that ICAO should establish mechanisms to ensure that AFI initiatives aimed to address air navigation safety and efficiency issues are properly coordinated to avoid duplication of efforts and develop effective synergy, thus enabling the timely resolution of identified deficiencies in the Region;
- c) Request the ICAO Regional Offices to re-activate the implementation coordination groups (ICGs) established for each routing area, in accordance with APIRG Decision 16/29; and
- d) Recommend that coordination be established between TAG and ICGs activities, through the ICAO Regional Offices and participation of ICG Coordinators in TAG meetings/teleconferences, as required.

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