



ICAO

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

SIXTH MEETING OF DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION (DGCA/6) (Brazzaville, Congo, 2 – 4 November 2016)

Agenda Item 3: Aviation Safety

Implementation of the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan)

(Presented by AFI Plan Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper presents the contributions being made by the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan) and the progress made in the implementation of its associated work programme.

Considering the success registered in the conventional safety areas of personnel licensing (PEL), operation of aircraft (OPS) and airworthiness of aircraft (AIR) as the primary focus of the programme since its inception, the AFI Plan was expanded in 2013 to cover all safety-related areas including aircraft accident and incident investigation (AIG), aerodromes and ground aids (AGA) and air navigation services (ANS) to accelerate improvement of safety in Africa. So far the programme has been identified as an effective instrument to enhance and accelerate efforts made by African States to achieve the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) objectives as well as the High-level Safety Targets adopted during the Abuja Ministerial Conference on Aviation Safety held in Abuja in July 2012 (i.e. the Abuja Safety Targets).

Required Action: The meeting is invited to:

- a) note and recognized the contribution of the AFI Plan since its inception and to further encourage the efforts being made by ICAO and its safety partners and
- b) note the expansion and continuation of the AFI Plan activities beyond 2016 and their integration in the work programmes of the regional offices.

REFERENCE(S):

Report of the AFI Plan SC17 meeting
Abuja Declaration on Aviation Safety in Africa
Doc 10022, Assembly Resolutions in Force (as of 4 October 2013)
A39-WP/502

Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s): This working paper is related to the Safety Strategic Objective of ICAO.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. During the past several years, the low level of aviation safety and high accident rates in Africa has attracted the attention of ICAO and its safety partners thus resulting in many safety initiatives and projects geared towards improvement of aviation safety in the region.
- 1.2. The Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan) was endorsed by the 36th Session of the ICAO Assembly and established by the Secretary General on 1 January 2008 to address civil aviation safety deficiencies in the Africa-Indian Ocean (AFI) region. The programme has since been providing assistance to AFI States with a focus on the establishment and implementation of effective and sustainable safety oversight systems; resolution of identified safety deficiencies; and fostering of aviation safety culture in Africa.
- 1.3. Over the years, significant progress has been achieved in enhancing aviation safety in Africa as a result of considerable work and activities undertaken by ICAO through the AFI Plan. The programme continues to register significant gains towards the attainment of the Abuja safety targets including the Improvement of Effective Implementation (EI) of the Critical Elements of a State safety oversight system, resolution of significant safety concerns (SSCs), establishment and strengthening of regional safety oversight and accident investigation organizations (RSOOs/RAIOs); and building of capacity through various training activities. Nonetheless, many States continue to face challenges in the implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).
- 1.4. An evaluation of the AFI Plan conducted in 2015 concluded that the programme is a relevant mechanism for the improvement of aviation safety capability in the region and recommended that the programme be continued beyond 2016 and through the next triennium in order to build on the results achieved so far and to ensure its sustainability. On the basis of the evaluation recommendation, the AFI Plan extension for at least the next triennium beyond 2016 was recently endorsed by the 39th ICAO Assembly.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1. On the basis of the focus areas of the AFI Plan and in accordance with its annual work programme, many assistance activities were conducted by the Regional Office Safety Teams (ROSTs), laying the groundwork for the development of ICAO Plans of Action for priority States identified with significant safety concerns (SSCs), low levels of effective implementation (EIs) and those States that are currently on the ICAO Monitoring and Assistance Review Board (MARB) list. The Plans of Action are developed in coordination with the respective States whilst taking into account the available resources and contributions from relevant stakeholders.

- 2.2. To date, thirty-two AFI States have accepted the ICAO Plans of Action and the implementation of these Plans has contributed to significant improvements in aviation safety in the region. ICAO has also developed specific technical assistance projects implemented and/or to be implemented in relevant States, which were funded by ICAO Safety Fund (SAFE).
- 2.3. Specific assistance activities envisaged under the ICAO Plans of Action have been carried out jointly by the ROSTs, the Africa and Indian-Ocean Cooperative Inspectorate Scheme (AFI-CIS) of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), Cooperative development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programmes (COSCAPs), and RSOOs and similar entities/initiatives including the regional prioritization and coordination of all regional safety-related activities by the Regional Aviation Safety Group of the AFI region (RASG-AFI). ICAO, through the AFI Plan, continues to play a lead role in coordinating these activities in order to avoid duplication of efforts and waste of resources.
- 2.4. The AFI Plan continues to provide necessary support to some States through RSOOs (namely Banjul Accord Group Aviation Safety Oversight Organization (BAGASOO) and East African Community Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA). Support is also being provided to those States in the process of establishing RSOOs. Some of the Seven Partner States (Egypt, Libya and Sudan) have joined the initiative of establishing an RSOO for the Middle East and North African States which was jointly initiated by the Arab Civil Aviation Commission (ACAC) and ICAO. The AFI Plan is currently working out a viable solution for the remaining States: Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea and South Sudan. It is also worth mentioning that the operationalization of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Safety Oversight Organization (SASO) was approved by its member States and the SADC Secretariat is currently working with Swaziland to operationalize the SASO Secretariat. Furthermore, the outstanding MOU with UEMOA was signed in May 2015 during the visit of the ICAO Secretary General to Burkina Faso. The signing of the MOU now concludes efforts to ensuring the separation of functions of the respective AAMAC, CEMAC and UEMOA RSOOs.
- 2.5. With respect to training, the AFI Plan provided support in the establishment of the Association of African Aviation Training Organization (AATO) for the purpose of achieving harmonization and standardization of aviation training in Africa. The Plan has played a crucial role in the recruitment of the Secretary General of the AATO as well as in efforts to secure its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Furthermore, the AFI Plan continues to assist the organization during its First and Second General Assembly meetings.
- 2.6. To further enhance the technical capability of States through increased number of qualified technical staff, the AFI Plan has conducted numerous training activities including seminars and workshops in various safety-related fields. Over 2,200 personnel from many African States have

benefited from these activities conducted from 2008 to date. The 37th Session of the Assembly in 2010 highlighted that there was a need for Member States to take ownership with regard to aviation training, thus requiring a change in the role played by ICAO from a training service provider to a facilitator of training. Accordingly, the AFI Plan has since facilitated and informed States on the available aviation safety training provided at selected ICAO-endorsed training centers in Africa.

- 2.7. The Ministerial Conference on Aviation Safety in Africa (16 to 20 July 2012, Abuja, Nigeria) reaffirmed the commitment to promote reliable, sustainable and safe air transport in Africa. The Ministerial Conference emphasized that this would be achieved through implementation of thorough and documented air operator certification processes followed by effective safety oversight of all African air operators; promotion and implementation of ICAO Plans of Action to ensure timely resolution of SSCs; creation and/or strengthening of RSOOs and regional accident and incident investigation organizations (RAIOs); as well as encouraging States to confine their membership to not more than one RSOO or RAIO and provision of resources and support in the implementation of the AFI-CIS.
- 2.8. Efforts in attaining these aviation safety targets and achieving sustainable safety improvements have already shown tangible results. Following validation of the evidence of implementation of the USOAP Corrective Actions Plans (CAPs), a number of African States have registered significant improvements in their safety oversight systems as evidenced by the increase in the EI of the critical elements. Between July 2012 and September 2016, the number of States throughout the AFI region with an EI of 60 per cent and above increased from fourteen to twenty-five and the number of States with SSCs declined from twenty to four.
- 2.9. In order to further foster and build a strong and healthy safety culture in the region, an AFI Safety Symposium has been held on an annual basis since May 2014. This forum has also played a role in escalating safety awareness to a level where all States proactively get engaged in exchanging ideas and disseminating information related to emerging safety issues and concerns prevalent in the region. It also serves as a golden opportunity for ICAO to effectively communicate with States in an effort to seek a workable solution between high-level officials demonstrating little or no progress in addressing their aviation safety deficiencies.
- 2.10. Also specific projects in the areas of Aerodrome Certification, Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSP) peer review, State Safety Programme/Safety Management System (SSP/SMS), Search and Rescue (SAR) were developed and being implemented on the basis of the Decision by the 38th Assembly to expand the AFI Plan activities to cover all safety-related areas and the Abuja Safety targets. This projects and the overall activities of the Plan are aligned to achieve the Decision of the 16th AFI Plan Steering Committee meeting and the Goals set by the same for 2016 which includes the removal of all Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs),

increase in the EIs of at least 70% of AFI States to 60% and certification of 45% of international aerodromes in the AFI Region.

- 2.11. Although significant progress in enhancing aviation safety in Africa has been achieved as a result of the considerable work and actions undertaken through the AFI Plan and aviation safety partners, it is broadly recognized and agreed that additional efforts, resources and time are required, not only to achieve the high-level safety targets (Abuja Safety Targets) including resolution of the remaining SSCs and other safety deficiencies in the region, but also to maintain this momentum and therefore ensure sustainability.
- 2.12. On this basis, the 39th ICAO Assembly agreed to further support efforts towards the improvement of aviation safety in Africa through endorsement of the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan) to be continued beyond 2016.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

- 3.1. The meeting is invited to:
- a) note and recognize the contribution of AFI Plan activities since its inception and to further encourage the efforts being made by ICAO and its safety partners; and
 - b) note the expansion of the AFI Plan to cover all safety areas and the continuation of its activities beyond 2016.

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