



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION  
WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICAN OFFICE

**First Meeting of Directors General of Civil Aviation**

(Abuja, Nigeria, 19-21 March 2002)

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**Agenda item 1: Strategies for the elimination of deficiencies in the Region**

**Improvement of safety oversight in Western and Central African Region**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

<b>Summary</b>	
This paper outlines the results of ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit programme with a focus on the results of Western and central African region related to the implementation of safety oversight critical elements. It also highlights the potential for a cooperative approach to enhance the safety oversight capability in the region.	
<b>REFERENCES</b>	
S A33-WP/47	S Doc 9734, <i>Safety Oversight Manual</i>
S A33-WP/48	
S A33-WP/49 (revised)	S Doc 9735, <i>Safety Oversight Audit Manual</i>
S Doc 7300, <i>Convention on International Civil Aviation</i>	
S Annex 1 — <i>Personnel Licensing</i>	
S Annex 6 — <i>Operation of Aircraft</i>	
S Annex 8 — <i>Airworthiness of Aircraft</i>	
<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix A:	The more frequently identified findings in the audited areas
Appendix B:	Analysis of audits' findings

## **1. SAFETY OVERSIGHT**

### **1.1 STATES' SAFETY OVERSIGHT SYSTEMS**

1.1.1 Safety oversight is defined as a function by means of which States ensure effective implementation of the safety-related Standards, Recommended Practices and associated procedures contained in the Annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation and related ICAO documents. A State's safety oversight system is comprised of appropriately developed and established procedures and organizational processes which generally enable a Contracting State to satisfactorily implement international SARPs and accepted safe practices. A State's responsibility and obligation under the Convention includes the licensing and control of operational personnel, the certification and supervision of aircraft, air operators and maintenance organizations in accordance with relevant ICAO provisions. Safety oversight also ensures that the national aviation industry provides a safety level equal to, or better than, that defined by the SARPs. As such, a Contracting State's responsibility for safety oversight is the foundation upon which safe global aircraft operations are built. Where proper safety oversight systems are not established, the potential for failures in the system is high.

### **1.2 ICAO SAFETY OVERSIGHT AUDIT PROGRAMME**

1.2.1 Assembly Resolution A32-11 directed ICAO to conduct regular, mandatory, systematic and harmonized safety audits of all Contracting States, with the objective of enhancing safety by promoting the implementation by Contracting States of International Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). This Resolution forms the basis of the ICAO policy and objectives for conducting safety oversight audits. The Assembly also decided that greater transparency and increased disclosure be implemented in the release of audit results. Therefore, the audits' process established was designed to review the effectiveness of the tools developed by Contracting States for the implementation and management of their safety oversight systems. As part of the audit programme States were required to produce an action plan which majority of audited Contracting States have been able to draw-up and propose appropriate corrective action plans for resolving identified findings.

1.2.2 Assembly Resolution A32-11 recalled that the objectives of the USOAP seek to ensure that Contracting States are adequately discharging their responsibility for safety oversight over the licensing and training of personnel, aircraft operations, and airworthiness. Accordingly, audits were conducted on safety-related issues pertaining to Annexes 1, 6 and 8 in addition to civil aviation legislation and organization as they constitute the basis of the establishment of an efficient certification and surveillance system. Recently, the last ICAO Assembly adopted the Resolution A33-8 by which it endorses that the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) had been successful in meeting the mandate given by Resolution A32-11 and recognized that the implementation of the USOAP had been instrumental in the identification of safety concerns and in providing recommendations for their solution

1.2.3 Safety oversight audits conducted by ICAO have been very effective in identifying shortcomings and possible systems' failures and difficulties experienced by many civil aviation administrations and have also been instrumental in highlighting identified un-safe conditions and providing on-site advice to Civil Aviation Authorities and Airlines to, at least, increase awareness of the prevailing situations.

## **2. AUDITS RESULTS IN WACAF AREA OF ACCREDITATION**

### **2.1 AUDIT FINDINGS**

2.1.1 The audit missions conducted in Western and Central African Region have identified many common shortcomings consisting mainly of:

S a lack of appropriate legislative framework (insufficient implementation of ICAO

- Standards and appropriate regulations, procedures, documentation and guidance material);
- S lack of an appropriately established, empowered and funded civil aviation organization;
- S lack of appropriately qualified and experienced technical personnel;
- S inadequate certification and licensing system and lack of a system for the control and supervision of licensed and certificated bodies;
- S specific operational authorizations provided without ascertaining the applicant's ability to carry them out;
- S flight crew licences and certificates improperly issued, validated and renewed without due process;
- S lack of a basic surveillance system with improper and insufficient inspections prior to the certification of air operators, maintenance organizations and aviation training institutes; and lack of a system for the resolution of safety issues.

2.1.2 Further, ICAO audits have also uncovered organization-related problems, arising mainly from a lack of commitment by Governments to support their corresponding civil aviation authorities at the desired level. These problems are manifested as: an inability to attract, recruit and retain adequately qualified and experienced personnel, resulting in high technical staff turn-over; job insecurity; low staff morale and the often active search for other employment; and the lack of adequate support staff, equipment, facilities and guidance material.

## 2.2 ANALYSIS OF AUDIT FINDINGS

2.2.1 ICAO as part of the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme, has developed an Audit Findings and Differences Database (AFDD) to enable it to analyse the audit findings and thus accurately identify deficiencies impacting on safety and also to determine action required to resolve the safety concerns. The analysis enables the identification and quantification of safety concerns at individual State, groups of States, regional and global levels. The analysis of the findings confirms also that a number of Contracting States experience serious difficulties in fulfilling their safety oversight obligations.

2.2.2 The data collected enables ICAO, among other things, to determine the types of difficulties experienced in the audited areas, to determine the level of implementation of Annex SARP in the audited areas, to identify major safety concerns on standards and procedures for issuing air operator certificates, personnel licences and certificates of airworthiness and to determine the percentage of findings *vis-à-vis* each provision contained in the Annexes, or guidance material, globally, by Region, by State, or by a group of States. The database also allows the establishment of a list of the more frequently identified findings in each audited area in the region (Appendix A). The total number of safety concerns identified through the audits at a global and regional level is presented in Appendix B.

## 3. NEED FOR A WACAF SAFETY OVERSIGHT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

3.1 The ultimate objective of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme is to enhance safety by promoting implementation by States of international Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and it is easy to conclude from ICAO provisions that an effective safety oversight system requires the implementation of a Civil Aviation system consistent with the environment and the complexity of the State's aviation industry. Common environment and common findings are in favor of regional solutions.

3.2 Therefore, a WACAF Safety Oversight implementation strategy may consist of any regional

or sub-regional well coordinated action plan aiming to gradually eliminate shortcomings pertaining to flight safety in general and in particular to the audited areas where findings have been identified. The main tasks in that connection should allow the implementation of relevant ICAO standards, the improvement of effectiveness of Civil Aviation Authorities by providing them adequate human and financial resources and an organizational structure consistent with Civil Aviation activities in the State, the establishment of certification and surveillance systems of licenced personnel, air operators and aircraft at States or at regional level, the establishment of systems permitting to enhance flight safety in general by implementing relevant ICAO programmes (Human Factors, Controlled Flight Into Terrain).

3.3 The data collected and the analysis made by ICAO enable the identification and quantification of safety oversight-related deficiencies and should be used to prioritize possible solutions. This will eventually lead to a more vigorous regional safety oversight system and enhance the safety of aircraft operations which is the ultimate goal of the Organization.

3.5 Therefore, a number of problems can be resolved with the assistance of ICAO through the provision of support at a sub-regional or regional level. This support would include support/follow-up missions based on the analysis of the findings and action plans submitted; the development and delivery of training courses, seminars and workshops; and the development of safety oversight-related guidance material, handbooks and checklists. Depending on the topics of the mission, the support/follow-up missions would be undertaken on a sub-regional or on a case-by-case basis and will mainly concentrate in providing advisory support to States concerned to overcome safety oversight related problems and would also provide hands-on guidance to States, as required.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

4.1 ICAO, through its safety oversight audit programme, has developed an effective safety tool which, among many other things, enables it and the Contracting States to determine the level of effective implementation of the critical elements of safety oversight and relevant Annex provisions. It also enables ICAO to accurately identify the difficulties experienced by States and would optimize and facilitate their assistance in order to alleviate the problems. The data gathered during the audits and analysed by ICAO is based on information collected at the time of the audits. It is therefore imperative that the ICAO Database should be regularly updated and ICAO be kept informed on the progress made by the States. Implementation action need no more be based on assumptions and the ICAO AFDD may be used to assist States in their sub-regional or regional action plans. Maintaining a valid database enables ICAO to reinforce the safety foundations of civil aviation organizations. We should not and we will no longer be working in the dark.

4.2 The Programme has shown that accurate, factual and timely information enables all Contracting States and the aviation community, in general, to develop a strategy to assist in the resolution of identified safety concerns. In that connection, a regional strategy and the regional cooperation would enable States to promote safe air transport operations for the benefit of the entire region and the establishment of a safe sky concept. The Programme has been successful in identifying deficiencies, recommending solutions and encouraging States to rectify the problems. However, the continuing success of the programme depends on the will of each Contracting State to implement the recommendations forwarded and, thereafter, to maintain the standards established.

#### **5. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

5.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information provided;
- b) comment thereon