



**Twenty-Third Meeting of the AFI Planning and Implementation Regional Group
(APIRG/23)**

Agenda Item 3: Update on the Safety Initiatives by States, Regional Organizations, Industry and Partners under the Context of COVID-19

3.2 New ACI-ICAO Airport Safety Professional qualification programme

(Presented by Airports Council International - Africa)

SUMMARY	
<p>This information paper presents the ACI/ICAO joint Airport Safety Professional, which is the new global qualification programme for airport safety professionals and civil aviation regulators. This ACI/ICAO Airport Safety Professional (ASP) programme is the first and only joint professional aviation programme of its kind and will help to support global airport industry, and in particular in Africa, in the recovery and sustainability efforts by assisting airports to align safety practices with ICAO.</p>	
<p>Action by the Meeting is at paragraph 3</p>	
Strategic Objectives	A – Safety, B – Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The mission of ACI Africa is to represent and advance the collective interests of African airports, while promoting professional excellence in airport operations and management, through the provision of effective and quality programs and services, to achieve a safe, secure and sustainable development of the air transport industry in Africa. Presently, ACI Africa is composed of 67 airport operator members from 53 countries managing more than 260 airports.

1.2 Capacity building on the African continent is an important component of the mission of ACI Africa and as such it collaborates closely with ACI World in this field.

1.3 On 04 November 2020, Airports Council International (ACI) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) launched a new global qualification programme called ACI-ICAO Airport Safety Professional (ASP) for airport safety professionals and civil aviation regulators.

1.4 The objective of the ASP is to train and recognize senior airport managers and airport regulators who have demonstrated an understanding of relevant ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), developed professional excellence in the field of airport airside operations as well as maintained ACI industry best practices.

2. DISCUSSIONS

2.1 Africa continues to lag behind in safety and airport operations despite visible efforts being made by many organizations and stakeholders, including ICAO and ACI. Unfortunately, the current state of safety in Africa will be even more adversely impacted in the future with the gradual

increase in air traffic after recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the growing complexity of airport operations, the pressure on airport infrastructure and changing technology, amongst others.

2.2 It is also true, as revealed by several past studies on the subject, that there is a lack of qualified personnel in key areas of civil aviation in Africa, which may have a negative impact on the long-term sustainable safety of African aviation. In the 1960's and 1970's, emphasis was very high on training but due to financial constraints subsequently, training was not prioritized and unfortunately it is still the case today at many airports on the African continent.

2.3 Additionally, with the active promotion and support for a swift implementation of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) initiative, resulting in a unified and standardized air travel across the African continent, there will be the need to guarantee safe and reliable airport operations, which encompasses the reliance on the technical and managerial skills of airport safety professionals and airport civil aviation regulators.

2.4 As part of its mission to promote professional excellence and achieve safe airport operations on the African continent, ACI Africa made an appeal for a joint ACI and ICAO professional qualification in safety at its Board meeting in October 2017 in Mauritius.

2.5 After 3 years of discussions and preparation, ICAO and ACI have finally come up with the ACI/ICAO Airport Safety Professional (ASP) programme, which is the premier global designation programme that leads to a unique and prestigious professional designation for airport safety professionals and civil aviation regulators.

2.6 The new ASP, while the first in the area of safety, is the second successful initiative jointly offered by ICAO and ACI. The Global ICAO-ACI Airport Management Professional Accreditation Programme (AMPAP) was first introduced in 2007 and has since recognized more than 1,000 International Airport Professionals (IAPs) globally.

2.7 Designed and delivered by ACI-ICAO certified instructors only, the ASP will provide African airport personnel with opportunities to advance in their careers, differentiate themselves from their peers and brand themselves as airport safety subject matter experts.

ASP Programme Objectives

2.8 The ASP designation aims to recognize the professional requirements of both the State regulators in demonstrating their proficient knowledge of relevant ICAO SARPs, and airport operations' managers in applying their professional expertise within their field.

2.9 The goal of this Programme is to:

- i. Accredit individuals as having acquired the knowledge and expertise to ensure the highest operational levels of safety at the airport;
- ii. Recognize professional excellence in airport airside management;
- iii. Increase professional knowledge and capability in the airport industry;
- iv. Promote the adherence to uniform standards and recommended practices and awareness of best practices;
- v. Support the qualification requirements for ACI Airport Excellence (APEX) Programme safety assessors;
- vi. Support the qualification requirements for the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) assessors; and
- vii. Expand communication and networking among airport safety executives and regulators globally to optimize knowledge sharing among the world's airports and civil aviation authorities.

Learning objectives

2.10 After completion of this programme, State regulators and airport operations personnel will be able to:

- Improve the performance of airports in their core safety mission;
- Adopt and apply a proactive approach to airport safety to ensure aerodrome readiness to comply with local civil aviation regulations;
- Understand the application of ICAO SARPs contained in Annex 14 and identify solutions to aerodrome design and operations challenges;
- Manage and apply procedures for aerodrome certification according to ICAO Annex 14 and Doc 9774 and how to best maintain the certification;
- Harmonize runway surface condition assessments and reporting as outlined in ICAO Circular 355 (Assessment, Measurement and Reporting of Runway Surface Conditions); and
- Gain professional knowledge in airport airside management and operations, while maintaining ACI industry best practices.

Programme Structure

2.11 To be accredited as an Airport Safety Professional and awarded the ASP designation, ASP candidates must pass the ASP validation online examination within one year after successfully completing the required three mandatory courses and one elective course.

2.12 The mandatory and elective courses must be completed within a 3-year timeframe.

2.13 The three mandatory courses are:

- ACI-ICAO Implementing Annex 14: Advanced Aerodrome Design and Operations
- ACI-ICAO Aerodrome Certification
- ACI-ICAO Global Reporting Format

2.14 The one elective course must be chosen from:

- Airport Safety Management Systems (SMS) Implementation
- Safety Management for Practitioners (SMxP)

The elective requirement is waived if the participant is an ACI Global safety Network Diploma graduate or has successfully completed the ICAO State Safety Programme.

2.15 While initially delivered in English, ACI and ICAO plan to expand the number of languages offered for each course using global and local case studies.

2.16 The graduates are required to upkeep their knowledge of regulatory and aerodrome safety. The ASP designation is valid for three years after which, the graduate will be required to maintain a valid designation by successfully completing a virtual ASP recurrent training and re-designation online exam.

Benefits of the programme to the graduates

2.17 The benefits of the ASP qualification programme to the students are as follows:

- Part of a global designation programme for airport safety professionals and civil aviation regulators
- Prestigious Industry-renowned professional ASP Safety designation
- Distinguished as an airport safety subject matter expert
- Access to the global professional Community of Practice (CoP) network through a web-based forum

Use of ASP Designation

2.18 The ASP designation, recognized internationally, is an industry specific designation that validates the graduate's expertise in safety and proficiency with ICAO Safety SARPS and ACI best practices.

2.19 Graduates will be entitled to use the ASP designation as a qualification that the individual has achieved a globally recognized standard of professional excellence in airport airside management.

3 ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to take note and promote the newly launched joint ICAO and ACI initiative, i.e. the Airport Safety Professional (ASP) qualification programme, with a bid to enhancing capacity building and expertise in airport safety and operations, as one of the main pillars for the recovery and sustainable development of the air transport industry in Africa.

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