



ASSEMBLY — 40TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 13: Audit Programmes – Continuous Monitoring Approach

SPECIFIC ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION SYSTEM AUDITS AND THE PRESENTATION OF RESULTS SEPARATE FROM OTHER USOAP DOMAINS

(Presented by Qatar)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) helps States to identify the strengths and areas for improvements of their safety oversight system. It also provides ICAO and States with a global view, benchmarks, and detailed assessments to support national, regional and global activities and decisions.

Each USOAP audit assesses a State's civil aviation safety system. In the main, they address the civil aviation authority's (CAA) safety oversight system as well as the State's accident investigation organisation (AIG), which ICAO requires to be fully independent.

However, the results of the AIG domain are presented together with the safety oversight domain results and combined to provide an overall effective implementation (EI) score. This blending of results obscures the performance of each independent entity and makes it difficult for the combined results to be used in addressing the strengths and weaknesses of each independent entity. A high score achieved primarily due to the effective implementation of the safety oversight domains might hide the fact that the AIG domain at a global level is low and therefore extra attention at ICAO level is required.

An independent audit and a separate presentation of the results of the AIG area would thus better reflect the current situation of the AIG and any need for specific attention with appropriate actions to develop the Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority and establish effectively its full independence. It would also emphasize the importance of comprehensive results of independent investigations for the improvement of safety.

Action: The Assembly is invited to request the Council to ensure that:

- a) ICAO audits of States' accident investigation systems be performed independently from the other domains within the USOAP; and
- b) AIG statistical results be presented separately from the results of the other domains.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This paper relates to Strategic Objective: Safety.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	No additional resources required.
<i>References:</i>	Annex 13 — <i>Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation</i> Annex 19 – <i>Safety Management</i> Doc 9756, <i>Manual of Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation</i> , Part I — <i>Organization</i>

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The USOAP provides valuable data and information for States to identify the strengths and areas for improvements of their safety oversight system. It also provides ICAO and States with a global view, benchmarks, and detailed assessments on national and international situations to support national, regional and ICAO activities and decisions.

1.2 The USOAP audits currently covers eight domains:

- a) legislation;
- b) organization;
- c) personnel licensing;
- d) aircraft operations;
- e) airworthiness;
- f) accident investigation;
- g) air navigation services; and
- h) aerodromes.

1.3 Audit results include statistical details that blend the results of all domains.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The majority of the USOAP's Protocol Questions directly relate to the CAA organisation and activities. The main exception is the aircraft accident investigation domain.

2.2 Nevertheless, the AIG authority is expected to be fully independent from the rest of the State's aviation safety oversight organisation, as reinforced in ICAO Annex 13 — *Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation*, Amendment 15 and in the subsequent update of ICAO Doc 9756, *Manual of Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation*, Part I — *Organization and Planning*. In addition to this, Annex 19 — *Safety Management*, definitions further confirm that the AIG is not part of the safety oversight system.

2.3 Yet, the AIG domain is audited as part of the USOAP with its results included in the overall report and blended with the other domains to arrive at a single statistical representation of EI.

2.4 These blended results do not give political leaders a clear view of the strengths and areas for improvements of their aviation safety oversight system nor do they give CAA leaders support in making appropriate decisions to reinforce and improve their systems and processes.

2.5 These combined reports also give the impression that ICAO still sees AIG as part of the aviation safety oversight system in contradiction to Annex 19 and the other references mentioned above.

2.6 Independent AIG audits have already been completed separately from the other domains in several States without problem.

2.7 ICAO has already separated the security domain (which is led by the CAA in numerous States) from USOAP with the establishment of the Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP). That separation allows the States to see clearly the status of their security oversight systems and to make appropriate comparisons with the Safety oversight audits results, thus deriving lessons for the improvement of both activities.

2.8 An independent audit and/or a separate presentation of the AIG results from the other USOAP domains would better reflect the current situation of aircraft accident investigation systems. It would emphasize the importance of the aircraft accident investigation authority (AIA) and of its full independence. It would help the States' highest authorities to recognize the role of the AIA and make appropriate decisions for its effective development.

2.9 If the action proposed is adopted, it would only require a few legislative (LEG) and organizational (ORG) protocol questions to be revised to exclude AIG aspects, and transfer the assessment of these aspects to the AIG questionnaire.

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