

# USOAP Newsletter

*Produced by Monitoring and Oversight, Air Navigation Bureau, ICAO*

## USOAP Recertified to ISO 9001:2015

On 17 June 2020, the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) was successfully recertified to the ISO 9001:2015 standard for quality management systems (QMS).

National Quality Assurance (NQA) Canada conducted the two-day external audit remotely, adapting its normal on-site procedures to accommodate ICAO's current telecommuting arrangements.

USOAP has been certified to ISO 9001 since 2002, when the then Safety Oversight Audit (SOA) Section, forerunner of today's Monitoring and Oversight (MO) (which comprises Safety and Air Navigation Oversight Audit Section or OAS and Oversight Support Unit or OSU), became the first ICAO section and one of very few within the United Nations, to receive compliance to the international standards.

The audit resulted in no findings or recommendations for improvement, which demonstrates USOAP's continued commitment to following its documented processes as well as identifying its deficiencies and improvement areas proactively.

One of the biggest challenges of ISO 9001 certification is continued buy-in of top management and, more importantly, of the staff members who comprise an integral part of the QMS. We all know that without top management support, no quality initiative can truly be successful, but we cannot overlook the importance of adherence from those individuals of whom we are asking the most.

A heartfelt congratulations to the entire USOAP team and particularly Lidia Witkowsky, our Quality Manager, who maintains our overall QMS programme!

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## USOAP Activities & COVID-19



Since March 2020, Monitoring and Oversight (MO) has suspended all on-site USOAP activities in response to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

MO has convened an internal working group to plan the possibility of conducting remote audit and validation activities in the final six months of 2020. The work included discussions on State selection criteria and considerations for Headquarters, the States and the Regional Offices. Once approved, the group will document and refine the relevant processes.

The 2020 USOAP CMA activities will include remote ICAO Coordinated Validation Missions (ICVMs) and desk audits of States.

Planning of USOAP activities in 2021 is being finalized, with adjustments made to accommodate future travel limitations, quarantine restrictions and other potential disruptions. An Electronic Bulletin on the 2021 USOAP CMA Activity Plan (EB 2020/34) was published on 29 June 2020 and posted on the CMA Online Framework (OLF).

### USOAP Advisory Group Forges Ahead

The Ad Hoc USOAP Advisory Group (USOAP AG) has continued its work despite travel limitations from COVID-19. Its Secretariat and members had planned an April 2020 meeting in Paris, France and a June 2020 meeting at ICAO Headquarters in Montreal. All activities have shifted online. A series of 20 2-hour teleconferences were conducted to review the group's recommendations and confirm its five strategic groupings. At this time, the USOAP AG is finalizing a white paper that describes their input on the long-term evolution of the USOAP CMA.

## Auditing Spot Check: Satisfactory or Not Satisfactory?

Audit Area: LEG  
Critical Element 2

*Protocol Question 1.205—Has the State established a process to ensure the identification and publication in the State's Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) of significant differences between SARPs/PANS/SUPPs and the State's regulations and practices?*

The State has established a procedure for the identification and publication of differences to ICAO and had published at least 2 previous AIPs. However, the State has not defined a "significant difference" in its aforementioned procedure. There is no clear criteria for the identification of differences and there is inconsistency in the differences that have been published previously. In addition, the State has not determined a fixed cycle for AIP publication, with the previous publications occurring five years apart.

***Would you find this PQ Satisfactory or Not Satisfactory?***



*“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Every step toward the goals requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.” Martin Luther King*

## USOAP CMA Transformational Activities

The COVID-19 global pandemic has resulted in a major disruption to normal USOAP CMA operations. An unintended consequence has been the acceleration of the programme’s transformative activities due to an updated prioritization of activities and reallocation of staff resources.

The implementation of the recommendations from the Group of Experts for a USOAP CMA Structured Review (GEUSR) is ongoing. OAS completed its huge Protocol Question (PQ) revision project a year ago. The PQ production process is now underway. The English edition of the 2020 PQs are being finalized, while French and Spanish translations have begun.

The overall work of the ad hoc USOAP Advisory Group (USOAP AG) continues despite changes in working arrangements at ICAO and in the participating States and organizations, as shown in the newsletter article, *USOAP Advisory Group Forges Ahead*, in this issue.

An informal advisory group is assisting OAS in finalizing the maturity level assessment tool for the State Safety Programme Implementation Assessment (SSPIA) activities as part of the quantitative-based Phase 2 of SSPIAs that are scheduled to begin in 2021.

A small group of OAS and MO staff members are reviewing the overall corrective action plan (CAP) management process. The team’s goals are to refine how CAPs are managed by ICAO at Headquarters and in the Regional Offices; ensure the clarity and accuracy of CAP guidance material in the CMA workshops and on the CMA online framework; identify CAP-related updates in future revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding between ICAO and the States; and determine the appropriate strategy for communicating all changes accordingly.

These various activities are helping to continuously improve the USOAP Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) as a whole and further its evolutionary progress, which is due in no small part to the hard work and dedication of its leadership and staff.

### Reminder: State Obligations

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the USOAP CMA agreed to between ICAO and the States says that the States shall use the USOAP CMA Online Framework (OLF) to update their information continuously. It is important that States maintain the accuracy of information listed in the following areas:

- ⇒ State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ)
- ⇒ Compliance Checklists/ Electronic Filing of Differences (CCs/EFOD)
- ⇒ The States’ corrective action plans (CAPs) addressing past Protocol Question (PQ) findings; and
- ⇒ The self-assessment of PQs, including the attachment of all relevant evidence

Current information helps, in part, with planning future CMA activities as well as assisting auditors with their pre-activity preparations.

## MO Spotlight: Our Terrific TRPAs!



With the establishment of USOAP in 1999, two Report Production Assistant (RPA) posts were initially created, one specializing in English/French and the other in English/Spanish. Their primary task and main responsibility was to produce, revise and edit documents and safety oversight written materials in English, French and/or Spanish, as required.

In December 1999, Ms. Lysanne Lefebvre was hired as RPA – English/French, followed a week later by Mrs. Georgina Echevarria as RPA – English/Spanish. Their number one task was to carry out a comprehensive editorial review of the safety oversight reports submitted by Team Leaders following each audit mission before their dispatch to the concerned Member States.

As more and more activities were scheduled and the volume of USOAP reports increased, the recruitment of another RPA became essential to help lighten the heavy load and ensure on-time delivery of the USOAP reports to the Member States. In late 2004, Ms. Yvonne Que was appointed and joined the team, rounding out the trio of USOAP's gems.

Over the years, as USOAP evolved, so have the tasks and responsibilities of the RPAs. In recognition of the growing technical component of their tasks and their USOAP-related technical knowhow, the three ladies were upgraded to Technical Report Production Assistants (TRPAs) in 2011.

This year marks an important career milestone for both Georgina and Lysanne as after more than 30 years of loyal and dedicated service, both have decided to take early retirement. Their departure from USOAP no doubt leaves a big void.

As for Yvonne, aside from her regular tasks with MO, she is also a precis writer for the ICAO Council, the Air Navigation Commission and the 2019 40th Assembly of ICAO. So far, she is still enjoying the work and doing her best to cope with losing her two long-time partners-in-crime. Let a new chapter in USOAP begin!

### Monitoring and Oversight websites:

USOAP CMA Online Framework:  
[www.icao.int/usoap](http://www.icao.int/usoap)

ICAO public websites:  
[www.icao.int/safety/CMAForum](http://www.icao.int/safety/CMAForum)  
[www.icao.int/safety/pages/usoap-results.aspx](http://www.icao.int/safety/pages/usoap-results.aspx)

### USOAP Continuous Monitoring Approach



#### Promoting global aviation safety

by continuously monitoring and updating  
the safety oversight capabilities of all ICAO Member States.

