



**ICAO EIGHTH MEETING OF THE ASIA PACIFIC ACCIDENT
INVESTIGATION GROUP (APAC-AIG/8)**

(Wednesday, 21 October 2020 on Virtual Platform)

Agenda Item 5: Regional Cooperation

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA SUPPORTING ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION
IN THE PACIFIC REGION**

(Presented by the PNG Accident Investigation Commission)

SUMMARY

This Working Paper presents the role of the PNG Accident Investigation Commission as the State authority in PNG complying with the provisions of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation and its involvement in activities in support of other Pacific States, especially referring to major accident investigations.

1. ABOUT THE PNG ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION COMMISSION

1.1 In 2000 the National Parliament of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea (PNG) passed an Act of Parliament (Civil Aviation Act 2000) to legally create the Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) as a permanent independent statutory agency within PNG to entirely separate from the aviation policy makers and service providers.

1.2 In 2010 the AIC commenced its mandate with the sole objective of conducting accident and incident investigation within the context of ICAO Annex 13, without apportioning of blame and producing Safety Recommendations to improve safety in the aviation system, supporting the development of PNG. Also in 2010, the AIC established the fundamental investigation areas as follows; Flight Operations, Engineering & ATM and a year later developed its first edition of the AIC Policies and Procedures Manual.

1.3 The AIC performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of Part XIII of the PNG Civil Aviation Act 2000 (As Amended) (CAAct), and the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1951 (as Amended), and in accordance with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

1.4 Since 2015, AIC has been progressively increasing its capacity for investigation. During this period, AIC investigators have also been heavily involved in advance and specialized trainings conducted externally and in-house by recognised/accredited Training Institutions and Accident Investigation Agencies Training Centres. Currently, the AIC has a team of investigators with expertise in Flight Operations, Engineering, Flight Data Recording, Air Traffic Management, Cabin Safety and Safety Management Systems. In addition, capacity and infrastructure has been developed which includes Flight Recorders Laboratory, Engineering Workshop and drone technology. The AIC has also hosted ICAO international training courses.

1.5 With regard to Safety Data Collection and Analysis, in 2017, the AIC implemented the European Co-ordination Centre for Accident and Incident Reporting System (ECCAIRS). To this date, almost 800 historical occurrences have been inserted in AIC ECCAIRS database, and recently have

been commenced to be used for conducting Safety Data Analysis. ECCAIRS training has been provided in-house in 2017 and 2018. During this year, the AIC delivered an ECCAIRS Introductory workshop through COSCAP-SEA, to 31 participants from different States of the Asia and Pacific Regions.

1.6 The AIC Flight Recorder Laboratory capacities currently include off-wing and on-wing download of data and data readout from flight recorders and other flight data collection systems.

1.7 In 2018, AIC was the first accident investigation agency implementing the Memory Access Retrieval Systems (MARS), for the recovery of the flight data and voice information. MARS was first used by the AIC in the investigation of the accident of a Boeing 737 occurred on 28th September 2018 in Chuuk Lagoon, Federated States of Micronesia. In this investigation, the damaged memory boards were retrieved from the sea water. All of the data and voice information was recovered with MARS and later readout and animated using Insight Analysis and Flight Analysis Systems (FAS) respectively.

1.8 With regard to the support to the Pacific States, the AIC has conducted investigations under full and partial delegation, in accordance with chapter 5 of ICAO Annex 13. Particularly in 2018, two major accident investigations were delegated to the AIC:

- The Republic of Vanuatu delegated to the AIC the whole of the investigation of a runway excursion accident occurred on 28th July 2018 in Port Vila, involving an ATR 72-500 aircraft.
- In September 2018, the PNG AIC commenced assisting the Federated States of Micronesia with the investigation of a Boeing 737-800 aircraft that impacted the water 460 metres short of Chuuk International Airport Runway 04, which eventually led to the development of a cooperation and assistance MoU between both States under which the investigation was delegated to the AIC.

1.9 In addition to the above mentioned, on 2019 the AIC assisted a Pacific State at the early stages of an investigation of a small aircraft accident, which allowed the solicitor State to prepare a Preliminary Report. As the investigation progressed, the affected Pacific State was unable to continue with the process because of the lack of technical capacity and expertise in the field and requested for AIC assistance under partial delegation, to take the investigation to the closing stages.

1.10 Since 2017, the AIC has conducted international training activities. Besides the ECCAIRS training mentioned in a previous paragraph, Aircraft Accident Investigation and Report Writing training courses have been hosted by the AIC, with participation of Pacific States and representatives of the aviation industry.

1.11 In 2019, the AIC was invited to become a member of the International Transport Safety Association (ITSA), which constitutes a significant acknowledgment to the AIC as an independent safety investigation authority.

2. MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING (MoUs)

2.1 Since 2017 the AIC has been promoting the implementation of MoUs with other Pacific States to assist in accident and serious incident investigation and in developing capacity across the Region.

2.2 Since 2018 MoUs have progressed with a number of Pacific States. The MoU between PNG and FSM was effectively implemented in 2018, and the MoU with the Republic of Vanuatu is on

its latest stages of approval. Other MoUs have been drafted and are at different stages of progress between PNG and Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Samoa and Solomon Islands.

2.3 MoUs between the Pacific States has been considered as a matter of importance for the AIC. From the point of view of Safety, the effective implementation of MoUs it is expected to have a positive impact for the travelling public within the region. Considering that PNG citizens mainly travel to different States within the Region, ensuring Safety is provided at the highest ICAO standards will assist in promoting travelling.

2.4 Additionally, the implementation of MoUs will assist in improving compliance with ICAO SARPs, especially related to those emanating from Annexes 13 and 19 to the Convention, resulting in improved conditions for air service providers, contributing to the economic development of PNG and the Region.

2.5 Even when the progress of the MoUs has been delayed due to the recent events affecting world aviation system due to the COVID 19 pandemics, the AIC will continue liaising with the authorities of the Pacific States to ensure the continuous improvement of Safety in the aviation system, especially at the regional level.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- take note of the Working Paper presented by the PNG Accident Investigation Commission; and
- to promote and support the implementation of MoUs for accident and incident investigation capacity building and assistance in the Pacific Region.

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