



ICAO

TENTH MEETING OF THE REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUP - ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS (RASG-APAC/10)

(Bangkok, Thailand, 17-18 December 2020 on Virtual Platform)

RASG-APAC/10–WP/3

Agenda Item 3

Agenda Item 3: RASG-APAC considerations and approval

UPDATE ON APAC-AIG ACTIVITIES

(Presented by Chairman of APAC-AIG)

SUMMARY

This paper updates the Meeting on the activities of the Asia Pacific Accident Investigation Group (APAC-AIG) since RASG-APAC/9.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 To date, the Asia Pacific Accident Investigation Group (APAC-AIG) has held eight annual meetings since 2013. The APAC-AIG last updated the RASG-APAC at its Ninth Meeting (RASG-APAC/9) on 7-8 November 2019.

1.2 This Working Paper updates the meeting on the activities of the APAC-AIG since RASG-APAC/9.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 First Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation

2.1.1 The First Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation was held in Beijing, China from 31 January to 1 February 2018. The Beijing Declaration endorsed by the Conference focused on four areas, viz. Aviation Safety, Collaboration, Accident Investigation and Human Resource Development.

2.1.2 In the area of accident investigation, the Ministers committed through the Beijing Declaration to either establish an accident investigation authority that is independent from State aviation authorities and other entities that could interfere with the conduct or objectivity of an investigation or where appropriate develop a bilateral, sub-regional or regional partnership to support the establishment of accident investigation capabilities to serve the Region, sub-region or State.

2.1.3 In the area of human resource development, the Ministers committed through the Beijing Declaration to establish access to quality training and encourage sharing of resources bilaterally and/or multilaterally as well as with industry partners.

2.1.4 The activities of the APAC-AIG had been in line with the APAC Ministers' thrusts. The APAC-AIG will continue to pursue the following aims:

- To encourage States/Administrations to establish an independent accident investigation authority, as required by Annex 13, as well as the related investigation system and procedures; and
- To develop training opportunities to enhance:
 - the accident investigation capabilities of the States/Administrations; and
 - the professionalism of the States/Administrations' investigators

2.1.5 A Second Ministerial Conference was planned to be held in 2020 to give further impetus to the commitments made in 2018. The conference plan has been postponed in view of the COVID-19 situation. The APAC-AIG looks forward to the ministerial conference, when eventually held, considering setting a target date for the States/Administrations to establish an independent accident investigation authority.

2.2 Asia-Pacific Regional Aviation Safety Plan (RASP) 2020-2022

2.2.1 The RASG-APAC decided at its Eighth Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand on 6-7 September 2018 on the formulation of a Regional Aviation Safety Plan (RASP) for 2020-22. RASG-APAC requested the Asia Pacific Regional Aviation Safety Team (APRAST) to look into formulating the plan in collaboration with the APAC-AIG wherever required.

2.2.2 The APRAST invited the APAC-AIG for comments during its drafting of the RASP. The APAC-AIG noted that the APRAST had already considered the following target:

“States should achieve at least 75% EI in AIG of USOAP CMA, and an APAC average USOAP EI score in AIG higher than or equal to the global average [by 2022]”

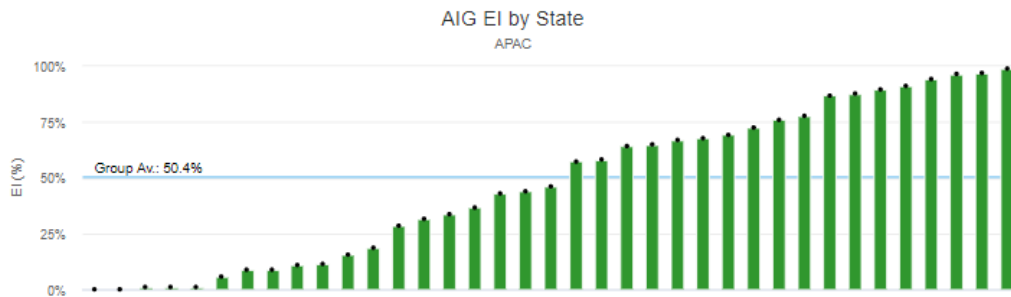
2.2.3 In line with the commitment of the APAC Ministers expressed in the Beijing Declaration as regards the establishment of independent accident investigation authority, the APAC-AIG proposed to the APRAST the following additional target for the RASP:

“States should establish an independent accident and incident investigation authority (AAIIA) as required by Annex 13, as well as related investigation system and procedures [by 2022]”

2.2.4 These two targets, among others in the Draft RASP prepared by the APRAST, were accepted by the RASG-APAC at RASG-APAC/9.

2.3 Target for APAC States to achieve at least 75% Effective Implementation (EI) in AIG

2.3.1 There has been very gradual improvement to the average AIG EI score for the APAC region over the years. As of October 2020, the statistics obtained by the ICAO APAC Office showed that the APAC States achieved an average AIG EI score of 50.4%, up from the 46.06% shown at the Fifth Meeting of the APAC-AIG in 2017. During this same period, the global AIG EI has dropped from 59.26% to 56.1%.



2.4 Target to establish an independent aircraft accident and incident investigation authority (AAIIA)

2.4.1 APAC States/Administrations have been reminded by the RASG-APAC to provide update, through the RASG-APAC monitoring mechanism, on their plan and progress pertaining to the establishment of an independent AAIIA. The RASG-APAC monitoring mechanism was shut down for security improvement but has been operating again since June 2020. APAC States/Administrations can now update its progress regarding establishment of an independent AAIIA through the RASG-APAC monitoring mechanism.

2.5 Enhancing accident investigation capabilities

2.5.1 Since RASG-APAC/9, the following AIG-related training has been conducted in the APAC region:

- a) COSCAP-SEA Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation Authority (AAIIA) Workshop conducted at the ICAO APAC Office on 18-21 February 2020
- b) Aircraft Accident Investigation Course at the Singapore Aviation Academy on 24 February-6 March 2020
- c) ICAO AIG Webinar on Aircraft Accident Investigations during the COVID-19 Pandemic on 25 June 2020
- d) Sharing session by two experienced operational pilots on Crew Resource Management via a virtual platform organised by Singapore's Transport Safety Investigation Bureau (TSIB) on 11-12 August 2020
- e) ICAO Asia Pacific Regional Accident Investigation Workshop on Risk-based Classification of Serious Incident conducted via a virtual platform on 20 October 2020 with the support of the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB), the French Bureau d'Enquêtes et d'Analyses pour la Sécurité de l'Aviation Civile (BEA) and Singapore's Transport Safety Investigation Bureau (TSIB)

2.5.2 In addition, IFALPA also organised an Accident Analysis & Prevention Meeting in Singapore on 12-14 November 2019.

2.6 Code of Conduct on Cooperation Relating to Civil Aviation Accident/Incident Investigation

2.6.1 The *Asia-Pacific Code of Conduct on Cooperation Relating to Civil Aviation Accident/Incident Investigation* was developed to promote mutual cooperation in accident/incident investigation in the APAC region but is not meant to be legally binding. To date, 22 States/Administrations¹ have pledged their support to the *Code of Conduct*.

2.6.2 ICAO APAC Office has issued State Letter dated 15 January 2019 [Ref. T 6/8.3 - AP002/19 (FS)] to encourage States/Administrations that have not done so to pledge support to the *Code of Conduct*.

2.7 Database of investigation agencies

2.7.1 A database of the investigation agencies in the APAC region has been created to allow States/Administrations to obtain contact information of their counterparts easily and facilitate expeditious communication among States/Administrations. To date, 24 States/Administrations² have provided input to the database.

2.7.2 ICAO APAC Office has issued State Letter dated 15 January 2019 [Ref. T 6/8.3 - AP002/19 (FS)] to encourage States/Administrations to provide, or to update, their input to the database.

2.8 Air accident investigation during a pandemic

2.8.1 A topic of special interest at the Eighth Meeting of the APAC-AIG (APAC-AIG/8) held recently on 21 October 2020 was how States/Administrations should respond to the risks and challenges in investigation operation that had arisen from the COVID-19 pandemic. The meeting noted that personal protection equipment (PPE) was regarded as adequate in the COVID-19 environment and that there would be limited support from foreign counterparts owing to the travel restrictions and quarantine requirements. Hence the need to rely on communication in the form of email, phone call, video conferencing, etc.

2.8.2 When a State decides on whether to dispatch its accredited representative and advisors to the accident site in the State of Occurrence, the following may have to be considered:

- Severity of the accident
- Pandemic situation in the State of Occurrence
- Availability of commercial flights or chartered flights to the State of Occurrence and possibility of making the travel on a specially arranged aircraft
- Travel restrictions and quarantine requirements imposed by the State of Occurrence
- Possibility of the accredited representative and advisors taking a voluntary COVID test as a basis for an exemption from the travel restrictions and quarantine requirements
- Local logistics arrangements (transport, accommodation, meals, continuous availability of PPE) that can be made by the State of Occurrence

¹ The 22 States/Administrations are Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, France, Hong Kong China, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Macao China, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

² The 24 States/Administrations are Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, France, Hong Kong China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Macao China, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

2.8.3 To provide information to help States/Administrations review their investigation operation procedure during a pandemic, the measures discussed at the APAC-AIG/8 have been summarised and shared on the APAC COVID-19 Contingency and Recovery Planning Group (ACCRPG) webpage for reference (<https://www.icao.int/APAC/ACCRPG/Pages/default.aspx> >>> Safety Sub-Group >>> Shared Doc).

2.9 Pacific Islands States

2.9.1 The Sixth Meeting of the APAC-AIG (APAC-AIG/6) observed that there was a lack of opportunities to interact with representatives from the Pacific Islands States in the area of AIG. APAC-AIG/6 has proposed that the RSAG-APAC consider exploring with the Pacific Islands States the possibility of having future APAC-AIG meetings or ICAO APAC regional accident investigation workshops held in a Pacific Islands State.

2.9.2 In this respect, it is very encouraging to note that the Papua New Guinea's Accident Investigation Commission (AIC) has been involved in accident investigation activities and investigation training in support of other Pacific Islands States, and has volunteered to host the Ninth Meeting of the APAC-AIG (APAC-AIG/9) and an ICAO Asia Pacific Regional Accident Investigation Workshop if the COVID-19 pandemic is over and air travel has returned to normalcy.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the activities of the APAC-AIG;
- b) Urge States/Administrations to take early actions to achieve the following AIG-related targets in the Asia Pacific Regional Aviation Safety Plan 2020-2022:
 - States should achieve at least 75% EI in AIG of USOAP CMA, and an APAC average USOAP EI score in AIG higher or equal to the global average [by 2022]
 - States should establish an independent accident and incident investigation authority (AIIA) as required by Annex 13, as well as related investigation system and procedures [by 2022]
- c) Request States/Administrations to provide update, through the RASG-APAC monitoring mechanism, on their plan and progress pertaining to the establishment of an independent aircraft accident and incident investigation authority;
- d) Encourage States/Administrations that have not yet done so to pledge their support to the *Asia Pacific Code of Conduct on Cooperation Relating to Civil Aviation Accident/Incident Investigation*;
- e) Encourage States/Administrations that have not yet done so to provide input to the database of the investigation agencies in the APAC region; and
- f) Urge States/Administrations to attend APAC-AIG/9 in Papua New Guinea in 2021 if the COVID-19 pandemic is over and air travel has returned to normalcy.