

**Task Force to Strengthen and Evolve Existing Regional Mechanism
for Regional Cooperation, towards Capability and Capacity Building
and Technical Assistance (RCM TF)**

**Summary of Discussion of 9th Meeting
Hybrid Format, 29 - 30 November 2022**

1. The 9th RCM TF meeting was held on 29-30 November 2022 via a hybrid format, at the ICAO Asia Pacific Regional Office in Bangkok, Thailand and online.
2. The list of meeting participants is in **Appendix 1**.
3. ICAO Regional Director welcomed the new Task Force members Bangladesh, Fiji, Nepal and Sri Lanka. Affirming the role of the Task Force to strengthen regional mechanism for regional cooperation, Regional Director proposed that the Task Force could take note of the new ICAO Implementation Support Policy. He also highlighted the various assistance that ICAO has been providing to the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) including the deployment of the ICAO PSIDS Liaison Officer planned for early 2023.
4. Chair also welcomed the new Task Force members. He recalled that the RCM TF was formed to improve the way the region worked together on capacity building and technical assistance. Following the pandemic, there were two key work items arising from APAC DGCA/57 Conference, to resume the RCM TF's work programme and to examine the feasibility of an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission (APCAC).

Agenda 2: Adoption of Provisional Agenda

5. The meeting adopted the agenda as attached in **Appendix 2**.

Agenda 3: Recap of Action Items from APAC DGCA/57 Conference

6. ICAO APAC RO provided a recap of the action items from the APAC DGCA/57 Conference held in July 2023 in the Republic of Korea, as attached in **Appendix 3**.
7. The meeting agreed to track the ratification status of APAC States of the Protocol relating to an Amendment to the Article 50(a) of the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

Agenda 4: Resumption of RCM TF's Work Programme

8. The meeting noted the recap by the Chair on the RCM TF and the work done thus far, as attached in **Appendix 4**.

9. Chair recalled the regional priorities and commitments e.g., in the Beijing Declaration and highlighted that these remained relevant for the APAC region. Noting the slow progress in implementation of these priorities and commitments by the region due to the pandemic, Chair emphasized the importance of taking action to addressing these gaps.
10. The meeting agreed that the RCM TF's existing Terms of Reference (TORs) remained valid. The current TORs provided basis for the task force to undertake the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC. Nonetheless, considering the suggestion of the ICAO APAC RO to include examination of the feasibility of an APCAC in the RCM TF's work programme, the meeting agreed to include a new recommendation in the Implementation Roadmap, namely "Examine the Feasibility of an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission" under TOR D.
11. The meeting noted the United States' suggestion to have a gap analysis in addition to identifying common needs and develop actions to address these gaps. Chair proposed for Singapore to update the needs analysis to cover these, as part of the revised Implementation Roadmap.
12. The meeting agreed with the revised Implementation Roadmap, as attached in **Appendix 5**, with the following adjustments:
 - i. Recommendation A.4: The meeting noted the importance of improving the communication between the RCM TF, COSCAPs and PASO on the work of the task force. The meeting agreed to include '*Strengthening communications with COSCAPs and PASO as well as coordination among the COSCAPs*' as another recommendation.
 - ii. Recommendation B.1: The meeting noted that the review of TORs had been completed by RASG-APAC and APANPIRG. These TORs are governed by the decisions of the ICAO Council.
 - iii. Recommendation B.2: The United States and the Republic of Korea agreed to join the working group together with Singapore as lead.
 - iv. Recommendation C.1: The meeting agreed to include the underlined phrase 'Individual assistance by States and International Organisations'.
 - v. Recommendation C.2: The meeting agreed to amend it to 'Explore strategies to increase and enhance high level industry participation, at ICAO forums'.

Recommendation E.1: ICAO APAC RO updated that it had introduced enhancements to the State Letter (SL) system by considering limiting SLs to one page and resending ICAO HQ SLs to draw attention of States/Administrations. Chair suggested for the Regional Office to send a checklist of SLs periodically for States/Administrations'

- reference. The meeting agreed to amend Recommendation E.1 to ‘Streamline State Letters (SL) for clarity and conciseness’.
- vi. Recommendation E.2: The meeting proposed for the necessary follow up actions by States/Administrations to be shown prominently in meeting reports.
 - vii. Recommendation E.4: The meeting noted that New Zealand will lead the survey, including deciding when to complete the task.

Agenda 5: Examination of Feasibility of an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission (APCAC)

- 13. The meeting acknowledged the summary of the APCAC TF Report tabled at APAC DGCA/54 Conference, as presented by ICAO APAC RO, and attached in **Appendix 6**.
- 14. Vice Chair presented the proposed approach on the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC, which had been developed together with Singapore and Australia prior to the RCM TF/9 meeting.
- 15. Regarding Part 1 on information gathering of a CAC, the meeting noted the need to develop a comprehensive questionnaire to request for relevant information from existing CACs. The information requested should include the success factors in operating a CAC in their region and the role / participation of the industry. Comments of the RCM TF members should be sought on the draft questionnaire. Chair encouraged all States/Administrations to refer to the APCAC TF report, which presented the research done previously.
- 16. On Part 2, Vice Chair explained that the work would effectively be a root cause analysis to identify the problem statement as well as the pre-conditions or operating assumptions for a CAC.
- 17. The meeting noted Australia’s comments that there could be different models to obtain consensus in any proposed CAC with operating assumptions; for example, despite being part of a CAC, not all States may need to sign on to regional papers to be presented at international forums. These models could be explored under Part 2.
- 18. In response to the United States’ query on how the results of the feasibility study would be used, Vice Chair explained that the role of the Task Force was to provide advice through the study on the feasibility of an APCAC, for the DGCA’s decision making. Chair added that the Task Force would provide a Progress Report on the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC to APAC DGCA/58 Conference.
- 19. The meeting noted ICAO APAC RO’s suggestion to consider outsourcing some parts of the feasibility study to external consultants, given limited time and manpower by the Task

Force, and agreed that this could be considered at a later stage. Vice Chair noted the need for clear terms of reference, should the Task Force decide to engage a consultant. The meeting noted the past difficulties faced by APCAC TF to access information on costings and that it might not be easy for consultants to access such information as well.

20. The meeting endorsed the proposed methodology of the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC, as attached in **Appendix 7**.
21. Chair invited Task Force members to volunteer to work for the different parts of the feasibility study. The confirmed task assignments are as follows:

Part 1: Information gathering on a Civil Aviation Commission	Australia (Lead) Bangladesh China Nepal Sri Lanka
Part 2: Identifying the problem and opportunities	New Zealand (Lead) Fiji Japan Republic of Korea Singapore United States
Part 3: Assessment of feasibility of an APCAC	Singapore (Lead) Japan New Zealand Republic of Korea United States

22. For each part of the feasibility study, States/Administrations are to provide contact details to the Lead State, so that the work in the various parts can commence as soon as possible.
23. The meeting agreed for the work on the different parts of the feasibility study to proceed in parallel where possible and endorsed the following milestones for the feasibility study.
- i. January - July 2023 : Part 1 - Information gathering on a Civil Aviation Commission
 - ii. April 2023 : RCM TF/10 meeting
 - iii. April - September 2023 : Part 2 - Identifying the problem and opportunities
 - iv. July 2023 : RCM TF/11 meeting
 - v. Mid 2023 (-2024) : Part 3 - Assessment of feasibility of an APCAC
 - vi. End August 2023 : Draft progress report for DGCA/58

- vii. September 2023 : RCM TF/12 meeting (could be held virtually)
- viii. October 2023 : Progress report to DGCA/58
- ix. End 2024 (tbc) : Final Report to DGCA/59

Agenda 6: Other Business

- 24. ICAO Regional Director encouraged RCM TF members to enhance regional cooperation in training among training centres in the APAC region and proposed suggestions such as having a regional training symposium to share best practices and improving flight safety inspectors' training in the region. The Working Group formed under Recommendation B.2 of the Implementation Roadmap will look into this and provide inputs to the RCM TF report to be submitted at APAC DGCA/58 Conference.

- 25. ICAO APAC RO highlighted the secondment opportunities by States/Administrations to support the work of the regional office, including working remotely from home country instead of being posted to the regional office. Secretariat will provide details on expectations and working arrangements for such a secondment for RCM TF. States/Administrations are encouraged to consider the secondment opportunity to provide Secretariat support to the RCM TF.

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