

**Opening Remarks – Mr. Tao Ma, ICAO APAC Regional Director**

**Third Aviation Medical Examiner Refresher Workshop**

**13 November 2023, Bangkok, Thailand**

Mr. Suttipong Kongpool, Director General  
Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand

Dr. Ansa Jordaan, Chief  
Aviation Medicine Section of ICAO

Aviation Medical Examiners and Medical Professionals

Participants

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning.

On behalf of ICAO, let me join Mr. Kongpool, Director General, CAA Thailand in welcoming all of you to this Third Aviation Medical Examiner Refresher Workshop, which will be held over two days, starting today. I am thankful for this opportunity to speak to a group of safety personnel whom we do not meet very often.

Maintaining required levels of Aviation safety and security are paramount for sustainable air transportation and growth of the industry. In that regard, as many of you know, ICAO develops and maintains International Standards and Recommended Practices known as SARPs, as well as Procedures for Air Navigation (PANS). These are fundamental tenets of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) and a core aspect of ICAO's mission and role. There are over 12,000 Standards and Recommended Practices contained in nineteen (19) Annexes to the Chicago Convention. The SARPS that you, as Aviation Medical Examiners work with are in relation to medical examinations found in ICAO Annex One on Personnel Licensing.

The significance of the medical examinations and medical certificates validity became evident during the initial stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the requirements for pilot medical validity had to be addressed to allow continuation of essential flight operations. One of the COVID-19 Contingency Related Differences to the ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices

came about related to the Pilot Medical Validity. This is a good example to understand the importance and criticality of the area that you work.

ICAO's pre-pandemic Asia and Pacific region's 20-year forecasts predicted that by 2037, the APAC region will need to add 19,870 new aircrafts to the current commercial fleet of 31,000 and that over two hundred and thirty eight thousand (238,420) pilots will be required to fly them with an additional fifty thousand seven hundred (50,732) air traffic controllers to look after the airspace safety. These forecasted statistics will add to your work. Thus the demand for the number of Aviation Medical Examiners as well as maintaining their proficiency on the subject matter will need closer follow up and timely planning of training.

One of the main areas that ICAO has been working currently is to assist States to build competence of their work force in different disciplines through implementation support.

Recognizing the need to assist States to implement the global safety and security Standards, ICAO has a new Implementation Support Policy approved by the ICAO Council in March 2022. The new Policy takes a more holistic concept for managing ICAO's implementation support provided by the Secretariat, including the ICAO Bureaus and Regional Offices.

I consider the Aviation Medical Examiner Refresher Workshop to be an integral part of ICAO's assistance provided to the States and Administrations to update and strengthen the capability of the States and Administrations in personnel licensing area and specifically in medical examinations and certification related to personnel licences.

The workshop programme has been designed to provide updates from ICAO, provide for good interactive subject matter discussions as well as share valuable professional experiences. Therefore I wish to encourage all of you to engage actively in the programme and take the maximum benefit out of it. This occasion provides you the opportunity to meet your counterparts from the region, therefore renew existing relationships as well as build new ones.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank our gracious host of the workshop, Mr. Suttipong Kongpool, Director General, Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand for his excellent support to the event. I am also thankful to the CAA's organizing team for their commitment to the success of the workshop and very courteous arrangements made for the visiting delegates.

Realizing the limited opportunity available for refresher training for aviation medical examiners, in the Asia and Pacific region, the ICAO Asia Pacific office has taken the initiative to make this workshop a regular event conducted along with the regional CAPSCA meeting. To that end, I am appreciative of the encouragement and support we have been receiving from the Chief of Aviation Medicine Section of ICAO, Dr. Ansa Jordaan and her team. Thank you Dr. Ansa for your support.

I also wish to take this opportunity also to thank all the presenters, who will deliver in-person and virtual for their excellent support to the workshop.

In concluding, I wish everyone a good interactive two days of discussions.

Thank you.

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