

**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 the 11th Meeting
In-person meeting, 26-27 July 2023**

1. The 11th RCM TF meeting was held on 26-27 July 2023 in-person at ICAO APAC Regional Office (APAC RO). The list of meeting participants is in **Appendix 1**.
2. ICAO Deputy Regional Director welcomed RCM TF members from 11 States/Administrations to the meeting. He updated on the upcoming events in ICAO, namely on the DGCA/58 on 15-19 October 2023, the Asia Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG) on 11 – 13 December 2023 and the Regional Aviation Safety Group – APAC (RASG-APAC) meeting on 18 – 19 December 2023. The Second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation had been postponed to 2024.
3. Chair noted the strong air travel recovery in the region, with airlines and airports ramping up their operations amidst manpower resource constraints. Issues related to sustainability, environment protection, innovation, artificial intelligence and new technologies were coming to the fore. Hence, the need for States/Administrations and industry to work together to deal with challenges in the region. He noted the good progress made by the task force since the RCM TF/10 meeting, with the implementation of the needs survey, updates to the implementation roadmap including regional cooperation in training and progress in the discussions of the Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission (APCAC) feasibility study.
4. Vice Chair thanked the APAC RO for organising the RCM TF/11 meeting and highlighted the importance of the work of RCM TF in addressing the challenges faced by the region.

Agenda 1: Adoption of Provisional Agenda

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

Agenda 2: Adoption of Record of Discussion of the RCM TF/10 Meeting

6. The meeting adopted the record of discussion of the RCM TF/10 meeting as attached in **Appendix 3**.

Agenda 3: Matters Arising from the RCM TF/10 Meeting

7. The meeting noted the matters arising from the RCM TF/10 meeting as attached in **Appendix 4**.

8. The meeting noted that 85 States had ratified the Protocol relating to an Amendment to Article 50(a) of the Convention on International Civil Aviation, of which 11 were APAC States, namely Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.
9. APAC RO urged States to ratify the above-mentioned Protocol, with reference to the State Letter (Ref: SN 2 (2023): AP-TC086/23 (TC)), dated 8 June 2023, and the Action Items 57/61 and 57/62 arising from the DGCA/57 Conference.

Agenda 4a: Status Updates on Recommendations in Implementation Roadmap (IRM)

10. The meeting noted the status updates for the Implementation Roadmap, as attached in **Appendix 5**, with highlights as follows:
 - i. Recommendations A.2: APAC RO updated that the new Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) of the COSCAP-SEA, Mr. Sudhir Kumar Singh, started work on 26 July 2023. In addition, the COSCAP-South Asia would be recruiting a new CTA as the existing CTA would be retiring in August 2023.
 - ii. Recommendation A.4: The meeting noted that the ICAO Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) Liaison Officer would be deployed in Nadi, Fiji, and would play key role in facilitating the coordination between the PSIDS and ICAO as well as other relevant stakeholders. The Liaison Officer would also maintain close relations with the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO).
 - iii. Recommendation C.1: The meeting noted the new ICAO regional support mechanism, which focused on enhancing Air Traffic management (ATM) and Aeronautical Information Service (AIS). With support from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), ICAO had been able to conduct missions in Nepal and the Philippines to assist these States on the regulatory aspects as well as service provider functions of the implementation. The next mission will be to Sri Lanka.
11. The meeting agreed to close Recommendation B.1: Request three key groupings WG/TFs to review Terms of Reference (TOR), based on the latest guidance from ICAO ANC and using the suggested template, as this had been completed.

Agenda 4b: Discussion on Recommendation A.1 (Needs Survey)

12. Singapore presented the preliminary analysis from the Needs Survey, as attached in **Appendix 6**. This survey was conducted from 1 June 2023 to 14 July 2023.
13. The meeting noted the good response rate, with 26 States/Administrations having submitted their responses. The meeting agreed for the survey to be kept open to allow more

States/Administrations to submit their responses. The responses from the remaining States, particularly the PSIDS would be important to take into account their needs. New Zealand volunteered to approach PASO to encourage the remaining PSIDS to respond to the survey as soon as possible.

14. The meeting noted that Singapore would finalise and report the analysis of the Needs Survey at the RCM TF/12. The plan was to present this as part of the RCM TF progress update at the DGCA/58.

Agenda 4c: Discussion on Recommendation B.2 (Training Framework)

15. Singapore presented a draft outline of the DGCA/58 paper on the training framework, which had been developed with the Republic of Korea and the United States, as attached in **Appendix 7**.
16. The meeting supported the proposed framework to strengthen cooperation among training academies.
17. Regional Director (RD) underscored the importance of building up training capacity and capabilities within the APAC region to address identified training needs and priorities. He highlighted the need for inspector training and instructor training and added that the Government Safety Inspector (GSI) courses were already scheduled to be conducted with the assistance of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). APAC RO was also working on delivering the Train the Trainer courses. RD mentioned that the ICAO Capacity Development and Implementation Bureau was supportive of a training symposium of the APAC Region, and suggested for the RCM TF to work closely with training academies in the APAC region to implement the various initiatives. He requested the RCM TF to seek endorsement from Directors-General in the APAC region on the Training Framework at the DGCA/58.
18. The Republic of Korea suggested using resources such as trainers from existing programmes, such as COSCAPs and the EU-Southeast Asia Aviation Partnership Project to support the initiatives under the training framework.
19. Australia suggested offering flexible modes of training delivery such as virtual training, to allow more States/Administrations to access training, taking into account the challenges to meet the training demands, especially for the PSIDS. Vice Chair suggested to customise training packages according to training needs of different States/Administrations in the region, such that we build the desired capabilities in the APAC region.
20. Chair requested the working group to further develop the implementation details of the training framework, including identifying the mechanisms required to so implement the various initiatives. He requested the working group to consider the comments of the task

force and to include examples of good collaboration on training in the paper to be tabled at the DGCA/58.

Agenda 4d: Discussion on Recommendation E.4 (Survey on Enhancing Communication Channels)

21. New Zealand presented the preliminary approach and the six proposed questions in the survey on enhancing communication channels.
22. Chair proposed for an additional question to be included in the survey to get ideas on new modes of communication. He also asked to explore methods, which would increase the response rate for this survey by making it convenient for survey respondents.
23. The meeting agreed for the survey to be launched after mid-September, and for the results to be analysed and presented at subsequent RCM TF meetings in 2024.

Agenda 5a: Examination of Feasibility of an APCAC - Discussion of Part I workstream

24. Australia, as lead of Part I of the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC on information gathering of a civil aviation commission, presented their report as attached in **Appendix 8**. The findings included the establishment, history and membership of CACs, CACs' objectives, activities and responsibilities, achievements, challenges and future strategic directions, organisational structures, relationships with the ICAO and their respective aviation stakeholders, funding, as well as the pre-conditions and assumptions that would inform the feasibility of an APCAC.
25. The meeting noted the excellent work done by the workstream and agreed that the report provided useful information for subsequent parts of the feasibility study. Various task force members provided comments/input to the report as follows:
 - i. Japan suggested to remove mention of "ICAO panels and working groups" under "Activities and Responsibilities of a CAC" as participants should attend such panels and working group in their personal capacity,
 - ii. Malaysia suggested to streamline the title "Aims and objectives", to mention either "aims" or "objectives", but not both.
26. Chair suggested for the concluding section of the report to be further strengthened for clarity. In addition to highlighting the key insights from Part I, the pre-conditions could be re-phrased as commitments, which would be required in relation to formation of an APCAC. Vice Chair suggested to have a list of 3-6 pre-conditions as necessary commitments and operating assumptions in considering an APCAC. Agreement on such

commitments and operating assumptions would be important for Parts II and III of the study.

27. The meeting endorsed Part I of the feasibility study, subject to amendments to be made. APAC RO will circulate the revised Part I report to the RCM TF.

Agenda 5b: Examination of Feasibility of an APCAC - Discussion of Part II workstream

28. New Zealand, as lead of Part II of the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC on identifying the problems and opportunities, presented its preliminary findings as attached in **Appendix 9**. They included background and history of this work and an overview on the APAC region, challenges and opportunities for the region, and the options that could be adopted to address the challenges.
29. On the challenges faced by APAC region, Singapore suggested to include mention of ANS and specific examples of emerging technologies, such as advanced air mobility.
30. Hong Kong, China suggested to take a balanced approach and consider the readiness of individual States/Administrations on challenges related to environment. It was suggested that the wording in paragraph 13b) of Part II's report be adjusted.
31. Malaysia suggested using consistent wording. "Problems/Challenges" should be standardized, with the meeting agreeing on using "challenges".
32. The meeting suggested to simplify paragraph 13c) to "Building capacity and capability will be a challenge." Innovation may also be included as a challenge in Section B.
33. Australia suggested for the workstream to consider and include positive aspects of the diversity in the APAC region in the report, instead of viewing the regional diversity as a challenge. Chair added that some examples of strengths of the APAC region in the report could be highlighted.
34. Australia also suggested for the workstream to consider the bigger picture when presenting the opportunities for the region and highlight the economic and social benefits brought about by aviation.
35. Chair added that the workstream should articulate the priorities of the APAC region, to set context for subsequent proposals on various options. In addition, Part II work should cover the objectives and priorities of the APAC region, on top of the objectives of any proposed APCAC.
36. The meeting agreed that while Part II work could present a spectrum of options available - maintaining the status quo, enhancing existing mechanisms or developing new

mechanisms such as an APCAC. It was not necessary for the workstream to provide recommendations on the options at this stage. The subsequent Part III workstream would have to evaluate the pros and cons for each option. The meeting agreed that it would be important not to anchor any decision making now without the full analysis. However, it would be useful to present the associated pre-conditions associated with each option.

37. On the options put forth in Part II, the meeting agreed that the status quo would not be a tenable option. The meeting agreed to categorise the options into two groups i.e. enhancing existing mechanisms and introducing new mechanisms. In addition, new mechanisms could be considered not just to address new and emerging issues, but on existing ones.
38. RD suggested to strengthen existing mechanisms and suggested setting up a small secretariat tasked to coordinate and implement recommendations arising from the DGCA Conferences. This should be evaluated in Part III.
39. Part II workstream would incorporate the comments by the task force and to present an update at the RCM TF/12.

Agenda 5c: Discussion of Progress Report of Feasibility Study to be tabled at the DGCA/58

40. Vice Chair proposed to structure the Progress Report to be tabled at the DGCA/58 in four parts, namely i) methodology of the feasibility study, ii) summary of insights from Part I of the APCAC Feasibility Study, iii) summary of insights from Part II of the APCAC Feasibility Study and, iv) pre-conditions associated with the spectrum of options. The objective would be to ensure that DGCAs have context of the key priorities at hand and the available options with pre-conditions and commitments that are necessary to ensure their effectiveness.
41. A sub-working group comprising Australia, New Zealand and Singapore would draft the progress report, which would be circulated for endorsement at the RCM TF/12.
42. The meeting suggested for two separate papers, one to update on the implementation roadmap of the RCM TF including the examination of feasibility of an APCAC, and one on the framework to enhance training collaboration among Asia Pacific training academies. RCM TF would discuss with the DGCA Secretariat, the most effective reporting format within the time allocated in the DGCA Conference agenda.
43. Concurrently, Singapore, as the lead of Part III of the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC would start work on Part III.

Agenda 6: Other Business

44. The meeting noted that the RCM TF/12 meeting would be held virtually on 4 September 2023, 0930 – 1130. (UTC+7).

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