International Civil Aviation Organization
Asia and Pacific Office

ICAO

**Thirteenth Meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group –
Asia and Pacific Regions (RASG-APAC/13)**

Hong Kong, China, 18-19 December 2023

Agenda Item 3:   **Update from ICAO HQ, APRAST and AIG outputs for RASG-APAC
consideration and approval**

**REVIEW OF ANC AND COUNCIL OF APANPIRG/33 AND
RASG-APAC/12 REPORTS**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper presents an overview of the review of the reports of the twelfth meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group – Asia and Pacific (RASG-APAC/12) meetings (Bangkok, Thailand and hybrid, 17 - 18 November 2022) and of the thirty-third meeting of the Asia/Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG/33) (Bali, Indonesia, 22 to 24 November 2022) by the Air Navigation Commission and ICAO Council.
 	
 Strategic Objectives:
    A: **Safety** *– Enhance global civil aviation safety*
 	
    B: *Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency — Increase the capacity and improve the efficiency of the global aviation system*
 	
    E: *Environmental Protection — Minimize the adverse environment effects of civil aviation activities.*

1.   **INTRODUCTION**

1.1   During the ninth meeting of its 222nd Session on 15 February 2023, the Air Navigation Commission (ANC) reviewed the reports of the twelfth meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group – Asia and Pacific (RASG-APAC/12) and of the thirty-third meeting of the Asia/Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG/33).

1.2   The Commission agreed on the consolidated annual report to the Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs) and Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs), that was presented to the ICAO Council during its 230th Session (C-WP 15511 refers). The report covered PIRG and RASG meetings from April 2022 to March 2023. The report included an overview of the outcomes of the RASG-APAC/12 and APANPIRG/33 meetings.

2.   DISCUSSION

2.1   *RASG-APAC/12 Report*

2.1.1.   The Commission reviewed the RASG-APAC/12 Report on 15 February 2022, as presented by the Chairperson, Capt. Victor Liu, Director General of Civil Aviation, Hong Kong, China and supported by Mr. Tao Ma, Regional Director, ICAO APAC Office. The presentation to the Commission covered the following areas: APAC key challenges/issues, implementation progress of the Beijing Declaration, RASG-APAC/12 key outcomes and achievements of 2022, followed by RASG-APAC priorities for 2023.

2.1.2.   The Commission noted that the RASG-APAC/12 meeting was attended by 162 participants from 18 States and administrations and nine international organizations. The meeting was held in a hybrid format, and most of the participants attended online. The RASG-APAC/12 Meeting agreed to Twelve decisions raised from the meeting based on the 32 working papers.

2.1.3.   The Commission specifically thanked Capt. Liu and Mr. Ma and their respective teams as well as ICAO HQ staff for their time and efforts in the preparation of a very detailed presentation to the AN-Commission. The Commission highlighted that the report depicts a clear indication of the efforts of the APAC Region.

2.1.4.   The Commission noted that, like observed in other regions, the challenges imposed by the restrictions related to the COVID-19 Pandemic continued to have an impact. This is evident in the Effective Implementation (EI) scores in all regions.

2.1.5.   With regard to regulation of small, unmanned aircraft in Hong Kong China and the implementation of the New Regulatory Regime, the Commission noted with interest the efforts to introduce and promote the Small Unmanned Aircraft Order, as well as to facilitate a smooth transition to the new risk-based regulatory regime. It was noted that additional information is available on the CAA Hong Kong China website.

2.1.6.   With regard to the progress in implementing the eight critical elements of a safety oversight system, the Commission noted that 13 States are below an EI score of 60%, 11 States are between 60 and 75%, and13 States above 75%.

2.1.7.   In relation to the progress of the Beijing Declaration, the Commission noted with satisfaction that Pakistan resolved the significant safety concern (SSC) on 20 January 2022. Currently, only 1 State (Bhutan) remains with an SSC in the Region. The APAC Regional Office (RO) including the cooperative development of operational safety and continuing airworthiness programme (COSCAP) South Asia (SA) are working closely with Bhutan to resolve their SSC.

2.1.8.   It was also highlighted that the postponement of USOAP-Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) activities and the unavailability of on-site technical assistance to the States with a low- level EI score further impacted the performance of the RASG-APAC. Another key challenge highlighted is the need to address the needs of Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS) and the execution of the Pacific Island Aviation Plan (PIAP) roadmap.

2.1.9.   The Commission was informed that 321 international aerodromes in the APAC Region out of 354 have been certified which is a 91 per cent implementation rate trending 3 per cent up from the 88 per cent in 2020. The Commission noted this remarkable achievement and was informed that the Beijing Declaration contributed hugely to the success, due to the high-level commitment of the APAC Ministers and other high-level officials. In addition, partnerships with international organizations, such as Airports Council International (ACI), the three COSCAPs and the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO), led to the hosting of workshops in aerodrome certification across the regions.

2.1.10.   With regard to SSP implementation, the Commission was informed that the establishment of Independent Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation Authorities (AAIIA) has reached 40 percent implementation in the APAC region. The Commission noted that the establishment of independent AAIIAs needs highly skilled resources, which are currently not available in many States.

2.1.11.   With regard to APAC key achievements for 2022, the Commission noted that AP RASP for 2023-2025 was updated in line with new GASP and related documents and was approved by RASG-APAC/12. It was further noted that APAC Annual Safety Report 2022 was promulgated on time and that RASG-APAC's accident rate remained lower than the global rate over the past decade.

2.1.12.   The Commission noted with interest that the ICAO APAC Regional Office developed the Monitoring Tool for safety enhancement initiatives (SEI) implementation. The National Aviation Safety Plan (NASP), AP RASP and GASP SEI mapping tool was developed with the assistance of Bangladesh. The Commission noted with concern that the level of implementation of the NASP is low and that the target date for implementation of 2024 is fast approaching.

2.1.13.   The Commission noted with interest that the COSCAP South Asia has developed a capacity-building matrix for the pooling of experts from the Region.

2.1.14.   The Commission supported the focus on building capacity in the Pacific Small Islands Developing States (PSIDS). The Commission noted with appreciation that an ICAO Pacific Liaison Officer was recruited.

2.2   *APANPIRG/33 Report*

2.2.1.   The Commission reviewed the APANPIRG/33 Report, on 15 February 2023 as presented by the Chairperson of APANPIRG Mr. Kevin Shum, Deputy Secretary (Strategy, Sustainability and Technology) Ministry of Transport and supported by Mr. Tao Ma, Regional Director, ICAO APAC Office.

2.2.2.   The Commission specifically thanked Mr. Shum and Mr. Ma and their teams for their time and effort in the preparation of an excellent and detailed presentation to the Commission. The Commission also expressed their appreciation to the ANB staff for their work related to PIRGs and RASGs.

2.2.3.   The Commission noted that the APANPIRG/33 meeting was attended by 326 participants from 30 Member States, 2 Special Administrative Regions of China, and 7 International Organizations (ACI, CANSO, IATA, ICAO, IFALPA, IFATSEA and PASO). The Meeting adopted 13 conclusions and 1 decision.

2.2.4.   The Commission noted the excellent coordination between APANPIRG and RASG-APAC even with resource constraints.

2.2.5.   With respect to the APAC region's key Air Navigation challenges, the Commission noted the slow recovery of air navigation services providers (ANSPs) and aerodrome operators (AOs) from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard, one of the greatest challenges remains the economic recovery of ANSPs and AOs.

2.2.6.   The Commission also noted the slow pace of implementation of the Beijing Declaration commitments in implementing the priority elements of the APAC Seamless ANS Plan. It was noted that some States/Administrations need further assistance to achieve their commitments. This slowness is particularly noted in areas such as the implementation of the transition from aeronautical information service (AIS) to aeronautical information management (AIM).

2.2.7.   It was noted that there had only been a small increase of overall progresses in the Implementation of the AIS to AIM transition expectations of the Asia/Pacific Regional Plan for Collaborative AIM with Phase I (legacy SARPS) increased to 55 percent from 54 percent in 2021, Phase II (aeronautical information in digital databases) a little improvement of two percent at 40 percent and Phase III increased to 13 percent from 12 percent.

2.2.8.   The Commission was informed that many States of the Region had insufficient resources to improve compliance with ICAO provisions. At the same time, it was noted that there is a need for States in the Region to consider the inclusion of civil aviation in their National Development Plans to ensure stability and develop a National Air Navigation Plan (NANP) that is compatible with the regional air navigation plan (ANP) as well as with the Asia/Pacific Seamless ANS Plan.

2.2.9.   The Commission was informed that the 2023 update of the Asia/Pacific Seamless ANS Plan, is now likely to include its migration into Regional Air Navigation Plan Vol III, which had until recently been considered to merit a separate project.

2.2.10.   The Commission noted that despite the great efforts of ICAO APAC Regional Office only few Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) attended ICAO virtual meetings, webinars, and workshops in 2022. The need to encourage those States to effectively engage in the ICAO activities was highlighted which could provide them support to address their deficiencies.

2.2.11.   Regarding the situation of the Kabul flight information region (FIR) the Commission noted that since 16 August 2021, it has been unavailable except for very limited contingency services that are provided in Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, and Mazar-e-Sharif, resulting in the majority of overflights avoiding this FIR.

2.2.12.   The Commission was informed that there is slow progress in the resolution of air navigation deficiencies related to the AOP, ATM and AIM fields. The Commission noted that 33 aerodromes used for international operations in Asia Pacific Region were yet to be certified, and 17 States had yet to publish the status of certification in their AIP. AIS Quality Management System (QMS) (Annex 15 — *Aeronautical Information Services*) was not yet implemented by 20 States. WGS-84 Requirements (Annex 15) was not yet implemented by 9 States and SAR capability (Annex 12 — *Search and Rescue*) by 32 States.

2.2.13.   The Commission recalled that it has been a long time since the applicability of WGS-84, and it plays a major role in aviation Safety and harmonization. The ATM Sub-Group of APANPIRG (ATM/SG/10, October 2022) had formed Conclusion ATM/SG/10-9: Revalidation of Coordinate Data, urging States to revalidate coordinate data each five years, or in response to certain events.

2.2.14.   ICAO APAC Office was exploring the possibility of conducting a region-wide data sampling activity. With regard to the APANPIRG/33 Key Conclusions and Outcomes, Conclusion 33/5 required action by Headquarters. The Commission noted the request for ICAO to provide clear direction on which separation minima require the *Regional Supplementary Procedures* (Doc 7030) to provide consistency in the information published in the different ICAO Regions. The Commission requested the Secretariat to study the proposal and take action as required.

2.2.15.   More generally, the Commission noted that the update of the Doc 7030 *Regional Supplementary Procedures* (SUPPS) was a long-standing task emanating from the Twelfth Air Navigation Conference (AN-Conf/12) which requested ICAO initiate a formal amendment process to align the areas of applicability of the air navigation plans and the regional supplementary procedures (Recommendation 6/11). The Commission suggested to speed up amendment of Doc 7030 and, since it may affect more regions, consider it as global challenge in the 2023 Consolidated Annual Report to Council.

2.2.16.   Regarding Key outcomes, the Commission noted that APANPIRG would monitor and track implementation of Beijing Declaration. The Commission was informed that APANPIRG has developed a generic template with 16 action items, responsible entities, target, and actual implementation dates to assist Asia-Pacific States in establishing and implementing national Wildlife Hazard Management Programme (WHMP).

2.2.17.   The Commission was informed that a major update of Asia/Pacific SAR Plan was conducted, primarily to include Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS) elements and a major update of Asia/Pacific Regional Framework for Collaborative air traffic flow management (ATFM). The Commission noted the need for intra-regional and inter-regional harmonization of ATFM network processes, further noting the different solutions implemented within the APAC Region by the APAC Multi-Nodal ATFM Collaboration (AMNAC) group, and the Northeast Asia Regional ATFM Harmonization Group (NARAHG).

2.2.18.   It was noted that ATFM implementation by the AMNAC group fully complied with the APANPIRG-agreed guidance and procedures in the Regional Framework for Collaborative ATFM, and that this group provided regional leadership in ATFM. The Commission also noted with interest that a time frame for the implementation of system-wide information management (SWIM) was developed. The Commission was informed that a revised Surveillance Strategy for the APAC Region was developed, and an ATM Automation System Implementation and Operations Guidance Document was published.

2.2.19.   In the MET field, the Commission noted APANPIRG had invited APAC States to prepare for planned upgrades to the world area forecast system (WAFS), satellite distribution system for information relating to air navigation (SADIS) and WIFS in 2023 and 2024 and urged States to integrate the 0.25-degree WAFS hazard data by November 2023. In addition, the Commission was informed that ICAO APAC had conducted Webinars in the following fields: ATM (3), AOP (1), CNS (4), MET (1) and ENV (2). Finally, concerning the APANPIRG Air Navigation (AN) deficiencies, the Commission noted with satisfaction that 13 Deficiencies were removed from the APANPIRG list in 2022, compared with 16 in 2021.

2.2.20.   The Commission was informed of the main Air Navigation priorities for 2023. These included the development of a master plan for aerodromes and transition from ICAO aircraft classification number (ACN) - pavement classification number (PCN) to ICAO aircraft classification rating (ACR) - pavement classification rating (PCR) method of reporting aerodrome pavement strength and in the ATM area, the update of the Asia/Pacific Seamless ANS Plan to Version 4, and the update of the Regional ATM Contingency Plan to further elaborate on lessons learned from major ATS disruptions in the last three to four years, and associated obligations of States.

2.2.21.   The Regional Airspace Safety Monitoring Advisory Group (RASMAG) is to formalize the procedure for the identification and monitoring of large height deviation (LHD) hot spots and to continue to address and attempt to rectify the issue of rogue State aircraft operating in the RVSM band.

2.2.22.   The Commission was informed that based on the current Common Aeronautical Virtual Private Network (CRV) contract Terms and Conditions, all APAC States/Administrations should join the CRV program before 31 December 2023. Therefore, APAC office priorities are to encourage and support APAC Member States to initiate CRV service contracts and complete the ATM Infrastructure Operations Capability Building in the Lao PDR project. The APANPIRG will also follow up on the 5G/RA issue with the telecommunication industry.

2.2.23.   Concerning MET, the Commission noted priority activities for the APAC Region, including conducting volcanic ash exercises (especially in PSIDS), facilitating coordination of SIGMET information, monitoring the dissemination of MET information in IWXXM form, educating regional

stakeholders on the space weather information services, and facilitating the States' review of and preparation for Amendment 81 of Annex 3 — *Meteorological Service for International Air Navigation*, including the new PANS MET.

2.3   *Review of the Consolidated Report on Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs) and Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) for 2022 by ICAO Council*

2.3.1.   The ICAO Council considered during its 230th session the consolidated annual report on Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs) and Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs), covering the period from April 2022 to March 2023 (C-WP/15511 refers). The ICAO Council:

> a) agreed to adopt henceforth an annual reporting period of 1 July to 30 June for subsequent iterations of the Consolidated Annual Report, commencing on 1 July 2023.

> b) underscored the importance of ensuring the availability of the technical layers of the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) in all ICAO working languages in order to enhance its effective and successful implementation by Member States, and accordingly, encouraged the Secretariat to identify possible extra-budgetary resources that could be allocated for that purpose;

> c)   requested the Secretariat to initiate a formal amendment process to align the geographic areas of applicability of the air navigation plans and the regional supplementary procedures, including in particular for the AFI Region;

> d) The ICAO Council encouraged the Secretariat to consider adopting possible measures to secure the appropriate level of participation in meetings of the PIRGs and RASGs, including, *inter alia*, to request Delegates to provide credentials for their participation, and to take into account the scheduling of other high-level regional events to optimize opportunities for attendance by high-level officials with decision-making authority; and

> e) invited the Air Navigation Commission (ANC) and the Secretariat to consider whether the current arrangements provided sufficient opportunities for Member States to reflect on lessons learned and share best practices in the development of their Air Navigation Plans.

3.   ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1   The Meeting is invited to consider the actions taken by the Air Navigation Commission and the ICAO Council on the reports of the APANPIRG/33 and RASG-APAC/12 and the consolidated reports of PIRGs and RASGs for 2022 during the deliberations under the relevant agenda items of the meetings.

— END —