



ICAO

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Asia and Pacific Office

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

Hong Kong, China, 18-19 December 2023

Agenda Item 5: ICAO / Member State / Industry Presentations

SUSPECTED UNAPPROVED PARTS

(Presented by Singapore)

SUMMARY

In light of rising reports of Suspected Unapproved Parts (SUP), this Working Paper advocates for the sharing of SUP information to increase awareness of the issue and improve safety by reducing the spread of SUP.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Suspected Unapproved Parts (SUP) can take on different forms, such as unserviceable parts being put back to service illegally, parts produced by unapproved manufacturing sources, or even genuine parts with incorrect or no accompanying documentation. Regardless of the type of SUP, these parts are potential risks to flight safety and should not be fitted onto any aircraft.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Most States have published guidelines on preventing, detecting, and reporting of SUP for their industry to comply with. Some States have a published list of known organisations found distributing SUP, while others may have information bulletins to inform the industry of known SUP cases. Usually, such guidance is proactively shared with organisations holding the National Aviation Authority's (NAAs) approval and the updates are disseminated via a subscription system. However, such information is not necessarily shared with other NAAs.

2.2 This means that for NAAs who do not have access to published SUP information, there is a potential for their regulated entities (e.g. airlines and maintenance organisations) to inadvertently be purchasing parts from an errant organisation that had already been identified to be a supplier of SUP. Moreover, such errant organisations may be outside the jurisdiction of individual NAAs as they do not hold an approval issued by that NAA. These issues can unfortunately perpetuate the continued purchase and use of SUP by unsuspecting organisations.

2.3 In the recent case involving AOG Technics, a UK-based parts distributor, it was discovered that the organisation had managed to distribute thousands of CFM56 engine parts before they were discovered. As the CFM56 engine is a common jet engine used worldwide, this SUP incident has given rise to a major global safety concern, and identifying all affected engines and aircraft has proven to be very challenging. In response to the case, the FAA published an Unapproved Parts Notification, EASA updated their known SUP list, and the UKCAA published a Safety Notice. Other NAAs worldwide subsequently reacted to the news, although their responses may have been delayed, depending on when they were made aware of the issue.

2.4 Learning from this recent experience, Singapore advocates the sharing of information on SUP between States in the future as it may help contain and reduce the spread of SUP. One possible channel for this would be for NAAs to raise recent cases of SUP to the APAC Regional Aviation Safety Team (APRAST) for dissemination to NAAs in the region through the ICAO APAC Regional Office (APAC RO) as critical safety information. ICAO APRO could also consider disseminating or receiving such information to/from other ICAO Regional Offices, where appropriate. Such info-sharing would allow us to learn from one another and improve the collective effort of preventing SUP from entering our aviation system.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information in this Working Paper;
- b) encourage Asia Pacific States to share experiences and best practices in handling SUPs with APAC RO; and
- c) request that APRAST consider drafting critical safety information relating to SUP occurrences and disseminating such information to APAC States through APAC RO.

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