



International Civil Aviation Organization
Asia and Pacific Office

Fourteenth Meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group – Asia and Pacific Regions (RASG-APAC/14)

(Bangkok, Thailand, 28-29 November 2024)

Agenda Item 2: Updates from ICAO, APRAST and APAC-AIG outputs for RASG-APAC consideration and approval

ASIA PACIFIC MINISTERIAL DECLARATION ON CIVIL AVIATION (DELHI)

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

The Second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation was held from 11 – 12 September 2024 in New Delhi, India. In the Conference, the APAC Ministers reviewed commitments made under the Beijing Declaration and agreed to another set of commitments to high-priority aviation strategic objectives in the form of the *Asia Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Civil Aviation (Delhi)*. This paper shares the key information related to the Second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation (APACMC/2).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The first APAC Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation was held in Beijing, China, from 31 January to 1 February 2018. During the conference, all delegates unanimously agreed upon the *Declaration of Asia/Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation (Beijing)* also known as *Beijing Declaration*. The Declaration formalized the shared commitments to high-priority aviation safety and air navigation services objectives as well as accident investigation and human resource development. At the Conference, India offered to host the Second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation (APACMC/2) in India in 2020. However, the second Conference was not organised in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.2 The Second Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation was held on 11 – 12 September 2024 in New Delhi, India. This paper provides key information about APACMC/2 and follow-up work done by the ICAO APAC Office to meet commitments under the Asia Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Civil Aviation (Delhi).

2. DISCUSSION

The Second APAC Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation (APACMC/2)

2.2. The APACMC/2 was hosted by the Government of India in New Delhi, India. The ICAO and the Ministry of Civil Aviation, India, jointly organised the Conference. To ensure the attendance of all APAC Ministers of Civil Aviation, the ICAO APAC Office issued a State Letter Ref. SN 4 (2023): AP-RD0009/24 dated 27 February 2024 to provide advance intimation as well as to reserve the dates 11 – 12 September 2024 in States/Admirations Hon. Minister's calendar.

Consequently, the Hon. Minister of Civil Aviation and Steel of India invited ICAO APAC Member States/Administrations and relevant international organizations to participate in this Conference by their letter of 30 April 2024. Subsequently, ICAO issued follow-up letters co-signed by the President of the Council and the Secretary-General to the event.

2.3. More than 200 delegates from 31 States / Administrations and 8 International Organizations, including 17 Ministers/Deputy Ministers/Vice Ministers and 24 Directors General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), attended the Conference. In the Conference, India hosted several initiatives/events to celebrate the 80th anniversary of ICAO.

2.4. The Conference endorsed the Second Asia and Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Civil Aviation (Delhi), also known as the Delhi Declaration (**Appendix A**).

Declaration of Asia/Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation (Delhi)

2.5. A considerable amount of work was done by the ICAO APAC Office with the support of APAC States/Administrations to conduct this Conference and successfully endorse the Delhi Declaration.

2.6. As a first step, a Working Group (WG) was constituted to develop the draft agenda for the Second Ministerial Conference. The ICAO APAC Office issued the ICAO State Letter Ref. SN 4 (2023): AP-TC0016/23 dated 10 April 2023, reconvening the Working Group. In addition, the ICAO APAC Office developed a Concept Note and the Conference Tentative Program in consultation with the Ministry of Civil Aviation, India.

2.7. The Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference Preparation Working Group (MCP WG), composed of volunteer members from Australia, China, Hong Kong China, India, Indonesia, Singapore and the United States, met thrice in 2023 on 28 April 2023 (Virtual), 25-26 May 2023 (In Person, Bangkok, Thailand), 16 June 2023 (Virtual) and prepared the first draft of Asia Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Civil Aviation (Delhi) in consultation with ICAO. The draft declaration was shared with APAC States/Administration by ICAO APAC State Letter Ref: SN 4 – AP104/23 (RD) dated 23 June 2023 for comments/observations.

2.8. Responding to the letter, 10 States/Administrations, namely China, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, USA, and Vietnam, shared their responses. The MCP WG met for the fourth time on 3-4 April 2024 (In Person, Bangkok, Thailand) to review all observations received. After carefully considering all remarks, the draft declaration was revised further. The MCP WG endeavoured to develop a document that demonstrated an inclusive and balanced approach regarding the commitments in the operating part of the draft declaration while remaining concise in the preamble.

2.9. Draft Asia Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Civil Aviation (Delhi) prepared by MCP WG was further shared with the APAC Member States by ICAO State Letter Ref.: SN 4 (2024)- AP061/24 (RD) dated 3 May 2024 for further comments/feedback. The deadline to provide comments/feedback was 30 June 2024. The MCP WG met two more times on 24 July 2024 and 22 August 2024 and finalised the draft of the Delhi Declaration, which was sent to APAC States/Administrations by State Letter Ref.: SN 4 (2024): AP102/24 (RD) 23 August 2024.

2.10. The draft declaration was presented at the “Preparatory Meeting of Directors General to finalise the Delhi Declaration” on the first day of the Conference. The Preparatory Meeting finalised the Declaration, which the Conference adopted.

2.11. The Delhi Declaration generates the political will needed to support the organization’s various objectives for an effective and efficient aviation system. The Declaration incorporated various critical aspects that required immediate attention from the APAC States. It included substantial

commitments needed from the APAC States for effective implementation of ICAO global plans, implementation of aviation safety and air navigation services priority elements, and addition of resilience to health-related disruptions. Furthermore, it has highlighted commitments required for gender equality, resourcing for civil aviation, aviation environment protection, and ratification of international air law treaties.

2.12. The Delhi Declaration will not only result in improved compliance with ICAO requirements but will also engage in high-level engagement to facilitate the decision of strategies and priorities for the Asia Pacific region, emphasizing the need for safety and promoting a culture of innovation.

2.13. The Declaration was also presented at the 59th DGCA Conference held from 14-18 October in Cebu, Philippines. The Conference formulated the following Action Item:

Action Item 59/41	<p>The Conference encouraged States/Administrations to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. continue to prioritize efforts towards the realization of the Beijing Declaration commitments;2. collaborate to achieve the commitments of the Delhi Declaration;3. share implementation status of Beijing and Delhi Declaration at APANPIRG, RASG-APAC and RASCF Meetings; and4. consider the feasibility of hosting the 3rd Asia/Pacific Ministerial Conference.
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3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the contents of the paper;
- b) collaborate and work towards achieving targets of the Asia Pacific Ministerial Declaration on Civil Aviation (Delhi); and
- c) share their latest implementation status of Delhi Declaration commitments with the ICAO APAC Office so that the progress can be tracked and the status reported accurately in future Meetings.

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