



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

COORDINATION MECHANISM BETWEEN REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUPS (RASGS) AND TEAMS (RASTs)

(Presented by APRAST Co-Chairs)

SUMMARY

RASGs and RASTs are key platforms to advance aviation safety in their various regions. Knowledge sharing between States, industry and international organisations is crucial to their work.

This paper presents a proposed coordination mechanism to facilitate improved inter-regional collaboration between RASGs and RASTs to support more effective, relevant and timely safety outputs.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) are ICAO cooperative forums that seek to integrate aviation safety efforts on global, regional, sub-regional, national, and industry levels. Each RASG may have their own Regional Aviation Safety Teams (RASTs) to drive the development of safety programmes in line with the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) to support the effective and continuous implementation of SMS and SSP provisions in line with ICAO Annex 19. Five RASGs¹ have been established.

1.2 Since the first RASG-APAC Meeting (RASG-APAC/1) and the establishment of the Asia Pacific Regional Aviation Safety Team (APRAST) in October 2011, there have been considerable efforts to raise safety performance in the APAC region. These include developing the APAC Regional Aviation Safety Plan (AP-RASP), publishing Annual Safety Reports to proactively identify safety risks and recommend mitigations, developing Safety Enhancement Initiatives (SEIs) for each of the identified global high-risk categories, and conducting workshops to foster the sharing of best practices.

1.3 Considering the rapidly evolving safety challenges and emerging risks faced on global and regional levels, which necessitate collective safety efforts in response, there is an opportunity to improve coordination and collaboration between ICAO regional aviation safety groups. The APRAST and Pan America RAST (PA-RAST) recently initiated a dialogue on this topic. The Co-Chairs of

¹ RASG-APAC (Asia Pacific), RASG-EUR (Europe), RASG-AFI (Africa), RASG-MID (Middle East), and RASG-PA (Pan America).

APRAST and PA-RAST would like to collaborate to trial a coordination mechanism between the two RASTs to support more effective, relevant, and timely safety outputs.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 RASTs currently operate independently. Interregional coordination between RASTs may help to realise better synergy in the recognition and mitigation of safety challenges.

2.2 At APRAST/21, the US FAA shared how the Pan America RAST (PA-RAST) produce advisories and alerts in the form of RASG-PA Safety Advisories (RSAs) and Safety Issues Alerts (RSIAs) to provide timely updates on critical safety information and had dedicated “Industry Days” for service providers to provide in-depth sharing on specific safety issues. APRAST agreed that these were beneficial suggestions and have successfully trialled them at recent Meetings. The APRAST/22 Meeting in October saw the introduction of focused discussions which were open to presentations from experts and service providers beyond APRAST. The Meeting also included discussions on the implementation of RASG-APAC Regional Safety Advisories, including amendments to the respective TORs.

Key Issues and Proposed Improvements

2.3 The APRAST/22 Meeting discussed that fostering the exchange of best practices and sharing of learning points with other RASTs would enable better cross-pollination of ideas for the development of safety solutions. The key gaps and proposed improvements are summarised as follows:

a) **More systematic sharing of safety alerts or advisories, identified safety hazards and safety risks, and best practices across regions.**

RASTs primarily focus on issues within their own regions. While it is necessary to ensure safety outputs are tailored to the unique safety challenges and needs in each region, there is a likelihood of similar information, research, and mitigations being applicable across multiple regions. There have been several recent safety trends including barometric reference errors, increasingly severe adverse weather, Global Navigation Satellite System Radio Frequency Interference (GNSS RFI), and visual approach aid alignment issues, which affect multiple regions. While these are not Global High-Risk Categories (HRCs) and therefore may not necessitate the long and rigorous SEI development process, timely dissemination of safety information may be beneficial in raising awareness of these trends to States and industry.

It is proposed that **APRAST and PA-RAST collaborate to initiate the development of a system/process to inform each other when they publish safety alerts or advisories, identify safety hazards and risks, and produce SEI outputs.** RASTs would evaluate the applicability of the information to their own regions and, where necessary, adapt and circulate with the proper attribution to the original RAST. This process would enable a more harmonised approach to the dissemination of critical safety information across regions.

b) **Providing more platforms for communication and exchange of information**

The RASG-APAC Procedural Handbook stipulates the need to ensure interregional coordination and communication². However, RASG-APAC is currently not

² 7.1 The RASG shall: a) ensure interregional coordination through formal and informal mechanisms, including the participation in meetings established for the purpose of coordinating RASG and PIRG activities, the GASP and regional

actively involved in any formal mechanism or platform for inter-RASG or RAST dialogue.

It is proposed that we establish regular meetings for RAST Co-Chairs and Working Group Co-Chairs. These meetings would be held virtually for Co-Chairs to provide an update on recent regional initiatives and challenges, and to discuss coordinated solutions. Additionally, in-person meetings could be arranged, where opportune, on the sidelines of global ICAO Conferences. These face-to-face interactions would foster stronger relationships between regional leaders and facilitate more in-depth discussions on complex issues.

Furthermore, a dedicated online platform could be established to facilitate ideation and the immediate communication of updates between meetings.

Implementation of the Proposed Improvements

2.4 Upon RASG-APAC's and RASG-PA's approval, it is proposed that APRAST (RASG-APAC) and PA-RAST (RASG-PA) collaborate to develop and trial an inter-regional coordination mechanism over one to two years. This trial period will allow us to assess the effectiveness of the proposed improvements and make necessary adjustments. The RAST co-chairs and/or Secretariat will be the focal points for coordinating the interregional collaboration. After the trial period, the effectiveness of the mechanism will be reported back to the respective RASGs. If assessed as effective, the mechanism can be formalised into the TORs or Procedural Handbooks of each respective RASG and reported to ICAO for consideration to implement across all RASGs.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Agree to the proposed improvements and implementation plan highlighted in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4; and
- b) Note that the RASG-APAC Procedural Handbook may be edited, where appropriate, to reflect these changes.

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aviation safety plans; and b) identify stakeholders that could be impacted by RASG SEIs within and outside the region, and develop an effective communication and coordination strategy with stakeholders.

7.2 ICAO Headquarters shall arrange a global coordination meeting between all RASG and PIRG chairpersons and secretaries on a biennial basis.