

**Task Force to Strengthen and Evolve Existing Regional Mechanisms for
Regional Cooperation, towards Capability and Capacity Building and
Technical Assistance (RCM TF)**

**Record of Discussion of 12th Meeting
Virtual Format, 4 Sep 2023**

1. The 12th RCM TF meeting was held on 4 Sep 2023 virtually. The list of meeting participants is in **Appendix 1**.
2. In his opening remarks, ICAO APAC Regional Director (APAC RD) reiterated the importance of regional platforms, like the RCM TF, in progressing civil aviation priorities in the region. Chair thanked the States/Administrations for their active participation and noted the timeliness of the RCM TF/12 meeting in the lead up to the DGCA/58 meeting in Dhaka, Bangladesh in Oct 2023.

Agenda 1: Adoption of Provisional Agenda

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

Agenda 2: Adoption of Record of Discussion of RCM TF/11 Meeting

4. The meeting adopted the record of discussion of the RCM TF/11 meeting as attached in **Appendix 3**.

Agenda 3: Matters Arising from RCM TF/11 Meeting

5. The meeting noted the matters arising from RCM TF/11 meeting as attached in **Appendix 4**.

Agenda 4: Examination of Feasibility of an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission (APCAC)

Agenda 4a: Discussion of Part 1 workstream – led by Australia

6. Australia, as lead of Part I of the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC on information gathering of civil aviation commissions, presented its report as attached in **Appendix 5**.
7. APAC RD highlighted the value of the DGCA Conference as an established platform that had achieved some success. He proposed strengthening the remit of the DGCA Conference as an option to be considered in the feasibility study.
8. Singapore suggested that statement relating to the region meeting ‘some of the preconditions’ might be premature, as there was no clear consensus on the preconditions across the region. New Zealand proposed that the phrasing could be amended to emphasise how the APAC region

would have ‘similar/ parallel conditions’ that had led to the development of Civil Aviation Commissions (CAC) in other regions.

9. Australia provided further refinements, noting that the presence of ‘similar conditions’ did not necessarily lead to the formation of an APCAC. Singapore then undertook to provide its proposed amendments to Australia on the specific wordings on the preconditions.

Agenda 4b: Discussion of Part 2 Workstream – led by New Zealand

10. New Zealand, as lead of Part II of the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC on identifying the problems and opportunities, presented its report as attached in **Appendix 6**.

11. Key discussion points on Section B of the paper included:

- i. Paragraph 12b – China suggested that the examples provided should be limited to aviation specific examples.
- ii. Paragraphs 14-15 – Singapore suggested to pitch safety and security risks as a stand-alone challenge. New Zealand noted that the intention of these paragraphs is to highlight how inaction in mitigating existing challenges would compound safety challenges faced by the region. Singapore also suggested for paragraph 15e to be listed as a challenge under paragraph 14.
- iii. Paragraph 16 – Australia suggested that the report should emphasise ‘common needs’ rather than the region’s diversity. New Zealand clarified that ‘common interests’, might not actually span the whole region (particularly for smaller States) and that the paper’s reference to the region’s diversity underpinned the region’s commitment to serving a range of needs, as opposed to what is most ‘common’.

12. Key discussion points on Section C of the paper included:

- i. Paragraphs 22-23 – Chair said that the current mechanisms were not necessarily technical in nature. Forums like the DGCA were increasingly discussing strategic issues such as sustainability, innovation and emerging technologies.
- ii. Paragraph 25 – Singapore asked to clarify the objective of ‘influencing the ICAO at all levels’, noting that the current framing was broad. Australia proposed that the phrasing be refined to ‘influence the strategic objectives, priorities and resourcing of ICAO’. Additionally, Chair proposed that subpoints under paragraph 25 be reordered such that points two and three are prioritised over the first sub-point.
- iii. Paragraphs 28-29 – Chair noted that the options were presented as a continuum and proposed these be reframed as separate options. Some States also proposed removing the ‘status quo’ option. However, on New Zealand’s advice, the Taskforce agreed to retain the

option as part of good policy practice, New Zealand agreed to make amendments to the diagrammatic depiction of options under paragraph 28.

- iv. Paragraph 30 – Chair proposed it be fleshed out to include APAC RD’s comments about the potential of enhancing existing mechanisms such as the DGCA Conference.
- v. Paragraph 32 – Singapore suggested the removal of the table, proposing that it might be more suited for the Part III report. Japan added that the table could be misleading, given that it offered no concrete examples for the various options.
- vi. Paragraphs 33-34 – Chair noted that the preconditions were framed as a progression, rather than being presented as separate preconditions. Singapore undertook to provide alternative phrasing to New Zealand.
- vii. APAC RD reiterated the value of the DGCA Conference but suggested that the forum still faced considerable difficulty in implementation of the Conference outcomes and priorities. In his view, a DGCA Secretariat, which liaises directly with ICAO, would be best placed to support the implementation of Conference action items. The U.S. suggested the region could focus on ‘developing a strong executive arm’ rather than ‘duplicating strategy forums’. This point was seconded by Bangladesh.

Agenda 5a: Progress Report on implementation roadmap of RCM TF including examination of feasibility of Asia Pacific CAC

- 13. Singapore presented an overview of the progress report on the Implementation Roadmap of RCM TF. (attached in **Appendix 7**)
- 14. Australia proposed that the ‘Needs Survey’ be included within the text of the report itself for ease of reference.
- 15. Australia and New Zealand suggested that the progress report be tabled as two separate papers at the DGCA Conference, with the second dedicated to updating APCAC feasibility study. Part I report of the APCAC feasibility study should be attached to this paper.
- 16. Chair proposed that a drafting group, consisting of Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore, be created to support the development of the second paper. Australia undertook to circulate a draft of the separated papers in the first instance.

Afternote: The APRO Secretariat agreed on 14 September 2023 for RCM TF to present two papers (in a combined presentation), at the upcoming DCGA Conference.

Agenda 5b: Framework for Training Academies in the Region to Cooperate in the Provision of Training in Key Areas

17. Singapore presented a draft discussion paper on the Regional Training Cooperation Framework to enable training academies in the region to cooperate in the provision of aviation training in key areas. (attached in **Appendix 8**)
18. APAC RD indicated his full support for the paper. He further recommended that the region organise the Asia Pacific aviation training symposium as a tangible action item under the framework. The U.S. endorsed the idea of a region-specific training symposium.
19. Australia noted that in practice, the vast majority of training support was provided in-situ (e.g., one to one training on the ground, via bilateral exchanges), rather than at training academies, and proposed that this point be more clearly reflected in the paper.
20. Singapore agreed to circulate the draft paper for comments of the RCM TF members.

Agenda 6: Other business

21. No further discussion took place under this agenda.