

Examination of the Feasibility of an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission

Part III: Assessment of the feasibility of an APCAC

(Presented by the Working Group led by Singapore, comprising Australia, China, Hong Kong China, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, and United States of America)

Executive Summary:

The 57th Conference of Directors-General of Civil Aviation, Asia and Pacific Regions (DCGA) tasked the Regional Coordination Mechanisms Task Force (RCM TF) to examine the feasibility of an Asia-Pacific Regional Civil Aviation Commission (APCAC). The RCM TF has approached this task in three parts:

- Part I: Information-gathering about a Civil Aviation Commission (CAC).
- Part II: Identifying the challenges and opportunities.
- Part III: Assessment of the feasibility of an APCAC.

This report focuses on **Part III: Assessment of the feasibility of an APCAC.**

Considering the insights gained from Parts I and II, this report proposes several initiatives under the two options endorsed by DGCA/58 – strengthening existing mechanisms and developing new mechanisms.

A five-criteria evaluation methodology has been used to consider the benefits that each initiative would bring to the region, and whether the initiatives could address the challenges and help realise the opportunities of the region, as outlined in Part II. These criteria include i) effectiveness in achieving priorities of the region, ii) inclusiveness of the region, iii) ease of implementation, iv) cost / resource required and v) timeframe of initiative.

A summary of the insights gained from all three Parts of the Feasibility Study is provided, together with the recommendation to DGCA/59 on the way forward for the region.

Section 1: Recap of Parts I and II

1.1 Impetus for the Feasibility Study

- 1.1.1 At the 57th DGCA Conference (DGCA/57), Bangladesh and the Republic of Korea had presented Discussion Papers DP/11a/3 and DP/11a/4¹ respectively on the proposed formation of an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission (APCAC).
- 1.1.2 DGCA/57 noted that the feasibility of an APCAC had been studied before by the APCAC Task Force. A feasibility study had concluded in 2017 at DGCA/54 that there was insufficient basis to establish an APCAC. DGCA/54 had agreed then, to establish under Action-level item DGCA 54/25, a new Task Force (RCM Task Force) to focus exclusively on strengthening and evolving existing regional mechanisms for regional cooperation, towards capability and capacity building and technical assistance.
- 1.1.3 The DGCA/57 agreed to entrust the RCM TF to examine the feasibility of an APCAC as part of its work program. Please see DGCA Action Item 57/63:

While acknowledging the Discussion Papers from the Republic of Korea and Bangladesh and noting that:

- a) increasing the future level of Asia Pacific membership on the ICAO Council and ratification had been responded to by the Conference in the Action-level Item 57/61 and Action-level Item 57/62;
- b) the Regional Cooperation Mechanisms (RCM) Task Force is resuming its work (reference Action-level Item 57/60) to continue its current work program;
- c) the priority for the region should be the recovery of aviation in the current circumstances;

The Conference:

- a) encouraged Bangladesh and other States/Administrations to join the RCM Taskforce; and

¹ Action Items for DGCA57/DP/11a/3, presented by Bangladesh:

- a) Urge the States/Administrations to establish the Asia-Pacific Civil Aviation Commission, on the condition that each Member State will enjoy equal rights in terms of participation and representation at the ICAO Council in Part III on a rotational basis; and
- b) Encourage the States/Administrations to ensure that the Presidency of the Commission should be on a rotational basis, with each State serving one (1) term of three (3) years.

Action Items for DGCA57/DP/11a/4, presented by Republic of Korea

- a) Support the plan to establish the Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission;
- b) Support the proposal that the establishment of the Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission be first pursued with the member countries that agree to the establishment; and
- c) Support the proposal for the composition and operation of the working level Task Force.

- b) entrusted the RCM Taskforce as part of its work program to include examination of the feasibility of an APCAC and report on progress to the next DGCA Conference.

1.2 Priorities of the APAC region

1.2.1 The priorities of the APAC region may be informed by the work in Parts I and II of the feasibility study. The priorities seek to address the challenges and realise the opportunities, working towards a safe, and secure aviation ecosystem while addressing emerging issues.

1.2.2 From Part I of the feasibility study, which was endorsed at the DGCA/58 in October 2023, States in the region are increasingly in alignment on:

- a) acknowledgement that the status quo does not suit the needs of the region;
- b) consideration of more structured coordination and cooperation on strategic policy and implementation support, as well as directions that could help address the needs of the region; and,
- c) commitment to examining the feasibility of a forum to address the needs of the region, including the objectives of such a forum and the resourcing required.

1.2.3 Part II of the feasibility study has identified a range of complex challenges facing the region. At a high level, these include the following:

- a) The APAC region is one of the fastest growing aviation economies in the world, although this growth is not even across the region.
- b) Emerging technologies in aviation are advancing rapidly and are providing new and unknown challenges.
- c) The need for international aviation to reduce its environmental impact. As the sector responds, such as by adopting the use of sustainable aviation fuels, new electric propulsion systems etc.
- d) Continuing to build capacity and capability across the region.
- e) Effectively enhancing regional cooperation and collaboration with finite resources and gaining ICAO support for assisting with specific regional priorities.

1.2.4 Part II has identified several opportunities arising from these challenges. They are to:

DRAFT – for discussion at RCM TF/14

- a) enhance its collaboration and coordination to assist with mitigating challenges,
- b) embrace the diversity of States and draw on differences as a strength, not a weakness, to further enhance collaboration, coordination, and innovation,
- c) ensure there are effective assistance and capacity-building mechanisms in place to improve aviation safety and security across the region.

1.3 Options agreed to be considered for the Examination of the Feasibility of an APCAC

1.3.1 The DGCA/58 noted the preliminary insights and findings of the work done by the RCM TF in examining the feasibility of an APCAC and endorsed the options “strengthening existing mechanisms” and “developing new mechanisms” to be considered in the final phase of the work to examine the feasibility of an APCAC.

a) Strengthening existing mechanisms

There are significant opportunities to enhance existing mechanisms, to enable them to address existing issues and emerging issues from the challenges and opportunities faced by the region. All States/Administrations would be required to commit to these enhancements through active and regular participation and commitment of resources where appropriate.

b) Developing new mechanisms

New mechanisms can be developed that stand alongside existing enhanced mechanisms. One example of such a mechanism could be the formation of an APCAC. The region must agree to the establishment of these new mechanisms including commitments to fully participate, resource, and formalise such mechanisms as necessary.

Section 2: Potential initiatives under each option

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Two types of mechanism are used in the region which are determined by the content of discussion, level of participation and desired outcomes. These mechanisms have been identified in Part II of the Feasibility Study and can be broadly split into **high-level** mechanisms and **domain-specific** mechanisms.

a) **High-level** mechanisms typically involve strategic / policy level discussion and asks for a participation by senior aviation officials across all five of ICAO's strategic objectives. The outcome is to align, at a top-level, the priorities and action-level items of the region by reference to ICAO's strategic objectives, which are defined at a global level. The ICAO Asia and Pacific Regional Office (APRO) supports these mechanisms. Examples of these mechanisms include the following:

- i. APAC Ministerial Conference
- ii. Directors General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Conference
- iii. APAC Air Navigation Service Providers' Committee
- iv. Regional Coordination Mechanisms Task Force (RCM TF) **[to be discussed]**

b) **Domain-specific** mechanism typically involve technical / operational level discussion and asks for participation of subject-matter experts. The outcome is to plan, operationalise and maintain initiatives that foster the implementation of regional technical/operational-level priorities within the broader context of ICAO's global plans. The Asia and Pacific Regional Sub-office and the Pacific Liaison Office for Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) support these mechanisms. Examples of these mechanisms include the following:

- i. Asia/Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG)
- ii. Regional Aviation Safety Group Asia and Pacific Regions (RASG-APAC)
- iii. Regional Aviation Security Coordination Forum (RASCF)
- iv. TRAINAIR Plus Programme
- v. Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programmes (COSCAP)

vi. Cooperative Aviation Security Programme – Asia Pacific (CASP-AP)

2.1.2 Beyond the mechanisms listed above, there are existing State-to-State relationships – bilateral and multilateral mechanisms - and State-to-ICAO relationships. Please refer to Annex A for the list of mechanisms, and each mechanism's objectives.

2.1.3 Both types of mechanisms have an important role to play in achieving the priorities of the region. These mechanisms work together in a bigger ecosystem to ensure that strategic / policy level discussion translates into technical / operational action items, that will positively impact the region.

2.2 *Gaps in existing mechanisms*

Existing mechanisms have served the region and have shown their usefulness. Nevertheless, as priorities of the region change with the evolving aviation landscape, and as new challenges and opportunities emerge, there is strong impetus to review existing mechanisms and explore new mechanisms to address these areas, including:

- a) **Increasing commitment and effort to address current priorities.** Long-standing mechanisms need to be kept relevant to upcoming trends to prepare the region for future challenges and opportunities. This ensures that the existing mechanisms continue to be fit-for-purpose as we consider developing new mechanisms.
- b) **Preserving inclusiveness and unity.** As we advance priorities, there is a need to ensure that views from all States/Administrations are heard and considered, and benefits from proposed solutions are scalable and are achievable by all States/Administrations. Importantly, we value collective buy-in and consensus building, avoiding fragmentation, and preserving unity within a diverse region in terms of culture, politics, economics, and differences in aviation priorities.
- c) **Enhancing the Asia Pacific's regional voice.** While acknowledging the differences in needs and priorities between States/Administrations, and the value of consensus, there is room for a collective position for areas of key and/or common needs and priorities, to garner support and greater influence at international settings, such as international meetings where other regional bodies often present collective views on behalf of their region.

2.3 *Proposed initiatives to strengthen existing mechanisms*

2.3.1 As a pre-condition agreed at DGCA/58, All States/Administrations would be required to commit to these enhancements through active and regular participation and commitment of resources where appropriate.

a) Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Civil Aviation (APACMC)

The APACMC is a recent mechanism, with the second Conference scheduled for September 2024. There is currently no set frequency for the APACMC, with the second Conference held six years after the first Conference in 2018, in part due to COVID-19. To date the APACMC has sought Ministerial endorsement to a high-level declaration focused on regional action towards achieving ICAO's global strategic objectives. This may provide a platform to encourage States' adoption of these objectives. Due to the recent initiation of this mechanism, minimal enhancements had been proposed for now.

Proposed Enhancements:

- i. Establish APACMC as a meeting held at agreed intervals with an agreed declaration at each meeting.

b) Directors-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Conference

DGCA is an annual conference which gathers the region's Directors-General (DGs) of Civil Aviation, with participation of industry partners, to discuss a range of issues including emerging needs and individual priorities. Regional groups, such as the APANPIRG and RASG-APAC, report their work at the DGCA Conference. The Conference seeks to provide directions to implement ICAO priorities.

Proposed enhancements:

Before the DGCA

- i. Refine the agenda of the DGCA Conference to have sharpened focus on key issues of regional interest, working towards defining the high-level strategic aviation priorities of the region, including discussion of papers and topics to be tabled at ICAO forums by States and/or the region collectively.
- ii. Enhance the role of DGCA Conference to facilitate inter-grouping coordination of the current domain-level mechanisms, including the APANPIRG-RASG coordination meeting, to oversee and help the region achieve its priorities.
- iii. Organise a meeting between DGs and/or their appointed representatives and the ICAO APRO to curate agenda items, topics and key issues to be discussed at the DGCA Conference.

During the DGCA

- iv. Establish a closed-door session that involves only DGs and/or their appointed representatives to discuss and agree, where possible, on APAC positions on priorities of the region, key and emerging issues.

DRAFT – for discussion at RCM TF/14

- v. Include an agenda item for the Montreal Group² and/or APAC Air Navigation Commissioners to apprise the DGCA Conference on key discussions held at ICAO HQ which may have implications on the region.

After the DGCA

- vi. Set up a team to support the running of the DGCA Conference, including setting agenda, putting up Working Papers / Information Papers, tracking action items, and organising relevant meetings. The team will also ensure that the action items are followed up, follow-ups, in preparation for the next DGCA Conference.

c) Regional Training

A variety of aviation training in the region involves the ICAO APRO, States/Administrations and a number of training academic institutions including dedicated training academies.

There is a need to focus on the region's priorities, one of which is to improve the levels of Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme Effective Implementation within the region. The DGCA/58 endorsed the proposed regional training cooperation framework, which was presented by the working group consisting of Singapore, the Republic of Korea and the United States.

Proposed enhancements:

- i. Implement the regional training cooperation framework for training academies in the region to exchange information, and facilitate cooperation in the provision of training in key and emerging areas, leveraging on the existing ICAO TRAINAIR Plus programme.
- ii. Organise an annual regional training symposium for relevant stakeholders to meet and advance training related interests for the region.
- iii. Develop a train-the-trainer programme to increase the pool of instructors from the region for resilience and to ensure continuous pipeline of trained aviation professionals in the region.

d) ICAO Asia and Pacific Regional Office (APRO)

The ICAO APRO fosters the planning and implementation by States of the ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), and use of guidance

² The Montreal Group currently comprises 7 APAC Council Representatives on the ICAO Council, namely Australia, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, ROK and Singapore.

DRAFT – for discussion at RCM TF/14

materials. It also provides the Secretariat support for most mechanisms in the region, spanning across high-level and domain-based mechanisms.

Proposed enhancements:

- i. Encourage States/Administrations in the region to support the ICAO APRO by providing secondees.
- ii. Support ICAO's initiatives to meet the region's priorities (e.g. COSCAP and Combined Action Team Mission) by providing subject matter experts where appropriate.
- iii. Encourage States/Administrations to provide voluntary funds in areas which will help achieve the region's priorities.
- iv. Seek additional resource allocation from ICAO HQ for the APRO to achieve its priorities for the region.

e) Regional Cooperation Mechanisms Task Force (RCM TF)

The RCM TF was established by DGCA largely to examine strengthening or updating existing regional arrangements and to complete its work with recommendations to the DGCA in this regard.

Proposed enhancements:

- i. Formalise the role of RCM TF as an ongoing mechanism where important or strategic issues related to regional cooperation could be discussed among senior aviation officials of States/Administrations, e.g. drafting of Ministerial Declaration.

2.4 Proposed initiatives to develop new mechanisms

- 2.4.1 As a pre-condition agreed at DGCA/58, the region must agree to the establishment of these new mechanisms including commitments to fully participate, resource, and formalise such mechanisms as necessary.

a) Formation of an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission (APCAC) with agreement from the region

An APCAC may be formed to coordinate matters which reflect the needs and priorities of the region, and facilitate regional positions, where possible, and garner support and greater influence at international settings. It could provide the platform for a regional voice. The objectives and key deliverables of a CAC is unique to each region and depends on the needs and priorities of the region. Details regarding the feasibility and potential for implementation of an APCAC will be examined in this report.

b) Montreal Group as a voice for the APAC region

The Montreal Group is an informal group comprising seven APAC Council Representatives, namely Australia, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, ROK and Singapore. Given its presence at ICAO HQ, it could communicate specific messages and the collective view on behalf of the region, with the agreement of DGCA Conference.

Section 3: Evaluation

3.1 *Introduction*

3.1.1 Referencing Parts I and II, this section evaluates the proposed initiatives against the needs and priorities of the region. Different initiatives will have different ease and timeframes for implementation. These are factors to be considered in deciding which initiatives should be pursued to achieve certain objectives. We need not rule out initiatives that are assessed to be difficult or take a long time to implement.

3.2 *Evaluation Methodology*

3.2.1 The initiatives outlined in paragraphs 0 and 0, would be evaluated against a series of criteria shown in paragraph 3.3.1 below. Where possible, both quantitative and qualitative substantiations would be used to illustrate insights. The intent is to compare various initiatives and recommend a set of initiatives for the region to undertake to best achieve its priorities. The initiatives can in fact be complementary rather than being set one against another.

3.3 *Evaluation Criteria*

3.3.1 There is a total of five evaluation criteria considered in this study:

- a) Effectiveness in addressing the challenges and realising the opportunities for the region
- b) Inclusiveness of the region
- c) Ease of implementation
- d) Cost / resource required
- e) Timeframe of initiative

3.3.2 Essentially, we seek to answer the following questions:

- a) Does it look like the initiative can do what the region wants it to do/what can the initiative do? (Scope)
- b) Does the initiative include the whole region/who is included? E.g. across Member States and domains (Inclusiveness)
- c) What will it take to do it and to participate? (Resources)

3.3.3 Effectiveness in addressing the challenges and realising the opportunities for the region. Any proposed initiative should directly address the challenges and opportunities faced by the region, as identified by Part II of the Feasibility Study. There are several aspects which may be considered under this evaluation criterion, such as:

- a) Retain and increase ICAO's support for the region in terms of resource allocation and priorities, and for the region to obtain better regional outcomes.
- b) Build capacity and capabilities within the region so as to enhance the levels of aviation safety, air navigation, security, facilitation, the environment and economic development within the region; and
- c) Build up regional readiness for the future by anticipating and addressing future challenges brought about by the changing aviation landscape.
- d) ...

3.3.4 Inclusiveness of the APAC region. The region is diverse, with some issues faced by each State/Administration different from the others. This must be considered as we seek to address challenges and realise opportunities of the region as a whole, to ensure that every State/Administration benefits in a way that addresses their unique circumstances. Therefore, unity and inclusiveness remain a fundamental criterion in the evaluation of initiatives. There are several aspects which may be considered under this evaluation criterion, such as:

- a) Whether the proposed initiatives fulfil the agreed pre-conditions:
 - i. Strengthening existing mechanisms - All States/Administrations would be required to commit to these enhancements through active and regular participation and commitment of resources where appropriate; and
 - ii. Developing new mechanisms - The region must agree to the establishment of these new mechanisms including commitments to fully participate, resource, and formalise such mechanisms as necessary.
- b) Whether the proposed initiatives cause or have the potential to cause fragmentation in the region.
- c) ...

3.3.5 Ease of implementation should be considered from a practical perspective. The lack of any factors indicated below would nullify efforts in implementing the proposed initiatives:

- a) Political will from States to consider and agree to implement proposed initiatives.

- b) Legal basis, where required, to support the proposed initiatives.
- c) Appropriate institutional arrangements and mechanisms which may be utilised to implement the proposed initiatives such that its outcomes are effectively achieved.
- d) ...

3.3.6 **Cost / resources required.** These should be justified against the potential benefits brought about by the initiative:

- a) Initial costs required to kickstart the proposed initiative, including start-up costs which may be once-off, e.g. infrastructure cost for offices, legal costs associated with setting up the initiative etc.
- b) Recurring costs required to sustain the proposed initiative, including operational costs, e.g. staff costs, man-hour commitment by States/Administrations to participate.
- c) Additional costs to States/Administrations, including travel costs, financial contributions, where applicable, including financial contributions on the part of States/Administrations, and opportunity costs should the effectiveness of one initiative be affected due to another.
- d) ...

3.3.7 **Timeframe of initiatives** should be considered, evaluated against when and how much the benefits would be reaped by States/Administrations in the region, e.g. short, medium or long term. This should be checked against the first criteria of effectiveness in addressing challenges and realising opportunities, and whether the gaps are addressed.

3.4 *Evaluation*

3.4.1 This section seeks to evaluate the proposed initiatives outlined in Paragraphs 0 and 0 under the two options – *strengthening existing mechanisms* and *developing new mechanisms*. The proposed initiatives under each option will be viewed and evaluated as a package, as far as possible.

3.4.2 Table 1 presents a summary of the evaluation of proposed initiatives against the criteria outlined. For example, for each evaluation criteria, an assessment matrix may be used, as below.

DRAFT – for discussion at RCM TF/14

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Criteria: Ease of implementation | Full commitment from all parties | Some commitment from all parties | Uncertain / lack of commitment from parties |
| | Easy | Moderate | Challenging |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Criteria: Cost / resources required | \$0 <i>(able to manage cost)</i> | ~\$50K / State / year | >\$100K / State / year |
| | Low | Medium | High |

| | | | |
|------------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| Criteria: Timeframe of Initiative | 1 – 2 years | 3 – 5 years | > 5 years |
| | Short | Medium | Long |

<to be further developed>

DRAFT – for discussion at RCM TF/14

Table 1: Summary of evaluation of proposed initiatives *(to be further populated with other initiatives, if any)*

| Proposed Initiatives Evaluation Criteria | Strengthening existing mechanisms | | | | Developing new mechanisms | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| | Strengthening ICAO mechanisms, | Strengthening training cooperation in the region | Strengthening the ICAO APAC Regional Office | | Developing an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission | |
| Effectiveness in addressing the challenges and realising the opportunities for the region | (High) Address priorities but may not address issues implemented by States/ Administrations (S/A) (i.e. from the ground) | (Medium) Training is a key enabler in advancing interests and address a longstanding priority to build up capabilities in safety and security oversight. | (Medium) Plays a pivotal role in the region. Would require resources to fulfil its mandate. | ... | (High) Platform to address priorities of the region. Need for agreement on the objectives and scope of the APCAC | ... |
| Inclusiveness of the region | (High) S/A already involved, but room to further enhance participation. | (Medium) S/A already involved indirectly through other mechanisms. To include training academies. | (High) S/A already have access to APRO, but room to improve engagement. | ... | (Medium - High) Crucial for consensus to be reached by the region as a pre-condition to avoid fragmentation. | ... |
| Ease of implementation | (Moderate) Requires agreement from the region, and to integrate into existing framework of mechanisms. | (Moderate) Requires coordination platforms, including their scopes, which involves the training academies. | (Challenging) Requires change in operating model to yield greater results on a sustained basis. | ... | (Challenging) Requires political will and treaty, followed by a detailed roadmap, and significant effort to discuss terms of reference, scope, etc. | ... |
| Cost and resources required | (Low) Additional manhours and resources may be required, but minimal costs associated with set-up of mechanism. | (Medium) Additional costs for new platforms, e.g. symposium and associated meetings. | (Medium) Additional costs to be borne by ICAO, or by S/A | ... | (High) Significant costs associated with set-up and running of an APCAC, and to obtain manpower to staff the APCAC. | ... |
| Timeframe of initiative | (Short – Medium) Depends on agreement by S/A and ICAO. Requires a few meetings to implement changes. | (Short – Medium) Training cooperation is already ongoing but requires formalisation and setting up of platforms. | (Medium - Long) May need long lead time to translate strengthening of ICAO APRO, to initiatives that benefits S/A. | ... | (Long) Long term given the significant work required. Benefits to be reaped only after APCAC reaches maturity. | ... |

3.4.3 Strengthening or adapting ICAO mechanisms, including Ministerial Conference, DGCA Conference, APANPIRG, RASG-APAC , Regional Cooperation Mechanism Task Force etc.

- 3.4.3.1 ICAO mechanisms play an important role as they determine the priorities of the region in relation to the global priorities. This is also the key platform to convey the region's collective views to ICAO and other States and international organisations. While this is important, ICAO mechanisms may not address fully the needs of the region, as these would need be implemented by the States/Administrations (i.e. from the ground). This may be addressed by enhancing mechanisms to allow States/Administrations to convey their respective needs.
- 3.4.3.2 Many States/Administrations in the region would already be involved in these existing mechanisms based on their participation. Nonetheless, participation rates should be further enhanced, including lowering the cost of participation by States/Administrations, and defining clearer terms of reference and deliverables for meetings.
- 3.4.3.3 Enhancements to these mechanisms would be based on an existing framework. Depending on the complexity of these initiatives, implementation might require agreement of the region, which could create challenges. It would also need to fit in the existing ecosystem of mechanisms, in alignment with ICAO's overall organisation structure.
- 3.4.3.4 If these enhancements require additional manhours and resources, costs may be involved, and these would be borne directly or indirectly by States/Administrations in the region. This would likely be minimal as mechanisms are already in progress.
- 3.4.3.5 The timeframe of these initiatives would also depend on achieving commitment and consensus in the region, for e.g. DGCA Conference.

3.4.4 Strengthening training cooperation in the region

- 3.4.4.1 Training is a key enabler in advancing the region's interest in capacity and capability development in aviation and would cascade to benefits in other priorities. Enhancing training cooperation in the region would make technical assistance and training available to a much wider target audience. This would specifically serve to address a longstanding priority of the region to build up capabilities in safety and security oversight among States/Administrations.
- 3.4.4.2 Consideration will also need to be given for enhanced regional training cooperation in other areas of aviation such as air navigation, facilitation, economic development, and the environment.

DRAFT – for discussion at RCM TF/14

- 3.4.4.3 Most States/Administrations in the region are currently involved in some form of training and competency building initiative. Current mechanisms such as COSCAPs, and the deployment of the Pacific Liaison Officer also serve this purpose. There is also a need to involve training academies, which may not be as involved as the civil aviation authorities of States/Administrations.
- 3.4.4.4 With existing platforms available, implementing enhancements to training cooperation would focus on establishing coordination platforms, determining the areas of collaboration, and bringing in relevant stakeholders.
- 3.4.4.5 Costs would likely be associated with additional platforms and meetings for coordination purposes. Should a symposium be organised, this may contribute to the cost.
- 3.4.4.6 The timeframe of this mechanism would be within short to medium term, noting that training cooperation is already ongoing through existing platforms. However, building up a significant pool of regional trainers will take time.

3.4.5 Strengthening the ICAO APAC Regional Office

- 3.4.5.1 Given its pivotal role in the region, the ICAO APRO needs to be well resourced to fulfil its mandate. This will be increasingly important given the expected increase in aviation activities in the region.
- 3.4.5.2 All States/Administrations would have access to the APRO, but more may be done to achieve greater participation.
- 3.4.5.3 While the APRO is well-established, strengthening the APRO may require a change in operating model to yield greater results on a sustained basis, rather than a once-off effort. The APRO would need to be empowered take on more, subject to the agreement of the region.
- 3.4.5.4 Additional cost, if any, would be either borne by ICAO, or supported by States/Administrations.
- 3.4.5.5 The timeframe of this initiative depends on when the resources and mandate are received by APRO.

3.4.6 Developing an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission

- 3.4.6.1 For this study, we envisage an APCAC similar to those established in other regions. Referencing Part I, it should seek to fulfil most of the roles:

DRAFT – for discussion at RCM TF/14

- a) conducting research and preparing studies on economic, regulatory, legal, technical and security aspects of civil aviation and making recommendations;
- b) coordinating Member States' positions in relation to ICAO activities, e.g. for ICAO Assemblies;
- c) contributing to the works of various ICAO panels and working groups;
- d) monitoring changes in civil aviation and considering Member States' options to respond;
- e) promoting implementation of SARPs and regional air navigation plans;
- f) coordinating or developing capability and capacity building and training initiatives;
- g) managing relationships with other civil aviation actors, including ICAO and other CACs, and civil aviation authorities, and industry;
- h) conducting research and preparing studies on economic, regulatory, legal, technical and security aspects of civil aviation and making recommendations;
- i) coordinating Member States' positions in relation to ICAO activities, e.g. for ICAO Assemblies;
- j) contributing to the works of various ICAO panels and working groups;
- k) monitoring changes in civil aviation and considering Member States' options to respond;
- l) promoting implementation of SARPs and regional air navigation plans;
- m) coordinating or developing capability and capacity building and training initiatives; and,
- n) managing relationships with other civil aviation actors, including ICAO and other CACs, and civil aviation authorities, and industry.

3.4.6.2 If formed, an APCAC can provide a platform to address the priorities of the region. There is a need to identify the building blocks leading to the formation of an APCAC.

3.4.6.3 Any new mechanism like an APCAC would require consensus from States. It is crucial for consensus to be reached by the region as a pre-condition for

DRAFT – for discussion at RCM TF/14

an APCAC, to avoid fragmentation, which would not be in the region's interest.

- 3.4.6.4 There are challenges in implementation, with a significant hurdle being the amount of political will required to establish the APCAC, including the conclusion of a treaty. Thereafter, further work is required to develop building blocks leading to the establishment of an APCAC. Significant effort would be expected to discuss and agree on the various aspects of an APCAC, such as terms of reference, infrastructure set up, working arrangements, and operationalisation. It is also necessary to examine how the APCAC would interface with existing working arrangements, including with ICAO APRO.
- 3.4.6.5 Correspondingly, there would be associated costs with the establishment of an APCAC. There would be a significant sum associated with the setting up of an APCAC, followed by a recurrent cost to sustain the APCAC. Like other CACs, these would likely depend on contributions by States. In terms of manpower, States/Administrations would also need to provide secondees to staff the newly formed APCAC.
- 3.4.6.6 With the above considerations, the timeframe for the establishment of an APCAC would be in the long term. Any benefits would only be realised after the APCAC has reached a certain level of maturity.

3.5 *Summary of Evaluation*

<to be discussed>

Section 4: Conclusion

4.1 *Summary of Insights*

- 4.1.1 The region recognises the need to move beyond the status quo and explore strengthening existing mechanisms and developing new mechanisms. Both options serve to achieve the region's priorities, but there are necessary considerations to be made.
- 4.1.2 These have been elaborated in the evaluation criteria. The balance between costs, ease of implementation and inclusiveness of the region should be obtained and matched against the timeframe and the effectiveness of addressing challenges and realising the opportunities of the region.
- 4.1.3 Timeframe is important as it determine when benefits may be reaped. The implementation of the initiatives could then be staged based on when we expect benefits to be reaped by the region.

4.2 *Recommendation*

<to be discussed>

ANNEX A: List of Existing Mechanisms in the Asia and Pacific Region

| Mechanism | Objective |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| High-level | |
| Directors General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Conference | <p>The Conference of Directors General of Civil Aviation Asia and Pacific Regions (more commonly known as the DGCA Conference) is an annual meeting with rotational hosting responsibilities. The aim of the conference is to supplement ICAO processes by bringing APAC Directors General together on an annual basis to discuss strategic and policy matters affecting aviation safety and security across the region.</p> <p>The DGCA Conference gives the opportunity for all member States to be represented.</p> |
| APAC Ministerial Conference | <p>Established to provide a forum for Ministers and their representatives to discuss and decide strategies for managing future safety and air navigation enhancements within the region.</p> |
| Regional Coordination Mechanisms Task Force (RCM TF) | <p>Following the conclusion of the first APCAC feasibility study that was prepared in 2016-2017, the 54th DGCA Conference (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 2017) agreed to establish a new Taskforce to focus exclusively on strengthening and evolving existing regional mechanisms for regional cooperation, towards capability and capacity building and technical assistance. The TF was reconvened in the second half of 2022 to resume its work after a pause due to the pandemic.</p> |
| ICAO APAC Regional Office | <p>The primary role of the ICAO APAC Regional Office is to foster the planning and implementation by States of the following ICAO provisions: International Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), Procedures for Air Navigation Services (PANS), and Regional Air Navigation Planning, for the safety, security, and efficiency of air transport. The Regional Office also provides many secretariat services for other mechanisms (such as DGCA and RCM TF).</p> |

| Mechanism | Objective |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Domain-level | |
| Regional Aviation Safety Group – Asia Pacific (RASG-APAC) | RASG-APAC was endorsed at the 47th DGCA Conference (Macao, China, 2010) as a focal point to ensure harmonisation and coordination of efforts aimed at reducing aviation safety risks for the APAC region ³ . |
| Asia-Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG) | <p>APANPIRG was established in 1991 by the ICAO Council, and seeks to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure continuous and coherent development of the Asia/Pacific Regional Air Navigation Plan and other relevant regional documentation in a manner that is harmonized with adjacent regions, consistent with ICAO SARPs and Global Air Navigation Plan (Doc 9750) and reflecting global requirements. • facilitate the implementation of air navigation systems and services as identified in the Asia/Pacific Regional Air Navigation Plan with due observance to the primacy of air safety, regularity, and efficiency; and • identify and address specific deficiencies in the air navigation field. |
| TRAINAIR Plus Programme | Aims to assist with achieving the ICAO goal of improving the safety and efficiency of air transport through the establishment, maintenance and monitoring of high standards of training and competency of aviation personnel on a world-wide basis and in a cost-effective manner. |
| ASEAN Air Transport Meetings | <p>Made up of Southeast Asian States, and comprises of various sub-working groups under the wider ASEAN Air Transport Working Group. These sub-groups include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASEAN Air Transport Economic Cooperation Sub-Working Group • ASEAN Air Transport Technical Cooperation Sub-Working Group • ASEAN Air Transport Sectoral Negotiations • ASEAN Transport Search and Rescue Forum |

³ [Annual Safety Report Asia Pacific Region 2017 \(icao.int\)](https://www.icao.int/publications/default.aspx?publicationid=9999)

DRAFT – for discussion at RCM TF/14

| Mechanism | Objective |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| COSCAPs | <p>The Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programmes (COSCAPs) are designed to enhance the safety and efficiency of air transport through the establishment of a self-sustaining sub-regional cooperative entity providing technical services in safety oversight to Member States.</p> <p>COSCAPs are implemented by ICAO and comprise DGCAs of participating States, ICAO representatives, and other organisations.</p> |
| Appointment of an ICAO Pacific Liaison Officer | <p>A Pacific Liaison Officer was appointed earlier this year in recognition of the distinct sustainable development and ICAO compliance challenges which many States in this region presently face,</p> <p>This post will serve as the key coordination point on civil aviation development matters among the PSIDS themselves, ICAO's APAC Regional Office and Capacity Development and Implementation bureau, and applicable regional and international organizations, including Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO).</p> |
| Others | |
| Existing State-to-State multilateral relationships and bilateral mechanisms | Established by States on a case-by-case basis. |
| State-to-ICAO relationships | Established between States and ICAO on a case-by-case basis. |