

**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 14th Meeting
In-person meeting, 4-5 July 2024**

1. The 14th RCM TF meeting was held on 4 – 5 July 2024 in-person at ICAO APAC Regional Office (APRO). The list of meeting participants is in **Appendix 1**.
2. ICAO APAC Regional Director, Mr Tao Ma, welcomed RCM TF members to Bangkok for the meeting. Mr Ma expressed sincere gratitude to the task force for their contribution to regional cooperation, particularly on the regional training cooperation.
3. In his opening remarks, Chair, Mr Tay Tiang Guan appreciated the work done by the various task force members and workstreams since the inception of RCM TF. He noted the good progress by Part 3 workstream on the feasibility study of the APCAC, which would enable the task force to discuss possible recommendations of the study at this meeting.
4. Vice Chair, Mr John Kay, expressed in his opening remarks that the 14th meeting of the RCM TF was at the critical moment to provide insights. The task force's recommendations to the DGCA Conference would inform pivotal decisions on the long-discussed topics crucial to improving regional cooperation.

Agenda 1: Adoption of Provisional Agenda

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

Agenda 2: Adoption of Record of Discussion of RCM TF/13 Meeting

6. The meeting adopted the record of discussion of the RCM TF/13 meeting as attached in **Appendix 3**.

Agenda 3: Matters Arising from RCM TF/13 Meeting

7. The meeting noted the matters arising from RCM TF/13 meeting as attached in **Appendix 4**.

Agenda 4: Implementation Roadmap

Agenda 4a: Status updates on Recommendations in Implementation Roadmap – led by Singapore

8. The meeting noted the status updates for the Implementation Roadmap, as attached in **Appendix 5**, with highlights as follows:
 - a. Recommendation A.2, A.3, C.1, C.2 and E.3: These Recommendations were marked as closed as agreed in RCM TF/13 Meeting.
 - b. Recommendation D.1: The Part 3 of the Feasibility Study would be completed by the next RCM TF meeting in August 2024. The RCM TF envisaged to present the final report at DGCA/59 in October 2024.

Agenda 4b: Discussion on Recommendation B.2 (Training Framework and DGCA/58 Action Item 58/37) – led by Working Group (Republic of Korea (ROK), Singapore, USA)

9. ICAO APRO issued a State Letter on 20 June 2024 to call for States' nominations to the Regional Training Cooperation Framework (RTCF) Working Group together with the document outlining the implementation and the objectives of the Framework.

10. The nomination for the RTCF Working Group was scheduled to close on 4 July 2024. As of the discussion, 5 States/Administrations submitted 9 nominees, as attached in **Appendix 6**.
11. In preparation for the work ahead, Chair encouraged RCM TF members to submit their nominations for the Working Group as soon as possible. Australia, China, Malaysia and ROK expressed their intention to submit nominations. The meeting agreed to extend the deadline for nominations to 12 July 2024.
12. Australia noted the composition of the submitted nominations and requested that the Working Group cover other types of aviation training such as sustainability, innovation and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence. Chair agreed and said that the training should cater to both the needs of the CAAs and the industry. In addition, the Working Group could look into ICAO RD's suggestion to include initiatives that promote Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP).
13. Chair encouraged the RTCF Working Group to convene its first meeting within the next two months, so that an update could be reported at the DGCA Conference in October 2024.

Agenda 4c: Discussion on Recommendation E.4 (Survey on Enhancing Communication Channels) – led by New Zealand

14. New Zealand expressed its appreciation to the drafting group which comprised members from China, New Zealand and Singapore, for their input to the draft outline of the paper on enhancing communication channels, planned for the DGCA Conference.
15. The meeting noted ICAO DRD's comments that the paper should also include recommendations on how States could improve communications with ICAO for example in the management of State Letters, in addition to what ICAO could do.
16. New Zealand shared the draft outline of the paper as attached in **Appendix 7** and encouraged members who were interested in joining the drafting group to contact New Zealand at earliest convenience. The draft outline was uploaded onto the meeting website for task force members' reference.
17. Chair guided the drafting group to complete the paper for endorsement at the next RCM TF meeting.

Agenda 5: Examination of Feasibility of Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission (APCAC)

Agenda 5a: Discussion of Part 3 Workstream – led by Singapore

18. Singapore, as lead of Part 3 of the feasibility study of an APCAC, presented its draft report as attached in **Appendix 8**.
19. Singapore provided an overview of the draft report to explain the content contained in each section and the approach taken. Chair emphasized that the draft provided the meeting an opportunity for further guidance and discussion so that the Part 3 working group could move forward to finalise its report.
20. The meeting agreed that, in the Part 3 report, the wordings and references should align with those used in Part 1 and Part 2, and avoid the use of new terminologies where possible.
21. The meeting agreed that the two options (i.e. strengthening existing mechanisms and developing new ones) were not mutually exclusive. There was strong support for strengthening existing mechanisms and agreement for enhanced regional cooperation regardless of whether an APCAC would be formed.
22. Australia expressed the view that the APAC region would not necessarily need to have a CAC that was similar to that in other regions and suggested that the APAC region could develop an effective middle ground mechanism with reasonable cost and resources involved.

23. Vice Chair guided that the context of the Part 3 report should be clear with no ambiguity that could be subjected to the reader's interpretation. The report should state clearly the assumptions and criteria applied in assessing the proposed initiatives. It was important to consider pros and cons of various initiatives.
24. The meeting agreed to put in a clear definition of "feasibility" in the report. The meeting acknowledged that all options were feasible under certain assumptions and conditions, and guided that the assessment of the options should focus on balancing the challenges and benefits that associated with each option together with the operating environment and pre-conditions of implementing such an option within the region.
25. During the section-by-section review, suggestions were made on some of the use of words to better align with Parts 1 and 2, and to prevent misinterpretation. These included:
 - a. "Improvements" instead of "Gaps". This was for consistency with the text which described areas for improvement, rather than gaps that were currently lacking.
 - b. "Considerations" instead of "Evaluation Criteria". This was to broaden the definition as several points were not strictly criteria, and instead were more implementation-related consideration, e.g. timeframe.
 - c. "Short, medium and long term" instead of "Timeframe". This was to clarify how timeframe would apply in the assessment, given that the timeframe of an initiative could be broad and subject to interpretation.
 - d. "Assessment" instead of "Evaluation". This was for consistency with the title of the Part 3 report on "Assessment of the feasibility of an APCAC."
 - e. "Needs" instead of "Priorities". This was to prevent confusion with priorities as agreed at a formal setting, rather than needs as raised by States/Administrations.
26. The meeting agreed to remove the enhancement of the RCM TF as an initiative in the Part 3 report, given that a task force would be subjected to further changes once the task assigned has been completed. Also, task forces should be considered in general under ICAO mechanisms.
27. For Section 2, Para. 2.3.1 b) of the draft regarding the proposed enhancements for DGCA Conference, the meeting agreed to the proposal of establishing a dedicated team with representatives from various States to work alongside the ICAO APRO which is DGCA Secretariat, to support the DGCA Conference, including to set the agenda and key topics to facilitate the discussion of needs and priorities of the region. The team would also be responsible for tracking the progress of the related action items arising from the DGCA Conference.
28. The meeting noted that the Montreal Group had been updating the DGCA Conference of issues relevant to the region and agreed to further enhance communication between the Montreal Group and the DGCA Conference. Australia, however, noted that the Montreal Group was an informal grouping and it was unclear whether it could be requested by the DGCA Conference to convey messages on behalf of the region as suggested in the draft Part 3 report.
29. Australia proposed a new mechanism for States only to discuss and agree on regional positions with high level of consensus. Some members enquired about the details of this new mechanism, such as where and when the forum would be organised, the difference between the forum and the DGCA Conference, and the commitment and inputs required by the participants of the forum. Chair tasked the Part 3 working group to articulate the impetus behind this new mechanism, and address potential questions from the DGCA Conference, including on implementation issues.
30. On the assessment of the proposed initiatives, the meeting suggested to focus on high-level mechanisms in the main report, i.e. the APAC Ministerial Conference and DGCA Conference, while domain-level

mechanisms could be included in an Annex. The meeting agreed to further expand the assessment matrix in Para 3.4.2 to elaborate on the considerations, without using definitive figures which may be subjective, as suggested by Australia. The meeting noted that the assessment of whether a particular proposed initiative was effective, assumed that the proposed initiatives would be implemented well.

31. In summarising the Part 3 report draft, the meeting agreed that the following possible recommendations for the DGCA Conference to consider. On sub-para d) below, the meeting discussed on the composition of the new forum but did not come to a consensus. Australia agreed to provide an alternative wording to d) on the establishment of a new forum.
 - a. Recognise that an APCAC of a similar nature as existing regional CACs is feasible over the longer term;
 - b. Recognise that the following three objectives:
 - i. Promoting implementation of ICAO SARPs and regional plans;
 - ii. Coordinating or developing capability and capacity building and training initiatives; and
 - iii. Developing and promoting regional policy positions in international fora;are the most relevant to address the current and emerging needs and challenges of the region, and should be the primary consideration for enhancing existing mechanisms and developing new mechanisms in the short to medium term;
 - c. Urge States/Administrations to focus on current and emerging needs and priorities by strengthening the DGCA Conference including:
 - i. Pursuing the Regional Training Cooperation Framework (RTCF) and the initiatives under the RTCF;
 - ii. Establishing a team to support the DGCA Conference, working in collaboration with the ICAO Secretariat to set the agenda and follow up on the outcomes of the DGCA Conference;
 - iii. Improving communication between DGCA Conference and the Montreal Group
 - d. Establish a new forum for APAC States to discuss and agree on policy positions on specific issues, especially those with a high level of consensus, to achieve the objectives listed in b. It is envisaged that this forum would have a specific agenda, low administrative burden and cost on these States.

Agenda 5b: Discussion of Report of Feasibility Study to be Tabled at DGCA/59 – led by Chair

32. On the final report of the feasibility study to be presented at the 59th DGCA Conference, the Chair envisaged the following three main parts:
 - a. An executive summary focusing on the impetus, motivation and considerations of the study;
 - b. Proposed recommendations in Part 3; and
 - c. Attachment of the Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 reports.
33. Chair commented that Vice Chair and he would be responsible for the drafting of the report with the help from the working group and invited any interested members to take part.
34. Chair tasked Secretariat to provide a timeline for the various tasks to be completed leading to the submission of the report to the DGCA Conference in October 2024.

Agenda 6: Discussion on RCM TF Papers to the DGCA/59

35. The meeting noted that RCM TF will present three (3) papers at the 59th DGCA Conference:

- a. Final Report of the Feasibility Study Report of APCAC;
 - b. Update on the Regional Training Cooperation; and
 - c. Results on the Survey on Enhancing Communication Channels
36. Chair considered three papers be sufficient and the usual paper regarding the status of the implementation roadmap of the RCM TF would not be necessary. Secretariat announced that the three papers to be presented at the 59th DGCA Conference shall be submitted to Secretariat for circulation by 14 August 2024, a week before the next RCM TF meeting.
37. Chair proposed to decide the sequence of the paper and the corresponding presenters at the next meeting.

Agenda 7: Other Business

38. No other business was raised.

Agenda 8: Date and Venue of next meeting – RCM TF/15

39. The meeting noted that the RCM TF/15 meeting would be held virtually on the morning of 21st and 22nd August 2024, with a 3-hour session on each day.
40. Chair proposed a short RCM TF side meeting of half an hour to one hour for those members joining the DGCA Conference in Cebu, the Philippines, as necessary, to settle any potential position issues before getting into the real discussion in the conference.

Closing Remarks

41. Chair, Vice Chair and the ICAO Regional Director delivered closing remarks in recognition of the task force members' active participation and contribution to enhancing regional cooperation in the region.

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