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, the Republic of Korea, and the United States of America)

Executive Summary:

The 57th Conference of Directors-General of Civil Aviation, Asia and Pacific Regions (DCGA/57) 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.

Five considerations have been identified to assess 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 considerations are i) effectiveness in addressing regional challenges and realising opportunities, ii) inclusiveness of the region, iii) ease of implementation, iv) cost / resources required and v) expected timeframe of initiative, i.e. short, medium or long term.

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

1. Recap of Parts I and II

1.1 Background

1.1.1 At the 57th DGCA Conference (DGCA/57) in 2022, Bangladesh and the Republic of Korea presented Discussion Papers DP/11a/3 and DP/11a/4 [1] respectively on the proposed formation of an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission (APCAC).

1.1.2 DGCA/57 noted that an earlier feasibility study presented at DGCA/54 in 2017 had concluded that there was insufficient basis to establish an APCAC. DGCA/54 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 DGCA/57 agreed to entrust the RCM TF to examine the feasibility of an APCAC as part of its work program, under DGCA Action Item 57/63:

> While acknowledging the Discussion Papers from the Republic of Korea and Bangladesh and noting that:
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> 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 Item 57/61 and Action Item 57/62;
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> b) the Regional Cooperation Mechanisms (RCM) Task Force is resuming its work (reference Action Item 57/60) to continue its current work program;
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> c) the priority for the region should be the recovery of aviation in the current circumstances;
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> The Conference:
>
> a) encouraged Bangladesh and other States/Administrations to join the RCM Taskforce; and

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[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   Needs of the APAC region

1.2.1   States/Administrations have expressed the needs of the region over the years, for example through the "Survey on Common and Evolving Needs of the Asia Pacific Region" in 2019, and an updated needs survey in 2023. The needs of the APAC region reflect the existing and new challenges faced by States and the opportunities to be realised.

1.2.2   From Part I of the feasibility study, which was endorsed at 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, as follows:

a)   The APAC region is one of the fastest growing regions in aviation 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)   There is a need for international aviation to reduce its environmental impact, such as by adopting the use of sustainable aviation fuels, new electric propulsion systems etc.

d)   There is a need to continue building capacity and capability across the region.

e)   The APAC region needs to effectively enhance regional cooperation and collaboration with finite resources, and gain ICAO support for assisting with specific regional priorities.

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

    a) enhance collaboration and coordination among the region 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   Definition of Feasibility

1.3.1   Feasibility refers to the possibility that a proposed initiative can be achieved, under a given set of conditions. It is assumed that all initiatives proposed in this study could be achieved with certain pre-conditions fulfilled, such as availability of expertise, resources and time.

1.4   Options endorsed at DGCA/58 for consideration under the feasibility study

1.4.1   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 address existing and emerging issues 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.

1.4.2   A list of potential initiatives under each of the options mentioned above have been identified for assessment.

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 / regulatory and policy level discussion and asks for a participation by senior aviation officials across ICAO's strategic objectives. The aim of these mechanisms, currently, is to align, at a top-level, the priorities and action items of the region by reference to ICAO's globally defined strategic objectives. The ICAO Asia and Pacific Regional Office (APRO) supports these mechanisms which include the following:

   i.   APAC Ministerial Conference

   ii.   Directors General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Conference

b) **Domain-specific** mechanisms typically involve technical / operational level discussion and seek 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 ICAO APRO, the Asia and Pacific Regional Sub-office and the Pacific Liaison Office for Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) support these mechanisms, which include the following:

   i.   Asia/Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG)

   ii.   APAC Air Navigation Service Providers' Committee

   iii.   Regional Aviation Safety Group Asia and Pacific Regions (RASG-APAC)

   iv.   Regional Aviation Security Coordination Forum (RASCF)

   v.   TRAINAIR Plus Programme

   vi.   Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programmes (COSCAP)

   vii.   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. Refer to <u>Annex A</u> for the list of mechanisms, and each mechanism's objectives.

2.1.3 Both types of mechanisms have an important role to play in addressing the needs and achieving the priorities of the region. These mechanisms contribute to ensuring that strategic / policy level discussion translates into technical / operational action items, that will positively impact the region.

2.2   Areas for improvement

2.2.1 Existing mechanisms have served the region well and have demonstrated their usefulness. Nevertheless, as the needs and priorities of the region change with the evolving aviation landscape, and as new challenges and opportunities emerge, there is strong impetus to strengthen existing mechanisms and develop new mechanisms to address these areas, including:

a) **Increasing commitment and effort to address current needs and 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 among States/Administrations, there is room for presenting agreed regional positions on areas of key and/or common needs and priorities, to garner support and greater influence international settings, such as at international meetings where other regional bodies often present collective views on behalf of their region.

2.2.2 The synthesised list of objectives of CACs identified in Part I could be considered to see how they may lead to improvements when strengthening existing mechanisms and developing new mechanisms. Specifically, the following would be the highest priorities, acknowledging the findings outlined in Part II and the areas for improvement above to address the current and emerging needs and challenges of the APAC region:

a) developing and securing the safety, security, and environmental protection of civil aviation regionally through capability and capacity building and by promoting the implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs)

b) developing positions, solutions and responses to regional civil aviation matters

c) promoting regional policy positions and solutions globally

2.3   Proposed initiatives to strengthen existing mechanisms

2.3.1   This section proposes several initiatives to strengthen existing mechanisms such that they remain relevant and effective and align to the needs of the region.

2.3.2   As a pre-condition agreed at DGCA/58, all States/Administrations in the region 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[2]. 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 the COVID-19 pandemic. To date the APACMC has sought Ministerial endorsement on a high-level declaration such as the Beijing Declaration, which is focused on regional action towards achieving ICAO's global strategic objectives. This provides a platform and impetus to encourage States/Administrations' adoption of the agreed commitments and actions to address regional priorities and ICAO strategic objectives. Due to the recent initiation of this mechanism, minimal enhancements have been proposed thus far.

Proposed Enhancements:

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

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

The DGCA Conference is an annual conference organised by a host State in close coordination with the ICAO APRO which also acts as the conference secretariat.

The DGCA Conference gathers the region's Directors-General (DGs) of Civil Aviation, with participation from other regions and States, and industry partners.

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[2] The Second APACMC was scheduled for 2020 with a planning session held during the 56th DGCA Conference in Nepal. However, this was postponed multiple times due to onset of the COVID pandemic.

The DGCA Conference provides a platform for discussion and information and experience sharing among States in the region on several civil aviation topics including issues on emerging needs and priorities. However, as topics discussed at the DGCA Conference are wide-ranging, some DGs that only cover certain areas may not proactively participate in discussions on areas outside their purview. However, they may seek views from relevant agencies when needed.

The DGCA Conference is updated on the outcome of ICAO's Assemblies and Conferences and presentations from senior ICAO officials. Regional domain specific technical groups, such as APANPIRG and RASG-APAC, report their work at DGCA Conferences focusing on how the region and individual States are responding to ICAO Assembly, conference and SARPs outcomes.

The DGCA Conference releases a list of action items, which States are expected to report against at subsequent Conferences.

Over the years, it has been observed that the DGCA Conference often does not engage in substantial discussions on issues, partly due to the significant number of working papers submitted by States during the conference. There is room for improvement for the DGCA Conference to focus on addressing regional priorities and formulating polices or action that would support civil aviation development and alignment on issues of common interests in the region.

While the DGCA Conference has existing practices, with a set of objectives, these have not been documented in the form of terms of reference. Given that the DGCA Conference has been in existence for about six decades, it may be timely to review and establish a set of terms of reference for the DGCA Conference.

Proposed enhancements:

i. Set up a team to work alongside the ICAO APRO and the host State to support the DGCA Conference with a view of strengthening governance, tracking follow up and enhancing the effectiveness of this conference and the quality of discussion among States/Administrations and industry partners.

   (a) This team should comprise officers from States/Administrations and work on an ongoing basis to ensure continuity between DGCA Conferences.

   (b) The team would support agenda setting with sharpened focus on key issues of regional interests, put up Working Papers / Information Papers, and track action items for DGCA Conference.

   (c) The team would help ensure the scheduling of the DGCA Conference takes into account significant ICAO events throughout

the year, encourage better representation from States at DGCA, and for DGCA to be held before major ICAO events, such as the ICAO General Assembly and the ICAO high-level Conferences, to allow the region to coordinate and prepare for these important events.

ii. Establish the terms of reference of the DGCA Conference to articulate the purpose, representation, scope (covering all key areas of ICAO's strategic objectives), governance and desired outcomes, including formulation of regional positions on issues of common interest, of the DGCA Conference.

    (a) Consider a dedicated session among States, in conjunction with the DGCA Conference, to discuss and agree on regional aviation policy positions.

iii. Improve two-way communication between DGCA Conference and the Montreal Group to facilitate setting of regional priorities with reference to discussion at the ICAO HQ, and/or at international fora.

    (a) Include a regular and formalised agenda item for the Montreal Group to apprise DGCA Conference on key discussions held at ICAO HQ which may have implications on the region.

c) Cooperation and collaboration platforms on regional training

A variety of aviation training in the region involves the ICAO APRO, States/Administrations and several 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 safety oversight capabilities such as through the ICAO regional aviation safety plan and Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme. 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 a 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) Support for the 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 materials. It also provides the secretariat support for most mechanisms in the region, spanning across high-level and domain-based mechanisms.

Proposed enhancements:

i. Seek additional resource allocation from ICAO HQ for the ICAO APRO to achieve its priorities for the region.

ii. Encourage States/Administrations in the region to:

(a) Support the ICAO APRO by providing secondees;

(b) Support ICAO's initiatives to meet the region's priorities (e.g. COSCAP and Combined Action Team (CAT) Missions) by providing subject matter experts where appropriate.

(c) Provide voluntary funds in areas which will help achieve the region's priorities.

2.4   Proposed new mechanisms

2.4.1 This section proposes two new mechanisms and their potential roles in achieving the needs of the region.

2.4.2 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) An APCAC may be formed to coordinate discussion and consideration of high level, strategic aviation policy matters which address regional needs and priorities, and facilitate the establishment of regional positions, where possible, and garner support and greater influence as a regional voice at international settings.

We envisage an APCAC modelled on the CACs established in other regions, with an established secretariat, office and ability to represent the region's views in international fora. Referencing Part I, it could fulfil most of these roles:

i.   conducting research and preparing studies on economic, regulatory, legal, technical and security aspects of civil aviation and making recommendations;

ii.   coordinating Member States' positions in relation to ICAO activities, e.g. for ICAO Assemblies;

iii. contributing to the works of various ICAO panels and working groups;

iv.   monitoring changes in civil aviation and considering Member States' options to respond;

v.   promoting implementation of SARPs and regional air navigation plans;

vi.   coordinating or developing capability and capacity building and training initiatives;

vii. managing relationships with other civil aviation actors, including ICAO and other CACs, and civil aviation authorities, and industry; and

viii. promoting information sharing among member States, such as statistical data and best practice.

b) Establishing an Asia Pacific annual forum to discuss and agree to regional aviation policy positions

At present, the DGCA Conference is the only annual senior aviation officials' event in the Asia Pacific region.

The major focus of DGCA Conference, as outlined above, is how to best implement ICAO's globally agreed outcomes and priorities at the regional level (particularly around safety and air navigation matters).

To enhance Asia Pacific's regional voice, an Asia Pacific annual forum could be organised as a short to medium-term initiative to facilitate policy-setting through discussions and agreements on positions on aviation policy matters. These regionally agreed positions could seek to shape and influence ICAO and other global fora outcomes and priorities. This forum should however not duplicate the roles being played by other mechanisms including the DGCA Conference.

Such a forum may also lend itself to better discuss other ICAO strategic objectives (such as facilitation, economic development and the environment) covered by policy agencies rather than CAAs. The forum should include all States in the region, to prevent potential fragmentation, while meeting the needs of this region, particularly around a regional voice. This would achieve the highest priorities as outlined at 2.2.2, while having low cost and low administrative burden.

Proposed enhancements:

i.   Establish an annual Asia Pacific forum, which would discuss policy-level and strategic issues at a regional level. Where appropriate, these discussions would seek agreement on regional approaches and positions on aviation policy matters being considered by ICAO and other global organisations and fora.

ii. To reduce administrative burden and encourage State attendance, the forum could be held alongside or during the DGCA Conference, with the DGCA host State providing the secretariat and a small team from volunteer Member States could be established to ensure ongoing stewardship of the forum's annual agenda and record of outcomes.

iii. Examples of topics that may be suitable for seeking agreement on initial forum meetings and then presenting as an Asia Pacific regional position at other international fora could include:

   (a)   The region's policy approach to aviation facilitation matters including lessons from the Asia Pacific learnt during COVID-19 with a view to influencing future changes to ICAO Annex 9.

   (b)   The region's approach to gender equality in aviation and the next generation of aviation professionals' initiative.

   (c)   The critical role of air transport in economic development in the Asia Pacific.

   (d)   Sharing implementation challenges of SARPs in the Asia Pacific.

   (e)   Highlighting the challenges of connectivity in the Asia Pacific and its impact on the development of aviation policies.

3. <u>Assessment Methodology</u>

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Referencing Parts I and II, this section assesses the proposed initiatives against regional needs and priorities. 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.

3.2 *Considerations*

3.2.1 There are a total of five considerations:

a) Effectiveness in addressing regional challenges and realising opportunities

b) Inclusiveness of the region

c) Ease of implementation

d) Cost/resources required

e) Expected Timeframe of initiatives, i.e. short, medium, or long term.

3.2.2 The initiatives outlined in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 would be evaluated against the above set of considerations. Where possible, both quantitative and qualitative substantiations would be used to assess feasibility. 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 be complementary.

3.2.3 **Effectiveness in addressing regional challenges and realising opportunities**

3.2.3.1 Any proposed initiative should seek to address the challenges and realise the opportunities for the region, as identified by Part II of the Feasibility Study. Under this consideration, we would assess whether the initiative can, for example, effectively build, strengthen and retain the following:

a) States', ICAO's and industry's support for the region in terms of resource allocation and priorities, and to obtain better regional outcomes.

b) 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) regional readiness for the future by anticipating and addressing future challenges and opportunities brought about by the changing aviation landscape.

3.2.4 Inclusiveness of the APAC region

3.2.4.1 The region is diverse, with disparate issues faced by different States/Administrations. This must be considered as we seek to address challenges and realise opportunities for the region as a whole, to ensure that every State/Administration could benefit in a way that addresses its unique circumstances. Therefore, unity and inclusiveness remain fundamental criteria in the assessment of initiatives. There are several aspects which may be considered under this consideration, such as:

a) whether the proposed initiative fulfils the agreed pre-conditions, as outlined in Para 2.3.2 and 2.4.2.

b) whether the proposed initiative causes or has the potential to cause fragmentation in the region.

c) scalability and whether the proposed initiative would apply to one or all States.

3.2.5 Ease of implementation

3.2.5.1 Ease of implementation should be considered from a practical perspective, considering whether the proposed initiative requires, for example, the following:

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

b) appropriate institutional and legal arrangements and mechanisms which may be utilised to implement the proposed initiatives such that its outcomes are effectively achieved.

3.2.6 Cost / resources required

3.2.6.1 Cost and resources, financial or otherwise, are other important and practical considerations. These should be measured against the potential benefits brought about by the initiative, as required, such as:

a) Potential 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 and resources 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) Resources required from States/Administrations for the effective implementation of the proposed initiative, including contributions in-kind and expert resources.

3.2.7 Expected timeframe of initiative, and assessment of short-, medium- and long-term initiatives

3.2.7.1 Expected timeframe should be considered, and evaluated against when the benefits would be reaped by States/Administrations in the region. This should be checked against the first consideration of effectiveness in addressing challenges and realising opportunities, and whether the improvements are likely addressed.

4. **Assessment**

4.1   Introduction

4.1.1   This section seeks to evaluate the proposed initiatives outlined in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 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.

4.1.2   Essentially, we seek to answer the following questions:

a) Does it look like the initiative can address the needs of the region, challenges and opportunities? (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? (Cost/Resources)

d) How long does it take to do it? And when to do it? (Time)

4.1.3   It is noted that these proposed initiatives have yet to be implemented. In the assessment process, the best-case scenario in terms of implementation is assumed.

4.2   Assessment

4.1.4   An assessment matrix is proposed, as shown in Table 1

4.1.5   The proposed initiatives are assessed using the considerations utilising the assessment matrix. The findings are shown in Table 2 and Table 3. Please refer to Annex B for further details on the assessment.

Table 1: Descriptors for Considerations

Consideration	Descriptors		
Effectiveness in addressing the challenges and realising the opportunities for the region	Initiative would address most challenges and opportunities to a large extent	Initiative would address some challenges and opportunities to a certain extent	Initiative may address challenges and opportunities to a small extent
	Effective	**Moderately effective**	**Somewhat effective**
Inclusiveness of the region	a) High participation in initiative, b) benefits reaped by most States and Administrations c) Low likelihood of fragmentation in the region	a) Some participation in initiative, b) benefits reaped by some States and Administrations c) Some likelihood of fragmentation in the region	a) Low participation in initiative, b) benefits reaped by a few States and Administrations c) High likelihood of fragmentation in the region
	High	**Medium**	**Low**
Ease of implementation	Full commitment from all parties	Some commitment from all parties	Uncertain / lack of commitment from parties
	Manageable	**Moderate**	**Challenging**
Cost/resource required.	Manageable in current budget	Some additional costs on top of existing costs	Significant contributions required
	Low	**Medium**	**High**
Timeline of initiatives, i.e. short, medium, or long term.	Initiative can be implemented quickly	Initiative requires more time to implement	Initiative requires substantial discussion and time to implement
	Short	**Medium**	**Long**

Table 2: Summary of assessment of proposed initiatives to strengthen existing mechanisms

Assessment Consideration / Proposed Initiatives	Strengthening existing mechanisms			
	Strengthening APAC Ministerial Conference	**Strengthening DGCA Conference**	**Strengthening training cooperation in the region**	**Strengthening the ICAO APAC Regional Office**
Effectiveness in addressing the challenges and realising the opportunities for the region	**(Moderately effective)** This is a relatively new mechanism. Buy-in from the Ministers may assist in pushing initiatives.	**(Effective)** Address priorities but may not address issues faced by States. The effectiveness of DGCA would depend on active participation and representation from States.	**(Effective)** Training is a key enabler in advancing interests and address a longstanding priority to build up capabilities in safety and security oversight.	**(Moderately effective)** Plays a pivotal role in the region. Would require resources to fulfil its mandate, which aligns to ICAO strategic objectives.
Inclusiveness of the region	**(Medium)** States already involved, but room to encourage high-level participation from States.	**(High)** States already involved, working on consensus basis but room to further enhance participation and increase benefits	**(Medium)** States already involved indirectly through other mechanisms. To include training academies.	**(Medium)** States already have access to APRO, but room to improve engagement.
Ease of implementation	**(Moderate)** APAC MC is relatively new and is not held at regular intervals. It would be challenging to implement enhancements unless the frequency is formalised.	**(Moderate)** Requires integration into existing framework of mechanisms, and some changes to way the conference is run and followed through.	**(Moderate)** Requires coordination platforms with scope to include training academies,	**(Moderate - Challenging)** Requires States' support and change in operating model and level of investment to yield greater results on a sustained basis.
Cost and resources required	**(Low)** Additional manhours and resources may be required, but minimal costs associated with strengthening of mechanism.	**(Low)** Additional manhours and resources may be required, but minimal costs associated with strengthening of mechanism.	**(Medium)** Additional costs for new platforms, e.g. symposium and associated meetings.	**(Medium)** Additional costs to be borne by ICAO, and/ by States
Timeline of initiatives, i.e. short, medium, or long term.	**(Medium)** APACMC is not held yearly given the involvement of Ministers, and significant follow up required to implement changes.	**(Short – Medium)** Depends on agreement by States and ICAO. Requires a few meetings to implement changes.	**(Medium - Long)** Training cooperation is already ongoing but it would take time to bear fruits.	**(Short - Medium)** May need some lead time to translate strengthening of ICAO APRO, to initiatives that benefits States.

Table 3: Summary of assessment of proposed initiatives to develop new mechanisms.

Proposed Initiatives / Assessment Consideration	Developing new mechanisms	
	Developing an Asia Pacific Civil Aviation Commission	**Establishing a forum to discuss regional positions**
Effectiveness in addressing the challenges and realising the opportunities for the region	**(Effective)** A platform to address all of the needs and priorities of the region.	**(Moderately effective)** in addressing the priority of giving a voice to the region in international fora, as well as anticipating and addressing future challenges and opportunities. While consensus is required, there are topics where common positions could be found.
Inclusiveness of the region	**(Medium - High)** Consensus of the region as a pre-condition to avoid fragmentation, which requires active participation from all States.	**(Medium - High)** Some of the same considerations as an APCAC, but with the benefits that could come from leveraging the high-levels of attendance from the DGCA Conference.
Ease of implementation	**(Challenging)** Requires political will and constitution or treaty, followed by a detailed roadmap, and significant effort to discuss terms of reference, scope, etc.	**(Manageable)** It would require a small team to be established to work through terms of reference but could be aligned to work being undertaken to enhance the DGCA Conference. Would require buy-in and consensus on its establishment, purpose, etc.
Cost and resources required	**(High)** Significant costs associated with set-up and running of an APCAC, and to obtain manpower to staff the APCAC.	**(Manageable)** The forum may be convened at the side-lines of existing meeting. There is a need to establish agenda and facilitate discussion. A marginal additional cost if done in conjunction with the existing DGCA Conference program.
Timeline of initiatives, i.e. short, medium, or long term.	**(Long)** Long term given the significant work required. APCAC would need to reach a steady-state for some benefits to be fully realised.	**(Short – Medium)** The forum may be initiated with agreement of States and could be addressed alongside enhancements to the DGCA Conference.

4.2   Summary of assessment

4.2.1   Table 2 and Table 3 above present a summary of assessment of proposed initiatives to strengthen existing mechanisms and develop new mechanisms respectively.

4.2.2   It is a no-regret move to strengthen existing mechanisms, to focus our efforts on addressing the current needs and priorities of the region. Nonetheless, there are benefits to new mechanisms, especially in addressing areas which are not covered by existing mechanisms.

4.2.3   The timeline for the initiative is a major consideration in ensuring that initiatives are implemented in a way that maximises benefits reaped by the region. In doing so, we should account for benefits from initiatives with a longer timeline which would only materialise after the initiative has been implemented and has reached a steady state.

4.2.4   Cost is also an important consideration, with a review necessary to prevent duplication of work.

4.2.5   In summary, efforts for both options – *strengthening existing mechanisms and developing new mechanisms* – are not mutually exclusive and the region should endeavour to work on both short-term and medium to long term initiatives.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 In Part I, it was concluded that the region recognised 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 pre-conditions for each option.

5.1.2 In Part II, the challenges and opportunities of the region had been identified. The balance between costs, ease of implementation and inclusiveness of the region has been assessed against the timeline and the effectiveness of addressing challenges and realising the opportunities of the region.

5.1.3 In Part III, proposed initiatives under the two options have been discussed and evaluated. Noting that all proposed initiatives are feasible to a certain degree, Part III focused on which initiative to implement and when, in order to ensure that the region plans ahead and works towards addressing challenges and realising opportunities in a staged manner. This has been identified as short-, medium-, and long-term initiatives.

5.1.4 Part III also identified three objectives which were most relevant to address the current and emerging needs and challenges of the region. These were the primary consideration for enhancing existing mechanisms and developing new mechanisms. The objectives include:

a) Promoting implementation of ICAO SARPs and regional plans;

b) Coordinating or developing capability and capacity building and training initiatives; and

c) Developing and promoting regional policy positions in international fora;

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 The APCAC could be feasible over the longer term. There may be value in developing an APCAC as it provides a platform for the region to cooperate and collaborate better, while serving as a vehicle for a regional voice. Significant discussion and further work are required to flesh out the scope and implementation detail.

5.2.2 The region is encouraged to consider implementing strengthening APACMC and support for the APAC Regional Office, including providing secondees and voluntary funds, as well as supporting ICAO's initiatives to meet the region's priorities.

5.2.3 The region should strengthen the DGCA Conference. The DGCA Conference is a well-established platform with a high attendance among States/Administrations in the region. Strengthening DGCA Conference would add greater value to the work already undertaken and serve to better support other initiatives. Some initiatives to strengthen DGCA Conference include:

a) Pursuing the Regional Training Cooperation Framework (RTCF) and the initiatives under the RTCF;

b) Establishing a team to support DGCA Conference, working in collaboration with the ICAO Secretariat to set the agenda and follow up on the outcomes of DGCA Conference.

c) Improving communication between DGCA Conference and the Montreal Group

d) Establishing the terms of reference of the DGCA Conference to articulate the purpose, representation, scope (covering all key areas of ICAO's strategic objectives), governance and desired outcomes, including formulation of regional positions on issues of common interest, of the DGCA Conference.

e) Considering having a dedicated session among States, in conjunction with the DGCA Conference, to discuss and agree on regional aviation policy positions.

5.2.4 The region could establish an annual aviation forum for States only, to discuss and agree on regional aviation policy positions.

– END –

ANNEX A:

List of Existing Mechanisms in the Asia and Pacific Region

Mechanism	Objective
High-level	
Directors General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Conference	The Conference of Directors General of Civil Aviation Asia and Pacific Regions (more commonly known as 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 regulatory practice matters affecting aviation safety and security across the region. The DGCA Conference gives the opportunity for all member States to be represented by the leaders of their State authorities responsible for civil aviation safety regulation and oversight, including over air navigation. Increasingly, DGCA is addressing areas outside of the traditional responsibilities of civil aviation safety regulators, but continues to have a focus on regulatory issues.
APAC Ministerial Conference (APACMC)	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, increasingly with a focus on all ICAO strategic objectives.
Regional Coordination Mechanisms Task Force (RCM TF)	Following the conclusion of the first APCAC feasibility study that was prepared in 2016-2017, 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.
ICAO APAC Regional Office	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

Mechanism	Objective
	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).
Domain-level	
Regional Aviation Safety Group – Asia Pacific (RASG-APAC)	RASG-APAC was endorsed at 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)	APANPIRG was established in 1991 by the ICAO Council, and seeks to: • 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	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: • ASEAN Air Transport Economic Cooperation Sub-Working Group • ASEAN Air Transport Technical Cooperation Sub-Working Group • ASEAN Air Transport Sectoral Negotiations

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[3] Annual Safety Report Asia Pacific Region 2017 (icao.int)

Mechanism	Objective
	• ASEAN Transport Search and Rescue Forum
COSCAPs	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. COSCAPs are implemented by ICAO and comprise DGCAs of participating States, ICAO representatives, and other organisations.
Appointment of an ICAO Pacific Liaison Officer	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, 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).
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.

ANNEX B:

Assessment of proposed initiatives against considerations

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

Proposed enhancements

i)   The APACMC is a relatively recent mechanism, with a variable frequency. The proposed enhancement to establish APACMC as a meeting held at agreed intervals with an agreed declaration at each meeting would enable advance planning and better achieve the strategic intent of the conference.

ii)   *Effectiveness in addressing challenges and realising opportunities for the region*

iii) The first APACMC was held in Beijing, China in 2018. It was attended by APAC Ministers in charge of civil aviation, who endorsed the Beijing Declaration, formalising their commitment to high-priority aviation safety and efficiency objectives. The second APACMC will be held in Delhi, India in September 2024 where APAC Ministers are expected to endorse the Delhi Declaration.

iv)   The APACMC and its Declarations seek to lay out priorities for the region, and garner political will and commitment at a very high level. The APACMC serves as a good forum for APAC Ministers who may cover multiple portfolios, including civil aviation, to gather and focus on civil aviation issues. This may provide impetus for desired improvements to civil aviation, benefiting the region. It would be important to ensure that the Declaration is translated into actions and implemented at the State level.

Ease of Implementation / Cost/resources required

v)   The host State of APACMC will be responsible for planning the conference, including providing the venue, logistics and administrative support to the ICAO Secretariat. ICAO Secretariat will also put together a small working group made up of representatives from States/Administrations to draft the Declaration.

vi)   Participating States would have to prepare and apprise their Ministers on key issues and the Declaration prior to the conference. In terms of cost, participating delegations would fund their own travelling costs.

Expected timeframe

vii) Given that these enhancements to the APACMC would require a few meetings to take effect, the timeline for strengthening of APACMC would be medium-term.

b) DGCA Conference

Proposed enhancements

i) The proposed enhancements to strengthen DGCA Conference, including setting up a team to work alongside the ICAO APRO and the host States to support DGCA Conference seek to enhance the effectiveness of the Conference and the quality of discussion among States/Administrations and industry partners.

Effectiveness in addressing challenges and realising opportunities for the region

ii) Strengthening the DGCA Conference could be effective in addressing some of the challenges and realising opportunities associated with needs and priorities of the region, given that their alignment with ICAO strategic objectives. Potential strengthening of other ICAO mechanisms or the development of new mechanisms could also be considered, in alignment with the proposed enhancements to DGCA Conference.

iii) However, current arrangements may not address issues that do not fall under ICAO's strategic objectives faced by States/Administrations, as the DGCA Conference is also largely focused on the implementation of ICAO strategic objectives at the regional level which are defined globally.

iv) A timely review of the DGCA Conference and establishment of a set of terms of reference covering its purpose, representation, scope (covering all key areas of ICAO's strategic objectives), governance and desired outcomes would address the gaps in iii).

Inclusiveness of the region

v) DGCA Conference already involves most States/Administrations in the region, even though participation can be enhanced by encouraging States/Administrations to ensure representatives from relevant State administration bodies or agencies are also available to participate or those participating are appropriately briefed on all ICAO strategic objectives.

Ease of implementation

vi) Implementation would be relatively straightforward, except for any enhancements that fall outside of the existing framework and scope of DGCA Conference which may require changes in organisation of

mechanisms. The setting up of the dedicated team is similar to setting up an ICAO work group / task force, and the existing arrangements would be able to support the setting up of the dedicated team with minimal challenges.

Cost/resources required and Expected timeframe

vii)   States/Administrations in the APAC region can offer to host DGCA Conference and will organise it in close coordination with the ICAO APRO which serves as the secretariat of the Conference. Similar to the APACMC, the host State provides the Conference venue, logistics and administrative support to the ICAO Secretariat, including organising the social programme. Participating delegations would fund their own traveling costs.

viii)   The cost required to set up the dedicated team would involve contributions in kind and expertise from States/Administrations, similar to the setting up of other ICAO work groups / task forces.

ix)   There would be minimal additional costs and resources needed to implement the proposed enhancements to DGCA Conference, given that these platforms already exist. The timeline of this initiative would be short to medium, depending on the complexity of the enhancement and the frequency of the platforms to implement changes.

c)   Cooperation and collaboration platforms on regional training

Proposed enhancements

i)   The proposed enhancements to cooperation and collaboration platforms on regional training would contribute to the improvement of levels of safety and security oversight capabilities. The implementation of the regional training cooperation framework allows training academies in the region to exchange information, pool resources and facilitate cooperation in the provision of training in key and emerging areas, including safety oversight, while the development of a train-the-trainer programme would increase the pool of instructors from the region to ensure continuous pipeline of trained aviation professionals in the region.

Effectiveness in addressing challenges and realising opportunities for the region

ii)   Training is a key enabler and would be effective in advancing the region's interest in capacity and capability development in aviation and would serve to address a longstanding priority of the region to build up capacity and capabilities in safety and security oversight among States/Administrations. However, training cooperation should include other areas of aviation such as air navigation, facilitation, economic development, and the environment.

Ease of implementation

iii)   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. Training academies would need to have greater involvement in training cooperation, and any coordination platform on training cooperation would need to accommodate them.

Cost/resources required / Expected timeframe

iv)   Costs would likely be associated with additional platforms and meetings for coordination purposes, including the hosting of annual regional training symposium. 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.

d)   Support for the ICAO APAC Regional Office

Proposed enhancements

i)   The proposed enhancements include seeking additional resource allocation from ICAO HQ for the APRO to achieve its priorities for the region, encouraging States/Administrations in the region to provide secondees, subject matter experts, as well as voluntary funds in areas which will help achieve the region's priorities. These enhancements would provide the ICAO Secretariat with necessary financial and resource support to fulfil its mandate, especially with the expected increase in aviation activities in the region.

Effectiveness in addressing challenges and realising opportunities for the region

ii)   The ICAO APRO plays a pivotal role in fostering the planning and implementation of ICAO SARPs, Procedures for Air Navigation Services (PANS) and Regional Air Navigation Planning, for the safety, security and efficiency of air transport. Having a well-resourced APRO will enable ICAO to better support the region in the above-mentioned areas.

Ease of implementation

iii)   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. This may correspond to a change in level of investment and the systems utilised. The APRO may also need to be

empowered to take on more responsibilities and activities. There is also a need to improve ICAO APRO's engagement of States/Administrations to improve communication and implementation.

Inclusiveness of the region

iv)   The APRO is now serving 39 contracting States[4], and maintains liaison with two Special Administrative Regions of China and 13 other territories within the Asia-Pacific region. Any benefits reaped from the enhanced support provided to APRO to achieve the region's priorities would be shared by the region.

Cost/resources required / Expected timeframe

v)   Additional cost, if any, would be either be borne by ICAO, or supported by States/Administrations. The timeframe of this initiative depends on when the resources and mandate are received by APRO. It can be short to medium term to derive benefits early.

e)   Formation of an APCAC

Proposed new mechanism

i)   The proposed mechanism is intended to be similar to those CACs already well-established in other regions, with a view to address the needs and priorities of the region, and facilitate regional positions, where possible, and garner support and greater influence as a regional voice at international settings.

Effectiveness in addressing challenges and realising opportunities for the region

ii)   Based on the experience of existing CACs, an APCAC could prove effective in addressing the region's needs. Referencing Part 1, each CAC has reported successes in addressing the challenges of their Member States in improving civil aviation in their regions. CACs have in place longer-term strategic plans to provide benefits to its Member States and address their regions' challenges, providing coordination and support for Member States during the COVID-19 pandemic, coordination of common positions and papers, and concluding agreements to promote capacity building within the region.

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[4] The 39 States accredited to the APRO include: Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Viet Nam.

iii)   ICAO also recognises the effectiveness of CACs. ICAO Assemblies have adopted Resolution A37-21 on ICAO's cooperation with regional organisations and regional civil aviation bodies, which encourages States which do not have a regional body to endeavour to form one, and for ICAO to establish synergy with regional civil aviation bodies through cooperative arrangements, thereby improving cooperation and obviating duplication of work.

Inclusiveness of the region

iv)   The formation of a CAC is dependent on fulfilment of pre-conditions. Importantly, the region must agree to the establishment of an APCAC, including commitments to fully participate, resource, and formalise the arrangements.

v)   This is to prevent fragmentation, which would not be in the region's interest. Sub-regional CACs, or CACs that do not involve all States, may lead to further fragmentation.

Ease of implementation

vi)   Referencing Part I on the establishment of existing CACs, it is observed that several building blocks need to be in place to ensure the APCAC would be fit-for-purpose and effective as a forum. These include:

vii)   Existence of a broader political regional organisation and their relationship and work with the CAC, for example Arab League and ACAO, African Union and AFCAC, and Council of Europe and ECAC, and Latin America with several regional organisations and LACAC;

viii)   Treaty-level instruments which create legal rights and obligations for Member States and is binding on the Member States under international law, noting this is not necessarily required e.g. ECAC is a conference with a constitution not underpinned by a treaty; and

ix)   Dedicated headquarters for its secretariat which provides a location for its executive and plenary to meet.

x)   Implementation could be challenging, due to the need for establishment of appropriate institutional and legal arrangements in States to support the formation and formalisation of an APCAC. In addition, to achieve this, political will would be required, which may include the conclusion of a treaty.

xi)   Crucial enablers would still be required. These include the need for the region to come to a consensus on objectives and regional positions and

having the political will to implement and formalise the APCAC to drive changes.

Cost/resources required

xii)   The operationalisation of an APCAC which is similar to other CACs would involve significant costs and resources. For example, the African Civil Aviation Commission's budget for 2018-2020 was reported to be about USD $3.5 million[5]. ECAC programmes are funded by its Member States, under a formula derived from that used in ICAO to determine Member States' contributions to the ICAO budget.

xiii)   Like other CACs, on top of financial contributions, States will need to provide contributions in kind, including manpower and expertise.

Expected timeframe

xiv)   With the above considerations, the timeline for the establishment of an APCAC would be in the long term, and we expect benefits to be reaped only when the APCAC reaches a steady state.

xv)   Further discussion is required on the various aspects of an APCAC. These include terms of reference, constitution, working arrangements (such as interface with existing platforms and ICAO APRO), and operationalisation plan.

f)   Establishing an Asia Pacific annual forum to discuss and agree to regional aviation policy positions

Proposed new mechanism

i)   The proposed new mechanism is intended to address the key current and emerging needs and challenges of the APAC region, as outlined at paragraph 2.2.2, through a policy forum with low administrative burden and cost for Member States. Without undertaking the many other activities and functions of a CAC, it would discuss and seek agreement on regional approaches and positions on aviation policy matters being considered by ICAO and other global organizations and fora.

Effectiveness in addressing challenges and realising opportunities for the region

ii)   This forum could prove effective in addressing the needs and challenges of the region, establishing a mechanism to give a voice to the region in international fora. This would enable the region to help shape and influence

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[5] AFCAC, Terms of Reference for the recruitment of an External Audit Firm to the African Civil Aviation Commission, AFCAC, 2019, p. 1, para. 3.

ICAO's and other fora's global priorities, the content of ICAO's strategic objectives and resource allocation as a region through a regional voice, which is one of the functions of a CAC.

iii)   With an increased focus on the role of policy-makers, the forum would also be effective at anticipating and addressing future challenges and opportunities.

Inclusiveness of the region

iv)   The forum could leverage from the already well-established and well-attended DGCA Conference if held alongside or as a session of the DGCA. Having the forum on specific topics outside of the traditional CAA roles also may encourage attendance at the forum session by subject-matter experts on those topics.

Ease of implementation

v)   The incorporation of a session in the DGCA Conference or directly before or after DGCA, allows for ease of implementation. The existing DGCA hosting arrangements would be able to support the setting up of a small dedicated team to service the forum with minimal administrative challenges.

Cost/resources required

vi)   If incorporated into the DGCA Conference or held alongside the DGCA Conference, the marginal additional cost to the hosting State would be minimal.

vii)   Similarly to the discussion regarding enhancements to the DGCA Conference, the cost of a small, dedicated team would involve contributions in kind and expertise from States, similar to setting up other ICAO work groups / task forces.

Expected timeframe

viii)   Similar to enhancements to the DGCA Conference