



ICAO

International Civil Aviation Organization

Ninth Meeting of the Aerodromes Operations and Planning Sub-Group (AOP/SG/9)

Bangkok, Thailand, 30 June to 4 July 2025

Agenda Item 4: Provision of AOP in the Asia/Pacific Region**REPORT ON THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE ASIA/PACIFIC
AERODROME ASSISTANCE WORKING GROUP (AP-AA/WG/7)**

(Presented by Chairperson of AP-AA/WG)

SUMMARY

This paper presents the Report of the Seventh Meeting of the Asia/Pacific Aerodrome Assistance Working Group (AP-AA/WG/7).

This paper relates to –

Strategic Objectives:

*A: **Safety** – Enhanced global civil aviation safety*

*B: **Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency** – Increase Capacity and improve efficiency of the global civil aviation system*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Seventh Meeting of the Asia/Pacific Aerodrome Assistance Working Group (AP-AA/WG/7) was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 27 – 30 May 2025. 47 participants from 12 Member States, 1 International Organization attended the Meeting.

1.2 There were 18 Working Papers, 12 Information Papers and 3 Presentations considered by the Meeting.

1.3 The full report of the meeting is posted on the ICAO APAC Office website and can be accessed through the following link:

<https://www.icao.int/APAC/Meetings/Pages/2025-AP-AA-WG-7.aspx>

1.4 **Appendices** referred to in this Working Paper carry the same Appendix numbers as those in the Report of the AP-AA/WG/7 Meeting for easy reference.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Some important discussions of the AP-AA/WG/7 Meeting are summarized below:

Rescue & Fire Fighting Requirements for Small Airports

2.2 AP-AA/WG/7 noted that Fiji has been facing the challenges in implementation of the Rescue and Fire Fighting Service (RFFS) requirements in line with the ICAO Annex 14 Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) mainly for its (11) domestic aerodromes serviced by Twin Otter (DHC 6) and BN-2 Islander aircraft (Aerodrome Category 1 and 2 for RFF) on Visual Meteorological Conditions (VMC) due to their low number of movements as most of these aerodromes having only one schedule flight a week.

2.3 The domestic aerodrome requirements in Fiji are based on the ICAO Annex 14, Volume I and enforced by the State's Civil Aviation Authority of Fiji through the Standard Documents – Aerodromes (SD-AD) that are required to be complied with by certified aerodromes. This posed a challenge to the 11 government domestic aerodromes administered by Fiji Airports in implementing the RFF requirements commensurate with the critical aircraft type.

2.4 While Fiji has been practicing partial implementation of rescue and firefighting services (RFFS) requirements for these Category 1 and 2 aerodromes, utilizing a tractor with a trailer loaded with portable fire extinguishers was considered as an acceptable means of compliance to replace a fully loaded RFFS vehicle.

2.5 Considering the Australia and New Zealand practices using risk based approach of not mandating Rescue and Firefighting Services for Aerodrome Category 1 - 2 aerodromes, Fiji recommended that a review of the RFFS requirements be considered for Aerodrome Category 1 – 2 with such a low movement, with an aim to strike a balance between flight safety and the economical sustainability of the aerodrome operator in providing this service.

2.6 Maldives supported the recommendation to form a small working group to further assess the requirement. The US, New Zealand (Wellington Airport), Solomon Islands and Philippines shared their interest to be part of the small working group. This task is added to the Task List of the AP-AA/WG.

The Challenges and Implemented Measures for the Certification of Military Aerodromes Used for Civilian Operations

2.7 AA-AP/WG/7 noted the challenges in certifying military aerodromes that were used for civil aviation in Malaysia due to differing regulatory standards between military and civil aviation, the absence of mandatory certification requirements for military aerodromes, complex and layered decision-making structures and restricted access to operational information due to confidentiality constraints. These factors collectively posed significant obstacles in aligning military aerodrome operations with international civil aviation requirements.

2.8 In response to these challenges, Malaysia implemented measures aimed at enhancing inter-agency coordination and regulatory compliance. These included the establishment of Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to define roles and responsibilities and the implementation of regular stakeholder engagements through mechanisms such as Runway Safety Team (RST) meetings. These efforts facilitated improved communication, expedited decision-making and strengthened the oversight framework.

2.9 AA-AP/WG/7 encouraged APAC States/ Administrations to share their respective best practices and experiences in engaging with military authorities, with the goal of promoting regional consistency and enhancing the safety of joint-use aerodromes.

Runway Safety Team (RST) and Runway Safety Go-Team

2.10 AP-AA/WG/7 noted that only five States (Hong Kong China, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Singapore and Thailand) had submitted to the ICAO APAC Office the response to the APAC State Letter Ref.: T 11/5.13.2 – AP111/24 (AGA) dated 3 September 2024 regarding RST questionnaire.

2.11 AP-AA/WG/7 also noted that out of 370 aerodromes used for international operations in Asia/Pacific Region, only **106** aerodromes established the RST (**Appendix C** to the Report of the AP-AA/WG/7).

2.12 As per the request of the AP-AA/WG/7 the Secretariat forwarded the above State Letter to the AOP/SG Focal Persons reminding them to response to the ICAO APAC by 31 December 2025.

Enhanced Global Reporting Format for Assessing and Reporting Runway Surface Conditions (GRF)

2.13 AP-AA/WG/7 noted that only 17 States/Administrations of Asia and Pacific Regions published procedures for assessment and reporting of runway condition in their AIP as of 22 March 2024.

2.14 AP-AA/WG/7 encouraged States/Administrations that had yet to implement the methodology for assessment and reporting of runway condition to implement it at the earliest possible opportunity and publish the procedures for assessment and reporting of runway condition report in AIP under “AD 1.2, 2 Snow plan” by States that have yet to publish in their AIP.

Runway Surface Condition Reporting – Adoption of Technology

2.15 AP-AA/WG/7 noted the regulatory challenges faced by New Zealand in adopting technology solutions to assist in assessment of runway surface conditions as part of the GRF implementation.

2.16 In Annex 14 Volume I, within the definition for “runway Surface Conditions” under Note 3 “WET runway” is defined as “A runway surface is covered by a visible dampness or water up to and including 3mm deep within the intended area of use.” The definition had subsequently been adopted in a variety of stakeholder documents including acknowledgement within airline operating manuals.

2.17 Although technology solutions could provide an equal of better safety performance outcome in certain complex operational or environmental conditions, the definition of a “WET runway” currently, by inference, indicates that such runway condition assessments must be based upon “visual” observation which might not be able to be achieved practically or effectively in a timely manner for rain related events. Allowing States to consider technology solutions as an acceptable alternative means of compliance would assist in enhancing safety and providing greater opportunity for the adoption of GRF.

2.18 AP-AA/WG/7 noted that the automated system installed at Wellington International Airport provides measurement of the runway condition minute by minute relaying this information in GRF format directly to the control tower. This approach was supported by the stakeholders (airlines), however its practical use was restrained, as such condition reporting was not conducted visually and hence unable to be officially approved by the regulator given the present definition of WET.

2.19 AP/AA-WG/7 suggested gathering information about other APAC airports utilising automation to assist in the runway condition assessment process and that this be appraised at the upcoming AOP/SG/9 Meeting. AP-AA/WG/7 formulated the following Draft Conclusion for endorsement by the AOP/SG/9 and for further consideration by APANPIRG/36:

Draft Conclusion AP-AA/WG/7 – 1 : Runway Surface Condition Assessment – Adoption of Technology		
What:	Restricting assessment of runway surface conditions to visual means only, especially for DRY or WET conditions restricts the introduction of technology and automation to assist airport operators to meet the performance and safety outcomes desired. ICAO is requested to facilitate States to consider the use of technology and automation methods as an alternative acceptable means of compliance, to assist aerodrome operators in the assessment of runway surface conditions.	Expected impact: ☒ Political / Global ☐ Inter-regional ☒ Economic ☐ Environmental ☒ Ops/Technical
Why:	Technology and automation can equally meet the performance and safety outcomes desired in assessing runway surface conditions for reporting in global reporting format	Follow-up: ☐ Required from States
When:	26-Nov-25	Status: Draft to be adopted by APANPIRG
Who:	☐ Sub groups ☐ APAC States ☐ ICAO APAC RO ☒ ICAO HQ ☐ Other: XXXX	

ICAO USOAP CMA and AGA Findings

2.20 AP-AA/WG/7 noted APAC average EI in AGA area was **62.16 %** as compared to the global average of **64.20%** as of March 2025.

2.21 AP-AA/WG/7 also noted that there were 18 APAC States with EI in AGA area less than 60%; 4 APAC States with EI in AGA area more than 60% to less than 75%; and 17 APAC States with EI in AGA area more than or equal to 75%.

USOAP CMA Protocol Questions – 2024 Edition

2.22 AP-AA/WG/7 noted that the 2024 Edition of the AGA Protocol includes 153 PQs, with eleven new PQs (8.901–8.941) added regarding SMS, one PQ (8.149) excluded due to similarity with PQ 8.148, and three PQs (8.147, 8.381, 8.387) revised for clarity. Additionally, two PQs (8.005, 8.113) were revised for clarity including instructions for auditors, and nine PQs had their references reviewed.

ICAO Initiative for Assistance to States in AGA Area

2.23 AP-AA/WG/7 noted various initiatives taken by ICAO, COSCAPs, ACI and other ICAO Safety Partners in assisting Asia Pacific States to improve USOAP CMA EI, to overcome challenges associated with the certification of aerodromes and encouraged States that need AGA assistance to approach respective COSCAPs, PASO, ACI and Champion States for their assistance and support in AGA area and put additional resources and efforts to enhance EI in AGA area.

AP-AA/WG Task List

2.24 AP-AA/WG/7 reviewed the AP-AA/WG Task List and included 6 new tasks to be delivered by the Expert Group in coming years. The updated Task List is placed in **Appendix F**.

Practices, Experience and Challenges for the Safety Oversight of Ground Handling Services in Malaysia

2.25 AP-AA/WH/7 noted the challenges in implementing effective practices, gaining operational experience and strengthening the safety oversight of ground handling services in Malaysia. Despite the essential role that ground handling played in ensuring the safe, efficient and seamless functioning of air transport, Malaysia continued to face significant obstacles including a shortage of qualified personnel, lack of direct enforcement authority and difficulties in coordinating oversight efforts across multiple stakeholders.

2.26 To address those challenges, Malaysia advocated for comprehensive capacity-building initiatives, including targeted training programs aimed at enhancing the competency of Ground Handling Service Providers (GHSPs) and regulatory personnel. Fostering closer inter-agency collaboration to ensure consistent and effective enforcement of ground handling safety standards, Malaysia aimed to strengthen regulatory compliance and promoting a proactive safety culture to elevate the overall quality and reliability of ground handling operations.

Guideline for Runway Classification

2.27 AP-AA/WG/7 reviewed the guideline for runway classification developed and presented by Thailand using Annex 14, Volume I, other relevant Annexes and manuals. While Annex 14, Volume I defined non-instrument and instrument runways, the definitions being vague and interpreted differently by States — some classifying runways based on installed equipment, others on actual operational use. This inconsistency might lead to varied applications of aerodrome standards, affecting runway design elements such as runway strip dimensions, obstacle limitation surfaces (OLS), and visual aids. It might impact other Annexes including Annex 4 (Charts), Annex 6 (Aircraft Operations), Annex 10 (Aeronautical Telecommunications) and Annex 19 (Safety Management).

2.28 The draft “Guideline for Runway Classification” was thoroughly reviewed by the Experts from India, Pakistan and Thailand to incorporate any missing information and provide more clarity before incorporating it as **Appendix G** to the Final Report of AP-AA/WG/7. The standardized guidelines would promote global harmonization, enhance safety, and ensure consistent application of Annex 14 Volume I provisions.

2.29 AP-AA/WG/7 agreed to endorse the following Draft Conclusion and submit it to AOP/SG for its consideration at the Ninth Meeting of the AOP/SG in July 2025:

Draft Conclusion AP-AA/WG/7 - 2: Guideline for Runway Classification		
What:	That, the Guideline for Runway Classification provided in Appendix G of the AP-AA/WG/7 Report be circulated to States/Administrations after approval by AOP/SG/9. The Guideline to be published on the ICAO APAC eDocuments Webpage under AGA Heading.	Expected impact: ☐ Political / Global ☐ Inter-regional ☐ Economic ☐ Environmental ☒ Ops/Technical

Why: To address ambiguities and inconsistent interpretation of runway classification criteria in Annex 14 Volume I, and to promote global harmonization, enhanced safety, and consistent implementation of aerodrome design standards.	Follow-up: ☒ Required from States
When: 4-Jul-25	Status: Adopted by Subgroup
Who: ☒ Sub groups ☐ APAC States ☒ ICAO APAC RO ☐ ICAO HQ ☐ Other:	

Information Papers and Presentations

2.30 The following Information Papers and Presentations were considered by AP-AA/WG/7:

- 1) ICAO HQ Update on AGA Matters (IP/03);
- 2) Overview of Safety Issues and Need for Safety Promotion (IP/04);
- 3) Safety Promotion Initiatives at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IP/05);
- 4) Benchmarking Safety Culture in Ground Handling (IP/06);
- 5) Environment Friendly Safety Mitigations (IP/07);
- 6) SMS Organization at Trans Maldivian Airways – World’s Largest Seaplane Operator (IP/08);
- 7) Land Use vis-à-vis Aviation Safety at Islamabad International Airport (IP/09);
- 8) Implementation of ICAO ACR-PCR Method for Declaring Pavement Strength at the Airport in India : A Conservative Approach of DGCA India (IP/10);
- 9) Velana International Airport (VIA) / Runway Safety Team (RST) Issues with Emphasis on Seaplane Operations (IP/11);
- 10) Thailand’s Experiences and Practices for Safety Oversight of Ground Handling Services (IP/12);
- 11) Safety Management Systems (PPT/01);
- 12) Runway Safety Programme and Global Reporting Format (PPT/02);
- 13) Lessons learnt from Runway Safety Team establishment and implementation of GRF (PPT/03)

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper;
- b) endorse the **Draft Conclusion** presented in Paragraph 2.19 for further consideration by APANPIRG/36;
- c) adopt the **Draft Conclusion** presented in 2.29; and
- d) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

AP-AA/WG TASK LIST (Updated at AP-AA/WG/7)

	ACTION ITEM/PLANNED ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	STATUS	REMARKS
1/1	Develop a survey on States which have not completed the implementation of aerodrome certification for all international aerodromes, with an AGA EI below 75% and/or AOP air navigation deficiencies to establish the requirements for assistance	India to lead Bangladesh, Nepal and Thailand to assist	December 2019	Closed	From TOR Conclusion AOP/SG/4-8 agreed to circulate the survey to APAC States / Administrations Circulated through SL AN 3/3 – AP258/20 (AGA) dated 18 December 2020 Interim results presented in AP-AA/WG/3 WP/12 [Continued in Task 3/1]
1/2	Review the status of air navigation deficiencies in the field of AOP (as listed in the APANPIRG air navigation deficiencies database) and assist the concerned State(s) to develop corrective action plans	States COSCAPs to support	Continuous	Open	From TOR
1/3	To assist States which have not completed the implementation of aerodrome certification for all international aerodromes and/or with an AGA EI below 75% in establishing an aerodrome certification	Thailand to lead (c & d) Philippines – item (c) Bangladesh – item (d) India – item (e) & (f) Nepal – item (g) Malaysia (lead), India and Nepal – item (a),	January 2020	Closed – Item (a), (b), (c), (e), (f), (g) & (h) Closed - Item (d) and (h)	From TOR Tasks 1/3 (a), (b), (c) and (g) completed and documents are posted on APAC Website https://www.icao.int/APAC/Pages/eDocs.aspx Agreed by Decision AOP/SG/4-7 SL AN 3/3 – AP257/20 (AGA) dated 18

	ACTION ITEM/PLANNED ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	STATUS	REMARKS
	process, develop a set of generic documents, such as: (a) specific operating regulations; (b) organization structure of the aerodrome regulatory unit; (c) aerodrome certification procedure manual; (d) generic aerodrome inspector handbook with checklists; (e) generic template of the aerodrome manual; (f) training programme and training plan; (g) procedures for accepting non compliances; and (h) surveillance programme.	(b) & (h) Secretariat to support Request support from TCB/IPAV Thailand – item (d) Malaysia (lead), India and Nepal - item (h)	May 2021 December 2021		December 2020 Task 1/3 (a), (b), (d), (e), & (f) completed and documents are posted on APAC Website https://www.icao.int/APAC/Pages/eDocs.aspx Task 1/3 (h) completed (AP-AA/WG/4 – WP/08) and document will be posted after approval by AOP/SG/6 on APAC Website https://www.icao.int/APAC/Pages/eDocs.aspx
3/1	For the aerodrome assistance survey questionnaire: (a) Recirculate to States / Administration which have yet to respond (b) Conduct analysis and recommend way forward	Secretariat India and Nepal	May 2021 December 2021	Closed	Task 3/1 (a): SL Ref.: AN 3/3 - AP075/21 (AGA), dated 5 May 2021 Task 3/2 (b): AP-AA/WG/4-WP/09 Task 3/1 (a) & (b) completed.

Appendix F to the Report of AP-AA/WG/7

	ACTION ITEM/PLANNED ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	STATUS	REMARKS
4/1	Develop Generic Enforcement Policy and Procedure Manual	Malaysia (Lead), India	December 2022	Completed	AP-AA/WG/5-WP/09 Task 4/1 completed.
4/2	Develop Generic Exemption Policy and Procedure Manual	Australia (Lead), Nepal	December 2022	Completed	AP-AA/WG/5-WP/10 Task 4/2 completed.
AP-AA/WG/5 [13 – 16 March 2023]					
5/1	Develop a Generic Guidance for the evaluation of Aerodrome SMS	Australia, Maldives, Thailand (Lead)	First draft GM by December 2023	Completed	AP-AA/WG/6-WP/06
AP-AA/WG/6 [02 – 05 April 2024]					
6/1	Share State's experiences of operation and maintenance of aerodromes without runway side stripe marking at AP-AA/WG/7	Lao PDR to share experiences at AP-AA/WG/7	AP-AA/WG/7 AP-AA/WG/8		
6/2	Review and improvise the RST Questionnaire presented through AP-AA/WG/6-WP/07	Thailand (Lead), Pakistan, Philippines, Malaysia, Maldives, India, Cambodia	End of May 2024.	Completed	Incorporated in the Final Report of AP-AA/WG/6 Reminder to States.
6/3	Share State's experiences, and mechanism established to resolve conflicts between Aviation Authorities and Environmental and/or Land Use Authorities.	Pakistan to share its experience for land use vis-à-vis aviation safety at Islamabad Airport. India (TBC)	AP-AA/WG/7	Completed	AP-AA/WG/7 – IP/09 (Pakistan)
6/4	Share State's Challenges and Mechanism established for certification of Military Aerodromes used for international Operations.	India and Malaysia to share its challenges and proposed/possible solution derived for certification of Military	AP-AA/WG/7	Completed	AP-AA/WG/7 – WP/13 (Malaysia) India to share experiences at AP-AA/WG/8

	ACTION ITEM/PLANNED ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	STATUS	REMARKS
		Aerodromes used for international Operations			
6/5	Share State's Experience, challenges and/or practices for safety oversight of Ground Handling Services.	India, Malaysia and Thailand to share experiences and practices at AP-AA/WG/7	AP-AA/WG/7	Completed	AP-AA/WG/7 – WP/15 (Malaysia) AP-AA/WG/7 – IP/06 (India) AP-AA/WG/7 – IP/12 (Thailand)
AP-AA/WG/7 [27 – 30 May 2025]					
7/1	Develop Regional Guidance on Alternative Acceptable Means of Compliance with Regard to RFF Services for Aerodrome Category 1 and 2.	Fiji (Lead), Maldives, Wellington Airport (New Zealand), Philippines, Solomon Islands, USA (TBC)	By AP-AA/WG/9, Progress update at AP-AA/WG/8		
7/2	Sharing experience on USOAP Preparation	Thailand, Maldives, New Zealand (TBC)	AP-AA/WG/8		
7/3	Aerodrome SMS Workshop to address USOAP CMA PQs related to SSP and SMS in conjunction with AP-AA/WG/8	COSCAP-SEA (Lead), USA, India, Pakistan	AP-AA/WG/8		
7/4	Addressing Issues related to Certification of Military Aerodromes used for international Operations.	Workshop on Civil/Military Cooperation in Aerodrome Operations	In 2026		
7/5	Review Appendix A to AP-AA/WG/7 - WP/18 - Guideline for Runway Classification and amend/update as necessary	India (Lead), Pakistan, Thailand, Philippines	By 15 June 2025 First online Meeting on 5 June 2025 at		

	ACTION ITEM/PLANNED ACTIVITIES	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	TIME FRAME	STATUS	REMARKS
			13:00 BKK Time		
7/6	Pakistan's experience with conduct and acceptance of Task and Resource Analysis (TRA) for Certified Aerodromes	Pakistan	AP-AA/WG/8		

