**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 15th Meeting**
**Video Teleconference meeting, 21-22 August 2024**

1. The 15th RCM TF meeting was held on 21 – 22 August 2024 virtually. The list of meeting participants is in **Appendix 1**.

2. ICAO APAC Regional Director, Mr Tao Ma, in his opening remarks, expressed his appreciation and congratulations to the taskforce for its contribution towards the upcoming DGCA Conference.

3. In his opening remarks, Chair, Mr Tay Tiang Guan recognised the work done by the workstreams and members in developing the various reports for the DGCA Conference.

4. Vice Chair, Mr John Kay, echoed the Chair's comment, acknowledging the good work, robust ideas and recommendations by the workstreams.

**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/14 Meeting**

6. The meeting adopted the record of discussion of the RCM TF/14 meeting as attached in **Appendix 3**.

**Agenda 3: Matters Arising from RCM TF/14 Meeting**

7. The meeting noted the matters arising from RCM TF/14 meeting as attached in **Appendix 4.**

**Agenda 4: Implementation Roadmap**

**Agenda 4a: Status updates on Recommendations in Implementation Roadmap**

8. The meeting noted the status updates for the Implementation Roadmap, as attached in **Appendix 5**.

**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)**

First Regional Training Cooperation Framework (RTCF) Working Group Meeting

9. Singapore reported on the First Regional Training Cooperation Framework (RTCF) Working Group meeting which was held on 1 August 2024 with the participation of 35 members from 18 States/ Administrations. The details are attached in **Appendix 6**. Ms Charmaine Liu (Singapore) was elected as the Chair of the Working Group while Ms Natalie Randolph (United States) and Ms Lia Sunok Lee (Republic of Korea) were elected as the 1st and 2nd Vice-Chairs respectively.

10. The meeting was briefed on the objectives of the RTCF Working Group and the timeline of key initiatives under the Regional Training Cooperation Framework, including the ICAO APAC Regional Training Symposium to be held in July 2025 in Singapore.

11. ICAO Regional Director suggested for the RTCF Working Group to (i) include a theme on the Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP) initiative and gender equality in the Regional Training

Symposium and (ii) to extend the invitation to Institutes of Higher Learning including universities that provide aviation training. This could also be mentioned in the RTCF paper for DGCA/59.

Discussion on RTCF Paper for Submission to DGCA/59

12. Singapore presented the draft paper titled "Implementation of Asia-Pacific Regional Training Cooperation Framework", as attached in **Appendix 7.**

13. Chair and Regional Director suggested for the RTCF Working Group to summarise the content of the paper to focus on the decisions to be taken by DGCA/59. Other details if required could be included in Annexes.

14. The meeting agreed that the revised paper be circulated to the RCM TF members for comments before finalising it for submission to DGCA/59.

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

15. New Zealand presented the draft paper titled "Enhancing Communication and Engagement in the ICAO State Letter Process" as attached in **Appendix 8**.

16. The paper summarised the survey conducted previously and included examples of how different States had established their own mechanisms to respond to ICAO State Letters. The paper urged both ICAO and States to take steps to improve communication, in particular of State letters.

17. Australia recommended that the drafting team consider combining action item 3.1 c) and d) to better highlight the most important items that required actions and responses by States/ Administrations.

18. Singapore agreed with Australia's comment regarding the difficulties in seeking ICAO to change the State Letters mechanism. A dedicated State Letter mechanism could help some States to respond to State Letters, it would not address the lack of technical expertise in some States in responding to State Letters.

19. Chair appreciated the work by New Zealand, and requested that the revised paper be circulated to the RCMTF for comments before finalising it for submission to DGCA/59.

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

**Agenda 5a: Endorsement of Part III Report – led by Singapore**

20. Singapore, as lead of Part 3 of the feasibility study of an APCAC, presented the draft Part III report as attached in **Appendix 9**.

21. Singapore provided an overview of the draft report to highlight the sections that were revised from the previous version:

 i.   Section 1.3:   Added new section "Definition of Feasibility";

 ii.  Section 2.2.2:   Added new paragraph regarding the objectives of CACs identified in Part I;

 iii. Section 2.3.2 b): Added new paragraph to better reframe DGCA Conference, to suggest a proposal for enhancing the DGCA Conference and to improve two-way communication with the Montreal Group;

 iv.  Section 2.4.2 b): Added new paragraph on proposal for a new forum as a new mechanism to discussion positions on aviation policy matters;

<ol type="i" start="5">
<li>Section 4 :         Separated from the original section 3 as a stand-alone Assessment Section;</li>
<li>Section 5.2:       Revisions to some of the recommendations</li>
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22. On the recommendation to establish an Asia Pacific Annual Forum alongside the DGCA Conference, the meeting discussed whether the Forum should be considered a new mechanism or an enhancement to the DGCA Conference.

23. ICAO APAC Deputy Regional Director commented that it could be too ambitious as a start for the Forum to agree on policies and suggested to amend the language to discuss regional aviation issues of common interest instead. On providing a regional voice at international platforms, he noted that States were already presenting papers co-sponsored by other APAC States at ICAO meetings.

24. Australia noted the proposed enhancements to the DGCA Conference, including the proposal to have a formal set of Terms of Reference (TORs), but indicated its preference to keep the forum and enhancements to DGCA Conference as separate initiatives, clarifying that these initiatives could co-exist.

25. Chair commented that the objective of having a set of formal TORs was not to fundamentally change the DGCA Conference. Instead, they would serve to better define the various aspects of the DGCA Conference to enhance its the effectiveness. Regional Director commented that while official TORs for the DGCA Conference was not available, there was a set of secretariat guidance material for ICAO APRO to support the Conference.

26. China highlighted the similarities between the DGCA Conference and the new forum and the need to examine the feasibility and purpose of the proposed new forum. On Section 4.3.2, China suggested the Part III report emphasise the importance for States to enhance communication and collaboration with ICAO APRO as an important enabler to achieving the needs and priorities of the region

27. The meeting further considered the comments made by various RCM TF members and agreed to better articulate the purpose of both strengthening the DGCA Conference and establishing a dedicated forum, and address the potential duplication between the two initiatives. Australia, New Zealand and Singapore then provided inputs to refine the wordings to be considered in formulating the recommendations in the Part III report.

28. The RCM TF members agreed to the formulation of paragraphs 5.2.3d and 5.2.4, as follows:

    a. "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:

    …

    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."

    b. "5.2.4   The region could establish a dedicated forum, to be held on the side of DGCA Conference for States/Administrations to discuss and agree on regional aviation issues of common interest."

*[Afternote: Please refer to the DGCA Conference paper on the examination of the feasibility of an APCAC for the final text of the recommendations to DGCA/59, after incorporating further comments by RCM TF members.]*

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

29. 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 outcomes of Parts I, II and III of the study;

    b.  Proposed recommendations to DGCA/59, under Action by the Conference; and

    c.  Attachment of the Part I, Part II and Part III full reports.

30. Chair commented that Vice Chair New Zealand and he would be responsible for the drafting of the report. The meeting agreed for the draft DGCA paper to be circulated to RCM TF members for comments before finalising it for submission to DGCA/59.

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

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

    a.  Final Report of the Feasibility Study of the APCAC;

    b.  Implementation of the Asia-Pacific Regional Training Cooperation Framework; and

    c.  Enhancing Communication and Engagement in the ICAO State Letter Process

32. Chair requested for the various drafting teams to revise the draft papers within 2 weeks and to circulate to the RCM TF members for comments before submission. Chair encouraged RCM TF members to provide timely feedback so that the papers could be submitted to the DGCA Conference Secretariat before the deadline.

33. The secretary informed the meeting that the deadline for DGCA Conference paper submission would be 13 September 2024.

**Agenda 7: Other Business**

34. No other business was raised.

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

35. Chair suggested for RCM TF members who would be attending the DGCA Conference to gather for an informal meeting as necessary before the RCMTF paper presentations, for final preparation of the presentation.

36. The date and nature of the next RCM TF meeting will be updated later.

**Closing Remarks**

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

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