



ICAO

International Civil Aviation Organization

The Eighth Meeting of the Asia/Pacific
Aerodrome Assistance Working Group (AP-AA/WG/8)

(Bangkok, Thailand, 21 to 24 April 2026)

Agenda Item 7: USOAP CMA in AGA

THAILAND'S EXPERIENCE ON USOAP AUDIT

(Presented by THAILAND)

SUMMARY

This Information Paper presents Thailand's experience on the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme – Continuous Monitoring Approach (USOAP CMA). It highlights key activities undertaken during pre-audit, audit, and post-audit phases, as well as the challenges encountered and lessons learnt. This paper aims to share practical insights and good practices that contributed to improving the outcomes of USOAP CMA Audit, particularly in enhancing Effective Implementation (EIEI).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 From 27 August to 8 September 2025, Thailand experienced a full-scope audit under the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme – Continuous Monitoring Approach (USOAP CMA). The audit assessed the State's capabilities in effectively implementing safety oversight across all eight Critical Elements (CEs) of a civil aviation system, as defined by ICAO.

1.2 This paper focuses on the Aerodromes and Ground Aids (AGA) area, in which Thailand achieved an Effective Implementation (EI) score of **84.62%**, reflecting the State's strong commitment to maintaining safety and ensuring compliance with aerodrome operations. In addition, Thailand recorded an overall EI score of **88.03%**, demonstrating significant progress in strengthening its safety oversight system.

1.3 This paper further outlines the key phases of preparation, including pre-audit, audit, and post-audit activities, as well as the challenges encountered and lessons learnt, with the aim of improving the outcomes of future USOAP CMA audits.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The USOAP CMA audit of the civil aviation system of Thailand was covered all eight areas of LEG (Primary Aviation Legislation), ORG (Civil Aviation Organization), PEL (Personnel Licensing), OPS (Aircraft Operation), AIR (Airworthiness), AIG (Accident and Incident Investigation), ANS (Air Navigation Services), and AGA (Aerodromes and Ground Aids).

2.2 The preparation involved key activities carried out across three distinct phases, as described below:

2.3 Pre-audit preparation was divided into key actions as follows:

- **USOAP Audit Plan Establishment:** The first and most critical step was the development of a comprehensive audit preparation plan. This involved a thorough review of the audit Protocol Questions (PQs), the Guidance for Review of Evidence, and relevant ICAO reference materials, in order to identify priority areas, potential gaps, and resource requirements. Tips were to treat the preparation plan as a *project management tool*. The plan should:

- Break down tasks by audit area
- Assign responsible focal points
- Set clear internal deadlines well ahead of ICAO timelines and include buffer time for document revision and management approval

- **USOAP Auditee Team Set-Up:** The second step was to form a dedicated and competent auditee team. CAAT (AGA) established a core team comprising:

- Spokesperson: equipped with audit techniques and strong problem-solving skills
- Evidence Preparation Teams (Technical Support): responsible for compiling and organizing documentation
- Audit Facilitators: supporting spokespersons in presenting evidence effectively

A tip was to have clear task assignment; each protocol question must have a designated responsible owner.

- **Document Preparation:** Document preparation is the most time-consuming aspect of USOAP readiness. Tips included:

- All evidence should be prepared in accordance with the Guidance for Review of Evidence
- Evidence should be organized based on the Critical Elements (CEs) sequences, starting from CE-1 onwards to the relevant CE for each PQ
- Avoidance of submitting unnecessary documentation that may lead to confusion during the audit process

- **External Support:** CAAT conducted a mock audit with support from Combined Action Team (CAT-Mission), Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) and the Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programme – Southeast Asia (COSCAP-SEA).

- **Internal Support:** A mock audit was conducted by the Safety Management and Safety Assurance Office (SMO) of CAAT to assess operational readiness, enhance staff understanding, and minimize potential findings prior to the actual audit. In addition, during the USOAP CMA audit, coordination was also undertaken with the Security Department (SFD) and Human Resources Department (HCD) to support responses to inquiries related to security measures, including fencing and other security-related matters and to support information related to organization, manpower, inspectors number, training records.

- **Preparation for the Industry Visit:** CAAT organized coordination meetings with aerodrome personnel to ensure their readiness and full cooperation during the audit process.

- These meetings aimed to seek collaboration in several key areas, including the preparation of relevant documentation, the arrangement of appropriate personnel for interviews with auditors, and logistical readiness for on-site inspection activities.
- In addition, CAAT worked closely with the aerodrome operators to ensure a clear understanding of the audit process, particularly the Audit Protocol Questions

(PQs) related to the Industry Visit. This helped operators recognize their roles and responsibilities, understand auditors' expectations, and prepare evidence in a structured and effective manner.

2.4 Audit phase was divided into key actions as follows:

- Audit Environment
 - The Audit Zone: Equipped with a triple-monitor setup. Two screens displayed evidence documents (one for auditors, one for participants), and a third screen displayed the specific Protocol Question (PQ) under discussion to ensure all parties remained aligned.
 - The Refresher Zone: A designated area behind a backdrop for team debriefing and relaxation. This allowed the team to coordinate quietly on upcoming sessions and manage the high-pressure atmosphere effectively.
- Inter-departmental Coordination
 - The audit required seamless collaboration across departments. The Human Capital Management Department supported CE-3 (State civil aviation system and safety oversight functions) and CE-4 (Technical personnel qualification and training), while the Security and Facility Department ensured controlled access to movement areas during the certification process.
- Industry Visit: Don Mueang International Airport (DMK) on 4 September 2025, the audit team conducted an on-site inspection at DMK. Key success factors included:
 - Pre-arrival Readiness: Detailed logistics planning, including transportation and mandatory PPE/security pass verification, was completed 24 hours in advance.
 - Comprehensive Coverage: The visit spanned the movement area, Airfield Ground Lighting (AGL), Wildlife Hazard Management, Fire Station, Aerodrome Control Tower, and the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).
 - Subject Matter Expert (SME) Presence: CAAT ensured that the right technical personnel were stationed at each location to provide immediate, accurate answers to the auditors' queries.

2.5 Post audit, CAAT (AGA) undertook key post-audit activities. The first action was the review of a draft audit report. The second action was the development of Corrective Action Plans (CAPs). In establishing CAPs for each finding, CAAT conducted internal meetings at the management level to define appropriate policies and timeframe. In developing the CAPs, CAAT strictly adhered to the six CAP Criteria outlined in ICAO Doc 9735 — Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme Continuous Monitoring Manual.

2.6 Challenges and Lessons Learnt:

- Prepare Personnel, Not Just Paperwork
 - Beyond document preparation, "mock" presentations of evidence are vital. For complex technical items, using one-page summaries or flowcharts significantly reduced the time auditors spent interpreting data.

- Version Control and Document Currency
 - A dedicated officer should be assigned to verify that all shared manuals (Corporate, Training, etc.) are the latest versions across all departments right up to the audit date.
- Demonstrating "System in Place"
 - In cases where implementation was not 100% complete, Thailand found that presenting a clear action plan with defined timelines was effective. Showing what has been done versus what is planned demonstrates a proactive safety oversight system even during transitions.
- Consolidated "Unexpected Request" Folder
 - Maintain a "Common Reference" folder containing frequently requested but non-specific documents. Having a back-office support team ready to retrieve additional evidence instantly is crucial for maintaining audit momentum.
- Transparency in Certification Status
 - For airports still undergoing certification, it is essential to present their current stage in the process clearly. Additionally, physical and operational data for all airports listed in the AIP (not just certified ones) must be ready, as auditors may select any site for verification.
- Regulator-Industry Alignment
 - The consistency of information between the Regulator (CAAT) and the Industry (Aerodrome Operators) is paramount. When both entities provide aligned answers to the same PQs, it significantly strengthens auditor confidence in the State's oversight capabilities.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in this paper; and
- b) discuss any relevant matters as appropriate.

Sharing Experience on USOAP Preparation - Thailand

Agenda

Experience on each phase of preparation

Audit Overview

- Audit Overview
- CMAA (2015) & ICVM (2019)
- CMAA (2025)

Pre-audit

- USOAP Audit Plan Establishment
- USOAP Audit Team Set up
- Document Preparation
- External/Internal Support
- Industry Visit Preparation

Audit

- Audit Period
- Audit Room Preparation
- Coordination
- Industry Visit
- Submit Additional Evidence after Daily De-briefing

Post Audit

- Review a Draft Report
- Corrective Action Plan Establishment

Challenges and Lessons Learnt

- Challenges
- Lessons Learnt

Audit Overview



Duration

27 August to 8 September 2025



Audit Scope

Full Scope:
LEG / ORG / PEL / OPS / AIR /
AIG / ANS / AGA



Audit Objective

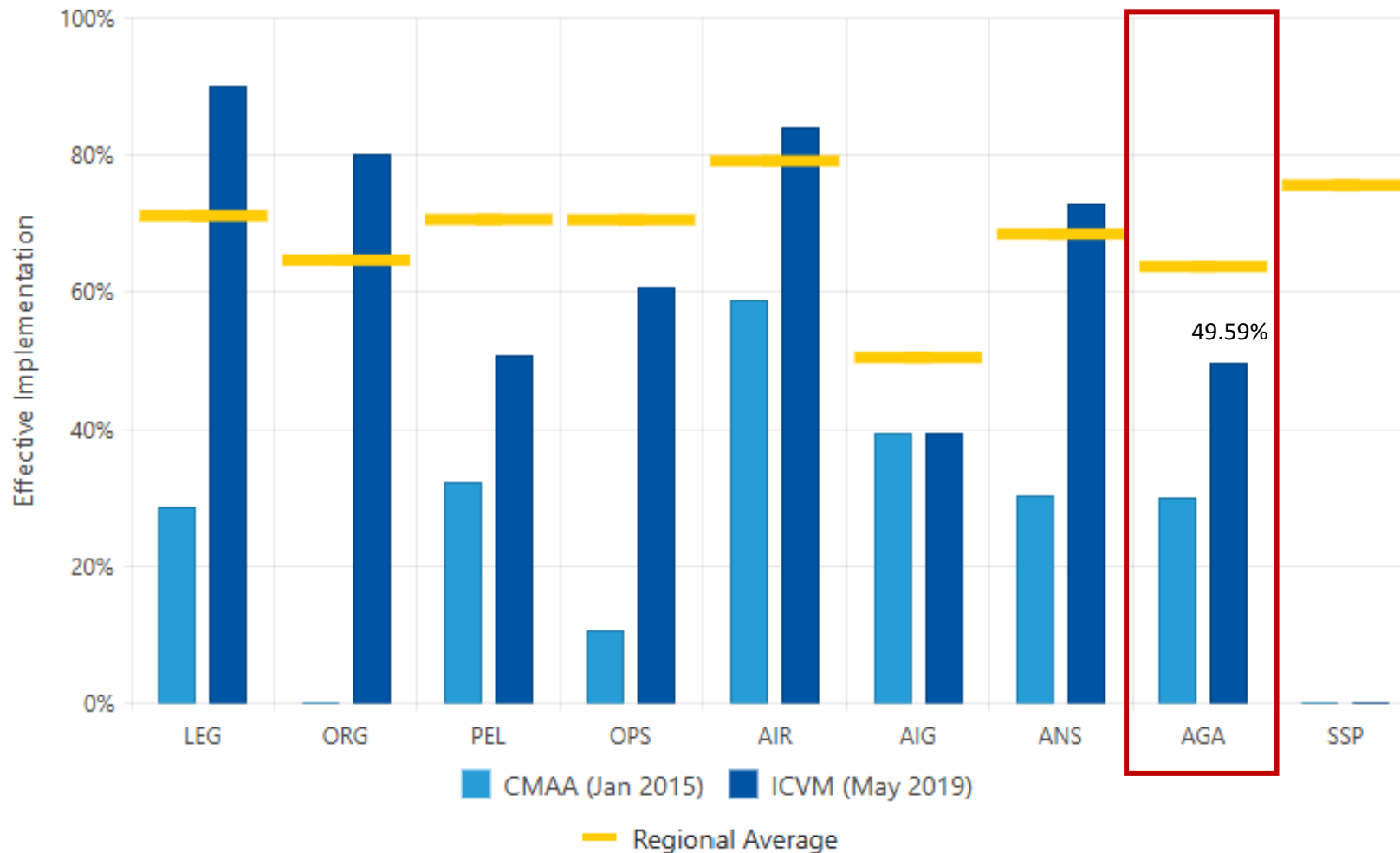
Ensure that Member States
effectively implement ICAO's
safety-related SARPs



Industry Visit

Don Mueang International
Airport (VTBD)

CMAA (2015) & ICVM (2019)

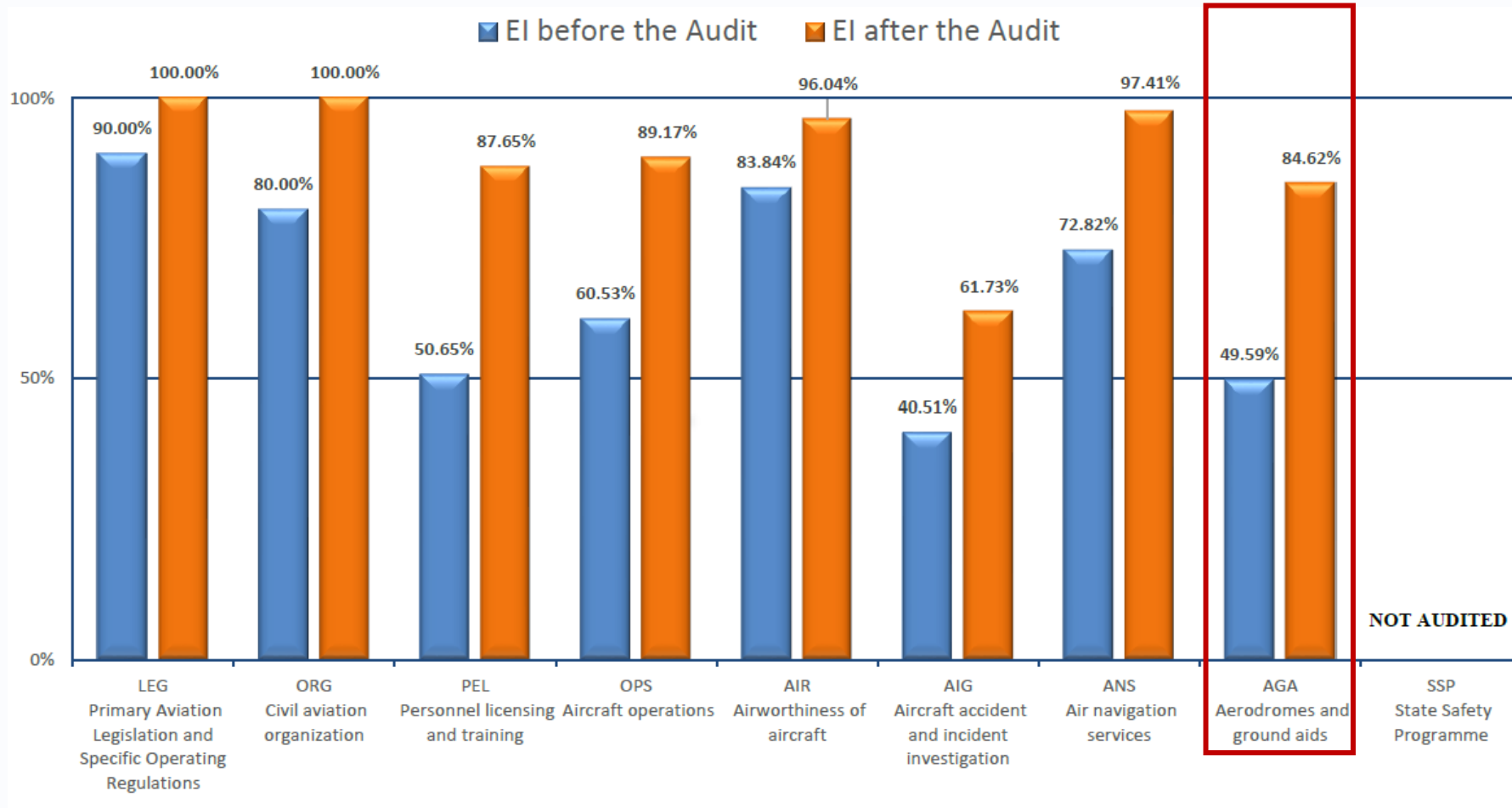


Effective
Implementation (EI)

Overall EI
61.60%

AGA
49.59%

CMAA (2025)



Effective Implementation (EI)

Overall EI 26 ↑
%
88.03%

AGA 35 ↑
%
84.62%

The image shows a large, modern building with a glass facade. The CAAT logo is prominently displayed on the glass. The logo consists of the letters 'CAAT' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, followed by a green arrow pointing to the right. The glass reflects the surrounding cityscape and the sky.

CAAT

Pre-audit

Pre-audit

1. USOAP Audit Plan Establishment.

- Break down tasks by audit area
- Assign responsible focal points
- Set clear internal deadlines well ahead of ICAO timelines

2. USOAP Auditee Team Set up.

- Spokesperson
- Evidence Preparation Teams (Technical Support)
- Audit Facilitators

3. Document Preparation.

- All evidence should be prepared in accordance with the Guidance for Review of Evidence
- Evidence should be organized based on the Critical Elements (CEs) sequence, starting from CE-1 onwards to the relevant CE for each PQ
- Avoidance of submitting unnecessary documentation that may lead to confusion during the audit process.



Pre-audit

4. External/Internal Support

External Support

- CAT-Mission
- COSCAP-SEA
- CAAS

Internal Support

- Coordination with other departments (SMO, SFD, HCD)

5. Industry Visit Preparation

- Meetings with aerodrome operators:
 - Preparation of relevant documentation
 - Arrangement of appropriate aerodrome personnel for interviews with auditors
- Arrangement of logistical readiness for on-site inspection activities





The Audit

Audit

1. Audit Room Preparation

- The room was divided into two zones, separated by a backdrop.

2. Coordination

- Coordination with other departments (HCD, SFD, SMO)

3. Submit Additional Evidence after Daily De-briefing

- USB flash drive



Audit

4. Industry Visit:

Don Mueang International Airport

- Movement area
- Airfield Ground Lighting Facility (AGL)
- Wildlife Hazard Management Control Unit
- Fire Station
- Aerodrome Control Tower
- Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)



CAAT

สำนักงานการบินพลเรือนแห่งประเทศไทย
The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand

STEADFAST CARE



CAAT
ACM Manat Chavanaprayoon
Director General
CAAT



CAAT
Mr. Adel Ramlawi
Team Leader ICAO USOAP CMA
LEG. ORG. AGA

Post audit

Post Audit

1. Review a Draft Report
 2. Corrective Action Plan Establishment
- Internal meeting with the management level to set out policy
 - Strictly adhered to the six CAP criteria specified in Doc 9735
 - Review by SMO, DDG, and DG



Challenges & Lessons Learnt

1. PREPARE EARLY & PRACTICE



2. KEEP DOCUMENTS UP TO DATE



3. SHOW THE SYSTEM IN PLACE



4. HANDLE UNEXPECTED DOCUMENT REQUESTS



5. PUBLIC AIRPORTS NOT FULLY CERTIFIED



6. COORDINATE WITH INDUSTRY





CAAT 

สำนักงานการบินพลเรือนแห่งประเทศไทย
The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand