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ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION**

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AGENDA ITEM 3: AVIATION SAFETY

**CERTIFICATION OF MILITARY AERODROMES USED FOR
CIVIL AVIATION OPERATIONS: CHALLENGES AND
IMPLEMENTED MEASURES**

(Presented by Malaysia)

INFORMATION PAPER

SUMMARY

This paper presents Malaysia's experience in certifying military aerodromes used for civil aviation operations, highlighting the principal regulatory challenges encountered and the measures implemented to facilitate certification while preserving military operational capability. The challenges include integrating military operational arrangements with civil aviation regulatory requirements, harmonising certification documentation, establishing effective civil-military governance and coordination, and supporting regulatory familiarisation. Malaysia addressed these challenges through structured governance arrangements, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), harmonised certification documentation, stakeholder engagement, collaborative safety assessments and progressive regulatory oversight, thereby strengthening civil-military coordination and supporting compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

CERTIFICATION OF MILITARY AERODROMES USED FOR CIVIL AVIATION OPERATIONS: CHALLENGES AND IMPLEMENTED MEASURES

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Military aerodromes used for civil aviation operations play an important role in enhancing connectivity and optimising aviation infrastructure. However, their certification presents unique regulatory, governance and operational challenges due to the differing requirements of military and civil aviation.

1.2 The certification of Labuan Airport and Kuantan Airport provided Malaysia with the opportunity to develop a structured approach for certifying military aerodromes used for civil aviation operations. The process required close collaboration between the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM), aerodrome operators and the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) to demonstrate compliance with applicable ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), while preserving military operational capability.

1.3 This paper presents Malaysia's experience, highlighting the key challenges encountered, the measures implemented and the lessons learned, which may provide useful reference for other States operating military aerodromes used for civil aviation operations.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Challenges

2.1.1 The primary challenge in certifying military aerodromes used for civil aviation operations is integrating military operational arrangements with applicable civil aviation regulatory requirements. As military aerodromes are established to support defence operations, they may incorporate infrastructure, operational procedures and safety arrangements that differ from those required for civil aviation. Certification therefore requires the demonstration of compliance with applicable regulatory requirements while preserving military operational capability and maintaining an acceptable level of safety.

2.1.2 Under the Malaysian regulatory framework, military aerodromes are not required to hold a Certificate of Aerodrome. Consequently, certification requires the development and harmonisation of certification documentation, including the Aerodrome Manual, Airport Emergency Plan (AEP), Safety Management System (SMS) documentation and associated operational procedures, to demonstrate compliance with applicable civil aviation requirements.

2.1.3 Certification requires effective governance and coordination among military authorities, aerodrome operators and the civil aviation regulator. As military operational decisions are subject to established command structures and security considerations, certification activities may require additional consultation and approval to ensure that military operational requirements and civil aviation obligations are appropriately addressed.

2.1.4 Military personnel and third-party service providers performing aerodrome functions may require appropriate regulatory familiarisation and competency development to support compliance with applicable civil aviation requirements and the continued safe operation of military aerodromes used for civil aviation operations.

2.1.5 The implementation of certification-related improvements requires effective planning and coordination among all stakeholders. As military and civil aviation organisations operate under different regulatory frameworks and operational priorities, the timely implementation of agreed actions depends on collaborative planning, resource allocation and continuous engagement between the relevant authorities.

2.2 Mitigation Measures

2.2.1 To facilitate certification, Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) were established between aerodrome operators and military authorities to define roles, responsibilities and coordination mechanisms, providing a structured governance framework to support certification activities and regulatory compliance.

2.2.2 Certification documentation, including the Aerodrome Manual, Airport Emergency Plan (AEP), Safety Management System (SMS) documentation and associated operational procedures, was developed and harmonised through a series of joint reviews involving the aerodrome operator and military authorities. Existing operational procedures were evaluated against applicable civil aviation requirements, with necessary enhancements incorporated to demonstrate regulatory compliance while preserving military operational capability.

2.2.3 Regular stakeholder engagement through the Runway Safety Team (RST) and Airside Safety Committee meetings has strengthened collaboration between civil and military authorities. These forums provide an effective platform to discuss operational matters, certification issues, audit findings and safety concerns, enabling stakeholders to develop coordinated and practical solutions.

2.2.4 Joint safety assessments were conducted to identify hazards associated with shared civil-military operations and establish appropriate risk mitigation measures. Relevant military operational information, including the presence of cable arresters and arrestor barriers where applicable, was promulgated through the Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) to support flight crew awareness and the safe conduct of civil aircraft operations.

2.2.5 Regulatory familiarisation and competency development programmes were implemented for military personnel and third-party service providers performing aerodrome functions through technical training, operational briefings, document reviews, joint inspections and on-site engagement throughout the certification process. These activities strengthened understanding of applicable civil aviation requirements and supported the effective discharge of certification and operational responsibilities.

2.2.6 Structured governance and coordination arrangements, supported by continuous regulatory engagement, periodic progress reviews and regulatory inspections, facilitated the timely resolution of certification findings and the implementation of corrective actions in a coordinated and progressive manner while accommodating military operational requirements.

2.2.7 Collectively, these measures established a structured and risk-based certification approach that strengthened civil-military governance, enhanced regulatory confidence and supported compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). Malaysia's experience demonstrates that effective collaboration and regulatory oversight can facilitate the certification and continued safe operation of military aerodromes used for civil aviation operations while preserving military operational capability.

3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

3.1 The Conference is invited to note the information contained in this Paper.

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