61st CONFERENCE OF DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

7-11 September 2026

AGENDA ITEM 8 : CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH DATA-DRIVEN RANKING FRAMEWORK FOR INDIAN FLYING TRAINING ORGANISATIONS (FTOs)

(Presented by DGCA-India)

SUMMARY

DGCA-India, has introduced a data-driven Ranking Framework for Flying Training Organisations (FTOs), effective from 1 October 2025, as a complement to the existing compliance-based oversight model. The framework evaluates FTOs across five weighted parameters: Operational Aspects (40%), Safety Standards (20%), FTO Performance (20%), Compliance Standards (10%), and Assistance to Students (10%).

The introduction of this framework has encouraged FTOs to enhance safety standards, ensure adequate human resources, optimise aircraft utilisation, and reduce training completion timelines in pursuit of higher rankings. These improvements are contributing to CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT and strengthening the overall flying training ecosystem in India.

Action:

The Conference is invited to:

- Note the progress made by DGCA India in developing and implementing a data-driven Ranking Framework for Flying Training Organisations (FTOs).
- Consider recommending that ICAO develop guidance material on data-driven ranking of FTOs as a complement to existing compliance-based oversight.
- Encourage Contracting States to progressively adopt similar data-driven ranking Framework within the Asia-Pacific region to promote regional standardisation and excellence in flying training.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT THROUGH DATA-DRIVEN RANKING FRAMEWORK FOR INDIAN FLYING TRAINING ORGANISATIONS (FTOs)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Ensuring consistent, measurable training standards among FTOs is essential for sustaining safe and orderly growth of the aviation sector, particularly in regions experiencing rapid expansion of pilot demand.

1.2 Traditional regulatory oversight of FTOs has primarily focused on compliance verification — confirming adherence to approved training programmes, personnel qualifications, and infrastructure requirements at the point of certification and periodic audits. While being essential, compliance-based oversight alone does not fully capture ongoing performance, safety trends, operational efficiency, or training outcomes of an FTO. Future aviation growth requires a shift from Compliance-based oversight to measurable Performance-based oversight. Ensuring high standards at the FTO level is the prerequisite for global aviation safety.

1.3 In recognition of this gap, and to support anticipated growth in pilot training demand, DGCA India has implemented ranking framework for Flying Training Organizations (FTOs) in India in year 2025. The framework is conceived as part of DGCA's continued commitment to improve the quality, safety, and efficiency of pilot training in India, while fostering a performance-driven and transparent training ecosystem.

1.4 The framework of FTO is evaluated against uniform, objective based, and largely quantifiable parameters. The data & information is drawn from DGCA's e-Governance of Civil Aviation (eGCA) platform and other regulatory sources, thereby minimising subjectivity and enhancing the credibility of the rankings.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Rationale for a Data-Driven Ranking Framework System

A Data-Driven Ranking Framework is a framework for enhancing Pilot Training Standards while ensuring Sustainable Aviation Growth. It provides regulators, student pilots, airlines, and other industry stakeholders with measurable, comparable information regarding an FTO's capability, safety performance, operational efficiency, and training outcomes. The key drivers for introducing such a framework in India were:

- Ensuring Standardisation and Training Quality: A comparative framework to assess FTO performance against uniform and objective criteria, promoting standardisation of training quality across FTOs.
- Enhancing Transparency and Accountability: Enabling regulators, students, and stakeholders to make informed decisions, while holding FTOs accountable for regulatory compliance and operational standards.
- Guidance for Student Pilots: Assisting aspiring pilots to identify FTOs meeting regulatory compliance standards. Ranking system serves as a reliable guide, helping them choose FTOs based on quality, safety, and training outcomes rather than mere location or fees.
- Regulatory Oversight and Policy-Making: Ranking framework helps in identifying high-performing FTOs suitable for expansion or international collaboration, and underperforming FTOs requiring closer monitoring or corrective action.

2.2 Framework Structure and Weightage

The framework evaluates each FTO under five broad categories, together constituting 100% of the overall score, as summarized below:

Evaluation Category	Weightage	Focus Area with weightage
Operational Aspects	40%	Student to Aircraft ratio (10%), Student to Instructor ratio(10%), Fleet to AME ratio(10%),Fleet Size(5%), Ground School & Simulators(5%)
Safety Standards	20%	Number of Accidents (18%) & Incidents (2%)
FTO Performance	20%	Average Time Taken to Complete 175 Hours(10%),Average Aircraft Utilization (5%), Ratio of Trainees Completing 175 Hrs to New Enrolments(5%),
Compliance Standards	10%	No. of Significant Safety Concerns (Level-I) Observations (5%), Number of BA positive cases (5%)
Assistance to Students	10%	Resolution of Student Grievances(4%), Financial Assistance / Scholarships(2%),Trainee Placement Assistance in Aviation Sector(2%),Transparency in Payment & Refund Policies(2%)
Total	**100%**	

Operational aspects carries the highest weightage (40%), reflecting the direct relationship between fleet adequacy, instructor availability, and training capacity. FTO Performance carrying 20% weightage reflects timely completion of training and reduced backlogs & training delays. Safety Standards weighted at 20%, while Compliance Standards and Assistance to Students are weighted at 10% each.

2.3 Categorisation of FTOs

Based on the overall score achieved, each FTO is placed in one of four categories, published biannually:

Overall Score (%)	Category
85% and above	A+
70% to less than 85%	A
50% to less than 70%	B
Below 50%	C

For FTOs placed in Category 'C', DGCA issues formal notices requiring them to undertake a comprehensive self-assessment, identify the underlying causes of poor performance, and submit a time-bound Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). This institutionalises a structured corrective-action mechanism within the ranking framework, ensuring continuous performance monitoring and improvement rather than merely publishing ranking results.

2.4 Global Applicability and Relevance to ICAO

With global aviation expansion and increasing dependence on professional pilot training organisations, ICAO should encourage Contracting States to adopt data-driven ranking framework of FTOs as a global Capacity Development and quality enhancement mechanism. Specific areas of relevance include:

- Direct Link with Aviation Safety: Since every professional pilot's competency foundation is laid at the training in FTO stage, objective performance monitoring of FTOs contributes directly to the long-term safety of commercial air transport.
- Supporting Developing and Emerging States: A structured, replicable framework offers States with limited oversight resources a practical template for enhancing FTO oversight.
- Creating International Benchmarking: A harmonised, or at least mutually referenceable, set of FTO performance indicators across States would support international students, airline cadet-sponsorship programmes, and cross-border recognition of training quality.

3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

3.1 The Conference is invited to:

a) note the progress made by DGCA India in developing, implementing, and iteratively refining a Data-driven Ranking Framework for FTOs, and to consider its relevance as a potential reference model for the Region. India's FTO Ranking Framework may be adopted as a global best practice model for measuring Flight Training Organisation performance, improving pilot training quality, enhancing transparency, and ensuring sustainable aviation growth;

b) consider recommending that ICAO develop guidance material on Data-driven Ranking Framework for FTOs, to complement existing compliance-based oversight frameworks;

c) encourage Contracting States to progressively establish transparent, objective FTO evaluation frameworks suited to their national training ecosystems; and

d) consider the creation of a Regional Working Group of Asia Pacific States to facilitate knowledge-sharing on FTO ranking implementation, harmonise core performance parameters, and develop a common framework for international benchmarking of Flying Training Organisations.

— END —

A. FTO Performance (Total weightage – 20 %)

<table>
<tr><th>S. No.</th><th>Parameter</th><th>Definition</th><th>Weightage</th><th>Standard</th><th>Data Source</th><th>Conditions & Scoring</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Average Time Taken to Complete 175 Hours</td><td>Average duration (in months) taken by cadets to complete 175 hours of flying from date of commencement of flying training.</td><td>10</td><td>12 Months</td><td>EGCA</td><td>Conditions
• Only those cadets who have completed entire 175 hrs with one particular FTO are considered.
• Irrespective of the date of commencement of flying training, 175th hour should be completed in last 12 months (01.03.2025 to 28.02.2026)
Scoring
<table><tr><th>Average time calculated</th><th>Score</th></tr><tr><td><= 12 M</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>>12 M & <=15M</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>>15M</td><td>0</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Average Aircraft Utilization (Last 6 Months)</td>
<td>Total flying hours logged per aircraft divided by number of aircraft for the last 06 months</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>120 hours
(average per month per aircraft)</td>
<td>EGCA</td>
<td>Conditions
• No levy of any kind will be given to the FTO citing reasons such as; Aircraft grounded due to maintenance, incident/ accident, weather, NOTAMs, ATC restriction etc.
Scoring
<table>
<tr><th>Average Aircraft Utilization</th><th>Score</th></tr>
<tr><td>>= 120 hrs</td><td>5</td></tr>
<tr><td>>=90 & <120 hrs</td><td>3</td></tr>
<tr><td><90hrs</td><td>0</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ratio of Trainees Completing 175 Hrs to New Enrolments (Last 12 Months)</td>
<td>Number of cadets who completed 175 hrs ÷ Number of cadets enrolled in same period.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>EGCA</td>
<td>Conditions
➢ Towards ‘Trainees Completing 175 Hrs’
• Only those cadets who have completed entire 175 hrs with one particular FTO are considered.
• Irrespective of the date of commencement of flying training, 175th hour should be</td>
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<table>
<tr><th>S. No.</th><th>Parameter</th><th>Definition</th><th>Weightage</th><th>Standard</th><th>Data Source</th><th>Conditions & Scoring</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>completed in last 12 months (01.03.2025 to 28.02.2026)

➢ ‘New Enrolments’

• Includes new students who have been issued SPL during this period.

Scoring
<table><tr><th>Ratio of Trainees Completing 175 Hrs to New Enrolments</th><th>Score</th></tr><tr><td>>= 1</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>0.75 to 1</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td><0.75</td><td>0</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

B. Operational Aspects (Total weightage – 40 %)

<table>
<tr><th>S. No.</th><th>Parameter</th><th>Definition</th><th>Weightage</th><th>Standard</th><th>Data Source</th><th>Conditions & Scoring</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Student to Aircraft Ratio (Yearly)</td><td>Number of Students with the FTO ÷ Number of trainer aircraft with the FTO</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>EGCA</td><td>Conditions
All the students undertaken flying training with the FTO during the specified period.
Aircraft must be available and added in the latest approved TPM of the FTO, as on 28th February 2026.
Scoring {Refer Note(1)}<table><tr><th>Student to Aircraft Ratio</th><th>Score</th></tr><tr><td><= 10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>>10 &<= 15</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>>15</td><td>0</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>S. No.</th><th>Parameter</th><th>Definition</th><th>Weightage</th><th>Standard</th><th>Data Source</th><th>Conditions & Scoring</th></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Student to Instructor Ratio (Yearly)</td><td>Number of total students ÷ Number of approved instructors</td><td>10</td><td>10</td><td>EGCA</td><td>Conditions
All the students undertaken flying training with the FTO during the specified period.
Only those Flight Instructors who have actively flown at least for 120 days with that FTO during 01.03.2025 to 28.02.2026 will be considered.
Scoring<table><tr><th>Student to Instructor Ratio</th><th>Score</th></tr><tr><td><= 10</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>>10 to <=15</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>>15</td><td>0</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Fleet to AME Ratio</td><td>Number of aircraft ÷ Number of full-time DGCA-approved AMEs</td><td>10</td><td>3</td><td>DAW</td><td>Conditions
Minimum service period of AME is 10 months in last one year for the consideration in above matrix.
Scoring<table><tr><th>Fleet to AME</th><th>Score</th><th>B-2 rated AME</th><th>Score</th></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>S. No.</th><th>Parameter</th><th>Definition</th><th>Weightage</th><th>Standard</th><th>Data Source</th><th>Conditions & Scoring</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>
<table>
<tr><th>Ratio (B-1 rated AME)</th><th></th><th></th><th></th></tr>
<tr><td><=3</td><td>8</td><td>For fleet upto 6 aircraft - Minimum 01 (either regular or contractual)</td><td>02</td></tr>
<tr><td>>3 &<= 6</td><td>4</td><td>For fleet greater than 6 aircraft - Minimum 01 (regular AME)</td><td>02</td></tr>
<tr><td>>6</td><td>0</td><td>No B-2 rated AME</td><td>0</td></tr>
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<table>
<tr><th>S. No.</th><th>Parameter</th><th>Definition</th><th>Weightage</th><th>Standard</th><th>Data Source</th><th>Conditions & Scoring</th></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Fleet Size (Single & Multi-Engine)</td><td>Total number of operational aircraft used for training</td><td>5</td><td>Min. 10 aircraft</td><td>EGCA</td><td>Conditions
Aircraft must be available and added in the latest approved TPM of the FTO as on 28th February 2026.
Scoring<table><tr><th>Fleet Size (Single & Multi-Engine)</th><th>Score</th></tr><tr><td>≥10 aircraft (incl. at-least 01 multi-engine)</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>≥10 aircraft (No multi-engine)</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>08 to 09</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>05 to 07</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>03 to 04</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td><3 aircraft</td><td>0</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th>S. No.</th><th>Parameter</th><th>Definition</th><th>Weightage</th><th>Standard</th><th>Data Source</th><th>Conditions & Scoring</th></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Availability of Ground School & Simulators</td><td>Presence of CGI & sufficient classroom infrastructure and provision for issue of SPL and approved simulators</td><td>5 (3-Ground School +2-Simulator)</td><td>In-house Ground School
At least one Simulator</td><td>FTO Website & Information submitted by FTO</td><td>Conditions
Presence of CGI & sufficient classroom infrastructure and provision for issue of SPL.
Simulator must be DGCA-approved and operational.
Scoring<table><tr><th>Availability of Ground School & Simulators</th><th>Score</th></tr><tr><td>Approved Ground school</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>No Ground school</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>Simulators (Owned)</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Simulators (MoU with others)</td><td>1</td></tr><tr><td>No simulators</td><td>0</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

C. Safety Standards* (Weightage – 20%)

(Non-reporting of any accident/incident will attract negative 5 marks from overall score of FTO for each case of accident/incident.)

<table>
<tr><th>Sl. No.</th><th>Parameter</th><th>Definition</th><th>Weightage</th><th>Standard</th><th>Source</th><th>Conditions and Scoring</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Number of Accidents (12 Months)</td><td>Total number of aircraft accidents involving FTO operations.</td><td>18</td><td>0 (Zero)</td><td>DAS/ AAIB</td><td>Conditions
Should fall under definition of ‘Accident’ as per CAR 5/C/I.
Investigation by AAIB
Irrespective of Solo or Dual flights.
Scoring Criteria {Refer Note (4)}<table><tr><td>Number of Accidents (12 Months)</td><td>Score</td></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>18</td></tr><tr><td>1 or more</td><td>0</td></tr></table></td></tr>
</table>

						Conditions
2	**Number of Incidents (12 Months)**	Total number of aircraft incidents Involving FTO operations per 15000 hrs of flying	2	**1 per 15000 hrs of flying**	DAS	• Should fall under definition of 'Incident' or 'Serious Incident' as per CAR 5/C/I. • investigation by DGCA • Irrespective of Solo or Dual flights. **Scoring Criteria** Number of Incident per 15000 hrs flown in 12 Months: Score 1: 2 2 or more: 0

D. Compliance Standards (Weightage – 10 %)

<table>
<tr><th>Sl. No.</th><th>Parameter</th><th>Definition</th><th>Weightage</th><th>Standard</th><th>Source</th><th>Conditions and Scoring Criteria</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>No. of Significant Safety Concerns (Level-I) Observations raised during DGCA Surveillance/ Inspection</td><td>Total number of Level-I safety observations raised by DGCA during surveillance or inspection of the FTO.</td><td>5</td><td>0 (Zero)</td><td>DAW, DAS, SED</td><td>Conditions
Raised by any of the directorate of DGCA.
Applicable irrespective of subsequent compliance after raised Level 1 observation.
Scoring Criteria<table><tr><th>No. of Significant Safety Concerns (Level-I) Observations</th><th>Score</th></tr><tr><td>0</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>More than 1</td><td>0</td></tr></table></td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Number of BA positive cases</td><td>Total number of confirmed Alcohol</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

	preceding 12 months	Breath Analyser violations or refused BA test involving FTO instructors and maintenance staff.	5	0 (Zero)	DAS	**Conditions** • Irrespective of pre-flight or post flight. **Scoring Criteria** Number of BA positive cases: Score 0: 5 1 or more: 0

E. Assistant to Students (Weightage – 10 %)

Sl. No.	Parameter	Definition	Weight age	Standard	Source	Conditions and Scoring Criteria
1	**Resolution of Student Grievances**	Mechanism for addressing complaints, concerns, or disputes raised by trainees.	4	Dedicated grievance cell with documented resolutions & timelines	FTO website and PG Portal	**Conditions** • Grievance redressal policy of FTO and mechanism shall be published on their website. • Well defined response timelines and Escalation matrix • Escalation of grievance to DGCA through Public Grievance Portal will attract negative score

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Provision for internal committee as per POSH Act.

Scoring Criteria
<table>
<tr><th>No. of Student Grievances in 6 months</th><th>Score</th></tr>
<tr><td>Upto 5 grievance Escalation to PG Portal (with Grievance redressal policy)</td><td>4</td></tr>
<tr><td>5 to 10 grievance Escalation to PG Portal due to unsatisfactory responses to grievances by FTO (with Grievance redressal policy)</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>No Grievance redressal policy</td><td>0</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Financial Assistance / Scholarships</td>
<td>Sponsorship/ Subsidy from States; Guarantee for Bank Loans; Bank loan arrangements for training costs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Availability of Sponsorship/ Subsidy /Guarantee for Bank Loans/Bank loan arrangements</td>
<td>FTO website</td>
<td>

Publication on FTO website;
Records of the same for DGCA verification

Scoring Criteria
<table>
<tr><th>Financial Assistance / Scholarships</th><th>Score</th></tr>
<tr><td>Available</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Not available</td><td>0</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Trainee Placement Assistance in Aviation Sector</td>
<td>Support for cadets in securing jobs or internships</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Active placement cell or industry tie-ups</td>
<td>FTO website</td>
<td>Conditions
• Placement records maintained and published on FTO website
• MoUs/ tie-ups with Airlines/ NSOPs like cadet programme

Scoring Criteria
<table>
<tr><th>Percentage of regular CPL trainees(i.e. flying 175 hrs with same FTO) facilitated with employment/placed in last 12 months</th><th>Score</th></tr>
<tr><td>5% or more</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>1% to 5%</td><td>1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Less than 1%</td><td>0</td></tr>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Transparency in Payment & Refund Policies</td>
<td>Clarity and fairness in fee structure and refund terms</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Published fee and fee payment schedule and refund policy, Agreement Bond on FTO website</td>
<td>FTO website</td>
<td>Conditions
• No hidden charges
• Refund timelines defined
• Standard Agreement Bond & Policy published on FTO website
Scoring Criteria
<table>
<tr><th>Published fee and fee payment schedule and refund policy, Agreement Bond on FTO website</th><th>Score</th></tr>
<tr><td>Available</td><td>2</td></tr>
<tr><td>Not Available</td><td>0</td></tr>
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Directorate General of Civil Aviation नागर विमानन महानिदेशालय भारत INDIA

24.03.2026

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