

**59<sup>th</sup> CONFERENCE OF  
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION  
ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS**

*Cebu, Philippines  
14 to 18 October 2024*

**AGENDA ITEM 3: AVIATION SAFETY**

**ISSUE OF SAFETY CLEARANCE TO GROUND HANDLING  
SERVICE PROVIDER (GHSP)**

(Presented by India)

**SUMMARY**

Ground handling service is a critical activity at an airport and acts as an interface between the airport and the airlines. Taking view of phenomenal growth of aircraft movements, increase in complexity of ground operations and proliferation of third-party in ground handling services, DGCA has issued regulations in the form of Civil Aviation Requirement which mandate the GHSP to obtain the safety clearance. The CAR requires alignment of documentation, operational SOPs, and lays down requirement for training, equipment and manpower for safe operations and to reduce ground incidents.

## **ISSUE OF SAFETY CLEARANCE TO GROUND HANDLING SERVICE PROVIDER (GHSP)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Ground handling service forms a significant and critical part of the aviation industry. Larger aircraft, an increase in ground support equipment and faster turnarounds all contribute to the challenge of improving operational safety. With the growth of air traffic and the proliferation of third party ground handling services, ground operations on airport aprons have become increasingly complex and potentially hazardous.

1.2 It is important that the safety, efficiency, reliability and consistency of flight operations are required to be maintained on ground. Apron areas are often the most congested and busiest areas of an airport with aircraft turnarounds being carried out under limited space and time constraints. Unlike other areas of the aviation industry, the ground handling services were not subjected to the level of regulation in areas such as flight operations, air traffic management and aerodrome operations. Therefore, it was felt necessary to develop the regulations for GHSP to achieve the operational safety on the ground at airport for aircraft operations.

1.3 ICAO Manual of Ground Handling DOC 10121 also gives an opportunity to states to decide the direct certification or licensing of the GHSP or alternative means of compliance. However, in the case of direct licensing /certification of GHSP the safety assurance can directly be provided by the state.

### **2. DISCUSSION**

2.1 The regulations, known as Civil Aviation Requirement, have been published prescribing the framework for safe operations by service providers after a consultation process with various stakeholders. The GHSP will now have to obtain a safety clearance from DGCA. The validity of the safety clearance will be five years.

2.2 The regulations defined key appointments that a service provider should make, including those of Accountable Manager, Station Manager and Safety Manager. The GHSP needs to employ adequate number of competent personnel based on the outcome of Task Resource Analysis (TRA) for the planned tasks, activities to be performed and commensurate with the type of aircraft operations and frequency in accordance with the applicable requirements.

2.3 The GHSP will have to prepare a ground handling service manual and laying down various procedures to be followed for carrying out ground activities, including those in relation to movements of their vehicles, equipment and personnel and performing these operations in low visibility conditions such as at night and adverse weather.

2.4 The service provider will have to establish a safety management system applicable to the size, scope and complexity of its handling activities at the airport to ensure that operations are carried out in a controlled and safe manner.

2.5 The GHSP will have to record incidents and accidents and report them to DGCA within 24 hours of their occurrence.

2.6 The GHSP will have to develop and implement an emergency response plan to support the aerodrome operator and the aircraft operators.

2.7 The GHSP will have to develop, implement and maintain a training programme for its personnel and ensure they complete initial and on-the-job training following which they must each be issued a Certificate of Competency. Recurrent training will have to be conducted within a period of three years. The GHSP will have to also maintain training records and make them available for review by DGCA.

2.8 DGCA India will carry out surveillance inspections of the GHSP as per Annual Surveillance inspection plan and address the deficiencies in a structured manner as per the given framework.

### **3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE**

3.1 The Conference is invited to:

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

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