INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

AFI PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION REGIONAL GROUP
TWENTIETH MEETING (APIRG/20)
(Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire, 30 November - 2 December 2015)

Agenda Item 2.7: Other Air Navigation matters

IMPROVEMENT OF AIR TRAFFIC SERVICES OPERATIONAL SAFETY

(Presented by IFATCA)

SUMMARY
As an initiative to improve safety culture in the region, IFATCA will be hosting a training workshop in Nairobi from Feb 3-5 2016. The workshop will provide an interactive environment aimed at developing a well-grounded understanding of the relationship between the reporting of incidents, investigations, a just culture, and the development of organizations that learn from errors. States are invited to consider the attendance of appropriate professionals.
REFRENCE(S): ▪ APIRG/19 Report ▪ TAG/6 and TAG/7 Summary of Discussions

Strategic Objective(s)	This working paper relates to the Strategic **Objective A**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA) represents more than 50,000 air traffic controllers from over 130 countries. The Federation is a non-political, non-profit, professional organisation that aims to further the skills and professionalism of air traffic controllers around the world with the purpose of improving aviation safety.

1.2 As you are certainly aware, an essential pillar of a safe aviation environment is a robust safety culture among aviation professionals. The development of an industry wide culture that learns from its mistakes is reliant on a strong reporting culture and a strong just culture that accepts identifying and addressing systemic organizational issues, rather than seeking to apportion blame to individuals.

1.3 In its discussions under safety management, the APIRG/19 meeting in 2013 noted the outcome of the TAG/5 meeting as well as safety issues that had been identified and addressed in a series of informal ATM coordination meetings arranged by the ICAO ESAF and WACAF Regional Offices, and that the issue of ATC competence warranted special attention.

1.4 In a review of incident reports, TAG/7 highlighted that many investigations cite "work overload" or other factors as the cause, however these are generally not causes on their own but rather symptoms of the existence of more profound issues such as the following:

a) lack of staffing policies or not adhering to such provisions;
b) lack of methods for determining appropriate staffing requirements;
c) staff shortage;
d) overworked staff, transient or cumulative fatigue;
e) unqualified or poorly qualified staff;
f) lack of recurrent training;
g) lack of ATC proficiency; and
h) lack of ATS investigator training.

1.5 In its analysis of ATS incidents over the past 5 years, the issue of safety culture and reporting, the concept of "just culture" have featured prominently in the annual sessions of the ATS Incident Analysis Group (AIAG). In the last five years, Human Factors remains the highest contributing factor to ATS incidents. Under this ATC proficiency has featured as the highest contributing factor in the region, as seen in the 2014 report:

Contributing factors – 2014

Human Factors remain the highest contributing factor – ATC and Cockpit crew – 34 cases

- ATC proficiency – 29 cases
- Working conditions: procedures and overload – 27 cases
- Failing to establish contact on IFBP - 12 cases
- Coordination failures in ATC sectors (including with MIL) -20 cases
- Crew error – 5 cases
- Non compliance – Includes disregard of FIR pre-entry communication procedures, RVSM, coordination procedures – 27 cases

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 In an initiative to improve safety culture in the African region, IFATCA, in collaboration with ICAO, is hosting a safety culture workshop – "Think Safety" – to be held in Nairobi, Kenya from 3-5 February 2016.

2.2 This two-and-a-half-day workshop invites an average of 40 participants from the African region, focusing on operational air traffic controllers, supervisors and unit managers. The workshop will provide an interactive environment aimed at developing a well-grounded understanding of the relationship between the reporting of incidents, investigations, a just culture, and a learning organisation.

2.3 The meeting will agree that success of an event such as this one is dependant not only on the arrangements and facilitation, but also on being attended by the most relevant officials and their effective participation in the workshop. In this regard, State and ANSP are requested to participate in the workshop by sending professionals with the following responsibilities:

- Operational air traffic control as senior operational air traffic controllers or supervisors
- Air traffic control check controllers and unit safety investigators
- Air traffic control regulatory/inspectorate officials

2.4 Online registration for the event will open from December 1 on the event website (http://thinksafety.ifatca.org). Further information on the event is also available on this website.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

(a) Note the information in this working paper; and
(b) Encourage States and ANSPs to participate in the workshop arranged by IFATCA as discussed in this paper, as well as other similar initiatives in order to improve safety in the AFI Region.

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