INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Second Meeting of the AFI Aviation System Planning and implementation Group (AASPG/2)
Livingstone, Zambia, 2 to 6 November 2026

Agenda Item 4: Implementation of safety and air navigation goals, targets and indicators, including priorities set in the Regional Aviation Safety and Air Navigation Plans

Progress update on the study on ARMA governance

(Presented by the Secretariat on behalf of the ARMA Study Group)

SUMMARY
This working paper presents an update on the work of the ARMA Study Group established to assess the governance framework, institutional arrangements, resource policies and long-term sustainability of the AFI Regional Monitoring Agency (ARMA). The Study Group has undertaken a preliminary assessment through document reviews, stakeholder consultations, questionnaires and benchmarking of comparable regional and international organizations. The paper highlights the preliminary governance and sustainability issues identified, presents governance enhancement options requiring further assessment, and proposes an extension of the Study Group's mandate to complete the analysis and submit final recommendations to AASPG/3. Action by the Meeting is at Section 3 of this Paper
REFERENCE(S): • ARMA Terms of Reference; • AASPG/1 Report; • ARMA strategic plans, work programmes, budgets, human-resources records and performance reports.
Strategic Goals: *A - Every Flight is Safe and Secure;* *C - Aviation Delivers Seamless, Accessible, and Reliable Mobility for All*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The First Meeting of the Africa-Indian Ocean Aviation System Planning and Implementation Group (AASPG/1) considered the need to strengthen regional support to the AFI Regional Monitoring Agency (ARMA) in order to enhance its regional role and ensure the sustainable and effective governance of its mission.

1.2 The meeting adopted AASPG/1 Conclusion 1/29, which established a multi-stakeholder Study Group comprising representatives from Namibia, Senegal, South Africa, Zambia, AFRAA, ARMA, ASECNA, ATNS, IATA and ICAO to conduct a comprehensive study on mechanisms for the improvement and enhancement of ARMA's mission, with particular focus on governance and resource policies, taking into account regional and global best practices. The Conclusion further tasked ICAO and ARMA with coordinating the work of the Study Group and reporting the outcomes to AASPG/2.

1.3 Pursuant to this Conclusion, ICAO invited States and participating organizations to nominate focal points to support the work of the Study Group, thereby ensuring broad regional participation in the assessment process. The Study Group subsequently developed a work programme and Terms of Reference to guide its activities.

1.4 The Study Group was mandated to review the current governance framework, institutional arrangements and operational mandate of ARMA; assess the adequacy, effectiveness and sustainability of existing governance and resource policies; identify challenges, gaps and opportunities affecting ARMA's regional effectiveness; benchmark governance models and financing arrangements adopted by similar organizations; and develop recommendations aimed at strengthening ARMA's governance, institutional effectiveness and long-term sustainability. The Study Group was also tasked with proposing mechanisms for enhancing regional ownership and developing sustainable resource and financing policies to support the effective execution of ARMA's mandate.

1.5 This working paper presents the progress achieved by the Study Group, summarizes the preliminary findings emerging from the assessment process, and outlines governance and sustainability issues requiring further consideration by the Meeting in support of the future development and strengthening of ARMA.

2. DISCUSSIONS

2.1 In accordance with the mandate assigned to the ARMA Study Group, a preliminary review of ARMA's governance, institutional arrangements, staffing, resource base and long-term sustainability was undertaken through document reviews, stakeholder consultations, questionnaires and benchmarking activities. The review sought to determine whether the current organizational structure and governance framework remain adequate to support ARMA's expanding regional responsibilities.

2.2 Initial findings indicate that ARMA continues to provide an important regional monitoring function. However, several institutional sustainability challenges require further consideration. These include dependence on a limited resource base, the absence of a predictable and sustainable financing mechanism, limited staffing resilience, and governance arrangements that may require strengthening to support increased regional responsibilities and future operational demands.

2.3 The Study Group preliminary assessment indicates that ARMA's current institutional framework may not provide a sufficiently defined long-term sustainability model to ensure predictable financial support, succession planning, institutional continuity and enhanced accountability to Member States.

2.4 Benchmarking activities undertaken by the Study Group indicate that successful regional and international monitoring organizations such as MIDRMA, NAARMO and PARMO are generally supported by:

- clearly defined governance structures with stronger Member State oversight;
- sustainable and predictable financing arrangements;
- dedicated technical and administrative staffing establishments;
- formal performance monitoring and reporting mechanisms; and
- long-term institutional development strategies.

2.5 Based on the preliminary assessment, the Study Group identified the following governance enhancement options for further consideration:

- **Option 1:** Strengthened existing ARMA structure.

✓ Retain the current ARMA structure while introducing governance improvements, enhanced reporting arrangements, clearer accountability mechanisms and strengthened Member State participation. Establish a sustainable financing framework and approved staffing structure to support ARMA's growing workload.

- **Option 2:** ARMA as a dedicated Regional Institution

✓ Transform ARMA into a more autonomous regional entity supported by a formal legal and governance framework. Establish dedicated financing mechanisms, institutional staffing arrangements and defined governance oversight by Member States.

- **Option 3:** ARMA integrated within a broader AFI Regional Monitoring Framework

✓ Integrate ARMA functions within an expanded regional institutional framework supporting safety and performance monitoring. Consolidate resources, expertise and governance functions to improve efficiency and sustainability.

2.6 The Study Group considers that each option presents different governance, legal, institutional, financial and implementation implications that require further analysis before a final recommendation can be submitted.

2.7 While substantial progress has been achieved in the collection of governance, financial, staffing and benchmarking information, additional work is required to complete the gap analysis, assess the financial and institutional implications of the identified governance options and undertake the necessary stakeholder consultations

. The Study Group therefore requires additional time develop a fully substantiated recommendation for consideration by AASPG.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

a) note the progress achieved by the ARMA Study Group and the preliminary governance and sustainability issues identified;

b) note the governance enhancement options identified for further assessment, without prejudice to the final recommendation of the Study Group;

c) extend the mandate of the Study Group until AASPG/3 to complete the assessment and submit its final recommendations; and

d) provide any additional guidance it may consider necessary, to support the completion and submission of the Study to AASPG.

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