INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Second Meeting of the Africa - Indian Ocean Aviation System Planning and implementation Group (AASPG/2)

Livingstone, Zambia, from 2 to 6 November 2026

Agenda Item 7: Review and adoption of the Work Programme of AASPG and its contributory Bodies

AASPG Meetings Arrangements

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY
This paper presents the working arrangements of the AASPG and its contributory bodies with the aim of assessing their effectiveness and exploring opportunities to enhance the efficiency of the Group from governance, implementation, and resource-utilization perspectives. The action by the Meeting is in **paragraph 3.**
REFERENCES • AASPG Procedural Handbook • ICAO Council Decision C-DEC 219/7 • Report on AASPG/1 Meeting

Strategic Goals:	A) Every Flight is Safe and Secure B) Aviation is Environmentally Sustainable C) Aviation Delivers Seamless, Accessible, and Reliable Mobility for All D) No Country Left Behind F) The Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The meeting may wish to recall that, on 25 July 2019, the President of the ICAO Council approved new generic Terms of Reference (ToRs) for PIRGs and RASGs to clarify the roles of stakeholders, strengthen partnerships, harmonize working methods, and enhance regional reporting through more frequent meetings. It was further agreed that the generic ToRs could be expanded, as necessary, to address specific regional needs, thereby ensuring flexibility in the conduct of work and providing a foundation for a more efficient meeting and reporting framework.

1.2 At the 40th Session of the ICAO Assembly, it was decided to align the meeting schedule of the PIRGs and RASGs with the annual reporting requirement to the Council (A40-WP/608 refers). In reviewing the Assembly Resolutions and Decisions (C-WP/14983 Rev. 2, Attachment C), the Council (C-DEC 219/7), endorsed the Assembly decision for the PIRGs

and RASGs to meet and report to Council on an annual basis. Accordingly, on 7 August 2020, the President of the Council approved the requirement for PIRGs & RASGs to meet annually.

1.3 The meeting may recall that the Extraordinary Meeting of APIRG and RASG-AFI held on 19 July 2024 in Libreville, Gabon, endorsed the establishment of AASPG, replacing APIRG and RASG-AFI. APIRG/27 & RASG-AFI/10 through Decision 6/02 endorsed the AASPG Procedural Handbook, including its Terms of Reference, which are aligned with the generic Terms of Reference of PIRGs and RASGs approved by the President of the Council on 7 August 2020 and provide for annual meetings (Paragraph 2.4.7).

1.4 The meeting may also recall that the Air Navigation Commission (ANC) in reviewing the AASPG/1, held in Libreville, Gabon, from 3 to 7 November 2025, noted key challenges affecting safety and air navigation in the AFI Region.. These challenges included **low attendance at meetings** and high turnover of the **Directors General of Civil Aviation Authorities and the chief executive officers (CEOs) of the industry** impacting business continuity.

2 DISCUSSION

2.1. The AASPG Terms of Reference (ToRs) state that at each of its meetings, the Group should endeavour to agree on the date, venue and duration of its next meeting.

2.2. Since July 2019 (*APIRG/22 & RASG-AFI/5 held in Accra, Ghana, from 29 July to 2 August 2019*), APIRG and RASG-AFI meetings, and subsequently AASPG, have been conducted on an annual basis, either in person or virtually.

2.3. The increasing operational demands within the AFI Region and the associated implementation demands placed on States, stakeholders and the Regional Offices, provide an opportunity to assess whether the current meetings arrangements of AASPG remain the most effective and implementation-oriented model for the Region. Accordingly, the Meeting may wish to reflect on the following:

a) *Frequency and format of meetings*: whether to maintain the current arrangements; consider extending the interval between meetings (e.g. reverting to an 18-month cycle as practiced prior to 2019); alternate between full-scale in-person meetings and limited-scope virtual meetings; or explore other options to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

b) *Attendance at meetings*: the relatively low participation of Directors General of Civil Aviation Authorities and industry Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), including the underlying causes and possible measures to enhance their engagement. These measures could include dedicated executive-level sessions, greater use of hybrid participation, earlier meeting scheduling, and enhanced focus on strategic issues requiring senior-level decisions.

2.4. The current arrangement of annual AASPG meetings provides important benefits in terms of regional coordination, alignment with ICAO global planning and reporting processes, and continuous monitoring of GASP/GANP implementation. It also revealed several challenges, including:

a) increasing workload on States and the Secretariat;
b) increasing resource requirements;
c) increasing challenges regarding the hosting of the meetings, considering that the ICAO Regional Offices premises are not suitable for the convening meetings of this scale; and
d) low participation of States and industry decision-makers in the meetings.

2.5. The meetings arrangements across the ICAO Regions are as follows:

a) *APAC (APANPIRG)*: PIRG for 2.5 days followed by a half day PIRG/RASG coordination meeting (on day 3), then the RASG for 2 days, in an in-person setting annually;

b) *EUR (EASPG) and NAT (EASPG)*: combined/merged Groups with a 4-day in-person meeting annually;
c) *AFI (AASPG)*: combined/merged Groups with a 5-day in-person meeting annually;
d) *NACC and SAM (GREPECAS)*: virtual asynchronous meetings which could last up-to 4 weeks to build momentum (analysis of WPs and provision of comments); then 3day in-person meeting; and
e) *MID (MIDANPIRG and RASG-MID)*: meetings are organized concurrently on an annual basis, alternating between virtual and in-person meetings.

2.6. The table below provides a comparative analysis of meeting frequency and format options and their potential impact on the participation of Directors General and industry CEOs.

Meeting frequency and format option	Expected impact on DGCA and CEO participation	Advantages for Senior-level participation	Risks / Disadvantages	Possible Mitigation Measures
Maintain the current arrangements (annual full-scale in-person meetings)	Moderate to low participation, consistent with recent experience.	• High visibility and status of in-person meetings. • Facilitates strategic dialogue and networking. • Strengthens commitment to regional initiatives.	• Scheduling conflicts for senior executives. • High meeting and travel costs, and time commitments. • Participation often delegated to technical experts.	• Introduce a dedicated executive segment. Enhance senior-level ICAO participation in the executive segment • Schedule meetings well in advance. • Streamline the agenda around strategic and decision-oriented matters • Strengthen virtual preparatory and intersessional work
Revert to an 18-month cycle (as practiced before 2019)	Potential for increased participation of DGCAs and CEOs.	• More time for implementation and demonstration of measurable Reduced meeting, travel and hosting burden results. More time for contributory bodies to mature technical work between sessions. Potentially greater attractiveness and relevance for senior-level participation Easier long-term planning and scheduling.	• Less frequent opportunities for leadership engagement and decision-making. • Risk of reduced momentum and accountability between meetings. •Potential delay in addressing emerging or time-sensitive issues • Possible misalignment with ICAO's annual meeting and reporting requirements - Larger agendas and heavier meeting	• Organize targeted virtual executive briefings between meetings. • Strengthen intersessional monitoring and reporting by contributory bodies •Provide a mechanism for urgent AASPG decisions between sessions • Ensure continued alignment with ICAO's annual reporting requirements

Meeting frequency and format option	Expected impact on DGCA and CEO participation	Advantages for Senior-level participation	Risks / Disadvantages	Possible Mitigation Measures
Alternate between full-scale in-person meetings and limited-scope virtual meetings	Potentially higher and more flexible participation,	• Reduces travel burden and meeting costs while maintaining engagement. • Provides additional opportunities for leaders to participate in strategic discussions. • Maintains annual senior-level oversight between full in-person meetings. In-person meetings remain focused on major decisions and high-level dialogue	• Lower engagement and visibility in virtual meetings Risk of virtual sessions becoming overly technical • Connectivity and time-zone challenges. Reduced networking opportunities.	• Keep virtual meetings short and strategic. • Include a dedicated executive segment. •Enhance senior-level ICAO participation • Address technical matters through contributory bodies. • Schedule meetings well in advance
Predominantly virtual meetings with occasional in-person sessions	Potentially higher attendance, but less consistent engagement .	• Minimal travel and time burden. • Greater flexibility for senior officials. . • Lower participation costs.	• Reduced interaction and networking. • Difficulties in building consensus on complex issues. • Lower visibility and prestige of meetings. - Connectivity and time-zone constraints	-Keep virtual meetings short and strategic • Reserve critical decision-making sessions for in-person meetings. • Use interactive executive roundtables. • Enhance senior-level ICAO participation. • Address technical matters through contributory bodies
Enhanced hybrid format (both in-person and virtual participation available at all meetings)	Potentially the highest participation level.	• Maximum participation flexibility. • Enables participation when travel is not possible . • Maintains opportunities for in-person engagement and networking .	• More complex and resource-intensive meeting management. • Risk of unequal engagement between virtual and in-person participants • Remote participation may be less active or sustained. • Connectivity constraints	• Use dedicated facilitation for virtual participants. • Ensure equal speaking opportunities and access to documents • Include a dedicated executive segment. • Enhance senior-level ICAO participation. • Ensure adequate technical and connectivity arrangements

2.7. Should the Meeting support an approach different from the current meeting cycle, the proposal would be reported through the appropriate AASPG governance channels for consideration in the context of broader harmonization of PIRG/RASG meeting arrangements and, as necessary, for consideration by the Council.

2.8. \

2.9. The meeting should further consider strengthening the decision-making process through a dedicated executive segment for DGCAs and industry CEOs, enhanced senior-level ICAO participation, focused virtual meetings between sessions, and effective intersessional monitoring and reporting arrangements

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1. The meeting is invited to:

a) note the information provided in this working paper; and

b) consider maintaining the current meeting cycle, together with the enhancements proposed in paragraph 2.8, and provide guidance as appropriate on the future meeting arrangements.

.

---END---