



WORKING PAPER

FOURTEENTH AIR NAVIGATION CONFERENCE

Montréal, Canada, 26 August to 6 September 2024

Agenda Item 1: Update on the ICAO 2023-2025 Business Plan and Long-term Strategic Planning
1.2: Strategic alignment of global plans for performance improvement

PRINCIPLES FOR THE GOVERNANCE OF THE ICAO GLOBAL PLANS

(Presented by Hungary on behalf of the European Union and its Member States¹,
the other Member States of the European Civil Aviation Conference², the
European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL)),
and by Canada)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper underscores the significance of ICAO's Global Plans in fulfilling its Strategic Objectives and presents the European perspectives on advancing global planning through enhanced cohesion and transparent decision-making. Drawing from recommendations formulated by the Global Plans Task Force, the paper proposes a forward-looking strategy, advocating the establishment of an overarching alignment framework. This framework would include a governance mechanism encompassing all three ICAO Global Plans, fostering proactive management of aviation safety, security, and air navigation. It emphasizes the necessity of adopting an integrated, performance-based approach and single management of change process to address current and future challenges, including innovation and sustainability, comprehensively.

Action: The Conference is invited to agree to the recommendation in paragraph 3.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Sustainable transport and aviation are essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations. Through its normative work, oversight, technical assistance and cooperation, ICAO serves the people of the world in facilitating international civil air transport that is safe, secure, efficient, economically viable and environmentally responsible. ICAO has set five Strategic Objectives to cover this scope.

1.2 The three Global Plans (Global Air navigation Plan (GANP), Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP)) are of great importance to deliver effectively on the globally consistent implementation of the ICAO Strategic Objectives and to serve as a common and stable

¹ Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden

² Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom

reference for plans developed, implemented and monitored at regional and national level. While the ICAO work programme is endorsed by the ICAO Assembly on a triennial basis, the Global Plans should offer a long-term planning reference that will assist ICAO, States and industry to ensure continuity and harmonization among their modernization programmes.

1.3 Assembly Resolution A41-6: *ICAO global planning for safety and air navigation* resolves, among other items, that ICAO shall implement and keep current the GASP and the GANP to support the relevant Strategic Objectives of the organization, while ensuring necessary stability; and that these global plans shall be implemented and kept current in close cooperation, collaboration and coordination with all concerned stakeholders.

2. ISSUE STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION

2.1 Despite their significance, the Global Plans are currently being developed and updated independently from each other, with the support of different groups, and lack a cohesive approach. This issue has been highlighted in various Working Papers (WPs) presented at ICAO High-level Conferences and Assemblies. Following the most recent of those, namely High-level Conference on COVID-19 (HLCC 2021) and the 41st Session of the ICAO Assembly (A41), a number of recommendations were issued, calling for a more integrated and overarching approach for global air navigation, safety and security planning, while taking due account of respective specificities.

2.2 Recognizing the need to enhance the consistency of global plans and in response to the related Assembly and HLCC, ICAO initiated the Global Plans Task Force (GPTF) in early 2023. The GPTF focused on bridging the gap between the GANP and GASP and creating meaningful connections. It was tasked with reviewing the open, common recommendations related to ICAO's Global Plans stemming from HLCC 2021 and A41 and the results were presented to the GANP Study Group (GANP-SG) and GASP Study Group (GASP-SG). These results and recommendations are presented by the Secretariat at the fifth meeting of GANP-SG in its GANP/SG/5- WP/3 paper "Work towards enhanced alignment of GASP and GANP". The recommendations will require short-term and long-term implementation actions. Short-term actions are those that can be implemented within the next editions of the GASP and GANP, while designing one consistent integrated process for development of the Global Plans, including management of change, should start now. It is recognized that the implementation and the reshaping of all three Global Plans, consistent with the common performance framework, will require more time and resources.

2.3 While the GANP is substantially influenced by the rapid digitalization/modernization of the Air Traffic Management/Air Navigation Services (ATM/ANS) systems, aligning with civil aviation's global climate goals, there is currently limited reflection in the GASP of the technological advancements shaping the aviation industry, nor of any environmental sustainability goals. Notably, the GASP does not explicitly articulate goals that address the safe integration of new technology and innovative business concepts. As the industry evolves, it is imperative to incorporate forward-looking considerations into the Global Plans, ensuring alignment with emerging technological trends and fostering a proactive approach to managing aviation safety, security and air navigation, in a rapidly changing environment.

2.4 At the 40th Session of the ICAO Assembly in 2019, ICAO adopted Resolution A40-27: *innovation in aviation*. The Resolution focuses on building a strategic view of the need for innovation and the importance of sharing understanding and experience across the aviation system. One of the recommendations of the ICAO Global Plans Task Force is to revise the process for Global Plans' development including management of change, in particular, to clarify what feeds the development of both plans, how the plans feed ICAO work (Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) development) and how new entrants/new technology is addressed. Given the aviation industry is experiencing rapid technological advancements, notably in unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), artificial intelligence (AI), automation, digitalization, and emerging propulsion technologies, coupled with a shift towards a greater

use of sustainable aviation fuels and other environmental considerations, a holistic approach can provide a comprehensive framework for integrating innovative technologies and practices as core elements of the Global Plans and their ongoing maintenance, as well as supporting regional and national plans.

2.5 There is also a need for greater transparency and involvement of States in how the agreed high level strategic objectives are translated into timely changes in the air transport system. The current challenges necessitate a more integrated, performance-based and overarching systems approach. Such an approach should also drive the integration and content of the Global Plans. This should be a basis for reviewing and rationalising the ICAO working arrangements with the objective of ensuring full transparency and the involvement of States. In addition, the implementation process at the level of the regional plans is not clear. Better top-down governance is required. Moreover, there is currently no structured way for Regions to channel their issues and propose them for inclusion in the global plans (bottom-up).

2.6 These changes can only be successful if there is a strong governance mechanism for ICAO Global Plans, ensuring complementarity, consistency, and coherence to support the holistic implementation of ICAO's Strategic Objectives. Such Global Plans governance should also support the management of interacting risks³, necessitating an integrated approach towards interconnected risks, while ensuring transparency of decision-making. The following principles should guide the development and implementation of a documented governance approach for Global Plans: a top-down approach, a common aviation performance framework, a streamlined process for the (routine) maintenance of the Global Plans, and transparency of decision-making.

2.7 Each new version of the Global Plans is proposed to be adopted by the ICAO Assembly, after the expert group responsible for its maintenance has developed the content of an update. These expert groups assist the ICAO Secretariat in a consultative capacity before the draft plans are discussed by the Air Navigation Commission. The involvement of Contracting States (governance) and political steering through the high-level meetings should ensure that the priorities of States and the aviation community are properly reflected in updates of the Global Plans and that relevant provisions will be available in a consistent and timely manner. Strategic decisions such as the introduction in the plans of elements required for the further implementation of a holistic vision⁴, of a global concept of operations (such as the Global Air Traffic Management (ATM) Operational Concept (GATMOC)), or for the phasing out of legacy systems, should be primarily made by States in the Assembly, High-level meeting (Category 2) or Council meetings. The systematic involvement of the ICAO Panels should be ensured for the assessment of significant changes.

2.8 Routine maintenance of the Global Plans involves the updates of existing elements that do not require strategic decisions and that are mostly based on the progress of ICAO Panels and expert groups on specific topics and that allow consistency between the elements contained in the Global Plans and the on-going activities supporting their further implementation. This routine maintenance should be possible in a continuous and a transparent manner. While the GAsEP is updated when deemed necessary and related implementing actions are amended or adjusted where practical, the current maintenance approach for the GANP and GASP is different, with a time-based approach foreseeing an update every three years alternating between a minor and a major update.

2.9 This approach does not offer sufficient flexibility to update and refine existing information based on the progression of work in ICAO, or the timely introduction of strategic decisions in the Global Plans between two major updates. It could be beneficial to distinguish between, on the one hand, routine maintenance of the Global Plans, for the refinement of existing information based on progression of work (e.g. by ICAO Panels), and not requiring endorsement at Conference and/or Assembly level; and, on the

³ As discussed in AN-Conf/14-WP/56, "Methodologies and approaches to managing interacting aviation risks", presented by Hungary on behalf of EU/ECAC Member States, EUROCONTROL, Canada and the United States

⁴ As discussed in AN-Conf/14-WP/58, "Air Navigation priorities to support safe and efficient integration of higher airspace operations and transit of space operations", presented by Hungary on behalf of EU/ECAC Member States, EUROCONTROL, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, and Mexico.

other hand, the inclusion of new and/or deletion of existing concepts or ICAO Strategic Objectives, which in the future should only be executed following a Council Decision based on a High-level meeting (Category 2) (Conference) recommendation or to be endorsed by an ICAO Assembly (Category 1).

2.10 Finally, in 2019 ICAO developed the first edition of the “National aviation planning framework”⁵ document, providing guidance for ICAO Member States to establish a framework for the sustainable development of air transport by prioritizing and coordinating the implementation of initiatives to improve the safety, security, facilitation, capacity and efficiency of their air transport systems. The implementation of this document would require a consistent planning approach at regional and global level. Therefore, ICAO should consider to develop supporting material to ensure that the global and regional aviation planning framework follows the methodology described in the referred document.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The establishment of an overarching alignment framework and governance for ICAO’s Global Plans would yield multiple benefits, including accurate reflection of global strategies, consistency in priorities and objectives, elimination of gaps and overlaps, streamlined planning at regional and national levels, enhanced efficiency in monitoring compliance and performance, improved oversight capabilities, and a more holistic approach to capacity building. Ultimately, the goal is to achieve fully consistent Global Plans and maintenance approaches.

3.2 In light of the issues described and principles proposed above, and taking into account the differing nature and domain specificities of the three Global Plans, the Conference is invited to agree to the following recommendation:

Recommendation 1.2/x — Principles for the Governance of the ICAO Global Plans

That ICAO:

- a) define and implement a documented overall top-down approach for the governance of Global Plans, with a performance framework and single management of change process, to support the implementation of the Global Plan Task Force (GPTF) recommendations;
- b) update the maintenance process for the Global Plans to increase flexibility and clearly distinguish between routine maintenance and the inclusion of new and/or deletion of existing concepts and solutions, which in the future should require a prior Conference recommendation;
- c) provide strategic direction, together with guiding principles for including innovation in the Global Plans to ensure they keep pace with emerging technological trends, foster a proactive approach to managing aviation safety, security and air navigation, and are adaptable in a rapidly changing environment;
- d) review and rationalize working arrangements to better address the integrated and performance-based evolution of air transport and innovation while ensuring consistent involvement of States and to include this in the ICAO capacity building/assistance programmes;

⁵ https://www.icao.int/secretariat/SecretaryGeneral/SPCP/Documents/ICAO_National_Aviation_Planning_Framework_2019.pdf

- e) develop the supporting material to ensure that the global and regional aviation planning framework is fully consistent with the principles and methodology described in the ICAO document for the national aviation planning framework;
- f) set up an expert group to support ICAO in addressing the above recommendations;
- g) consult the GAsEP Task Force to help ensure alignment between Safety and Security plans; and
- h) take into account the differing nature and specificities of the domain of each Global Plan, when following up on these recommendations.

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