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WORKING PAPER

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FOURTEENTH AIR NAVIGATION CONFERENCE

Montréal, Canada, 26 August to 6 September 2024

- Agenda Item 2: Timely and safe use of new technologies**
2.3 2026-2028 Edition of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP)

STRENGTHENING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

(Presented by Canada and co-sponsored by Australia and United Kingdom)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper promotes the pivotal role of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) technical assistance programmes, ICAO Regional Offices, and Member States and international organizations in providing technical assistance to enhance global aviation safety and security. This paper underscores the importance of strategic coordination, partnership building, and ICAO's No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative for the equitable development of the global aviation system. The paper recommends enhancing communication among ICAO regions and Member States offering technical assistance to optimize resources and ensure efficient project implementation, supporting the overall Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and regional aviation safety goals.

Action: The Conference is invited to:

- a) encourage Member States and other entities to increase coordination of assistance activities, taking necessary steps to avoid duplication, leverage resources and promote the effectiveness and sustainability of technical assistance activities; and
- b) support increased ICAO Regional Office coordination and collaboration in technical assistance matters, including greater cooperation, efficient implementation of activities, as well as harmonization of technical projects when applicable.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this working paper is to recognize and support the role of ICAO Regional Offices, Member States, and the ICAO technical assistance programme in enhancing the capacity of all Member States to meet international aviation safety and security Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). This effort contributes to the shared objective of a safe, secure, and reliable interconnected civil aviation system.

1.2 ICAO Annex 19 — *Safety Management* and ICAO 2023-2025 edition of the *Global Aviation Safety Plan* (GASP, Doc 10004) promotes State Safety Programmes, risk-based safety management, and collaboration among States, regions, and the industry. The Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) serves as a framework for developing regional and national safety plans, ensuring coordinated efforts to enhance global aviation safety, capacity, and efficiency. These safety collaboration objectives will continue in GASP 2026-2028.

1.3 In alignment with the GASP safety priorities, technical assistance projects aim to improve the operational safety, security, efficiency, and predictability of civil aviation, while ensuring the global and consistent implementation of ICAO SARPs. By sharing technical expertise and knowledge, these projects support the welfare, sustainability, and economic benefits of the global civil aviation system.

1.4 Technical assistance is also a critical component of the ICAO No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative which aims to ensure all States and regions benefit from a safe and reliable air transport system. Assistance is provided to all States based on a prioritization of need so that their civil aviation sectors can support future economic development and prosperity. The NCLB initiative and associated activities contribute significantly to the realization of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

1.5 The ICAO Regional Offices ensure the harmonious development of the international air transport system and adherence and effective implementation of established standards and practices.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 A collaborative effort towards strengthening, enhancing, and strategically coordinating technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives would benefit all involved stakeholders. It is important to leverage resources and invest in activities which are aligned with the GASP, while improving States' capacity to address existing vulnerabilities and emerging challenges.

2.3 ICAO Member States and international organizations provide technical assistance in varying methods and timelines. These initiatives build capacity globally through training, infrastructure improvement, and technology implementation. Additionally, technical assistance fosters cooperation and harmonization among States, leading to more consistent practices across the aviation community.

2.4 While providing technical assistance can be beneficial, ICAO Member States might face several potential challenges. Financial burdens can be significant, as illustrated by ICAO's USD 46.4 million technical cooperation programme, which can strain the finances of assisting States, especially if they are funding their own projects. A notable decrease in the Programme's annual implementation volume—33 per cent from 2018 to 2019 and 37 per cent from 2019 to 2020 — indicates reduced capacity or ability of States to provide or receive assistance. Security concerns, such as regional conflicts reported by the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS), may prevent assistance from being delivered. Additionally, some States may be unable to carry out agreed activities under an Aviation Security Improvement Plans (ASIPs), causing the plan to be put on hold and delaying the associated benefits.

2.5 Despite these challenges, the benefits of providing technical assistance remain significant, requiring effective management to ensure the success of these programmes. To achieve this, it is essential that States and other groups be coordinated throughout all steps of technical assistance activities, recognizing one another as equal participants with important roles and responsibilities.

2.5 Further, while the initiation of technical assistance projects necessitate demands of financial, material, and human resources, these demands may be alleviated through tailored assistance to several States concurrently. Coordination among several States and ICAO Regional Offices may significantly reduce the burden on any one entity wishing to engage in technical assistance activities.

2.6 ICAO Regional Offices play a crucial role in leveraging resources and realizing the sustainable and successful implementation of aviation safety and security initiatives. With their continuous support, States and other entities can tailor technical assistance projects to the needs of recipients more

efficiently and in a more coordinated fashion. Regions should seek to enhance communication amongst one another to prevent duplicating requests and instead combine technical assistance efforts when feasible. This practice would allow for a better utilization of resources on the part of ICAO, States, and other active entities. There may also be opportunities to harmonize technical assistance activities both cross-regionally and within regions themselves.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Focusing on the strengthening of civil aviation institutions, technical assistance enables States to better face challenges in the continuously evolving aviation landscape. ICAO Regional Offices are pivotal in ensuring this goal is met on a dependable basis and that assistance activities are available to those in need.

3.2 States are encouraged to involve their regional offices when requesting or offering technical assistance. Doing so will help avoid duplication and will also help identify opportunities as regional offices are well positioned to provide greater coordination and efficient implementation. Harmonizing efforts on projects that strengthen aviation safety and security, and coordinating these projects among regional offices, States, and international organizations, will lead to more timely and efficient achievement of technical assistance activities. Enhanced communication among regions and combining technical assistance efforts, where feasible, will optimize resource utilization and support the shared objective of a safe, secure, and reliable interconnected civil aviation system.

3.3 The Conference is invited to continue encouraging States, the Secretariat, ICAO Regional Offices, as well as other entities active in technical assistance activities, to strengthen efforts where possible to increase the coordination of projects for their timely, cost effective, and sustainable realization.

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