International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

ATConf/7-WP/35[1]
23/9/26
(Information Paper)
English and Chinese only

SEVENTH WORLDWIDE AIR TRANSPORT CONFERENCE (ATCONF/7)

Montréal, HQ, 16 to 20 November 2026

Agenda Item 2: Fostering aviation growth and air connectivity through investments in infrastructure, human capital and partnerships
2.2: Investment for the development and modernization of civil aviation infrastructure

IMPROVING THE ASSESSMENT OF REGIONAL AIR NAVIGATION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TO SUPPORT INVESTMENT IN THE MODERNIZATION OF AVIATION INFRASTRUCTURE

(Presented by China)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Air transport is a key driver of economic development for States. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Strategic Plan 2026-2050 indicates that global passenger and cargo traffic will continue to grow over the next two decades and beyond, and identifies insufficient aviation infrastructure capacity as one of the key issues requiring priority attention. Regional air navigation plans are an essential component of the multi-tier implementation framework of the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP), performing a critical bridging function between global and national levels.

At present, regions lack a unified and well-coordinated methodology and associated indicator framework for assessing progress in the implementation of regional air navigation plans, which constrains intra-regional and inter-regional coordination, as well as investment decision-making. It is proposed that ICAO study and develop a unified assessment methodology and indicators, and incorporate this work into the work programme for the ninth edition of the GANP, so as to enhance the coordination, transparency and traceability of implementation progress information and provide an objective basis for investment in the modernization of aviation infrastructure.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Continued growth in air transport is placing considerable pressure on infrastructure capacity. The global air transport industry is in a phase of sustained growth. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Strategic Plan 2026-2050 envisages adequate aviation infrastructure and systems to enable safe, secure, accessible, efficient and sustainable service delivery for passengers and cargo across airports, air navigation services and airline operations, with a view to narrowing long-standing gaps and

[1] English and Chinese versions provided by China.

meeting growing future demand, particularly in developing States. Strengthening the development of aviation infrastructure has accordingly become one of the key tasks requiring priority attention.

1.2 Regional air navigation plans play a critical bridging role. The Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) is structured into four levels — global strategic, global technical, regional and national. Regional air navigation plans serve as a critical link between the global strategic level and national planning: global objectives and technical roadmaps shall be translated into implementable programmes through regional air navigation plans, which then provide the basis for States to develop and implement their national plans. The effectiveness of regional plan implementation directly affects how efficiently the global strategy is translated into action.

1.3 A unified monitoring and assessment approach is essential to ensuring the effective implementation of the strategy. ICAO has already put in place institutional arrangements for the reporting, monitoring and assessment of regional air navigation plan implementation; however, no unified methodology is mandated across regions, and the specific assessment approach used is left largely to each region's discretion. This makes it difficult to harmonize progress information across regions through quantitative tools, and constrains an overall assessment of the global implementation status. Studying and developing a unified assessment methodology and associated indicators is therefore an important task for improving global air navigation governance and supporting investment in infrastructure modernization.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 ICAO Assembly Resolution A42-6 established the institutional basis for monitoring, but did not standardize a specific methodology. Assembly Resolution A42-6, Appendix B, calls upon States, Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs) and the aviation industry to share timely information with ICAO and among themselves on the implementation status of the GANP, including lessons learned from the implementation of the operational improvements outlined in the Aviation System Block Upgrades (ASBU) framework. It also invites PIRGs to use ICAO standardized tools or adequate regional tools to monitor, and in collaboration with ICAO, analyse the implementation status of air navigation systems. This resolution provides a basic framework for regional-level monitoring; however, the reference to "ICAO standardized tools or adequate regional tools" leaves room for regions to adopt different approaches.

2.2 The eighth edition of the GANP sets out more specific monitoring requirements, but a unified assessment methodology and indicator framework remains absent. The eighth edition of the GANP (Doc 9750) states that ICAO should provide data and tools to support performance and implementation monitoring, and facilitate the sharing of relevant information and best practices across regions. This confirms that implementation monitoring has been established as an ongoing ICAO responsibility. However, the GANP has yet to establish a unified assessment methodology and indicator framework that can be commonly applied across regions. In practice, regions differ in their statistical scope, assessment standards and methods for determining progress, making it difficult to quantitatively analyze implementation progress across multiple dimensions, including at the State and technical-element levels.

2.3 The absence of a unified assessment methodology has consequences in three key areas:

2.3.1 **Regional coordination:** the lack of unified, well-coordinated assessment results may increase the difficulty of coordination within and across regions, affecting cross-border interoperability and the achievement of strategic goals related to safety, efficiency and capacity.

2.3.2 **Resource allocation:** the lack of quantitative tools to identify regions or States with significant implementation gaps makes it difficult to target "No Country Left Behind" support effectively and prioritize those most in need.

2.3.3 **Investment decision-making:** States, regional bodies and potential investors generally require credible and well-coordinated assessment results to determine investment priorities; the absence of an assessment methodology may weaken the evidence base for such decisions, thereby constraining infrastructure modernization from keeping pace with growing demand.

2.4 In light of the above, there is a need to study and develop a unified assessment methodology and associated indicators, while respecting the principle that States implement measures according to their operational needs. Certain technical elements covered by regional air navigation plans — particularly those under the ASBU framework — follow a needs-based implementation approach. Under this approach, States determine the scope and priorities of implementation based on their own operational needs, stage of development and available resources. The purpose of a unified assessment methodology and indicators is twofold: to enhance the coordination, transparency and traceability of implementation progress information across regions; and to provide an objective reference for resource allocation, capacity-building and investment decision-making. This would neither alter nor diminish States' autonomy to implement measures according to their own needs and circumstances.

2.5 In terms of concrete measures, ICAO is recommended to build on existing reporting data and reporting mechanisms, take into account regional differences, and develop a unified and feasible assessment methodology and associated indicators, with the resulting methodology and indicators incorporated into the work programme for the ninth edition of the GANP.

— END —