



WORKING PAPER

**SEVENTH WORLDWIDE AIR TRANSPORT CONFERENCE
(ATCONF/7)**

Montréal, HQ, 16 to 20 November 2026

Agenda Item 3: Strengthening regulatory and institutional frameworks

3.3: Strengthening emergency planning mechanism and consumer protection for a resilient aviation system

**A POLICY TOOLKIT FOR AVIATION EMERGENCY PLANNING AND
RESILIENCE**

(Presented by Thailand)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recent global disruptions demonstrate that external shocks to air transport are increasingly frequent and systemic. When disruptions occur, operational breakdowns directly threaten airline financial viability, national connectivity, and macroeconomic stability. Ad-hoc and reactive relief measures are no longer sufficient to guarantee long-term sector resilience.

This working paper presents framework for proactive crisis preparedness and economic continuity. Built upon continuous risk monitoring and an integrated Aviation Policy Toolkit, the framework provides structured regulatory flexibility across seven core policy dimensions and a four-stage activation mechanism. The paper proposes concrete actions for Member States and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to establish data-driven, coordinated frameworks for emergency response and economic resilience.

Action: The Conference is invited to consider the paper and endorse the actions in section 5 of this paper.

<i>Strategic Goal:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Goal: <i>The Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All.</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	None
<i>References:</i>	<i>Resolutions Adopted by the 42nd Session of the Assembly, Provisional Edition, October 2025 (ICAO Assembly Resolution A42-13)</i> ICAO's Strategic Plan 2026-2050

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 At the 42nd session of the Assembly, Member States adopted Resolution A42-13 which recognizes that "all States can benefit from integrating disaster risk reduction strategies into their Air Transport Sector Strategic Plans" and highlights "a need to coordinate at the most appropriate level the political and operational response to natural or man-made disasters reaching a regional or global scale". By

establishing an integrated, data-driven Aviation Policy Toolkit, this paper seeks to operationalize these global commitments, guiding civil aviation authorities to transition from uncoordinated, ad-hoc relief measures toward institutionalized emergency planning and long-term sector resilience.

1.2 Recent years have highlighted the vulnerability of civil aviation to cascading external shocks. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions and airspace restrictions led to extensive flight diversions and severe energy volatility. In Thailand, Jet A-1 fuel prices escalated from USD 80 to over USD 200 per barrel at peak periods, raising airline fuel expenditures from 30 percent to 50 percent of total operating costs. This price surge resulted in 65,234 flight cancellations and a loss of 12.16 million seats during 2026.

1.3 While emergency interventions such as fee waivers, airport rental reductions, credit payment extensions, and temporary licensing flexibilities provided immediate cash-flow relief, they were inherently reactive. Managing recurring systemic disruptions requires civil aviation authorities to transition from uncoordinated relief toward institutionalized emergency planning mechanisms that safeguard operational continuity and industry stability.

2. THE POLICY DIMENSIONS OF CRISIS RESILIENCE

2.1 To address multi-faceted disruptions, civil aviation authorities require a comprehensive framework covering seven core policy dimensions:

Dimension	Scope and Regulatory Objective
1. Safety and Regulatory Oversight	Maintaining high safety standards while applying proportionate, risk-based flexibility to licensing, certifications, and inspections.
2. Operational Capacity	Managing constrained airspace and aerodrome capacity, optimizing slot allocation rules, and facilitating dynamic route diversions.
3. Security and Facilitation	Preserving baseline aviation security while streamlining clearance protocols for aircrew, humanitarian relief, and critical cargo.
4. Economic and Financial Resilience	Supporting the liquidity and financial continuity of airlines, airports, and aviation service providers through transparent, temporary, and non-discriminatory measures.
5. Strategic Connectivity	Safeguarding essential domestic, regional, and international air corridors, including cargo supply chains and repatriation flights.
6. Workforce Retention	Protecting critical aviation competencies by preventing abrupt workforce attrition and facilitating flexible certification renewal.
7. Coordinated Information Sharing	Establishing structured, real-time data exchange between government authorities, industry operators, and international partners.

3. HOW THE POLICY TOOLKIT WORKS AND OPERATES

3.1 The Four-Stage Activation Process

3.1.1 An effective emergency framework should operate through a graduated mechanism calibrated by continuous risk monitoring and operational data analytics:

Stage	Operational Focus	Key Regulatory Actions
Stage 1: Preparedness	Routine monitoring of leading economic, geopolitical, and operational indicators.	Review contingency arrangements, validate baseline data feeds, and pre-position regulatory relief instruments.
Stage 2: Early Activation	Early warning signals indicate potential systemic distress prior to official international directives.	Implement provisional, risk-based measures on a temporary basis to buffer initial operational and financial impacts.
Stage 3: Crisis Response	High-severity systemic disruption with confirmed operational and economic impacts.	Deploy targeted regulatory flexibilities, temporary financial continuity interventions, slot relief, and route adjustments.
Stage 4: Recovery & Transition	Operational conditions stabilize and market traffic rebounds toward normal baselines.	Systematically phase out emergency flexibilities, conduct post-event reviews, and restore normal regulatory oversight.

3.2 Standing Preparedness and Simulation Testing

3.2.1 Emergency planning mechanisms must be maintained as standing institutional processes rather than reactive decrees. Periodic scenario-based simulation exercises, post-disruption evaluations, and continuous stakeholder consultation are essential to calibrate response capabilities and maintain institutional agility.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The growing frequency and complexity of global disruptions require civil aviation authorities to shift decisively from reactive crisis management toward proactive and institutionalized preparedness. Uncoordinated policy responses exacerbate industry vulnerability, fragment markets, and prolong economic recovery.

4.2 Establishing an integrated Aviation Policy Toolkit supported by real-time data monitoring, transparent activation criteria, and structured inter-agency coordination. Enables civil aviation authorities to substantially reduce response times, maintain critical air connectivity, and reinforce global aviation resilience.

5. ACTION

5.1 The Conference is invited to:

- a) Invite Member States and relevant aviation stakeholders to recognize the importance of strengthening aviation crisis preparedness through data-driven monitoring, risk assessment, and evidence-based policy decision-making to enhance the resilience and economic sustainability of the aviation sector; and

- b) Request the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to develop global guidance and common principles for aviation crisis preparedness, risk monitoring, and coordinated regulatory response within its long-term strategic frameworks.

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