



WORKING PAPER

SEVENTH WORLDWIDE AIR TRANSPORT CONFERENCE (ATCONF/7)

Montréal, HQ, 16 to 20 November 2026

Agenda Item 1: Overview of developments in the field of air transport

1.1 Developments and progress since the Sixth Worldwide Air Transport Conference (ATCONF/6)

THE IMPORTANCE OF ICAO GUIDANCE ON ENSURING INTEGRITY OF ASAs DURING CRISES

(Presented by Ireland on behalf of the European Union, its Member States¹ and the other Member States of the European Civil Aviation Conference²)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents the fundamental need to have stability and predictability in the international civil aviation system during periods of global disruption. The “*Guidance to ensure Air Services Agreements continue to provide a predictable framework during crises impacting international air services*” is a tool that should be further utilised and highlighted to help States provide that certainty, to industry and other States.

Action: The conference is invited to:

- Underscore the importance of maintaining a continuous update cycle of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) guidance, ensuring ICAO remains responsive to evolving global challenges, specifically during global or regional crises impacting international civil aviation;
- Request commitment from ICAO to promote guidance on ensuring Air Services Agreements (ASA) more actively, in particular during periods of global disruption; and
- Agree that the continued development of ICAO’s Template Air Services Agreement (TASA) is key and where contracting parties choose to apply it, can work alongside the guidance to ensure that ASAs remain resilient and support air transport during a crisis.

<i>Strategic Goals:</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>	The activities referred to in this paper will be undertaken with the resources available in the regular Programme Budget.

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

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

<i>References:</i>	ICAO <i>Guidance to ensure Air Services Agreements continue to provide a predictable framework during crises impacting international air services</i> ICAO <i>Template Air Services Agreement (TASA)</i>
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The integrity and credibility of Air Services Agreements (ASAs) remain fundamental to the stability and predictability of the international civil aviation system, particularly during periods of global disruption. ICAO's "*Guidance to ensure Air Services Agreements continue to provide a predictable framework during crises impacting international air services*", hereafter referred to as *the guidance*, reinforced through State Letter 24/75, highlights the need for States to coordinate and to preserve operational certainty when crises threaten the continuity of international air services.

1.2 Global events since the Sixth Worldwide Air Transport Conference (**ATConf/6**) have demonstrated that crises – whether geopolitical, public health-related, environmental, or economic – can evolve rapidly and place significant strain on bilateral and multilateral air service frameworks. In such circumstances, transparent communication, timely coordination, and cooperative decision-making between States are essential to maintaining functional and resilient ASAs.

1.3 The guidance provides a strong foundation for supporting States in this regard. However, given the dynamic nature of global crises, the guidance must remain a living document, updated and communicated regularly to reflect emerging challenges, lessons learned, and remind States of the guidance and their international legal obligations. Similarly, the ongoing development of ICAO's Template Air Services Agreement (TASA) offers an important opportunity to embed crisis-resilience into the design and negotiation of ASAs.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Importance of maintaining ASA integrity during crises

- a) ASAs underpin the legal and operational framework for international air transport. During crises, uncertainty can reduce confidence in the system, disrupt connectivity, and have long- term commercial consequences. Ensuring the integrity of ASAs helps maintain predictability for operators, protects consumer interest, and supports global economic resilience.

2.2 Role of the guidance

- a) The guidance shared in 2024 provides States with practical tools to manage crisis-related pressures on ASAs, including recommended approaches for communication, transparency, and coordination.
- b) However, the guidance must be kept under continuous review. As new crises emerge, States accumulate operational experience that should inform iterative improvements.

2.3 **Need for enhanced promotion and awareness**

- a) Despite its value, we believe the guidance has not been utilised much since its publication. Greater visibility and a further evolution of the guidance – particularly at the onset of global disruptions – would help ensure that States are aware of the tools available to support continuity of air services. ICAO can play a more active role in disseminating the guidance, including through targeted communications and integration with other ICAO mechanisms.

2.4 **Strengthening ASAs through the TASA**

- a) The ongoing development of the TASA represents a key mechanism for embedding resilience into ASAs. By providing options, the TASA can help States incorporate provisions that support continuity of air services during crises, promote transparency and reduce disruptions to connectivity.
- b) Active engagement from Member States is essential to ensure that the TASA acknowledges diverse operational realities and incorporates lessons learned from recent disruptions. Its development should reflect the proposals outlined in the guidance, and we encourage States to engage in this work through the Air Transport Regulation Panel (ATRP).

3. **CONCLUSION**

3.1 The integrity of ASAs is essential to maintaining a stable and predictable international aviation system, especially during global crises. The guidance provides valuable support for States in navigating complex and fast-moving challenges, but it must remain dynamic and up to date.

3.2 The Conference is asked to agree the actions as presented above.

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