



ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 36: Aviation safety and air navigation implementation support

INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF PIRGS AND RASGS MEETINGS

(Presented by 54 Contracting States, members of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC)²)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper highlights some achievements made by the AFI Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APIRG) and Regional Aviation Safety Group (RASG-AFI) in addressing their respective terms of reference and makes some proposals to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) note the progress of APIRG and RASG-AFI activities;
- b) endorse the proposal to organise the High-level (DGCA) meetings back-to-back with the APIRG and RASG-AFI meetings, in order to facilitate ownership of the outcomes and implementation thereof;
- c) urge States, industry and donors to support the implementation of priority activities identified by APIRG and RASG-AFI; and
- d) request ICAO to continuously encourage all member States to provide the necessary support and technical expertise to their respective PIRGs and RASGs.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety and Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency Strategic Objectives.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	
<i>References:</i>	

¹ English and French versions provided by AFCAC.

² Presented by 54 Contracting States (Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, the Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South, Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The objectives of APIRG are to ensure the continuous and coherent development and implementation of the AFI Air Navigation Plan (ANP); conduct follow-up to the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) activities as required; APIRG continually addresses deficiencies in the aerodromes, air routes and ground aids (AGA), communications, navigation, and surveillance (CNS), air traffic management (ATM), meteorological (MET), search and rescue (SAR) and aeronautical information service (AIS) fields.

1.2 The functions of RASG-AFI include analysis of safety information and hazards to civil aviation at the regional level and review of the action plans developed within the region to address identified hazards; conduct of follow-up to the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) activities as required; and coordination with the relevant PIRG on safety issues. Currently, RASG-AFI activities are focused on the resolution of significant safety concerns (SSCs), fundamentals of safety oversight (FSO), Aircraft accident investigation (AIG) and emerging safety issues such as runway safety, controlled flight into terrain (CFIT), and loss of control in flight (LOC-I).

1.3 Planning and implementation regional groups (PIRGs) and regional aviation safety groups (RASGs) have established the regional priorities, implementation indicators and targets in aviation safety and air navigation for the regional implementation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP).

1.4 The Air Navigation Commission (ANC) and the Air Navigation Bureau (ANB) jointly presented a consolidated annual report to the Council on planning and implementation regional groups (PIRGs) and regional aviation safety groups (RASGs) covering the period from March 2015 to March 2016. The Report focused not only on the outcomes of PIRGs and RASGs meetings but also on the regional safety and air navigation implementation progress and challenges.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The twentieth meeting of the AFI planning and implementation regional group (APIRG/20), which was held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire (30 November to 2 December 2015), operationalized the new structure of the APIRG with a reduced number of contributory bodies from 23 discipline-oriented bodies previously to 4 performance-based bodies. The Procedural Handbook of APIRG was amended accordingly.

2.2 APIRG/20 identified priority projects for the AFI Region, derived from applicable Aviation System Block Upgrade (ASBU) modules and regional performance objectives, and based on the status of implementation of air navigation requirements as established by the Sub-groups. The application of the new eANP in three volumes and related amendment procedures was also acknowledged and is being populated.

2.3 The third meeting of the AFI Regional Aviation Safety Group (RASG-AFI/3) was held in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire (3 to 4 December 2015). Achievements of RASG-AFI in 2016 include the Guidance material and tools developed for the use of the RASG AFI Runway Safety Go-Team; the establishment of runway safety teams at six international airports; the publication of the first and second editions of the Annual Safety Report in May, 2015 and June 2016, and the resolution of three SSCs in two States.

2.4 The AFI region established a close coordination between APIRG and RASG-AFI which relates to the following areas: RVSM safety monitoring; Quality Management Systems (QMS) for AIM and MET; Civil - Military coordination; Search and Rescue (SAR); Unsatisfactory Condition Reports (UCRs); Accidents and Incidents Analysis; SSP/SMS implementation; English Language Proficiency (ELP); Airspace contingencies and Aeronautical information management (AIM).

2.5 APIRG and RASG-AFI addressed some challenges faced in States for the regional implementation of SARPs, PANS and policies, and associated recommendations and actions taken. Some of those challenges related to Air Navigation concern the insufficient progress in the development of national PBN implementation plans; Low level of understanding and implementation of ASBU methodology by stakeholders; Slow pace in harmonizing the various aeronautical projects (CNS, ATM, AIM, MET, AGA and SAR); Difficulty in collecting data related to air navigation system performance measurement and implementation.

2.6 On Safety, the highlighted by RASG-AFI include the insufficient independence/autonomy of civil aviation administrations for effective execution of work programmes/responsibilities; low level of State commitments in recognizing civil aviation matters as part of the priorities in the national policy; Insufficient qualified human resources for safety oversight and insufficient resources to motivate and retain qualified and experienced personnel.

2.7 Regional air navigation planning is normally accomplished by Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs). Assembly resolution A38-12, Appendix E states that Regional Air Navigation (RAN) meetings, although important instruments in the determination of the facilities and services, shall be convened only to address issues which cannot be adequately addressed through the Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs).

2.8 In these circumstances, PIRG and RASG meetings constitute the appropriate frameworks for policy makers to review and discuss implementation issues, and take ownership of the outcomes of the deliberations, the timely and effective implementation of which is necessary for improving aviation safety and air navigation performance in the region.

2.9 To facilitate the decision making of the outcomes of the APIRG and RASG-AFI meetings, AFI Region proposes to organise the High-level (DGCA) meetings back to back with the above mentioned meetings.

2.10 Currently, while the RASG-AFI and its Steering Committee meetings are chaired by DGCA, with Champion States leading specialized safety support teams, the chairpersonship and attendance to APIRG and its auxiliary bodies' meetings are most of the time left to ANSP representatives and experts, therefore, there is a need for the DGCA meeting to be held back to back with APIRG and RASG-AFI meetings.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs) and Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) form the basis for regional frameworks for air navigation and safety planning and implementation. Therefore, ICAO should make use of its established regional groups (PIRGs and RASGs) to assist in monitoring planning and implementation progress and keeping up to date the Regional Plans and any related complementary documents.

3.2 Contracting States are urged to take remedial actions to address safety and air navigation deficiencies, including priority activities identified by PIRGs and RASGs and the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP), through the application of GASP and GANP objectives and the ICAO regional planning and implementation processes.

3.3 States authorities in particular Civil Aviation Authorities are encouraged to participate at the highest level in the PIRGs and RASGs meetings in order to facilitate the process of decision-making, planning and implementation.

3.4 There is a need to organize High-level (DGCA) meetings back to back with APIRG and RASG-AFI meetings, to facilitate the decision making of the outcomes of the above mentioned meetings and to improve the implementation of the Conclusions and Decisions of these meetings.

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