



**WORKING PAPER**

**ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION**

**TECHNICAL COMMISSION**

**Agenda Item 37: Other Issues to be considered by the Technical Commission**

**CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEMS**

(Presented by Canada)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2015, ICAO published the *Manual on the Approval and Use of Child Restraint Systems* (Doc 10049) providing guidance for the development of regulations and approval processes for child restraint systems (CRS).

Canada believes that infants and young children who travel while not properly restrained in an age and size appropriate CRS do not benefit from an equivalent level of safety as adult passengers. Parents and guardians may not be fully aware of the risks involved.

Canada is of the opinion that a consistent approach to the use of CRS would benefit the travelling public.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to:

- a) promote international harmonization for the use of CRS; and
- b) ensure an acceptable level of safety for infants and young children who travel by air.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	N/A
<i>References:</i>	TSB of Canada - Investigation A12Q0216

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ICAO has addressed the use of Child Restraint Systems (CRS) on board aircraft by publishing the *Manual on the Approval and Use of Child Restraint Systems*. This guidance document provides States with information on how to develop regulations and approval processes on the use of CRS.

1.2 When CRS are not used and an accident or severe turbulence occurs, infants and young children may sustain injuries, sometimes fatal, that could be lessened and/or avoided should a CRS be used. An unrestrained child may also cause injury or death to other passengers.

## 2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Passengers over two years of age are required to be restrained using the aircraft safety belt. Cabin baggage must be stowed and restrained during take-off and landing and during periods of turbulence. However, infants and small children can be held by their guardian. Should an unexpected hazardous event occur, a lap-held infant can be ejected from its guardian's arms and may cause injury or death to other passengers. Furthermore, studies have shown that adult safety belts are not well-suited for young children.

2.1 Some States currently provide passengers and air carriers with guidance on the use of CRS while travelling on board aircraft and recommend that infants and young children travel in an approved CRS during flights. However, such use is voluntary and many parents/guardians do not choose to use them.

2.2 In December 2012, a 6-month old lap-held infant was killed during a landing accident in northern Canada, while the two crew and six adult passengers, who were suitably restrained, survived. The subsequent Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) investigation led to the publication of two safety recommendations. The TSB recommended that data be collected on the number of lap-held infants and young children (from 2 to 12 years old) to better assess the risk exposure of children travelling by air. Additionally, the TSB recommended that the use of age appropriate CRS be mandated for infants and young children travelling on commercial aircraft in Canada to provide an equivalent level of safety compared to adults.

2.3 Although most States do permit the use of some approved CRS when travelling on board aircraft, most do not currently allow the use of other countries' approved CRS. Passengers are therefore left without the use of their child's CRS if travelling on a foreign air carrier or even during different legs of their journey.

2.4 By publishing the *Manual on the Approval and Use of Child Restraint Systems*, ICAO provided the key elements required for each State to develop regulations and an approval process for CRS. With international agreements between air carriers, the need for harmonization is becoming increasingly important. Harmonization in the acceptance and use of CRS would improve the safety of infants and small children and would also give consistency in their use worldwide.

2.5 Canada has recently modified the acceptance criteria for foreign CRS by issuing an exemption to the current *Canadian Aviation Regulations (CARs)* on CRS and now permits the use of some other countries' approved CRS on board aircraft.

2.6 Canada is also preparing an awareness campaign aimed at promoting the use of CRS on board aircraft and, in the longer term, will initiate an in-depth regulatory examination of the issue.

### 3. **CONCLUSION**

3.1 History has shown that when infants and children are not properly restrained, they are at risk of injury and possibly death, and may cause injury or death to other passengers. States are encouraged to harmonize the use of CRS and to ensure an acceptable level of safety for infants and young children who travel by air.

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