



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 14: Technical Assistance Programme

SUPPORT TO THE CONTINUATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR AVIATION SAFETY IN AFRICA (AFI PLAN)

(Presented by the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC)² on behalf of African States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents the progressive achievements in improving safety in Africa through the implementation of the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan). The paper also recommends the continuation of the AFI Plan beyond 2016, with focus on its expansion to cover all safety-related areas, including Accident Investigation (AIG), Aerodromes and Ground Aids (AGA) and Air Navigation Services (ANS). The expansion and continuation of the programme beyond 2016 helps to contribute to further enhancement of aviation safety in the African Continent.

The assistance provided through the AFI Plan coupled with efforts made by States to effectively implement their ICAO Plans of Action has contributed to a number of African States registering significant improvements in their safety oversight systems as evidenced by the increase in effective implementation (EI) of the critical elements. Between July 2012 and June 2016, the number of States throughout the AFI Region, with EI of 60 per cent and above increased from 14 to 24 and the number of Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs) also declined from 20 to 4.

Based on its recorded achievements, AFCAC and African States support the objectives of the AFI Plan and are convinced that its continuation will contribute to further enhancing aviation safety in Africa as well as assisting in accelerating and sustainably maintaining progress so far made by the African States.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) note the achievements made by the AFI Plan and the commitment of African States in the implementation of the AFI Plan and its objectives;
- b) endorse the continuation of AFI Plan activities;
- c) call on Contracting States, international organizations and industry to support the programme and the associated projects; and
- d) encourage other regions to consider adopting an approach similar to the AFI Plan to address safety deficiencies and challenges.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety and Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency Strategic Objectives.
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¹ English and French versions provided by AFCAC.

² Presented by 54 Contracting States (Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cap Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of The Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, 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, United Republic Of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe)

<i>Financial implications:</i>	
<i>References:</i>	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Considering the significant number of accidents and incidents, lack of effective safety oversight systems, lack of autonomous civil aviation authorities and shortage of qualified skilled personnel etc., the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Africa (AFI Plan) was initiated by ICAO and endorsed by the 36th Session of its Assembly. Subsequently, the Plan was established by the Secretary General on 1 January 2008 to address those deficiencies. Since then, the Plan has been providing assistance to States focusing among others, on the following objectives:

- a) to strengthen civil aviation authorities with respect to their safety oversight capabilities;
- b) to increase compliance with ICAO SARPs and industry's best practices; and
- c) to increase the number of qualified personnel at the industry and oversight levels.

1.2 In March 2013, the AFI Plan was expanded to include Air Navigation Services (ANS), Aerodromes and Ground Aids (AGA) and Accident Investigation (AIG), taking into account the relatively low levels of effective implementation in these areas as shown by ICAO Audit results for States in the region, while maintaining its primary focus on the areas of PEL, OPS and AIR.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 On the basis of the focus areas of the AFI Plan and in accordance with its annual work programme, many activities were conducted to assist States. Through the AFI Plan, specific ICAO Plans of Action were developed and are being implemented in thirty-two priority States. This includes States with significant safety concerns (SSCs), low levels of Effective Implementation and/or those in the ICAO Monitoring and Assistance Review Board (MARB) list. In addition, such ICAO Plans of Action are also in use in a few high-performing States that seek to enhance their aviation safety oversight even further. The effective implementation of these Plans has contributed to significant improvements in aviation safety in the region.

2.2 Specific assistance activities envisaged under the ICAO Plans of Action to States have been carried out jointly by the ICAO Regional Office Safety Teams (ROSTs), the Africa and Indian-Ocean Cooperative Inspectorate Scheme (AFI-CIS) of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and COSCAPs/RSOOs as well as similar entities.

2.3 The assistance provided through the AFI Plan coupled with efforts made by States to effectively implement their ICAO Plan of Action has contributed to a number of African States registering significant improvements in their safety oversight systems as evidenced by the increase in effective implementation (EI) of the critical elements. Between July 2012 and June 2016, the number of States throughout the AFI Region, with EI of 60 per cent and above increased from 14 to 24 and the number of SSCs also declined from 20 to 4.

2.4 The AFI Plan continues to provide necessary support for the establishment and operation of Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs) and Regional Accident and Incident Investigation Organizations (RAIOs). The establishment and/or operationalization of such entities is still continuing. However, it is observed that these entities are facing some challenges in operating effectively and supporting States as expected. In support of the effective operation and sustainability of these entities, the AFI Plan has begun to work on facilitating the future cooperation and enlargement of such entities. To this effect, actions have been taken to avoid overlapping of functions, proliferation of uncoordinated regional organizations and waste of scarce resources. States have also been encouraged not to join more than one RSOO unless the RSOO in question provides different functions.

2.5 The AFI Plan assisted in the establishment of the Association of African Aviation Training Organizations (AATO) aimed at harmonizing and standardizing aviation training in Africa. Support was provided from inception to its establishment and subsequent practical actions including acquisition of its headquarters with a Host Country Agreement signed with the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Currently, AATO has begun operations from its Headquarters located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

2.6 In the area of capacity building, the AFI Plan has conducted numerous activities including seminars and workshops in various safety-related fields. Over 2 300 personnel from many African States have benefited from these activities conducted from 2008 to date.

2.7 The Ministerial Conference on Aviation Safety in Africa (16 to 20 July 2012, Abuja, Nigeria) re-affirmed the commitment to promote reliable, sustainable and safe air transport in Africa. The Conference adopted a set of high-level aviation safety targets, which were subsequently endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State of the African Union (AU) in January 2013. Efforts made through the AFI Plan in attaining these aviation safety targets and achieving sustainable safety improvements have been showing a positive outcome.

2.8 Apart from the traditional State support mechanism, the AFI Plan has adopted a project-based approach by developing and launching specific projects in the areas of Aerodrome Certification, Search and Rescue (SAR), Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) peer review, and SSP-SMS implementation, so as to further assist States in achieving a sustainable aviation safety level.

2.9 In order to continue sensitizing and building an effective safety culture in the Region, the Plan has been supporting annual AFI safety symposia since 2014. The first Symposium was held in Dakar, Senegal in May 2014, the second one in Maputo, Mozambique in May 2015 and the third one in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in June 2016. These symposia have been instrumental in exchanging ideas and disseminating information related to emerging safety issues/concerns prevalent in the region. They have also served as fora for international, regional and State aviation executives as well as safety experts and partners to develop collaborative implementation programmes with plans and actions to address current and future challenges that the continent is facing.

2.10 Despite the significant progress so far achieved in enhancing aviation safety in the AFI Region as a result of the considerable work and actions undertaken through the AFI Plan and aviation partners, AFI States recognize that additional efforts, resources and time are required to fully achieve the Abuja safety targets.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Implementation and support of the AFI Plan together with the efforts made by States have contributed significant improvements in safety oversight systems of States in the AFI Region.

3.2 In view of these significant achievements, AFCAC and its member States commit to the continuation of the AFI Plan with effective and systematic implementation covering all safety-related areas, and recognize that it will help accelerate and sustainably maintain the progress being made by AFI States in enhancing their civil aviation systems.

3.3 African States support the objectives of the AFI Plan and are convinced that its continuous implementation will further contribute to the enhancement of aviation safety in the AFI Region. Furthermore, the continuation will also contribute to reinforce the safety culture necessary for sustainable safety oversight in the continent.

3.4 Building on the experience gained in the AFI Region, AFCAC and African States recommend that other ICAO regions consider adopting an approach similar to the AFI Plan to address safety deficiencies and challenges.

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