



ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

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

PROGRAMME ON STRESS MANAGEMENT IN CRITICAL INCIDENTS (MEIC)
FOR AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES PROFESSIONALS

(Presented by Argentina)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Argentine Air Navigation Company (EANA S.E.) has created a Strategic Programme on *Stress Management in Critical Incidents* (MEIC), which aims at preventing and reducing the incidence of critical situations in order to help improve the working conditions and quality of life of the Argentine Air Navigation Services professionals. The Programme seeks to detect the high stress situations these professionals experience, both in their workplace or outside, and provide them with emotional support, given the fact that such circumstances can affect safety or cause damage to their physical, moral or emotional integrity. This Working Paper introduces the characteristic features of the Programme.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) note the MEIC Programme developed by EANA S.E., which is available for ICAO Member States; and
- b) request that ICAO consider the need to include information on stress management for air navigation services professionals in future updates to ICAO provisions.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	None.
<i>References:</i>	

¹ English and Spanish versions provided by Argentina

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 On July 15, 2015 the Argentine State created the Argentine Air Navigation Company (EANA S.E.) (Ley N° 27.161, HONORABLE CONGRESO DE LA NACIÓN ARGENTINA), responsible for providing the operational control of the Air Navigation Public Service, as well as coordinating and supervising the air control operations with the respective responsibilities. EANA S.E. has become the new Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP) within the airspace above Argentina's territory and its territorial waters.

1.2 The service to be provided by EANA S.E. includes:

- a) Air Traffic Management (ATM), including the Air Traffic Services (ATS)
- b) Air Traffic Flow Management (AFTM) and Air Space Management (ASM)
- c) Aeronautical Information Services (AIS)
- d) Aeronautical Communications Service (COM)
- e) Communications, Navigation and Surveillance System (CNS)
- f) Search and Rescue Service (SAR)
- g) Air Navigation Meteorological Service (MET)

1.3 Among the tools available to the company to meet its responsibilities, it is worth mentioning the implementation of the MEIC Programme for the intervention and prevention of the increased emotional stress that affects personnel in charge of the Air Navigation Services.

2. ANALYSIS

2.1 The development of this tool, intended to provide these professionals with emotional support in the event of critical situations which might significantly affect their health, quality of life and working performance, was based on the need to create and implement action strategies that helped achieve both higher levels of safety and job satisfaction.

2.2 Implementing the MEIC Programme will allow achieving the following objectives:

- a) identify, monitor and detect situations involving high levels of stress for workers, anticipating harmful effects that could cause critical situations in the Air Navigation Services as a consequence of the action or inaction of the professionals involved;
- b) identify common critical situations and stressful agents in the company;
- c) provide professionals within the Air Navigation Services with the necessary tools for the implementation of strategies and stress management procedures through training programmes, workshops and group dynamics activities; and

- d) have qualified personnel for the early detection of the right indicators, considering three levels of programme activation:
 - Minor
 - Significant
 - Severe

This last item is particularly significant taken that, if a correct detection and preventive management is carried out at the Minor and Significant Levels, there will be less chances of reaching the Severe Level, which goes from serious damage to physical, moral or emotional integrity to death.

2.3 The MEIC Programme focuses on a working approach from two axes that are significantly different:

- a) REACTIVE Axis: It requires direct INTERVENTION in the crisis situation, which refers to specific situations that so require.
- b) PROACTIVE Axis: It requires PREVENTION, through the design of interventions, workshops, training, research work and surveys, which provide the prevention tools for appropriate stress management.

2.4 As a summary of the strategy of the MEIC Programme we can mention that once the detected activation level is determined, the action plan is executed and immediately implemented based on the functions carried out by the professional within the Air Navigation Services System.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The steady growth of commercial transport brings about an increase in the operations and in the number of aircraft in flight, what in turn means a significant growth in the activity directly associated with air navigation.

3.2 As a result, in order to reach better Safety records in that area, it becomes necessary to adopt strategies to help those professionals operating the Air Navigation Services.

3.3 In this context, considering all the advantages and benefits that the MEIC Programme offers, EANA S.E. believes that this Programme will allow to reduce the cases of crisis/conflict situations that affect, or might affect, the required Safety standards for the appropriate provision of Air Navigation Services and, in case immediate intervention is needed, an action plan will be available in order to address the situation in a proper way and keep it within acceptable Safety levels, making it possible to develop services with high degree of efficiency.