



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 28: No Country Left Behind Initiative

PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROCESS

(Presented by the United States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the last few years, there have been a number of events that have impacted civil aviation in a manner unlike anything we have experienced before. These events have included both manmade and natural disasters, as well as large disruptions to navigable airspace. Given that civil aviation has technically advanced to the point where routes are flown under very efficient parameters, these events require a very robust, integrated, and well-coordinated crisis management. ICAO may lack sufficient institutional process to respond to these types of events that would enable it to mitigate the impact on international civil aviation. In addition to what is already required in a Regional Air Navigation Plan, ICAO, States, air navigation providers and operators should develop procedures to implement regional contingency plans that can be quickly put into effect. Although States may already have internal contingency plans for crisis response, most of these plans do not adequately detail the operational best practices that are required to effectively manage both international and domestic airspace.

ICAO's crisis response mechanisms need to be reviewed because a concern is that the international civil aviation community continues to operate within a culture of reactive response to emergency and hazardous operations. Instead, it needs to adopt a culture of proactive/predictive approaches to crisis management.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) note the provisions of Annexes 1, 6, 9, 11, 14 and 19 relating to contingency planning; and
- b) urge ICAO to review existing policies and procedures in order to develop a strategy to institutionalize crisis response within the organization and facilitate the establishment of regional contingency plans and measures that would quickly and effectively activate a network to manage disruptions to civil aviation operations.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	The activities referred to in this paper will be undertaken subject to the resources available in the 2017-2019 Regular Programme Budget and/or from extra budgetary contribution.

<i>References:</i>	Annex 1 — <i>Personnel Licensing</i> Annex 6 — <i>Operation of Aircraft</i> Annex 9 — <i>Facilitation</i> Annex 11 — <i>Air Traffic Services</i> Annex 14 — <i>Aerodromes</i> Annex 19 — <i>Safety Management</i> Doc 7300, <i>Convention on International Civil Aviation</i> ICAO Business Plan
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Beginning in 2010, with the natural disaster that impacted Haiti and the Caribbean region in the aftermath of the tragic earthquake and the global disruptions to the flow of aviation caused by the volcano eruption of Eyjafjallajökull in Iceland, the civil aviation community has witnessed a series of both natural and manmade events that have revealed a need to improve upon the capability of ICAO and States to better manage and adapt to these disruptions. ICAO, in its role as a standard-setting organization and delegator of international airspace, should facilitate the establishment of regional and multi-regional contingency plans and measures that can be quickly and effectively implemented in order to protect the safety of civil aviation and the flying public during such disruptions.

1.2 Aircraft operators are key to assisting in the evacuation of people stranded by natural disasters or victims of conflict, and to providing humanitarian support for first responders, relief supplies, cargo deliveries and refugees. ICAO plays an essential role in assisting States and regions affected by natural disasters, conflicts, pandemics, and the like. Procedures that can quickly bring together the key organizations and personnel to react to these events would enhance its ability to support the international air transport system and the international community in times of crisis.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The primary objective of this paper is to propose a review of ICAO's crisis response mechanisms with a view toward improvements to enhance crisis response in the international civil aviation community. More effective emergency response assistance and coordination would be possible with the engagement of ICAO's Headquarters and regional offices, as well as an international point of contact network for aviation emergency responses involving national, regional and international organizations.

2.2 We submit that the overarching responsibility for responding to these events resides with the States, and that any response undertaken by ICAO should be guided by, and in concert with, the State(s) affected.

2.3 Over the last decade and more specifically since the 38th ICAO Assembly, disasters and conflicts have continued to impact the well-being and safety of persons and States. ICAO has worked with States in the development, promulgation, and maintenance of contingency plans, including holding practical exercises, such as for volcanic eruptions, but these contingency plans are regional in focus, strategic in nature, and lack the capability to tactically assist civil aviation in adapting and managing a crisis situation in real-time.

2.4 ICAO has played a role in the response to numerous crises, including earthquakes in Haiti, Japan, and Ecuador, pandemic events, and conflict areas with significant impact on international civil aviation. These events all required coordination between States, regions, and operators. ICAO has addressed these crises in part through ad hoc teams which developed guidance for the international community. However, the information developed by the ad hoc teams received limited distribution; the teams did not always include all possible stakeholders; and, coordination and information sharing between ICAO Montreal, the ICAO regional offices, operators and affected States was insufficient.

2.5 Existing ICAO Standards only call for the provision of a contingency plan to manage affected airspace within a given ICAO Regional Air Navigation Plan. The lack of institutional procedures and mechanisms to share information more broadly with the international community and to coordinate appropriate responses potentially endangers the safety of aircraft traveling through affected airspace as well as slowing down any humanitarian relief efforts.

2.6 One possible path forward might be the creation of a crisis management system with both a strategic element and a tactical element. The strategic element establishes the procedures and coordination links that will be utilized when the aviation community is called upon to react to disasters and airspace disruptions. The tactical or real-time element would provide assistance and or guidance for the global community to respond to these events. The roles and responsibilities of ICAO, States, and all stakeholders involved should be identified and defined for each of these two phases of crisis management.

2.7 States should have an aviation emergency response plan that incorporates both strategic and tactical elements to ensure continued safety of the aviation system in the event of natural and man-made crises such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis or pandemic outbreaks and conflict areas, that may have an impact on the aviation system.

2.8 Each State should also ensure that its aviation emergency response plan is properly coordinated among pertinent organizations and with other States. This may include coordination of emergency response planning between the civil aviation authority, service providers, emergency management and other State organizations and may specifically address the interaction between air navigation services and overarching emergency response efforts. Lastly, each State should ensure that personnel directly involved in ensuring continued safety of civil aviation operations are adequately qualified and trained for effective emergency response.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 An examination of ICAO crisis management procedures and policies must be undertaken as a priority. It is time to give consideration to a more systematic approach to respond to these events in a way that respects States' rights, ensures an appropriate level of continuity, and includes both safety and security risk reduction measures.

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