



ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 35: Aviation safety and air navigation standardization

CERTIFICATION OF FIRMS PROVIDING AIRCRAFT GROUND HANDLING SERVICES

(Presented by the Dominican Republic)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

World aviation safety priorities include the improvement of runway safety in order to reduce risks encountered in the take-off and landing phases as well as during surface movements.

In order to raise safety levels, reduce incidents and avoid personnel injury in the movement area at airports, the Dominican Republic considers that the certification requirement for aircraft ground handling service providers must be implemented, owing to the high number of events relating to these service providers recorded in various international airports.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) recommend that Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) be developed to support States in regulating firms that provide aircraft ground handling services; and
- b) request the Secretariat to compile guidance material to support the implementation of the future Standards.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	The activities mentioned in this document can be carried out within the limits of funds available under the regular budget
<i>References:</i>	Doc 10004, 2014-2016 <i>Global Aviation Safety Plan</i>

¹ Spanish version provided by the Dominican Republic

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 World aviation safety priorities include the improvement of runway safety in order to reduce risks encountered in the take-off and landing phases as well as during surface movements.

1.2 During a statistical review of ground incidents in the Dominican Republic, it was found that a high number of incidents were connected with firms providing aircraft ground handling services and that some incidents had caused flight cancellations, structural damage to aircraft and injury to staff.

1.3 Aircraft damage and staff injury had cost hundreds of thousands of dollars and hundreds of person-hours had been lost in the Dominican Republic alone. Extrapolated to operations worldwide, they undoubtedly amount to billions of dollars and thousands of person-hours lost yearly.

1.4 The occurrence of these incidents, in addition to causing material losses, have a direct bearing on safety, hence the need to take timely remedial action before they cause greater and irreparable losses

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 In a detailed study of incidents recorded in the Dominican Republic and involving aircraft ground handling service providers, repetitive patterns and causes were identified which have led to the isolation of the following contributing factors: lack of adequate staff training; failure to implement programmes to monitor the use of psychotropic substances; and high rotation of service providers' staff.

2.2 In response to this state of affairs, the Dominican Civil Aviation Institute, the civil aviation authority (CAA) of the Dominican Republic, decided to issue a regulation setting out rules on the provision of aircraft ground handling services and the requirements that must be met in order to obtain certification as an aircraft ground handling agent. The regulation was published in December 2014 and was well received by firms providing such services. To date, all providers are engaged in the certification process.

2.3 In regulating such services, it is important to bear in mind that they are provided in many ways. They can be provided by the State, by the airport operator, by the airline operator or by specialized dedicated firms that only provide such services.

2.4 In the case of the fuel supply service, for instance, in some States these firms are authorized by State bodies other than the CAA, but as they operate on airports, they must be regulated for safety reasons.

2.5 Another factor that must be taken into consideration is the likelihood of many firms interacting simultaneously around aircraft on the ground. One firm could be providing fuelling services, another commissary or catering services, while another provides on-board cleaning services and handles sewage and drinking water, and yet another handles the loading and unloading of payload and baggage. The authority must therefore ensure that there is adequate coordination among providers that interact in providing aircraft ground handling services, given the possible safety effects of such interaction.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 While the Dominican Republic has already introduced the requirement nationally and has adopted the Dominican Aviation Regulation setting out certification rules and the requirements that service providers must meet, it considers that the International Civil Aviation Organization should, as part of its strategy to improve safety and efficiency levels in international air operations, formulate a set of requirements for implementation worldwide as a Standard, as a basis and as support for other Member States in formulating and implementing this requirement in their national rules and regulations.

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