



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 39TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 23: ICAO Civil Aviation Training Policy and Capacity Building

REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

(Presented by India)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper examines the requirement for technically trained and qualified flight operations inspectors in the civil aviation oversight system and the challenges in recruitment and retention of such flight operations inspectors. The working paper outlines Indian experience in capacity building and presents a case for regional cooperation for capacity building within the Asia Pacific region by identifying a pool of flight operations inspectors that can be deployed within the region for training specific areas of certification and surveillance.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) note the information in the paper;
- b) note the Indian experience in capacity building from 2014 till date;
- c) recognize the need and opportunity for regional capacity building of flight operations inspectors as a means to mitigate this skilled manpower shortage; and
- d) incorporate regional capacity building into the state civil aviation safety oversight framework.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	
<i>References:</i>	

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The civil aviation safety oversight system is reliant on operations and airworthiness inspectors who form a highly skilled work force. There is a global shortage of this work force and even more evident in a number of States in the Asia Pacific region. This has a direct impact on the ability to establish and maintain an effective safety oversight system.

1.2 Based on India's experience in the past two years that involved rapid capacity building of flight operations inspectors, proposes a regional approach to capacity building in the future that will be beneficial to cooperating States in optimizing the work force requirements while continuing the ability to maintain effective oversight.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 ICAO Contracting States are obligated to implement the requirements of the Chicago Convention by establishing a civil aviation safety oversight system that ensures safe and secure air transportation. A key component of the oversight system is a cadre of operations and airworthiness inspectors that have to be trained and qualified to ensure that standards are maintained. This work force forms a highly skilled manpower set and therein lie challenges to recruit, train, qualify and retain this manpower.

2.2 In early 2014, India did not have any full time flight operations inspectors on the strength of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), and this was the root cause of a number of findings in the critical elements of safety oversight that were highlighted by the ICAO and FAA audits the previous year. The Indian Government and DGCA made the necessary changes in rules and procedures to permit recruitment of flight operations inspectors from industry, and embarked on a fast track capacity building programme while focusing on regaining Category 1 status that was achieved in a short time frame. The challenge of retaining this skilled manpower is being addressed presently, and with the double-digit growth of Indian, the need for continued capacity building is imperative. The situation faced by Indian DGCA is not too different from other Contracting States in the region, and a regional cooperative framework for capacity building is considered beneficial to member states.

2.3 Regional cooperative framework for capacity building can be based on a building block approach. The first step is to identify a set of flight operations domain experts in the key areas of training, certification, surveillance and special operations. This can be done on a two-pronged method, one to establish criteria based on experience and qualification, and the other through direct nomination by the concerned state Director General where experience may be short but qualification requirements are met. The advantage of a two-pronged approach would be to maximize availability of technically qualified manpower since a singular window of experience and qualification could lead to reduced pool of experts when there could be others available for inclusion but not necessarily with the required years of experience as inspectors.

2.4 The second step in the regional capacity building approach would be to deploy the training experts in the state requiring assistance in building its capacity. The experts would then identify the work force needed for the state depending upon the quantum of civil aviation activities in the state. This would form the basis for recruitment if in situ capacity does not exist. The next step would be to

evaluate the training needs of the inspector work force and review the technical guidance available for the nature or civil aviation activities. If there is a gap in the technical guidance, additional domain experts could be requisitioned to develop the technical guidance, which would form basis of the training to be imparted. A training plan would be drawn up by the training domain experts and relevant training imparted. In order to sustain the inspectorate of the state, it would be necessary to identify suitable candidates from the host state inspectorate work force and train those in a Train-the Trainer programme.

2.5 The third step for the certification, special operations and surveillance flight operations domain experts would be to work with the trained work force of the host state to establish a firm foundation of complaint certification and surveillance procedures and practices. On job training in certification, special operations and surveillance would be imparted in this step. Once there is a basic structure of flight operations inspectors trained and qualified, the fourth step could commence, which is related to sustainment and would require less frequent visits of the domain experts to the host state.

2.6 Typically such a regional cooperative approach could take 6-9 months to be effective depending on the scale of activity and resources available both for the donor state and the host or recipient state. A project could be undertaken given the recent experience in capacity building, India would be willing to consider undertaking this lead pilot project with another state for a period of 6-9 months based on an agreed understanding. The experience gained could be the cornerstone of a firm regional cooperative capacity building programme for the future thereafter.

2.7 Recruitment of skilled professionals as flight operations inspectors is a global problem due to shortages of manpower, industry demands on the same manpower creating internal competition within a country, but by establishing a regional basis of cooperation this problem can be mitigated to an extent. As the regional programme grows, the availability of shared inspector resources is likely to have a multiplier effect with benefits to Member States.

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