



WORKING PAPER

**DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION CONFERENCE
ON A GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR AVIATION SAFETY**

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Theme 2: Improving aviation safety

Topic 2.3

**UNIFIED STRATEGY TO RESOLVE SAFETY-RELATED
DEFICIENCIES**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

The ICAO Unified Strategy to resolve safety-related deficiencies is a pivotal concept. This paper outlines the two main pillars of the strategy; namely providing assistance to States and facilitating the use and exchange of safety-related information. The programme will respond to calls for assistance by member States in implementing corrective measures to resolve their safety-related deficiencies through the promotion of regional or sub-regional safety oversight organizations and encouraging partnerships, and will include results oriented management and quality control. The programme is based on principles of cooperation and assistance, increased transparency and disclosure, fostering partnerships among States, industry, financial institutions and other stakeholders in order to establish and implement sustainable solutions.

Action by the Conference is in paragraph 6.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Results of the first audit cycle of the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) revealed that a number of States continued to experience difficulties in implementing Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and maintaining adequate levels of safety oversight. Although corrective action plans were being developed by States, some did not have the requisite human, technical and financial resources to adequately fulfil their safety oversight obligations. The 35th Session of the ICAO Assembly (Montreal, 28 September to 8 October 2004) recognized this and adopted Resolution A35-7: Unified strategy to resolve safety-related deficiencies. The resolution directed ICAO to implement

a unified strategy with the purpose to assist member States in correcting deficiencies primarily identified through the ICAO safety oversight audits as well as other audits conducted by other international and regional organizations.

1.2 The ICAO Unified Strategy Programme (USP), administered by a newly created unit within the Air Navigation Bureau, was created with a view to implement the strategy called for by the Assembly. The programme's two main pillars are:

- a) provide assistance to States' civil aviation authorities through the elaboration and implementation of their corrective action plans while encouraging partnerships and regional cooperation; and
- b) facilitate the use and sharing of safety-related information among States.

2. ASSISTANCE TO STATES

2.1 It should be noted that whether individually or collectively, Contracting States may develop and implement their corrective action plans with the support of ICAO and/or other interested parties in civil aviation operations. In many cases, this support is intended to lead to the formation of regional or sub-regional safety oversight organizations (RSOOs). The establishment of these organizations will assist those States that may otherwise not have the human, financial or technical resources to sustain an effective individual safety oversight system.

2.2 States that request assistance under the USP will have the benefit of the following support. USP will analyze the results of the USOAP audit reports to determine the status of compliance with ICAO SARPs of these States or group of States that wish to work together. As information and data from the USOAP comprehensive systems approach audit cycle become available, attention will also focus on those additional areas that were not heretofore available. USP will assist States, or a group of States, in exploring options for the implementation of corrective actions within their sphere of responsibility. Assistance will range from the elaboration and review of action plans to the conduct of feasibility studies and the development of a work breakdown structure. The USP will endeavour to assist States to understand and manage risk associated with the implementation of safety measures when carried out within limited budgets and technical resources. Also, it will prioritize the options available within budget restrictions to increase safety as much as possible by results oriented management and quality control. In addition, USP will facilitate the matching of financial and/or technical donors with identified needs.

2.3 A further initiative will involve training of implementation teams for the development of corrective action plans based upon ICAO USOAP audits. The implementation teams will be staffed by using qualified ICAO auditors who are not presently conducting audits under the comprehensive audit programme. A seminar for training personnel for corrective action plan implementation teams is being considered for the third quarter of 2006.

COSCAPs and others

2.4 Since the adoption of Resolution A35-7, the Unified Strategy Programme has been assisting a number of regional initiatives in different areas of the world. USP is working with the Technical Cooperation Programme and its cooperative development of operational safety and continuing airworthiness programmes (COSCAPs). Seven COSCAP projects have been established and four more are under discussion. The ICAO Regional Offices work in close coordination with USP and TCB to

ensure that COSCAP Projects continuously meet the needs of the regions involved. When COSCAP States agree to pursue the establishment of an RSOO, the USP will help these States develop a clear evolution plan and identify supporting resources. The USP will also work directly with other independent initiatives such as the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO) to help such initiatives achieve successful implementation of RSOOs.

Regional cooperation

2.5 The Convention on International Civil Aviation encourages cooperation and coordination among Contracting States in order to ensure the safety and efficiency of international air navigation. The benefit of pooling resources can be more effective in meeting a State's safety oversight obligations as it provides an opportunity to share experience, discuss problems in areas of common interest, eliminate duplication of efforts, standardize regulatory frameworks and achieve economies of scale. The establishment and management of effective safety oversight systems require a high-level government commitment. ICAO expects to receive more requests for assistance as more States begin to recognize the benefits of regional cooperation. Guidance material in this respect has been developed by ICAO and is available in Document 9734B - *The Establishment and Management of a Regional Safety Oversight System*, presently published in draft on the ICAO-Net.

Partnerships

2.6 A fundamental tenet for the ICAO Unified Strategy Programme is to assist States in developing partnerships among themselves and share resources to achieve more effective levels of safety oversight. Equally important is the Programme's ability to facilitate and coordinate links between sponsors and recipients for financial and technical assistance. For that purpose, Assembly Resolution A35-7 outlines the establishment of partnerships between States with industry, air navigation service providers, financial institutions and other stakeholders.

2.7 In order to facilitate these efforts, the USP will make coordinated analyses of specific areas to be covered by the partnerships. Regulatory harmonization, development of technical material, networking of communication systems, among others, may require different types, or even, multiple partnerships. Each partner in this endeavour must be committed to agreed-upon goals towards achieving sustainable outcomes with concrete safety deliverables that will manifest the value of their investments.

3. EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

3.1 The Unified Strategy Programme is also committed to assisting States through providing practical means for sharing of guidance material and facilitating the use and exchange of safety-related information that has an impact on international air navigation. For that purpose, a robust web-based information tool, namely the Flight Safety Information Exchange (FSIX) has been launched by ICAO. The FSIX is a portal website that will provide access to safety-related information. Some safety critical information including audit findings and links to incident and accident reports will be accessible through the ICAO secure website and is intended for use by States only. A newsgroup and forum section within FSIX will enable users to exchange views and diverse aviation safety-related information.

4. **RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1 The Unified Strategy is a major departure from the way ICAO has done business in the past. The Organization now places less emphasis on developing new SARPs and focuses more on implementing existing Standards and associated provisions. The Organization is supporting this programme to the extent possible by reallocating resources from other Standards-producing activities. The Unified Strategy Programme will rely, to a great extent, on the support by States.

5. **CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 Despite the audits and follow-up missions conducted by USOAP, a significant number of States have not been able to implement their corrective action plans and fulfil their safety oversight obligations.

5.2 Regional partnerships and the establishment of regional safety oversight mechanisms represent a good vehicle for enabling States to fulfil their safety oversight obligations and, with the support of various stakeholders, will achieve long-term sustainable results.

5.3 Sharing of critical safety information among Contracting States in performing safety oversight functions enhances standardization, improves implementation of safety measures, and reduces duplication of efforts.

6. **ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE**

6.1 The Conference is invited to recommend that:

- a) Contracting States commit to the development and establishment of sustainable safety solutions through the formation of regional and sub-regional safety oversight organizations or initiatives when States lack the financial resources and/or technical capability to fulfil their safety oversight obligations on an individual basis;
- b) Contracting States in need of assistance coordinate with the Unified Strategy Programme Unit to validate that their action plans are likely to achieve the desired results, and to identify the most appropriate assistance mechanisms;
- c) Contracting States and associated industry and professional organizations provide guidance material and relevant safety-related information to the international civil aviation community through the ICAO Flight Safety Information Exchange (FSIX) website; and
- d) States, as well as other stakeholders, that are in a position to do so, make financial contributions and/or contributions in kind to support States in need of assistance to rectify their safety oversight deficiencies through the Unified Strategy Programme.