

ELEVENTH AIR NAVIGATION CONFERENCE

Montreal, 22 September to 3 October 2003

Agenda Item 2: Safety and security in air traffic management (ATM)

2.1 Safety management systems and programmes :

EXPANSION OF THE ICAO UNIVERSAL SAFETY OVERSIGHT AUDIT PROGRAMME

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper contains information on the implementation of the expansion of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme to include Annexes 11, 13 and 14 as of 2004. It briefly explains the preparatory work which has already been accomplished, the modality established for conducting the audits and, in general, the cooperation expected from all Contracting States to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the Organization in respect to conducting safety oversight audits.

Action by the Conference is in paragraph 5.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The 32nd Session of the Assembly directed the Council to establish the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) and requested, *inter alia*, that the Programme include a systematic reporting and monitoring mechanism on the implementation of safety-related Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

1.2 The 33rd Session of the Assembly resolved that the ICAO USOAP be continued and expanded to Annex 11 — *Air Traffic Services*, and Annex 14 — *Aerodromes*, as of 2004. It further instructed the Secretary General to undertake a study regarding the expansion of USOAP to other safety-related fields and, in particular, on the conduct of audits of the core elements of Annex 13 — *Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation*, as soon as possible, without significantly increasing the cost of the expansion.

1.3 On the basis of proposals presented by the Secretariat for the expansion of USOAP to the core elements of Annex 13 and a report thereon by the Air Navigation Commission, the Council agreed, during its 165th Session, that the expansion of USOAP to Annexes 11 and 14 be further extended to include Annex 13 in its entirety and not solely its core elements.

1.4 During its 168th Session the Council considered and endorsed, in principle, the plan of action presented by the Secretariat for the expansion of USOAP to Annexes 11, 13 and 14.

1.5 This paper contains information on the implementation of the expansion of the ICAO USOAP to Annexes 11, 13 and 14 as of 2004. It briefly explains the preparatory work which has already been accomplished, the modality established for conducting the audits and, in general, the cooperation expected from all Contracting States to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the Organization in respect to conducting safety oversight audits.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The audits to be conducted will, in general terms, follow the process which has been utilized during the previous audits relating to Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing*, Annex 6 — *Operation of Aircraft* and Annex 8 — *Airworthiness of Aircraft*. However, the forthcoming audits will be more structured as detailed information on State aviation activities will be solicited long before an audit to a Contracting State is scheduled. In this regard, Contracting States have been provided with the State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ), which most of them have completed and forwarded to ICAO, as requested. The completed information, in addition to the factors established for planning and scheduling an audit, will enable ICAO to maintain an up-to-date database on State aviation activities before and after an audit has been conducted. Contracting States will be required to update the data whenever a change occurs, or every two years, to ensure that the information available at ICAO is up to date. Although in the first instance the information solicited will be based on the areas of audit (Annexes 11, 13 and 14), the plan is to develop similar questionnaires in all areas of safety-related activities in order to maintain an overall picture of the safety oversight management system established in each Contracting State.

2.2 The SAAQ is divided into three parts: a general section requesting information on the civil aviation system (organization and structure) in general, and in each area of audit, in particular, established by the State; a section soliciting information on the technical practices implemented in each area of audit; and a regulatory section soliciting information on the legislative and operating regulations practised in the State. To ensure a comprehensive approach in the collection and storage of information in the Audit Findings and Differences Database (AFDD), and to cover all regulations pertaining to the audit areas, the SAAQ is wide-based and therefore also solicits information on regulatory and legislative elements which were addressed during the initial ICAO Safety Oversight Audits covering Annexes 1, 6 and 8. In addition, the information collected will enable ICAO to tailor the audits to be conducted to the reality of the situation in the Contracting State being audited.

2.3 In addition to the SAAQ, the Secretariat has also developed a SARPs Compliance Checklist (CC) relating to the areas of the audit. The CC is a list of the provisions contained in the Annexes, specifically organized to enable Contracting States to review their national regulations *vis-à-vis* international SARPs and to identify differences which may exist between the national regulations and relevant ICAO Annex provisions. Diligent completion of the CC will enable Contracting States to fulfill the obligations associated with Article 38 of *The Convention on International Civil Aviation*, an obligation which has not, so far, been met at the desired level.

2.4 The Secretariat has also developed the safety oversight audit protocols, which are the primary tools for conducting the audits. The protocols are currently being translated into the ICAO languages and will be forwarded to all Contracting States as soon as they are ready. These are for the use of Contracting States and don't need to be returned to ICAO. In any case, each Contracting State will also be provided with a copy of the audit protocols approximately four months prior to the audit to ensure that it has received a copy and to prepare for the forthcoming audit. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) covering the conduct of audits relating to Annexes 11, 13 and 14 has been reviewed and approved by the Council. The MOU is similar to that which was applied during the initial audits and has been updated to conform to some of the elements contained in the MOU developed for aviation security audits.

2.5 The *Safety Oversight Manual, Part A, The Establishment and Management of a State's Safety Oversight System* (Doc 9734) is currently being amended to cover all audit areas. A second safety oversight-specific guidance material, i.e. the *Safety Oversight Manual, Part B — The Development and Management of Regional Safety Oversight Systems*, is also being developed to provide guidance to Contracting States which may wish to establish a common safety oversight management system, a course of action recommended by ICAO in regions where a cooperative approach is viewed to be as the desired practical approach. Both manuals are expected to be available to all Contracting States by the end of November 2003.

2.6 All safety oversight-related documents will also be available in electronic format and States will be provided with the ability to access and complete the SAAQ and the CC electronically and submit them to ICAO in the same format. This will cut the time of access and response significantly and will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, while reducing its operating costs.

2.7 The full cooperation of States for the timely completion and submission of all required documentation pertaining to the preparation, conduct and reporting of the audits will be essential for the effectiveness of the programme and the fulfilment of the mandate given to the Organization by the Assembly.

3. PROVISION OF TRAINING, SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

3.1 The majority of auditors who will be involved in the conduct of audits in the areas of expansion are expected to come from Contracting States as short-term seconded auditors. To this end, SOA plans to train an adequate number of experts in all ICAO Regions who will be able to conduct audits under the leadership of an ICAO staff member. The ICAO staff member, who would act as a team leader, would be an adequately trained and qualified auditor who may be a staff of SOA or another ICAO HQ Section, seconded to SOA for the purpose of conducting a particular safety oversight audit mission. Relevant ICAO Regional Office staff would also be trained by SOA in audit processes and procedures so that the relevant experts will be able to assist States in resolving identified deficiencies and implementing the ICAO recommendations. Adequately trained and qualified Regional Office staff may also be asked to lead an audit team or serve as a member of an audit team, should the need arise. The Secretariat has, accordingly, scheduled a series of auditor training courses and seminars workshops starting in November of 2003.

3.2 The Secretariat will also conduct a series of safety oversight management system seminar/workshops in cooperation with the Regional Offices. Three seminar/workshops a year, starting in 2004, are envisaged. There is also a plan to hold two seminars in November this year. However, these seminars are

an abbreviated version of the seminar portion of the standard safety oversight management system seminar/workshop and will not include the workshop part of the whole programme.

4. CONDUCTING AUDITS AND REPORTING AUDIT FINDINGS

4.1 Conducting audits in the areas of expansion will require the availability of a considerable number of adequately qualified and experienced experts. Recruiting all of them as ICAO staff members would not be economically feasible, nor would it be cost-effective from an operational point of view. To overcome this problem, ICAO has already put in motion a programme to invite States to nominate national experts to participate in the auditor training courses described in paragraph 3 above, and to join ICAO audit teams as short-term seconded auditors. This practice has already been utilized during the initial audits of Annexes 1, 6 and 8 and is also being implemented currently in relation to the audit follow-up missions conducted by ICAO. Contracting States have already been invited to propose experts from among their staff who meet the qualification and experience requirements developed by ICAO. Currently, the Secretariat is reviewing the application forms received from would-be short-term seconded auditors and selection for participation in the auditors training will soon be completed. As the number of auditors involved is relatively large, four auditors' training sessions will be held in selected Regional Offices following the first training planned to be conducted in Montreal in November 2003.

4.2 Actual audits will be conducted with three to five auditors over a period of five to ten working days, depending on the level of civil aviation activity and the complexity of the State to be audited. Audits will be conducted in line with the audit protocols; however, audit reports will be structured to reflect the critical elements of a safety oversight system as requested by the Assembly (Assembly Resolution A33-8 refers). Structuring the report in line with the critical elements of a safety oversight system will enable the measurement of the impact of non-implementation of international Standards.

4.3 The AFDD has been expanded and modified to accommodate the inclusion of air traffic management, accident investigation and aerodrome related findings. The AFDD will be continuously updated to ensure that an adequate and realistic analysis of the audit findings can be carried out.

4.4 The long-term objective is to transform the audit programme from conducting audits on an Annex-to-Annex basis into a systemic and comprehensive audit programme which would address the overall safety oversight management system established in States and determine its ability to ensure the effective implementation of SARPs and the critical elements of a safety oversight system.

5. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

5.1 The Conference is invited to:

- a) note the information contained in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 relating to the preparatory work, the provision of auditor training courses and safety oversight management system seminars and workshops and the conduct of audits in the expansion areas;
- b) note the audit process envisaged by the Secretariat for the conduct of safety oversight audits in the expansion areas; and
- c) note the long-term objective of the Secretariat for the migration of the programme into a comprehensive and systemic safety oversight audit programme.

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