



WORKING PAPER

**SPECIAL AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN (AFI)
REGIONAL AIR NAVIGATION (RAN) MEETING**

Durban, South Africa, 24 to 29 November 2008

Agenda Item 4: Current status of aviation safety and related activities in the Africa-Indian Ocean (AFI) Region (Safety Committee)

**THE COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF OPERATIONAL SAFETY
AND CONTINUING AIRWORTHINESS PROGRAMMES (COSCAPS) IN AFRICA**

THE ROAD AHEAD

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper invites African States already participating in the Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programme (COSCAP) to meet their obligations, and encourages non-participant States to join a COSCAP group in the AFI Region. The paper further confirms that “coordination and alignment of assistance”, as proposed in SP AFI/08-WP/27, is critical and should be adopted using the COSCAPs as the platform for such coordination. The paper also discusses the expansion of the scope of the COSCAP, taking into account the current situation in Africa and the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP).

Action by the meeting is in paragraph 4.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programme (COSCAP) is a cooperative agreement between participant States, which aims at enhancing the safety of air transport operations in a subregion. It is directed by a Programme Steering Committee, comprised of Director Generals of Civil Aviation or their representatives, and managed by ICAO through an in-trust fund. The programme’s main goals are, in short, to:

- a) provide a focal point among participant States to deal with all issues relating to air operator certification and technical inspections in the subregion, with a view to harmonizing and standardizing all related policies, regulations and procedures;
- b) facilitate a coordinated approach with regard to shared technical expertise, while enhancing the capability of States to provide safety oversight through the training of national inspectors;

- c) perform air operator certification and surveillance functions, establish an aerodrome inspection and certification programme, and address specific issues and deficiencies identified through the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) audit reports of participant States; and
- d) serve as a pilot project for the establishment of a permanent regional safety oversight organization and establish Regional Aviation Safety Teams (RASTs).

1.2 Assembly Resolutions A29-13 and A36-1 formed the basis for the establishment of the COSCAPs in Africa, recognizing “that some Contracting States cannot implement effective oversight without drawing badly needed resources from some other public use, that many others operate substantial fleets but still lack all the resources necessary to provide effective oversight” and “that Contracting States in the AFI Region may not have the technical or financial resources to comply with the requirements of the Chicago Convention and its Annexes and therefore have to rely on ICAO and other stakeholders for the expertise and assistance.”

1.3 The COSCAP offers a practical and cost-effective solution to difficulties faced by many States in Africa, such as recruiting and retaining qualified personnel in the civil aviation sector, the lack of basic air law and civil aviation regulations and also the fact that the size of the air transport industry in most States is usually small, often not requiring full time services of even one flight operations inspector and one airworthiness inspector in each State. The continued lack of resources for African States to separately address these critical requirements necessitated the establishment of a cooperative regional approach that would facilitate the provision of certification and surveillance services through a regional core of safety inspectors.

1.4 Given the support provided by the donor community and the aviation industry for the COSCAP in Asia and similar programmes in South America, a similar approach was proposed for Africa. The COSCAP in West and Central Africa was developed following the conclusion of a study on a mechanism for cooperation in safety oversight at the subregional level, which was carried out by ICAO at the request of the Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in 2001. The concept of three COSCAP programmes was subsequently adopted by the Council of Ministers responsible for civil aviation in West and Central Africa at a meeting held in Lome, Togo in February 2002. The three COSCAPs were anchored in the existing subregional groupings of UEMOA¹, Banjul Accord Group² and CEMAC³. Members of each group were required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding indicating their commitment to the implementation of the COSCAP project. With the favourable response to COSCAP in other regions of the world, as well as in the West and Central African subregion, the concept was subsequently extended to the Eastern and Southern African subregion. COSCAP-SADC⁴ became operational in April 2008. ICAO is currently reviewing the possibility of developing a COSCAP for East/Horn of Africa and Seychelles, part of COMESA regional countries not covered by other COSCAPs or regional offices.

1.5 The African Ministers responsible for air transport met in Libreville, Republic of Gabon in May 2006 and adopted the Libreville Plan of Action which includes, among others, the decision to encourage the Regional Economic Communities to undertake or pursue COSCAP or similar programmes in the regions where they do not exist and to establish Regional and Subregional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs). It is also ICAO’s policy to support the establishment of such entities.

¹ Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo

² Gambia, Ghana, Cape Verde, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone

³ Cameroun, Central African Republic, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Tchad

⁴ Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The COSCAPs, which receive wide support from various stakeholders and donors, promote regional integration and constitute a test bed for a cooperative approach to resolving safety related issues by using best practices, including gap analyses, in coordination with the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (ACIP) and in line with the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP). Donors provide, inter alia, training courses in the region and make available their training facilities for programme inspectors' qualifications and certification training. Drawing from resources of experts on its roster as well as from technical backstopping by ICAO Headquarters and Regional Offices, COSCAP is able to provide much needed assistance in areas of critical concern to aviation safety.

2.2 The main achievements of the COSCAPs currently in progress include the ongoing harmonization of civil aviation regulations, meetings of regional safety working groups to review work produced by the programme experts, training of trainers, training of regional and national inspectors in a wide range of safety related subjects, conduct of mock audits of civil aviation authorities (CAAs) on request, and assistance in the conduct of airline inspections and audits at the request of CAAs.

2.3 Despite these concrete achievements, the COSCAPs continue to face other challenges hampering the smooth implementation of the programmes and which, if not adequately addressed, could further jeopardize the achievement of the programme goals. Some of these challenges are:

- a) slow or low funding delaying implementation of critical programme activities;
- b) difficulty in finding suitably qualified international and regional experts, especially in the area of flight operations;
- c) lack of political will by States to fully participate in programme activities;
- d) political and social upheavals delaying the start of individual programmes; and
- e) unpreparedness or reluctance of some States to commit to join a COSCAP grouping.

2.4 To meet these challenges, it is necessary to ensure better "coordination and alignment of assistance" provided to Africa, as proposed in SP AFI/08-WP/27 presented under Agenda Item 5.2, with the proviso that strengthened COSCAPs serve as the platform to address the "overlapping of support, causing confusion" and resulting in the lack of effective implementation of required safety programmes. As described in SP AFI/08-WP/27, coordination and alignment of assistance would lead to "sustained improvements in the global aviation safety undertakings". In order to ensure effective implementation, this process would entail that the ownership of the COSCAPs would remain the States' responsibility through the Steering Committees, with their execution remaining with the Technical Co-operation Bureau (TCB), and coordination would be shared by various stakeholders, including a unified ICAO strategy supported by all concerned.

2.5 Given the shared objectives between COSCAP and ACIP, it is proposed that the mechanism to link ACIP activities and other stakeholders to the COSCAPs be reinforced. This should also hold true for any regional activities that may be planned for the AFI Region where the COSCAPs will be used as a launching platform.

2.6 COSCAPs were initially established mirroring the original scope of USOAP audits which covered ICAO Annex 1 — *Personnel Licensing*, Annex 6 — *Operation of Aircraft* and Annex 8 — *Airworthiness of Aircraft*. With the expansion of the USOAP to cover all safety related

provisions of all ICAO Annexes, with the exception of Annex 9 — *Facilitation* and Annex 17 — *Security — Safeguarding International Civil Aviation against Acts of Unlawful Interference*, it is recommended that the scope of the COSCAP be reviewed and adapted accordingly.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 The COSCAP has been successfully implemented in many regions as a test bed for a cooperative approach to resolving safety related issues and leading to the establishment of a RSOO and RASTs. In light of the challenges faced by African States in the area of flight safety, the COSCAP offers a practical and cost-effective solution to address safety issues and has the potential to expand in scope to cover all the elements of a State's safety oversight programme. As far as Africa is concerned, it is important to note that the COSCAP enjoys close affinity with the ACIP and is well set to further the objectives and gains of ACIP for the enhancement of safety in the AFI Region.

3.2 On the basis of the above, the meeting is invited to adopt the following recommendation:

Recommendation 4/x — The COSCAP Programmes in Africa

- a) States in the AFI Region which do not belong to a COSCAP be encouraged to form or join a COSCAP grouping;
- b) COSCAP participant States actively contribute to the respective work programme, including participation in, as well as offering to host, workshops and training courses established under the programme;
- c) the COSCAPs serve as an entry point for regional cooperation activities where applicable within the AFI Region, including the inter-related or overlapping work with the ACIP;
- d) donors, the industry and other stakeholders be encouraged to support the COSCAP through financial and in-kind contributions and participate in setting its guiding strategies; and
- e) the mandate and scope of the COSCAP be expanded and aligned with those of the USOAP.

4. ACTION BY THE MEETING

4.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the information provided on the role of the COSCAP in the AFI Region; and
- b) approve the draft Recommendation in paragraph 3.2 above.

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