



International Civil Aviation Organization

## WORKING PAPER

A42-WP/35

EX/17

10/7/25

### ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### Agenda Item 13: Aviation Security — Policy

#### ONGOING WORK RELATED TO CONFLICT ZONES AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBER STATES

(Presented by the Council of ICAO)

##### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Operating over or near conflict zones continues to present significant risks to civil aviation. In the past, civil passenger aircraft downed over or near conflict zones, include among others Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 in 2014, Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 in 2020, and Azerbaijan Airlines Flight 8243 on 25 December 2024. This paper underscores the critical importance of mitigating risks to civil aviation over and near conflict zones, highlights the need for concerted efforts to address such risks, and proposes that the Assembly adopt a resolution to reaffirm States' and operators' responsibilities, and for them to take timely and decisive action in mitigating risks associated with conflict zones.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to:

- recognize the importance of establishing a dedicated ICAO work programme on civil aircraft operations over and near conflict zones, addressing risks to aviation safety and security;
- urge States to support, financially and in-kind, the development, deployment and promotion of such work programme; and
- adopt the proposed Resolution on *Addressing risks to civil aviation arising from conflict zones* in the Appendix.

<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This working paper relates to the Strategic Goals <i>Every Flight is Safe and Secure, Aviation Delivers Seamless, Accessible and Reliable Mobility for All</i> and the <i>International Civil Aviation Convention, other Treaties, Laws and Regulations Address All Challenges</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	The ICAO activities referred to in this paper are expected to be undertaken within the resources available in the 2026-2028 Regular Budget and/or from extra-budgetary contributions as guided by the ICAO Business Plan 2026-2028.
<i>References:</i>	Doc 10084, <i>Risk Assessment Manual for Civil Aircraft Operations Over or Near Conflict Zones</i> Doc 10088, <i>Manual on Civil-Military Cooperation in Air Traffic Management</i> Doc 9554, <i>Manual Concerning Safety Measures Relating to Military Activities Potentially Hazardous to Civil Aircraft Operations</i>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The tragic accident of the downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight 17 in 2014 was the impetus for a review of relevant ICAO Annexes and guidance material to focus on risk assessment and communication with regard to civil aircraft operations over or near conflict zones. Following the downing of Ukrainian International Airlines Flight 752 in 2020, risk mitigation for civil aviation operations over or near conflict zones received renewed focus. To date, such work resulted in various updates to Annex 6 – *Operation of Aircraft, Part 1 – International Commercial Air Transport – Aeroplanes*, Annex 11 – *Air Traffic Services*, Annex 15 – *Aeronautical Information Services*, Annex 17 – *Aviation Security* and Annex 19 – *Safety Management* and guidance material. As part of this work, the *Risk Assessment Manual for Civil Aircraft Operations Over or Near Conflict Zones* (Doc 10084) was first issued in 2016 and the Third Edition issued in 2023, and the *Manual on Civil-Military Cooperation in Air Traffic Management* (Doc 10088) was issued in 2021. The recent accident of Azerbaijan Airlines Flight 8243 underscores the continued importance of a proper risk and safety assessment ensuring robust aviation safety and security risk mitigation measures on a global scale.

1.2 To enable more effective conflict zones information collection and dissemination, both regionally and internationally, and to enhance effective airspace management, several global and regional initiatives were established by international groups and organizations such as the European Union (EU) Conflict Zone Alerting System, the Expert Group on Risk Information overflying Conflict Zones (EGRICZ), and the Safer Skies Consultative Committee (SSCC). The SSCC brings together subject-matter experts from States, international organizations, and industry, providing a dedicated international platform to consolidate discussions on civil aviation operations related to conflict zones. Along with the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the SSCC established a mechanism for rapid information sharing with industry and other relevant stakeholders when emerging or evolving risk situations develop.

## 2. UNDERLYING RISK: A CALL FOR CONTINUED COMMITMENT

2.1 On 25 December 2024, Azerbaijan Airlines Flight 8243 crashed in Kazakhstan where investigations suggest the aircraft was misidentified during a period of heightened military activity and later struck by a surface to air missile. Investigations suggest that the aircraft experienced electromagnetic interference and disruptions, leading to navigational and approach challenges, which underscore the growing threat of global navigation satellite System (GNSS) radio frequency interferences (RFI): jamming and spoofing of signals.

2.2 On 12 May 2025, the ICAO Council voted that the Russian Federation failed to uphold its obligations under the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* (Chicago Convention) in the 2014 downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, which requires that States refrain from resorting to the use of weapons against civil aircraft in flight.<sup>1</sup>

2.3 The latest accident highlights that challenges remain in the effective implementation of existing ICAO Annexes and guidance, particularly regarding risk assessment, civil-military coordination, and timely information-sharing between States and operators, as well as the impact of GNSS RFI. The above events reinforce also the necessity to: refrain from resorting to the use of weapons against civil aircraft in flight pursuant to Article 3 *bis* of the Chicago Convention: update ICAO guidance such as the *Manual Concerning Safety Measures Relating to Military Activities Potentially Hazardous to Civil Aircraft Operations* (Doc 9554) and the *Risk Assessment Manual for Civil Aircraft Operations Over or Near Conflict Zones* (Doc 10084); and to establish a dedicated ICAO work programme.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.icao.int/Newsroom/Pages/icao-council-vote-on-flight-mh17-case.aspx>

### 3. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND ONGOING WORK

3.1 At the request of the 41st Session of the Assembly, in 2023 ICAO issued the Third Edition of Doc 10084 to expand the advice for States and operators regarding the risks from surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), air-to-air attacks, surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs), and provide guidance on conducting conflict zone airspace closures, and reassessing post conflict zone airspace. It also incorporates new guidelines for harmonization of risk assessments and risk communication. This revised version is available since October 2023 for download on ICAO's public website in all six ICAO languages (<https://www.icao.int/Security/SFP/Pages/Conflict-Zones.aspx>).

3.2 Some States have made progress in notifying activities that are hazardous to civil aviation, particularly those related to conflict zones. However, challenges remain regarding the timely issuance of necessary NOTAMs and the exchange of critical information, especially between military and civil aviation stakeholders. To manage airspace disruptions, including those arising from conflict zones, the ICAO contingency coordination teams (CCTs) have been playing a vital role in sharing information and implementing contingency arrangements to reroute traffic and avoid affected airspace. Most of the time, these decisions rely on airspace users to circumvent the impacted areas, the restrictions set by civil aviation authorities, and various sources of information, without delving into the specifics of the risk assessments conducted.

3.3 To improve the management of contingency events, ICAO, with support from relevant international organizations, is developing a harmonized regional air traffic management (ATM) contingency management framework and global guidance material. This initiative aligns with Recommendation 1.1/2 *Resilience of the air navigation system* from the Fourteenth Air Navigation Conference (AN-Conf/14) which was held in Montréal from 26 August to 6 September 2024. Additionally, ICAO has been conducting regional workshops to promote the implementation of effective civil-military cooperation, based on the guidance provided in ICAO Doc 10088, and these activities will continue in the coming years.

3.4 Guidance for the State of Occurrence in the case of accidents over or near conflict zones has been proposed in Annex 13 – *Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation* to enhance the credibility of investigations in such scenarios. The proposed Amendment of Annex 13 is at the stage of States' consultation.

3.5 Recognizing that outreach is an important component of effective implementation, ICAO has developed and applied an outreach strategy including press releases, promoting awareness during regional and global ICAO events, and developing a promotional video on social media. Additionally, a session conducted during the ICAO Security Week 2024 (Muscat, Oman from 9 to 12 December 2024) focused on civil-military cooperation and innovation for secure operations. The session highlighted risks to civil aviation operations over or near conflict zones, particularly during times of uncertainty and instability. It emphasized the critical importance of fostering collaboration and coordination among civil aviation stakeholders, and cooperation between civil and military aviation authorities as essential to maintaining safe and secure aviation operations in the face of escalating challenges requiring timely decision-making and airspace closures. Since September 2024, ICAO in cooperation with the SSCC and the support of the EU funded Case II project, implemented by the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC), delivered six regional awareness seminars on Risk Assessment Processes and on Doc 10084, held in the following States: Dominican Republic, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Morocco and Thailand.

### 4. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

4.1 Coordinated progress is required in addressing evolving threats to civil aviation over or near conflict zones with the aim of ensuring States and operators can effectively: mitigate conflict zone risks; manage the

engagement of all relevant stakeholders; improve strategies for conducting timely airspace closures; and establish guidelines to reassess risks and resume flight operations post conflict. Therefore, the development of a dedicated ICAO conflict zone work programme, taking into account the work conducted by the SSCC, is strongly recommended, subject to the availability of the resources required, which may include the following key priorities:

- a) develop an implementation Package (iPack) for States and stakeholders to benefit from a ready-to-deploy comprehensive and adapted product to support them to mitigate efficiently safety and security risks to civil aviation over and near conflict zones; and
- b) continue to review and update as necessary relevant guidance material, including Doc 10084 to enable timely decision-making while refining risk assessment methodologies, taking into account that:
  - 1) military or weaponized unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) have been extensively used in conflict zones as new methods of attacks and bringing complexity and new criteria to include into the risk assessments;
  - 2) the use of satellite-based communications, navigation and surveillance (CNS) systems can potentially be impacted beyond conflict zones;
  - 3) there is opportunity to better integrate with the work on civil-military cooperation, as well as air traffic management (ATM) contingency management framework; and
  - 4) lessons learnt from regional awareness activities and other relevant fora should be incorporated therein.

— — — — —

## APPENDIX

### DRAFT RESOLUTION

#### **A42-xx: Addressing risks to civil aviation arising from conflict zones**

*Recalling* the tragic loss of Azerbaijan Airlines Flight 8243 on 25 December 2024, and noting with grave concern similar civil aircraft downing's over or near a conflict zone, including Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 in 2020 and Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 in 2014;

*Recalling* Article 3 *bis* of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* reaffirms the principle of non-use of weapons against civil aircraft in flight;

*Recalling that in accordance with the Convention on International Civil Aviation* and its Annexes thereto, Member States should take preventive measures in airspace controlled by them, including timely promulgation of prohibited, restricted or danger areas as appropriate, when military activities or conflict pose a risk to civil aviation;

*Acknowledging* the increased complexity of risk management over conflict zones, including the threats posed by the use of military or weaponized unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), global navigation satellite System (GNSS) radio frequency interferences (RFI), electronic warfare and air defence systems;

*Recalling* Assembly Resolution A41-8 that civil-military coordination should facilitate the sharing of relevant information with airspace users, especially for civil aircraft operations over or near conflict zones;

*Recognizing* the need for enhanced coordination, timely dissemination of risk information and decision -making, and updated guidance for States and operators; and

*Recalling* that the ICAO Strategic Plan 2026-2050 has one of its essential aspirations to achieve zero fatalities in international aviation from accidents and acts of unlawful interference.

*The Assembly:*

1. *Strongly condemns* the use of weapons against civil aircraft in flight and reiterates that, in case of interception, the lives of persons on board and the safety of the aircraft must not be endangered;
2. *Reaffirms* that every State must refrain from resorting to the use of weapons against civil aircraft in flight as reflected in Article 3 *bis* of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*;
3. *Urges* Member States, which have not yet done so, to ratify, as soon as possible, the Protocol incorporating Article 3 *bis* into the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*.
4. *Calls upon* Member States to identify, notify and take appropriate measures in airspace controlled by them, in accordance with the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* and its

Annexes thereto, including timely promulgation of prohibited, restricted or danger areas as appropriate, when military activities or conflict pose a risk to civil aviation;

5. *Urges* Member States to share relevant information with air navigation services providers and aircraft operators under their authority, and ensure that they on a timely basis assess and mitigate risks posed to civil aircraft over or near conflict zones;

6. *Urges* Member States to call upon aircraft operators to ensure that their decision-making for flight planning includes updated risk assessment and appropriate risk mitigation measures, taking into account information regarding conflict zones by every reasonable means;

7. *Calls upon* Member States to improve and strengthen civil-military cooperation in air traffic management (ATM), and support the development and implementation of a regional ATM contingency management framework;

8. *Calls upon* Member States to support global initiatives, such as the Safer Skies Initiative, as an effective means to share best practices and information, including existing regional initiatives, and promote effective implementation of global standards and guidance on mitigating the risks conflict zones pose to civil aviation;

9. *Directs* the Council to continue to update relevant ICAO documents, including ICAO *Risk Assessment Manual for Civil Aircraft Operations Over or Near Conflict Zones* (Doc 10084), to reflect current operational and technological threats, including attacks using weaponized unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), GNSS RFI and electronic warfare;

10. *Directs* the Council to ensure the development of a dedicated ICAO work programme on conflict zones in order to support cross-cutting efforts within ICAO; and

11. *Directs* the Council to monitor the implementation of this Resolution and report progress to the next ordinary Session of the Assembly.

— END —