



ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 14: Audit Programmes – Continuous Monitoring Approach

POSSIBILITY OF ENHANCING THE USOAP CMA REPORTING, CONSIDERING THE SIZE AND COMPLEXITY OF AVIATION ACTIVITIES IN THE STATE

(Presented by South Africa)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) to consider the possibility of enhancing the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme Continuous Monitoring Approach (USOAP CMA) reporting, considering the size and complexity of the civil aviation activities amongst various Member States, by grouping States with similar levels of civil aviation activities. This approach would facilitate more meaningful comparisons within comparable subsets, improving the relevance and effectiveness of collaboration amongst States.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- note the content of the paper; and
- request ICAO to investigate in accordance with the workplan, how performance reports can be enhanced to reflect the size and complexity of Civil Aviation activities amongst Member States, based on a classification or grouping mechanism that distinguishes results among States with similar levels of civil aviation activities and make recommendations in the next Assembly.

<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This paper relates to the Strategic Goal <i>Every Flight is Safe and Secure</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Nil
<i>References:</i>	ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Program Continuous Monitoring Approach Online Framework (USOAP CMA OLF) Integrated Safety Trend Analysis and Reporting System (iSTARS)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This paper aims to inform and request that ICAO consider exploring the possibility of enhancing the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme Continuous Monitoring Approach (USOAP CMA) reporting by categorizing Member States with similar or comparable civil aviation activities into distinct sub-groups and rate their effective implementation (EI) accordingly, considering various levels of civil aviation activities and complexity.

1.2 Presently, the ICAO Integrated Safety Trend Analysis and Reporting System (iSTARS) 4.0 website, provides information that enable States to compare their performance within their respective regions and globally. However, it is not possible to compare State's performance against those with comparable civil aviation complexities and activities. This gap makes it impossible for States to effectively evaluate their performance with their peers. If this gap can be closed, this could improve the ability of States to evaluate their compliance standing and effectiveness in a more meaningful manner. If achievable, this will also assist States that requires assistance through the ICAO No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative to identify those States with whom they can partner with for the purpose of assisting each other.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The USOAP CMA serves as a mechanism to assess States' capabilities to conduct effective safety oversight. It employs a formula that appropriately accommodates all Member States, regardless of the scale of their civil aviation activities. The methodology is sound, particularly in its exclusion of protocol question (PQs) from the calculation, which are deemed as not being applicable to the specific State.

2.2 The global civil aviation system is inherently collaborative, with States working together to enhance civil aviation safety. Some States manage significantly more aviation activities than others, and levels of EI also vary widely.

2.3 While it is currently possible to generate State safety reports at regional and global levels, it would be beneficial for States to generate comparative reports with other States that share similar characteristics. These characteristics include comparable levels of EI, as well as equivalent level of civil aviation activities identifiable through the State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ).

2.4 This proposed approach would offer a more accurate and meaningful representation of the global civil aviation environment and provide the following benefits to Member States:

2.4.1 More effective allocation of assistance resources by ICAO, ensuring support is directed towards where it is most needed and can have the greatest impact.

2.4.2 Enhanced understanding of the scope and distribution of civil aviation activities relative to available resources, particularly among States affiliated with the same Regional Safety Oversight Organization (RSOO), this will enhance a stronger support for ICAO's NCLB initiative amongst States.

2.4.3 The ability to benchmark and assess performance among peer States with comparable civil aviation systems and activity levels, thereby fostering collaboration and continuous improvement.

2.4.4 Stronger support for ICAO's NCLB initiative by enabling States in need of access to assistance by other Member States that could be easily identified, maximizing the relevance and effectiveness of co-operation and collaborative efforts.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 All Member States are provided access to performance reports and State safety briefings through the iSTARS platform. This centralized resource enables States to benchmark their aviation safety and performance outcomes against those of other States, both within their respective regions and on a global scale. Such comparative analysis can be leveraged to foster transparency, encourage the sharing of best practices, and drive continuous improvements in civil aviation safety system. However, it is important to

recognize that not all States engage in civil aviation activities at the same scale or complexity. States with relatively limited aviation operations may not have many performance indicators or safety activities as many Protocol Questions (PQ) may not be directly applicable or relevant. Consequently, the current one-size-fits-all approach to reporting might not fully capture the significant safety and performance profiles of these States, potentially resulting in less actionable insights or misleading comparisons.

3.2 Furthermore, when iSTARS generates regional and global performance reports, the comparative context tends to overlook the diversity in aviation infrastructure, regulatory environments, and operational complexities that exist among States. For instance, a State with a highly complex aviation ecosystem involving international airports, multiple airlines, and extensive cargo and passenger operations faces very different safety management challenges compared to a State with limited domestic air traffic and a handful of general aviation activities. Evaluating both using the same metrics and without contextual grouping can skew performance assessments. This lack of differentiation could lead to unfair benchmarking outcomes for example, a smaller State might appear to underperform simply because certain metrics do not apply, or conversely, a larger complexity State might mask critical risks by averaging out data. To address this limitation, incorporating a classification or grouping mechanism within the performance reports would be highly advantageous. Such a mechanism would categorize States based on parameters such as the volume and complexity of aviation activities, range of civil aviation operations undertaken, airport infrastructure capacity, and regulatory maturity.

3.3 Grouped performance reporting would improve the interpretability and relevance of data, supporting evidence-based policy making, resource allocation, and regulatory oversight. It would also provide a fairer assessment framework, motivating all States to engage more actively in safety improvements without concern for disproportionate evaluation. Ultimately, refining the reporting methodology in this manner aligns with the broader goal of enhancing global aviation safety by facilitating more meaningful and actionable performance insights.

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