



ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 12: Facilitation Programmes

ADDRESSING AND UPGRADING PASSENGER EXPERIENCE

(Presented by Saudi Arabia)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Global passenger traffic is growing rapidly, yet environmental, land-use and financial constraints make new runway, and terminal projects slow to deliver. Optimizing existing capacity is therefore essential, while passengers now expect fast processing and consistently high service quality. Annex 9 — *Facilitation* guides Member States to minimize border control processing time, but it offers only an aggregate recommended total time period for the completion of required departure and arrival formalities, with no quantitative metrics for identifying or measuring performance at each step of the passenger processing points. This paper proposes that the Assembly consider upgrading passenger experience with the concept of an Operational Performance Review System based on metrics. A complementary Facilities-and-Services Evaluation would accompany the metrics to confirm that all terminal amenities and services maintain a minimum acceptable quality of service, in line with the facilitation provisions of Annex 9

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- Agree that the importance of addressing and upgrading the passenger experience with an Operational Performance Review System based on metrics be included in the Assembly resolution dedicated to Facilitation;
- Request the Council to include in the work programme for (2025–2028) upgrading the passenger experience provisions in Annex 9 with the concept of Operational Performance Review System based on metrics;
- Request the Council, as a first step, to compile and publish the best practices of States currently implementing such performance review procedures; and
- Based on the best practices compiled, request the Council to elaborate and publish guidance material to be widely used by Member States.

<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Goal — Aviation Delivers Seamless, Accessible, and Reliable Mobility for All
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Not Applicable
<i>References:</i>	Annex 9 — <i>Facilitation</i> , 17th Edition Joint ACI World–ICAO Passenger Traffic Report, Trends and, Outlook (Montréal, 28 January 2025) A41-WP/342, <i>Introduction of airport total quality score program (ATQS)</i> A40-WP/326, <i>USOAP-CMA readiness program</i> A40-WP/462, <i>Accommodating more passenger traffic through more efficient facilitation</i> A42-WP/15, <i>Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies related to facilitation</i>

¹ Arabic and English versions provided by Saudi Arabia.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Global passenger traffic demand has been rising rapidly and is projected to continue growing for the next decades. The joint Passenger Traffic Report, Trends and Outlook issued by Airports Council International (ACI) World and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) projects that global passenger traffic will reach 19.5 billion by 2042. At the same time, the expansion of airport infrastructure is increasingly constrained by land-use, environmental and community considerations, requiring substantial investment in capacity and technology; as a result, many airports now operate at or near capacity during peak periods.

1.2 Annex 9 — *Facilitation* contains several provisions relevant to passenger experience. Standard 1.2 requires that “the time required for the accomplishment of border controls ... is kept to the minimum,” while Standard 3.1 obliges Contracting States to adopt border-control procedures that prevent unnecessary delays. Standard 6.1.2 further calls for the expeditious processing of passengers, crew, baggage, cargo and mail. Moreover, Recommended Practices 3.42 and 3.45 provide aggregate advisory goals for departure (60 minutes) and arrival (45 minutes) formalities; however, the Annex sets no specific performance measures for the individual passenger-processing points.

1.3 To bridge this gap, it is proposed that Member States adopt and monitor operational performance metrics for key passenger processing points. The goal is to ensure that even within existing infrastructure limits, Member States ensure a minimum acceptable quality of service, in line with the spirit contained in the existing provisions of Annex 9 and with paragraph 11 of Appendix E (A42-WP/15, *Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies related to facilitation*), the Council’s Facilitation Resolution to supersede A41-17, which requests Member States to improve passenger travel experience and cargo facilitation by enhancing efficiency of the movement of aircraft, passengers, crew and cargo.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Annex 9 through quantitative metrics

An Operational Performance Review System based on metrics transforms Annex 9 facilitation recommendations into measurable services, enabling each Member State to collaborate with aircraft and airport operators in developing and implementing metrics that reflect its local conditions, passenger volumes, and operating environment, while fully accounting for national circumstances.

2.2 Passenger-processing points

The metrics to be used in the operational performance review would apply, for example, to check-in, security control, border control, customs inspection, baggage delivery and assistance for persons with disabilities.

2.3 Quality of services and facilities

To complement the Operational Performance Review System based on metrics, each Member State would carry out a concise Facilities-and-Services Evaluation that confirms the adequacy of all terminal amenities and the services, including those provided for persons with disabilities. The review would be aligned with Recommended Practice 6.9, encouraging the installation of automated facilities for passenger and baggage processing; and Recommended Practice 8.20, which urges publication of minimum, uniform accessibility standards covering the entire journey of persons with disabilities from arrival at the airport of departure to leaving the airport of destination. Any shortfall identified by the evaluation would guide the airport operator to submit a corrective-action plan to the relevant authority. Coupling this qualitative facilities check with the quantitative Operational Performance Metrics ensures that both service adequacy and accessibility remain fully aligned with the facilitation provisions of Annex 9.

2.4 Measurement and reporting

The Operational Performance Review System based on metrics presupposes that each Member State will obtain and transmit dependable measures for every passenger-processing point. While Annex 9 Recommended Practice 6.8 notes that airport operators, aircraft operators and public authorities should exchange, in a timely manner, all relevant operational information to help maintain smooth passenger flow and optimise resources, Member States remain free to employ any data collection method suited to their operating environment. A recent experience reported by Saudi Arabia where an artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled queue management system operates at its airports, demonstrates that real-time data, coupled with predictive algorithms that anticipate queues at passenger-processing points, allows operators to proactively redeploy staff, ensuring efficient resource allocation and an upgraded passenger experience.

2.5 Previous Assembly working papers

Recent Assembly working papers illustrate a shared movement toward The Operational Performance Review System based on metrics concept. A41-WP/342, *Introduction of airport total quality score program (ATQS)* (Saudi Arabia) presented an airport wide service quality program that publishes monthly wait-time metrics for every major processing point; A40-WP/326, *USOAP-CMA readiness program* (Brazil) proposed Quality of Service Indicators for airports and set minimum standards and targets to ensure compliance with Annex 9; and in A40-WP/462, *Accommodating more passenger traffic through more efficient facilitation* (Singapore), the establishment of ground operations efficiency metrics serves to align expectations across airport stakeholders to achieve a common outcome. These papers confirm both the technical feasibility of quantified passenger service metrics and their effectiveness in driving measurable operational improvement, thus enhancing the passenger experience.

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