



International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

A42-WP/583

TE/218

12/9/25

(Information paper)

English only

ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 24: Aviation Safety and Air Navigation Priority Initiatives

WILDLIFE HAZARD MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL AVIATION GROWTH

(Presented by the World Birdstrike Association (WBA))

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This information paper provides an overview of the WorldBirdstrike Association's (WBA) global contributions to aviation safety with a focus on Wildlife Hazard Management (WHM). It highlights the increasing importance of WHM amid rapid global aviation growth and encourages greater alignment of States, authorities and airport operators with ICAO guidance and international best practices to mitigate risks from wildlife hazards.

<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This working paper relates to <i>Every Flight is Safe and Secure</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Nil for ICAO. Proposals relate to exploring sustainable models for WHM implementation at airport/operator level.
<i>References:</i>	Annex 14 – <i>Aerodromes</i> , Volume I – <i>Aerodrome Design and Operations</i> Doc 9981, <i>Procedures for Air Navigation Services (PANS) — Aerodromes</i> Doc 9137, <i>Airport Services Manual</i> , Part 3 – <i>Wildlife Hazard Management</i> State Safety Programme (SSP) and Safety Management System (SMS) frameworks ICAO MID ASPIG outcomes related to WHM.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WorldBirdstrike Association Vision

1.1.1 The vision of the WorldBirdstrike Association (WBA) is to strive to support and strengthen the global aviation safety community.

1.2 Mission

1.2.1 To champion ICAO-aligned, science-based wildlife hazard management (WHM) solutions that protect passengers, crew, aircraft and wildlife.

1.2.2 To strengthen global aviation safety by fostering collaboration between States, civil aviation authorities, airports, airlines, and wildlife experts.

1.2.3 To promote sustainable, ethical, and data-driven habitat management strategies that reduce risk while respecting ecological balance.

1.2.4 To provide training, capacity building, and expert guidance so that every airport, from regional strips to major hubs, can implement robust WHM programmes integrated into their safety management systems (SMS).

1.3 The WBA is a global, ICAO-aligned non-governmental organization (NGO) (officially recognised since 21st May 2025) dedicated to reducing risks associated with wildlife hazards to aviation. WBA collaborates with States, aerodromes, regulators and industry partners to share expertise, develop guidance, and promote effective WHM practices.

1.4 With accelerated aviation growth, exposure to wildlife hazards increases. The challenge is present at each aerodrome and pronounced at greenfield aerodromes and in high-density traffic corridors, underscoring the need for robust, ICAO-aligned WHM systems integrated within SMS.

2. WBA GLOBAL CONTRIBUTIONS

2.1 WBA has been actively engaged in supporting aviation safety worldwide through:

- a) actively contributing to the ICAO APAC WHM Working Group on working papers, information papers and guidance tasks for the past six years since its formation;
- b) presenting a working paper at the ICAO Middle East (MID) ASPIG (Riyadh, April 2025) on the requirement to establish a WHM Working Group in the MID Region; and
- c) serving as an advisory and liaison body between aerodromes and agencies to facilitate sharing of guidance on WHM and SMS:
 - 1) building partnerships with ICAO, civil aviation authorities, Aerodromes and operators;

- 2) supporting States with training, capacity building and expert missions;
- 3) sharing international best practices and aligning WHM initiatives with ICAO provisions (Annex 14, Doc 9137, PANS-Aerodromes); and
- 4) promoting integration of WHM within SMS.

3. GROWING IMPORTANCE OF WHM

3.1 Global aviation expansion and the growing populations of hazardous wildlife species are increasing the likelihood and consequences of wildlife-related incidents.

3.2 Without robust WHM, States and operators face elevated safety risk, operational disruption and reputational harm.

3.3 WHM is a strategic safety investment that enhances resilience, operational efficiency and compliance.

3.4 In addition, as bird/wildlife strikes become more common, public awareness has matured to the point where the media and public increasingly seek WBA's authoritative input (e.g. outreach from The Washington Post following the AI171 accident and from Japan's Hodo TV on migratory flyways). This heightened visibility reinforces the expectation of transparent, fact-based communication avoiding early speculation and underscores that WHM is a continuous, adequately resourced function. To support global consistency, WBA would welcome ICAO guidance on handling public and media enquiries in a manner aligned with ICAO provisions and safety-communication principles.

4. WBA INITIATIVES AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.1 WBA supports ICAO APAC and other regions through guidance on all WHM matters.

4.2 Given its role as a recognised ICAO-aligned NGO, WBA underscores the importance of sustaining its contributions to global aviation safety. While WBA has historically relied on bi-annual conferences and volunteer contributions, this model should be strengthened by setting up partnerships with international organizations and ICAO guidance on sustainable models, including membership-based contributions from States and airports, to ensure WBA can continue providing consistent expertise, training and global coordination in WHM.

5. ALIGNMENT WITH ICAO GUIDANCE

5.1 States are encouraged to:

- a) integrate WHM into national aviation safety frameworks;
- b) ensure aerodrome operators develop, implement and maintain ICAO-aligned WHM programmes and good practices; and

- c) mandate proactive monitoring, risk assessment and stakeholder engagement.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Wildlife hazard management is a shared responsibility requiring global collaboration.

6.2 WBA reaffirms its commitment to working with ICAO, States and operators to strengthen WHM capacity worldwide.

6.3 This paper highlights the importance of integrating ICAO-aligned Wildlife Hazard Management (WHM) practices within the broader framework of aviation safety, particularly in the context of rapid global aviation growth. It outlines WBA's contributions to WHM and aviation safety, recognises the link between increasing air traffic, the growth of hazardous wildlife populations, and the corresponding rise in wildlife hazard risk.

6.4 The paper further presents the relevance of ICAO guidance and best practices in strengthening WHM programmes, emphasising the value of developing training standards, ensuring adequate resources, and fostering sustainable approaches. In addition, it notes the importance of international collaboration and consistent communication aligned with ICAO principles to maintain confidence in aviation safety.

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