Governance Framework

Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan), Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa (AFI SECFAL Plan), and the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF)

1. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

1.1   The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has been implementing three regional programmes in Africa, aimed at enhancing aviation safety, aviation security and facilitation, and human resource development. These programmes, herein after referred to as 'the Plans" are the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan), the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa (AFI SECFAL Plan), and the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) and are hereinafter referred to as "Programmes".

1.2   This governance framework aims to ensure the effectiveness and inclusiveness of these programmes, enhance their impacts, ensure that no country is left behind and strengthen oversight.

AFI Plan

1.3   The Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan) was established in 2008 by ICAO to address civil aviation safety deficiencies in the Africa-Indian Ocean (AFI) region. The plan focuses on supporting States to create sustainable safety oversight systems and promoting aviation safety culture.

1.4   In 2009, the ICAO Council decided (C-DEC 188/11) to integrate the AFI Plan into the regular work of ICAO Regional Offices, though it continues to operate as a distinct Africa-wide support programme.

1.5   Independent evaluations conducted by ICAO's Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) in 2015 and 2022 confirmed that the AFI Plan has significantly improved aviation safety in Africa and remains highly relevant. However, these evaluations, along with observations from the Steering Committee, highlighted areas requiring improvement to enhance the programme's effectiveness. Key recommendations include:

- Enhancing the Planning and Implementation Framework: Strengthening the structure and processes to ensure efficient and impactful execution of programme activities.

- Revising the Terms of Reference for Regional Office Safety Teams: Updating roles and responsibilities to better align with the programme's objectives.

- Improving Resource Mobilization and Utilization: Increasing efforts to secure and efficiently allocate resources for programme activities.

- Restructuring the Governance Framework: Streamlining the Steering Committee to include a limited number of focused members, while ensuring representation of all key stakeholders and improving the decision-making process.

AFI SECFAL Plan

1.6   The Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa (AFI SECFAL Plan) was unanimously supported by States at the AFI Aviation Security Meeting in Dakar, Senegal, on 28 May 2014. It was subsequently endorsed at the 24th Extraordinary Plenary Session of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), held from 1 to 4 July 2014 in Dakar, Senegal. During this Session, the AFI States further requested ICAO to approve the Plan as one of its programmes.

1.7   The ICAO Council, at its 203rd Session (C-DEC 203/2), approved the AFI SECFAL Plan as an ICAO programme and requested that the Secretary General report on the AFI SECFAL Plan activities and progress to the ICAO Council during the 204th or 205th session, as appropriate.

1.8   The eight-year period of the AFI SECFAL Plan (2015 -2023) recorded notable milestones in its objectives, deliverables and targets to elevate aviation security and facilitation in the AFI Region. The Plan strengthened collaboration and coordination between international and regional organizations and other partners, despite challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and unsustainable funding to implement its planned activities. The implementation of State specific projects was successfully completed in several States, based on priority order.

1.9   In alignment with the Global Aviation Security Plan (GASeP) Roadmap, the ICAO Council extended the AFI SECFAL Plan's mandate to 2030. This extension reinforces the programme's commitment to improving aviation security and facilitation across the AFI region.

HRDF

1.10   The Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF) was established in 2014 to address the shortage of qualified technical aviation professionals in Africa. This initiative emerged from a declaration by African Transport Ministers during the Malabo Conference held from 7 to 11 April 2024 and was formally endorsed by AFCAC in coordination with ICAO.

1.11   Africa's growing aviation industry faces significant challenges in meeting the demand for skilled professionals, which affects compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and the implementation of regional programmes. Addressing these gaps requires collaboration among African States and other stakeholders.

1.12   The HRDF provides a mechanism for collecting and utilizing voluntary contributions to develop capacity-building opportunities in civil aviation. Its primary objective is to support African States in implementing ICAO SARPs and improving operational efficiency. This contributes to the continent socio-economic development.

1.13   Accordingly, the first round of the Secondment Programme of African Aviation Professionals to ICAO facilitated through the HRDF took place from June 2016 to February 2018. A total of 8 Secondees attended the programme in various areas of expertise. Given the programme aims to support capacity building for qualified personnel beyond secondment, it was recommended to review the fund's objectives and implementation framework. As a result, a task force was established to reassess the scope and objectives. The task force developed a term of reference (TOR) for the fund including various capacity building initiatives. In line with this, ICAO and AFCAC prepared various capacity building activities for implementation under the HRDF.

Way forward

1.14   To address the recommendations of ICAO's Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) on the AFI Plan and the challenges in implementing the AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF, the governance framework focuses on aligning the Steering Committee with the objectives of these programmes.

1.15   The restructured Steering Committee will maintain a balance between inclusivity and efficiency, ensuring timely and effective decision-making. Additionally, the Programme Management Team will be tasked with implementing activities within specified timeframes, quality standards, and budgetary constraints. This approach aims to optimize programme management and delivery, ensuring the AFI Plan, the AFI SECFAL Plan and the HRDF continue to drive progress in aviation safety, security and facilitation across the AFI region.

1.16		By adopting these measures, these programmes will be better positioned to sustain and expand their impact, addressing evolving challenges and meeting the needs of all the stakeholders.

2.		**THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK**

2.1		To enhance oversight and optimize resource allocation, the governance of the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan, and HRDF has been consolidated. A unified governance structure is expected to improve decision-making efficiency, ensure alignment with ICAO policies and regional priorities. It is further expected that the consolidation will drive enhanced implementation support hence sustainable progress in aviation safety, security, facilitation, and capacity building across Africa.

2.2		The governance of the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan, and HRDF involves the ICAO Council, the Steering Committee, the ICAO Secretariat and other stakeholders as may be described in the respective Programme Documents. Roles and responsibilities are as follows.

3.		**ROLES**

3.1		The subsections below describe the roles and responsibilities of the governance bodies, role players and standing invitees. Roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders are provided in the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF Programme Documents.

3.2		**The ICAO Council**

   3.2.1 The ICAO Council is responsible for the establishment and the overall oversight of the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF Programmes. This includes the following:

   a) establish, extend as appropriate and authorize the closure of the programmes;

   b) approve the governance framework, including the terms of reference of the Steering Committee, and any amendments thereto; and

   c) review the annual reports and provide overall guidance for the management of the programmes.

3.3		**The Steering Committee**

   3.3.1 The roles of the Steering Committee and the corresponding responsibilities are as follows:

   a) provide policy and strategic direction for the effective implementation of the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF programmes;

   b) formulate strategies and promote resource mobilization;

   c) approve the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF programme documents as well as their related projects and activities, and revisions thereof;

   d) review and approve work plans, budgets and progress reports for the activities and projects;

   e) monitor the implementation of the programmes;

f) provide through the Chairperson, annual progress report to the Council as well to the African Ministers of Transport through AFCAC;

g) review the terms of reference as required and submit these revisions to the Council for approval; and

h) recommend the closure of the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF programmes to the ICAO Council.

3.4 The ICAO Secretary General

3.4.1 The Secretary General is responsible for the overall implementation of the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF programmes. This includes the following:

a) act as the Administrator of the corresponding Programme funds, i.e. of the AFI Plan Fund, the accounting purpose Fund for the AFI SECFAL Plan and the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF); and as such, ensure compliance with all applicable policies and rules;

b) define the objectives for the Secretariat's work and allocate resources;

c) at the end of the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF programmes:

1) present the final report and ensure that any issues, lessons and risks are documented and passed on to the appropriate body; and

2) propose the closure of the programmes to the Steering Committee.

3.5 The ICAO Regional Directors

3.5.1 The ICAO Regional Directors (ESAF, EURNAT, MID and WACAF Offices) are responsible for the implementation of the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF related projects/activities pertaining to the States to which their respective Regional Offices are accredited. This includes the following:

a) act as allotment holders for projects/activities pertaining to the States to which their respective Regional Offices are accredited and direct the work of the Regional Officers. Regional Officers are the technical subject-matter experts of the Regional Offices. They are responsible for implementing assigned general activities and specific projects;

b) coordinate projects/activities pertaining to their areas of accreditation and ensure their timely submission to the Programmes Officer;

c) monitor the implementation of the approved work programme in their areas of accreditation;

d) make decisions on matters referred by the Programmes Officer; and

e) ensure timely submission of monthly/quarterly progress reports and the end stage/annual reports to the Programmes Officer.

3.5.2 The above-mentioned responsibilities will be included in the Performance management objectives of the Regional Offices. The Regional Directors will supervise and evaluate related activities.

3.6 **Programmes Officer**

3.6.1 The primary responsibility of the Programmes Officer is to ensure that the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and HRDF programmes produce the required outputs as set out in the approved work plans and budget.

3.6.2 The responsibilities of the programmes Officer include the following:

   a) act as the secretary of the Steering Committee;

   b) prepare the annual plans;

   c) develop a results-based monitoring framework;

   d) coordinate quarterly consolidated progress reports, end annual reports, issue reports and the final report;

   e) maintain the issue register, risk register, daily log and lessons log;

   f) liaise with Deputy Regional Directors and Regional Officers to:

      1) assign general activities and specific projects for implementation; and

      2) ensure that work is neither overlooked nor duplicated by other programmes or projects, including those implemented by other Regional Offices and Bureaus;

   g) manage the information flows between ICAO and the Steering Committee (e.g. sharing of progress reports and minutes of Steering Committee meetings);

   h) coordinate submissions and communication with other stakeholders;

   i) manage the production of the required outputs, taking responsibility for overall progress and use of resources;

   j) initiate/request the allocation of funds based on the approved budget;

   k) establish and manage the project's procedures for risk management, issue management, change control and communication;

   l) establish and manage the project controls (monitoring and reporting); and

   m) initiate any necessary corrective action.

3.6.3 The Programmes Officer reports to the Regional Director of his/her duty station and is responsible for supporting the effective planning, implementation and monitoring of the Plan. The Programmes Officer also provides timely regular reports to facilitate informed decisions and successful execution of the Plans.

3.6.4   To enhance regional coordination and operational efficiency the Programmes Officer is based in one of the Regional Offices servicing African States, where he/she works closely with Regional Offices, States and other relevant stakeholders.

3.6.5   The position of the Programmes Officer is funded by ICAO. The position is subject to ICAO's Field Service Staff Rules[1] (FSSR). According to these rules, ICAO will:

  a)   develop the job description based on the responsibilities mentioned above;

  b)   classify the position;

  c)   recruit, deploy and repatriate the incumbent;

  d)   administer the contract (salary, annual leave, entitlements);

  e)   provide direction and supervision; and

  f)   evaluate the performance of the incumbent.

3.7   **Administration of the corresponding Programme funds**

3.7.1   The ICAO Secretary General is the Administrator of the corresponding Programme funds, i.e. of the AFI Plan Fund, the accounting purpose Fund for the AFI SECFAL Plan and the Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF). Given their nature, these funds are established as Voluntary Funds and are therefore subject to:

  a)   ICAO's Financial Regulations (Doc 7515/17) and Rules;

  b)   the ICAO Resource Mobilization Policy and its Annex on establishment and management of voluntary funds;

  c)   the HRDF Implementation Arrangements concluded between the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and AFCAC in December 2014 as modified by this Framework; and

  d)   any other applicable documentation approved by the ICAO Council.

4.   **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE**

4.1   The sections below provide principles governing the Terms of reference of the Steering Committee and deals with its membership, roles and responsibilities.

4.2   Unless explicitly stated otherwise, the definitions below which refer to Representatives on the ICAO Council or Directors General only apply to African States, i.e. to Representatives of African States on the ICAO Council or to Directors General of Civil Aviation Administrations of African States respectively.

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[1] Based on the assumption that the position is administered under the Capacity Development and Implementation Programme. Should the position ultimately be administered under the Regular Programme, the corresponding Staff Rules will apply.

4.3   The terms of reference can be reviewed and modified by the Steering Committee, subject to approval by the ICAO Council.

4.4   **Membership**

4.4.1 The Steering Committee is composed of five Representatives from African States on the ICAO Council and members nominated by African States to the Air Navigation Commission, one Director General of Civil Aviation Administration of each African Region (Vice Presidents in the AFCAC Bureau for Central, Eastern, Northern, Southern and Western African Regions) and the Secretary General of AFCAC.

4.4.2 The ICAO Secretariat will provide the Secretariat support to the Steering Committee.

Observers

4.4.3 Member States, civil aviation administrations and organizations, and donors would be invited to participate in the Steering Committee as observers.

4.5   **Roles and Responsibilities**

4.5.1 The specific roles of the Steering Committee members and the corresponding responsibilities are defined below.

Chairperson

4.5.2 The Chairperson's responsibilities are to:

   a) provide overall leadership to the Steering Committee and coordinate with its members;

   b) ensure that the Steering Committee activities are carried out as per its general mandate and in accordance with these terms of reference;

   c) approve the need for any ad hoc meetings;

   d) ensure that the annual Steering Committee meetings are conducted as planned and that all matters are addressed in an orderly and efficient manner;

   e) approve the Steering Committee meetings items for the draft agenda;

   f) approve the list of observers to be invited to Steering Committee meetings;

   g) liaise and coordinate with the Vice-chairperson on the above-mentioned items; and

   h) present the annual report to the ICAO Council.

4.5.3 The Chairperson is elected by the members of the Steering Committee by simple majority, i.e. more than half the votes are required. Should no candidate receive more than half the votes in the first ballot, a second ballot shall be held with the candidates having received the most and second most votes in the first; if there are two or more candidates sharing the highest number of votes, only those shall be eligible for the second ballot. The successful candidate after the first or second ballot shall be elected as the Chairperson.

4.5.4 The Chairperson is appointed for an initial term of two years renewable once, subject to the approval of the Steering Committee.

Vice-chairperson

4.5.5 The Vice-chairperson's responsibilities are to:

a) liaise with the Chairperson on their responsibilities as mentioned in section 4.5.2 and provide related support as necessary; and

b) act on behalf of the Chairperson when the Chairperson is unable to carry out related responsibilities.

4.5.6 The Vice-chairperson is appointed for an initial term of two years renewable once, subject to the approval of the Steering Committee. The election of the Vice-chairperson follows the same process as the election of the chairperson as defined in sections 4.5.3.

Secretariat of the Steering Committee meetings

4.5.7 The Programmes Officer serves as secretary of the Steering Committee meetings and has in addition the following responsibilities:

a) liaise with the Chairperson to determine the place and agenda of Steering Committee meetings;

b) conduct all administrative activities with regard to the organisation of Steering Committee meetings (venue, invitations, interpretation, etc.);

c) ensure there is a quorum for the meetings;

d) develop and distribute the minutes and the matters arising of Steering Committee meetings;

e) Distribute meeting packs and agendas timeously;

f) maintain records related to all activities of the Steering Committee;

g) maintain records on Steering Committee membership; and

h) maintain a list of observers to be invited to Steering Committee meetings and submit this list to the Chairperson for approval prior to each meeting.

4.6   **Meetings**

4.6.1 The Steering Committee shall hold meetings twice a year, preferably in July and December. The meeting should be held at ICAO headquarters or in an African State. Extraordinary meetings can be convened when necessary.

4.6.2 The Steering Committee quorum is by simple majority, i.e. if more than half of the members of the Steering Committee is present at the meeting. Decisions are made by simple majority of the members of the Steering Committee present.

4.6.3 The Steering Committee meetings shall be conducted in English and French, with simultaneous interpretation to be covered by the Programmes budget. All documentation, such as discussion papers and minutes, shall be available in both languages.

4.6.4 The Steering Committee meetings should be in-person whenever possible. If necessary, the meetings can also be held virtually.

4.6.5 The costs for participation in the Steering Committee meetings shall be borne by the participants' administrations.

4.6.6 The hosting entity of Steering Committee meetings shall cover the cost for the venue and all required equipment. The hosting entity shall also cover related costs for catering services.

5.   **FINAL DISPOSITION**

5.1.1 The governance framework of the AFI Plans supersedes all previous governance arrangements for the AFI Plan, AFI SECFAL Plan and the HRDF, including the existing HRDF Implementation Arrangement between ICAO and AFCAC.

5.1.2 This governance framework shall come into effect upon approval by the ICAO Council.