

ICAO Action

ICAO has undertaken a study of the vertical requirements when aircraft are vectored to intercept the final approach track to a pilot-interpreted final approach aid. The Air Traffic Management Operations Panel (ATMOPSP) is currently reviewing the existing provisions in the PANS-ATM, as part of an existing work programme item: “Final approach aid vectoring”. In the event changes are considered necessary, provisions would likely be applicable in November 2016.

It is however considered, at this stage, that elevating paragraph 8.9.3.6 to a Standard may not effectively accomplish the objectives envisioned, i.e. the elevation to a Standard would not reduce operational circumstances that can lead to aircraft interceptions of instrument landing system (ILS) glide paths from above.

Operational realities dictate that in some situations flight crews may choose to undertake interceptions of glide paths from above, to varying degrees, under well-managed and well-considered circumstances, taking due account of weather and other factors. It is submitted that to absolutely prohibit interceptions of glide paths from above, through application of an overly prescriptive Standard may disrupt today’s dynamic operational environment and possibly introduce new safety risks, e.g. systematic go-arounds under all weather conditions by flight crews who find themselves, despite thorough planning, to be above the glide path upon interception of the final approach.

On the understanding that ICAO continues to have a key role in the mitigation of operational risks associated with interceptions of glide paths from above, ICAO will incorporate the comprehensive information and findings of the Dutch Safety Board (DSB) Report into the ICAO Runway Safety Programme with a view to the development and promulgation of awareness, guidelines and best practices for both flight crew and air traffic control (ATC).