



ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 13: Facilitation Programmes

IMPLEMENTATION OF ANNEX 9 AND LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF
STATE-LEVEL AUDITS

(Presented by Qatar)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout the recent circumstances and particularly the crisis that has changed and impacted civil aviation during the COVID-19 pandemic, it became clear that that experience highlighted the importance of continued coordination amongst all authorities operating at airports as well as the significance of air transport facilitation. Moreover, Annex 9 — *Facilitation* is considered one of the broadest annexes in terms of its multidisciplinary topics and interrelation with other annexes. In that regard, Annex 9 also addresses the issue of coordination among relevant aviation authorities.

During the pandemic, the importance of Annex 9 became more prominent, especially over the last two years. The role of the Annex heavily depends on the coordination among airport authorities, and its interrelation with other annexes, which highlights the need to lend greater attention to facilitation.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) urge International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to give greater attention to air transport facilitation;
- b) urge ICAO to assist member States in implementing Annex 9 and creating a State oversight mechanism for air transport facilitation;
- c) request ICAO to assist States in developing a mechanism aimed at evolving National Air Transport Facilitation Programmes (NATFPs) and National Air Transport Facilitation Committee (NATFCs); and
- d) urge States to participate in facilitation meetings, intensify participation in working groups and raise awareness on the importance of interagency coordination.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Strategic Objective <i>Security & Facilitation</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	
<i>References:</i>	Annex 9 — <i>Facilitation</i>

¹ Arabic version provided by Qatar.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Annex 9 is considered one of the broadest and most extensive annexes, as it comprises a wide variety of topics related to aviation. It is also the most diverse annex in terms of topics that are both multidisciplinary and linked to a number of other annexes.

1.2 The role of facilitation has garnered greater importance over the last two years during the pandemic. Further, the role of Annex 9 entirely depends upon the coordination among authorities operating at airports.

1.3 Given the interrelation between Annex 9 and other annexes, it is of utmost importance for ICAO and its Member States to give this annex greater attention.

1.4 Rather than focussing on parts of the Annex that are related to other annexes such as security and safety, it is even more crucial to ensure the full implementation of all its Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Implementation of Annex 9

2.1.1 Implementation of Annex 9 requires high-level coordination at the State level, as it contains several SARPs that relate to all stakeholders, and because its implementation entails more coordination among government agencies and greater efforts to achieve that coordination. In order to implement Annex 9, States are required to give greater attention to all SARPs, with a particular focus on those requiring coordination among all stakeholders, which, in turn, will enhance the implementation of other SARPs.

2.1.2 Annex 9 is particularly important and it must be ensured that all SARPs contained therein are implemented. Recently, focus has been on implementing some of its SARPs, whether those related to the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP), the Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP), or those related to ongoing events such as public health-related SARPs during the pandemic. Therefore, it is paramount to continue to ensure the implementation of Annex 9 through implementing all its SARPs.

2.2 National Air Transport Facilitation Programme

2.2.1 While Annex 9 Standard 8.17 stipulates that all Member States must develop National Air Transport Facilitation Programmes (NATFPs), there are still a number of issues in that regard, due to the interdisciplinary nature of standards and the large number of topics involved. Hence, it is of utmost importance to establish a specific mechanism when designing facilitation programs. States are also required to create a regulatory structure that helps in the development and implementation of their NATFPs, as well as define responsibilities of all authorities involved in the implementation of Annex 9 within NATFPs.

2.3 **National Air Transport Facilitation Committee**

2.3.1 Annex 9 Standard 8.19 stipulates that all Member States must establish NATFCs for the coordination among all stakeholders. The establishment of NATFCs is related to the NATFPs, as the latter serve to ensure proper coordination among all facilitation stakeholders as well as the implementation of Annex 9 provisions. It is necessary to have a clear mechanism in place for establishing NATFCs, identifying stakeholders and defining their Terms of Reference. There is also a need to establish an ad hoc airport facilitation committee at the operational level in airports. Such ad hoc committees would help monitor the implementation of Annex 9 requirements and define tasks and responsibilities of stakeholders.

2.4 **National audits**

2.4.1 It is paramount to have a viable approach and a clear mechanism to ensure the implementation of Annex 9. The mere establishment of NATFPs and NATFCs is, by no means, sufficient. Thorough national audits are needed to ensure the effective implementation of Annex 9 provisions. But due to the absence of oversight, there is still a missing link in the audit work and thus in ensuring the implementation of Annex 9 provisions. Inspection processes should therefore be initiated at the State level, and in that regard, ICAO is requested to assist and urge states in laying the foundations of inspection. Additionally, compliance checklists for the implementation of Annex 9 should be disseminated, which will help States to fully implement Annex 9.

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