



ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 26: ICAO Civil Aviation Training and Capacity Building

CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES IN AFRICA

(Presented by the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) on behalf of 54 African States²)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aviation industry in Africa is undergoing significant growth, which is in turn creating difficulty in meeting human capital demands in the aviation sector in the region. The growth has an impact on the availability of qualified technical aviation professionals as well as African States' ability to effectively implement ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and other ICAO programmes and activities.

There is therefore an inherent need to build capacity in the African civil aviation sector and to enhance the skills of personnel particularly those involved in aviation safety and security oversight and regulation.

Action: The Assembly is invited to support Recommendation in paragraph 4 of this working paper.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety and Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency Strategic Objectives
<i>Financial implications:</i>	High
<i>References:</i>	1) Aviation training and capacity-building roadmap for States – ICAO 2) ICAO Civil Aviation Training Policy 25 May 2016 EN

¹ English and French versions provided by the African Civil Aviation Commission.

² Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Global air traffic is expected to double over the next fifteen years with Africa experiencing exponential growth. This will inevitably create new challenges in terms of equipment (e.g., aircraft) and infrastructure (e.g., air navigation systems, procedures etc.), but also in terms of hiring, developing and maintaining competent personnel to plan, coordinate, manage, operate, maintain and oversee all complex operations in various airports, airspaces, aircraft etc. In this context, education and training in the sector (both technical and managerial) should be seen not only as a cost, but also as the roadmap to ensure African States have the required human resources, skills, technology and operational environment to carry out all aviation activities in compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). Capacity building by developing technically qualified personnel in African Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs) and Service Providers is imperative in an increasingly automated sector and as such, appropriate policies should be designed to address the various knowledge and skills gaps.

1.2 Moreover, it is important to achieve an optimum level of technically trained and qualified people before air traffic reaches unprecedented levels in order to assure safety for all involved stakeholders. Addressing the issue of education and training in the sector is of major importance from a quantitative (i.e., the number of technically qualified personnel) and qualitative (i.e., in terms of bridging the skills gap between what is needed and what is available) perspective.

1.3 This working paper highlights capacity building initiatives in Africa, outlines the challenges faced by African Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Authorities and Air Navigation Services provision organizations in recruiting and retaining personnel, and provides recommended actions that may be undertaken to improve capacity building initiatives to meet projected growth in air traffic in the coming years.

2. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING AS INTEGRAL COMPONENTS OF CAPACITY BUILDING

2.1 Recruitment is a key activity towards achieving the right levels of technical personnel. Training ensures that these persons are adequately qualified to carry out their mandate whether in air navigation service provision or safety oversight and regulation. Aviation training is however costly. The cost of aviation training and development has two major components: the monetary aspect in terms of tuition fees and the time dimension in terms of the time spent on being trained. Whichever way, the cost has to be borne by someone.

2.2 Recruitment, qualification and retention of technically qualified personnel are among the many challenges civil aviation in Africa has to contend with. Many African States are unable to secure sufficient funding to recruit competitive technical personnel and implement comprehensive training programmes to ensure continued competency. Additionally, given the rapid changes in technology and the need for recurrent training, there is need for a sustainable programme to ensure that Africa is not left behind and that aviation safety is assured through recruitment, training and retention of competent and adequately qualified personnel.

2.3 Africa in cooperation with ICAO, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and other development partners provides training opportunities through fellowship programmes, capacity building workshops and conferences. This however, is grossly inadequate to support the 54 African States to achieve sufficient numbers of adequately trained personnel and ensure that ‘No African State is left Behind’.

2.4 Although several training opportunities have been provided to aviation personnel from different African States, gaps still exist and hence it’s a high time that African States acquired capability to train their personnel in both technical and managerial skills. With more cooperation and assistance from

ICAO and other partners, more experienced and qualified technical personnel from African States could be given the train-the-trainer course on key areas that could lead to building and maintaining the competence of new hires and experienced technical personnel respectively.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Given the above discussion, the following challenges related to capacity building must be addressed:

a) *Meeting the needs of a growing industry*: The aviation industry in Africa is projected to continue to grow faster over the coming years more than in other parts of the world. This growth will generate increasing demands for personnel in all areas of the aviation sector. Africa must be prepared for this welcome challenge.

b) *Competing for personnel*: Aviation Safety oversight sources its personnel from the aviation industry and service providers. As such, there is a continuous need for training for air navigation service provision organizations to replace personnel lost to oversight organizations. Otherwise, the competition for personnel may have negative effects on air navigation service provision organizations and jeopardize aviation safety. Safety Oversight organizations should equally make sustainable training programs and projections for their personnel to attain and maintain safety oversight qualifications at all times.

c) *Retention*: Related to the challenges of hiring new personnel is the problem of retaining the personnel. Given the needs for personal growth, both African CAAs and Service Provider Organisations will have to develop in-house training programmes in order to facilitate this growth. Retention is especially a problem in Africa given the lower pay levels, as personnel may migrate to higher paying positions outside the region. Therefore, creating growth opportunities and improving remunerations within these lower-paying areas is especially important.

d) *Providing Training Opportunities*: The aviation industry itself cannot fully meet its training needs. Therefore, it needs to partner with educational institutions and other Aviation Training Organizations. Seemingly traditional educational institutions are best suited to provide the “soft-skills” needed by the industry. However, the aviation industry will need to compete with other industries for these new hires. There are ways that the aviation industry may increase the probability of hiring new recruits from these educational institutions, such as offering internships, working with the placement offices in the educational institutions, and volunteering as guest speakers in classes. On the other hand, training in technical skills may best be offered in-house or in partnership with specialized training organizations.

e) *Filling the Gender Gap and Addressing Diversity*: Africa suffers from numerous cultural practices that discourage equality of opportunities for both gender hence causing disparities. In particular, recruiting more women will be required, since the percentage of women in aviation is relatively low, compared to their male counterparts. It is easier to retain the services of women within safety oversight organization and ANS than men.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 The Assembly is invited:

- a) working jointly with States to ensure that appropriate studies are conducted to gain comprehensive situational awareness of the status and needs for training at regional and national level; and to identify the key priorities;
- b) supporting the development of effective aviation industry and Training partnerships to provide a framework for addressing future training priorities through fellowships and scholarship grant;
- c) working jointly with industry association to identify the relevant best practices adopted in other industries to successfully compete for recruitment and retention of qualified personnel;
- d) ensuring the development of best practice training programmes and processes so that current employees can be usefully deployed and retrained;
- e) ensuring that all initiatives and actions related to education and training in aviation address diversity imbalance; and
- f) work with States and RSOOs to develop pools of experienced instructors that will enhance in-house training and capability development in Africa.

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