



**International Civil Aviation Organization**  
ICAO South American Regional Office  
**Eleventh Meeting of the Civil Aviation Authorities of the SAM Region (RAAC/11)**  
(Santiago, Chile, 6 – 8 May 2009)

**Agenda Item 4: Review of the level of safety oversight attained in the Region**

**a) Results of the application of the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP)**

(Presented by the Secretariat)

**SUMMARY**

This working paper briefly presents the background of USOAP under the comprehensive systems approach, its activities and its results in the SAM Region.

**References:**

- Assembly Resolution A35-6;
- SAM States published reports; and
- AFDD data base global results.

**ICAO strategic objectives:**

- A: Safety
- B: Aviation Security

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 ICAO Assembly Resolution A35-6 - *Transition to a comprehensive systems approach for audits in the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP)*, resolved that the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) be expanded to include the safety-related provisions contained in all safety-related Annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Doc 7300) from 1 January 2005 and instructed the Secretary General to adopt a comprehensive systems approach in conducting safety oversight audits in all Contracting States.

**2. PROGRESS ACHIEVED BY USOAP ON STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE A (ENHANCE GLOBAL AVIATION SAFETY)**

**2.1 Audits**

2.1.1 The conduct of audits under the comprehensive systems approach started in April 2005. As of 30 March 2009, a total of one hundred and twenty-four audits had been conducted. The programme remains on course to complete the audits of all Contracting States within the six-year cycle ending in 2010.

2.1.2 The audits in the SAM Region under the comprehensive system approach started with Panama, in October 2005. Then, Guyana was audited in February 2007 and Peru and Colombia were audited in May and June 2007, respectively. In May 2008, USOAP audited Chile and Bolivia.

2.1.3 The audits in Argentina and Uruguay were carried out in November and December 2008, respectively, and in Venezuela, in February 2009. The audit reports of these three States are still in process of publication, expecting the publication of the Argentina and Uruguay reports between August and September 2009, and of the Venezuela report, in October of this same year.

2.1.4 In accordance with the schedule of activities and using the comprehensive systems approach, the audits pending for the SAM States will be carried out in the following dates: Brazil, 4 May 2009; Ecuador and Paraguay, 18 May 2009 and Suriname, in December 2009.

## 2.2 **Audit Reports**

2.2.1 Pursuant to Assembly Resolution A35-6, safety oversight audit reports have been restructured to reflect the critical elements of a safety oversight system as presented in ICAO Doc 9734, Safety Oversight Manual, Part A — The Establishment and Management of a State's Safety Oversight System.

2.2.2 In accordance with the Resolution, final safety oversight audit reports are made available to all Contracting States through a secure website, providing them as well with access to all relevant information derived from the Audit Findings and Differences Database (AFDD). As of 30 April 2007, a total of twenty-four audit final reports had been posted, including the one on the audit conducted of the European Aviation Safety Agency. Detailed information on the status of implementation of ICAO provisions and the critical elements is also posted on the secure website.

## 2.3 **Audit Tools**

2.3.1 Several tools are used in the preparation, conduct and reporting of safety oversight audits. These include the State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ), Compliance Checklists (CCs) for each of the Annexes being audited, eight Audit Protocols (APs) and numerous procedures, checklists, work instructions and flowcharts, all of which form part of the Safety Oversight Audit (SOA) Section Quality Management System.

2.3.2 A dedicated secure website was developed for the submission and updating by States of the SAAQ and CCs and for the dissemination of audit reports and related information, in accordance with Assembly Resolution A35-6.

## 2.4 **State corrective action plans**

2.4.1 In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on safety oversight audits signed with ICAO, States undertake to prepare and submit to ICAO, within sixty calendar days from the date the interim safety oversight audit report has been made available to them, a corrective action plan addressing the findings and recommendations contained in the report, including the identification of specific actions, deadlines and the office(s) responsible for each action. As of 30 April 2007, for the current audit cycle all of the corrective action plans due following an audit under the comprehensive systems approach had been submitted to ICAO.

## 2.5 **Audit results**

2.5.1 Globally, the AFDD data base reflects the audits carried out to 124 States under the comprehensive systems approach to establish the degree of compliance as regards the eight critical elements (CE) of a safety oversight system (see Doc 9734, Part A), determine States' degree of implementation of ICAO SARPs and identify disturbing aspects. The **Appendix** shows the global and regional level of application of the eight critical elements.

2.5.2 Audit results on the first nine audits conducted under the comprehensive systems approach in the SAM Region have been analyzed to establish the degree of implementation of the eight critical elements (CE) of a safety oversight system (Doc 9734, Part A refers), to determine the status of State's compliance with ICAO SARPs and to identify areas of concern. As observed, critical element CE-4 related to technical personnel instruction, and critical elements CE-7 and CE-8 related to surveillance activities and security issues are the ones to show highest non compliance level.

2.5.3 It should be highlighted that even through there are still findings in areas previously audited under the Mandatory Programme, such as: personnel licensing, operations and airworthiness, the higher incidence is found in the new areas incorporated under the comprehensive systems approach, which are: air navigation services, aerodromes and incident and accident aviation investigation.

## 2.6 **Transparency and information exchange regarding safety oversight**

2.6.1 The declaration of the Civil Aeronautical General Directors Conference regarding a world wide strategy for Safety Oversight (Montreal 20-22 March 2006) remembers transparency and information exchange concerning safety oversight are basic principles of a secure air transportation system.

2.6.2 In this regard, Civil Aeronautical General Directors compromised to reinforce civil aviation safety oversight structure through, among others, an exchange of appropriate information related to safety oversight among the States, all other parties interested in aviation, and the public; including the revelation of information about the results of their safety oversight audits, which is disseminated through the ICAO FSIX web site.

## 3. **Development of USOAP beyond 2010**

3.1 The current cycle of safety oversight audits under the comprehensive systems approach extends through the end of 2010. Even though the audit cycle does not include the conduct of audit follow-up missions, once completed it will establish a baseline on the level of effective implementation worldwide of the eight critical elements and the status of States' compliance with ICAO SARPs in all safety-related Annexes.

3.2 As a continuation to the current cycle of safety oversight audits after 2010, the Secretariat considers that resources made available to the Programme would be used more effectively and efficiently through the establishment of a continuous monitoring programme (CMP) whereby all Contracting States would be continuously monitored by ICAO.

3.3 The CMP would be based on pre-established risk indicators that would include, but not be limited to, the States ability to maintain their SAAQ and CCs up-to-date, aircraft accident and serious incident rates, sudden increase in aviation activity, overall situation in the State, and progress made in the implementation of the corrective action plan as a result of the comprehensive systems approach. This more proactive approach would allow for audits to be prioritized and better focused while maintaining the principle of universality. It would also yield additional Programme benefits by encouraging Contracting States to ensure ongoing compliance with ICAO provisions while implementing at the same time the critical elements of a safety oversight system.

#### 4. **CONCLUSION**

4.1 The ICAO USOAP has been implemented on schedule and within its budget allocation. Audits conducted under the comprehensive systems approach have continued to increase States' awareness on their safety oversight responsibilities. The audits have also proven to be instrumental in determining the States' degree of implementation with ICAO provisions and the implementation of the critical elements of a safety oversight system. Given its wide scope, the Programme also allows the identification of safety concerns relative to all safety-related Annexes. As a continuation to the current audit cycle, the Secretariat will present proposals to the Council on the establishment of a continuous monitoring programme based on pre-established risk indicators. This system would allow ICAO to conduct more prioritized and focused audits.

#### 5. **SUGGESTED ACTION**

5.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) take note of the information presented;
- b) analyze the impact that the application of USOAP has had in the Region, indicated in Section2 of this working paper; and
- c) analyze any other matter in this respect that the Meeting might deem necessary

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**CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF A SAFETY OVERSIGHT SYSTEM  
LACK OF EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION (%)**

■ Global (124) Audited States: 41.01%
 ■ SAM Region: (9) Audited States 32.63%

