



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

IATA SAFETY AUDIT FOR GROUND OPERATIONS

(Presented by the International Air Transport Association –IATA)

SUMMARY

IATA Safety Audit For Ground Operations (ISAGO) is an audit program for ground service providers that improves safety and quality in ground operations, through the implementation of a formal, systematic process using internationally harmonized standards to manage operational risk and safety that reduces accidents, incidents and injuries. ISAGO has two fundamental objectives:

- a) Improve safety in ground operations; and
- b) Eliminate redundant audits of ground handling companies by airlines.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The International Air Transport Association estimates that ground damage costs airlines about U.S.\$4 billion each year. The indirect costs such as aircraft downtime, injury claims, loss of revenue and crew costs, and handling delayed passengers and freight, are measured in multiples of this figure. Ground handling accidents also lead to physical injury or even death of personnel, and can pose a risk to flight safety.

1.2 At present, Ground Service Providers (GSPs) are subject to multiple audits from their airline customers because there is little or no sharing of audit's results, creating an inefficient environment, wasteful of resources on all sides.

1.3 In most cases, aviation and government authorities have little oversight of ground operations. In some countries, there is minimal direct regulatory oversight over GSPs activities in the following areas:

- a) Selection and licensing;
- b) Systems implementation;
- c) Training and development; and
- d) Auditing, reporting and compliance.

1.4 According to regulatory agency requirements, it is generally the responsibility of the AOC holders to maintain a proper oversight of their party contractors.

2. PRINCIPLE

2.1 ISAGO is based on the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) framework, which assesses the operational management and control systems of an airline. It will achieve the same two fundamental aims of improving operational safety, and driving down the number of redundant audits. The principle is to establish a worldwide ground operational safety benchmark and standard. Like IOSA, ISAGO enjoys growing support from States and from airport authorities, who will benefit from being able to gain additional information which can facilitate oversight on ground operations within their States and airports respectively.

2.2 Upon completion of the audit and correction of any related findings, the GSP will be placed on a registry for an agreed period, at which time a renewal audit will be required. Airlines will accept the ISAGO Audit registration in lieu of conducting their own audit.

3. APPLICABILITY

3.1 The program will be available to all GSPs worldwide, irrespective of size or independent status. Nevertheless, the ISAGO Audit can be tailored according to the specific ground handling activities conducted by the entity to be audited.

3.2 The ISAGO Audit can be achieved at different levels. At the corporate, regional and country level, the Audit will focus on corporate organization and management systems. At the station level, the Audit will focus on operationally oriented aspects, and its proposed qualified and approved auditors conduct it.

4. AUDIT SCOPE AND STANDARDS

4.1 Technical specifications contained in the standards will focus on ground operations. Many of the standards will be drawn from existing documentation, including the Airport Handling Manual (AHM), IOSA Standards Manual (ISM), ICAO Annexes and FAA/EASA regulations, as well as relevant industry sources such as checklists used by airlines for ground ops audits. GSPs will need to demonstrate not only technical conformity with “hard” standards, but also conformity with a risk management philosophy, which will permeate all sections of the standards manual.

5. BENEFITS

5.1 By setting international standards and risk management practices for ground handling, ISAGO will provide the following benefits:

- a) Safer ground operations, less accidents and injuries;
- b) Elimination of redundant audits from airlines;
- c) Reduced costs: less damage and less audits;
- d) Improved safety oversight;
- e) Improved quality standards;
- f) A better understanding of risk exposures, essential for prevention;
- g) Enhanced company image and reputation; and
- h) Additional source of information for regulators

6. ACTION REQUESTED

6.1 IATA invites RAAC11 participants to take note of the content of this working paper and requests that member States include ISAGO in their national regulations for certification of ground service providers.

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