



Agenda Item 3: The ASB and its relationship with the safety programmes established by ICAO

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This working paper presents to the Meeting the activities undertaken by ICAO in relation to the USOAP and the implementation of safety management systems (SMS), and proposes some actions to be taken by the ASB.

1. Introduction

1.1 The 32nd session of the ICAO Assembly (September – October 1998) reviewed the recommendations of the Council regarding the establishment of an ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP), and empowered the Council to create such programme. Subsequently, Assembly resolution A35-6 resolved to extend the programme as of 2005 to include the provisions contained in all of the safety-related Annexes.

1.2 The final reports of the audits performed under the USOAP are disclosed so that the contracting States may clearly know the safety oversight capabilities of other States.

1.3 On the other hand, ICAO Strategic Objective A – Safety for the 2005 – 2010 period is aimed at improving the safety of international civil aviation through the attainment of harmonised standards and recommended practices and guidance material for safety programmes and systems; training for the implementation of the Safety Management System (SMS); and the development of safety management-based performance terms. The first two items are currently being implemented, while the third one is to be revised by the Air Navigation Commission in 2009.

2. Responsibility for safety management

Safety oversight

2.1 From the regulatory viewpoint, the function of ICAO is to provide procedures and guidance for the safe conduction of international aircraft operations and to promote the planning and development of air transport. To a large extent, this is achieved through standards and recommended practices (SARPS). The procedures for air navigation services (PANS) contain practices that go beyond the SARPS, where some measure of international uniformity is desirable for the sake of safety and efficiency. Air navigation plans (ANPs) give details of the requirements for specific facilities in the ICAO Regions. In essence, these documents define the international framework for promoting aviation safety and efficiency.

2.2 In addition to this regulatory framework, ICAO contributes with the promotion of best safety management practices and conducting audits under the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP). These safety oversight audits highlight the fundamental safety weaknesses in many States that give rise to significant differences in safety levels throughout the world.

2.3 Notwithstanding the obligation of States and other contracting organisations to meet SARP requirements, the States should be concerned with the safety efficacy of their national aviation systems. This becomes even more significant if we realise that a non-conformity identified by the USOAP might represent a deficiency in terms of the characteristics, documentation or procedures concerning an ICAO standard.

Course on ICAO safety management systems (SMS)

2.4 The modern approach to safety supplements or, as the case may be, adds to the obligation of States and other organisations to meet ICAO SARPS and national regulations.

2.5 In this sense, ICAO has incorporated safety management requirements into Annex 6 – Operation of aircraft, Annex 11 – Air traffic services, and Annex 14 – Aerodromes, which have been in force since November 2006.

2.6 According to these requirements, the States are responsible for establishing a safety programme and, as part of this programme, air service operators, air traffic service providers, and certified aerodrome operators must implement a safety management system. Finally, the requirements assign the States the responsibility of establishing an acceptable level of safety for the aforementioned activities or provision of services.

2.7 Likewise, ICAO published the Safety Management Manual (Doc. 9859) in 2006, and has designed an SMS implementation course.

2.8 This course is addressed to civil aviation administrations and is aimed at getting the participants acquainted with the safety management concepts and the safety-related SARPS contained in Annexes 6, 11, and 14, the associated guidance material, and providing them with the capability of accepting and overseeing the implementation of SMS by operators and service providers, in keeping with ICAO SARPS.

2.9 The cooperation of the States in sponsoring regional courses, as well as the assignment of specific resources by the ICAO Secretariat in support of this activity have permitted the regional course programme to expand its scope beyond what would be possible at local level.

2.10 During this year, ICAO has conducted the aforementioned course in both Spanish and English in the CAR Region. An instructor training course was conducted in Cuba and two regional courses, one in Spanish and one in English, were given in Guatemala and Mexico, respectively. Likewise, the possibility of giving the course in Costa Rica, Salvador, Mexico and Dominican Republic is under study.

2.11 In the SAM Region, courses were conducted in 2006 in Brazil, Panama, and Uruguay, while in March this year, the course in Spanish was given in Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and Peru; there are plans for conducting this same course during the second half of this year in Bolivia, Paraguay, and Venezuela. The States that have requested a second course in 2007 are Panama, Chile, and Colombia.

3. Suggested action

3.1 The Meeting is requested to:

- a) take note of the information contained in this paper;
- b) study the possibility of incorporating the “non-conformities” identified through USOAP audits to the CAR/SAM Air Navigation System Deficiencies under the classification of “Urgent”; and
- c) urge CAR/SAM States/Territories and International Organisations to use the ICAO safety management system (SMS) course as a useful tool to develop the knowledge of their personnel and thus be able to accept and oversee the implementation of the components of a basic SMS.