



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

**First Meeting the Runway and Ground Safety Working Group  
(RGS WG/1)**

*(Cairo, Egypt, 7-9 April 2014)*

**Agenda Item 2: Implementation of Aerodrome Safety Priorities and Objectives in the MID Region**

**ACI APEX IN SAFETY PROGRAM**

*(Airports Council International)*

**SUMMARY**

This paper presents the progress that Airports Council International has made on its aerodrome safety enhancement initiative, Airport Excellence (“APEX”) in Safety Program, since it was presented to RASG-MID/2 in November 2012. It also highlights the role that APEX in Safety plays in the promotion of runway and ground safety. At the conclusion of the paper, States are invited to encourage their aerodrome operators to participate in the program.

Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The APEX in Safety Program is an ACI initiative announced at the ICAO Global Runway Safety Symposium in Montreal in May 2011. The aim is to assist aerodrome operators with the improvement of levels of safety and compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices.

1.2 On 15 June 2012, ACI signed a landmark Memorandum of Cooperation (“MoC”) with ICAO to provide a framework under which the two organizations would jointly pursue the highest possible levels of safety at airports worldwide. The MoC, i.e. the Memorandum of Cooperation between ICAO and ACI for Enhanced Cooperation to Improve Safety Standards at Airports Worldwide was signed by ICAO Council President, Mr. Roberto Kobeh González and ACI Director General, Ms. Angela Gittens during a ceremony at ICAO Headquarters in Montreal.

1.3 The APEX Program was also presented to RASG-MID/2 in November 2012. States were invited to support the Program and to encourage their aerodrome operators to participate in it.

1.4 Under the APEX in Safety Program, ACI dispatches Safety Review Teams, typically comprised of safety experts from ACI Offices, ICAO Regional Offices and Safety Partner Airports, to conduct on-site Safety Reviews at the Host Airports. The aim of the Safety Reviews is to identify gaps in aerodrome safety and to draw up an action/implementation plan for the Host Airports concerned to address these vulnerabilities. ACI also assists the Host Airports throughout the implementation phase by providing technical support, training and access to a global network of

airport safety expertise. Depending on the size and complexity of the aerodrome concerned, the on-site Safety Reviews are usually completed in one to two weeks.

## **2. DISCUSSION**

2.1 Much progress has been made in the rollout of the APEX program since its announcement in May 2011 and the report to RASG-MID in November 2012. ACI has since then conducted Safety Reviews at 19 airports across all continents.

2.2 ACI is planning to conduct 20 Safety Reviews worldwide in 2014.

2.3 ACI has also signed an agreement with a number of its airport members on the provision of technical expertise and the hosting of Safety Reviews. For example, in January 2013, ACI and Abu Dhabi Airports Company (“ADAC”) signed an MoC on ACI's APEX in Safety Program.

2.4 Under the MoC, ADAC will assist ACI in conducting Safety Reviews at other aerodromes. ADAC also agreed to host APEX for Safety Reviews. Such a review was conducted at Abu Dhabi International Airport from 2 to 6 March 2014. It is worth noting that the review was the first of its kind in the MID region. The Safety Review Team comprised of experts from ICAO MID Office, Dublin Airport Authority, Genève Aéroport, Greater Toronto Airports Authority and ACI offices.

2.5 ACI would like to take this opportunity to thank the ICAO MID Office for the strong support it provided to the Abu Dhabi mission.

2.6 The next Safety Reviews in MID is scheduled to be conducted at Medina, Saudi Arabia, in May 2014.

2.7 APEX Safety Reviews typically covers runway safety as well as other key areas concerning aerodrome safety such as wildlife management, safety management system, rescue and firefighting, and airfield signs, lightings and markings. APEX is therefore a useful vehicle for promoting the implementation and exchange of best practices in runway and ground safety, e.g. the establishment of Runway Safety Teams (“RSTs”), that ICAO and Industry Partners have been arduously advocating. The MoC signed by ACI and ICAO mentioned in paragraph 1.2 lays the groundwork for furthering the collaboration between ACI and ICAO on the promotion of runway and ground safety.

2.8 The establishment of RSTs is one of the key safety enhancement measures that APEX for Safety promotes and recommends to Host Airports. It is also a priority for ICAO, as attested by the numerous Regional Runway Safety Seminars that ICAO has organized around the world since 2011.

2.9 Airports that have so far hosted APEX Safety Reviews unanimously agree that they benefit immensely from the altruistic sharing of safety expertise. Safety Partner airports and other members of the Safety Review Teams also expressed great appreciation for the opportunity to learn from the reviews since every airport has its unique problems arising from its specific operating environment.

2.10 APEX for Safety would also potentially offer great benefits to civil aviation safety regulators in MID, international organizations and other stakeholders given that the Program helps identify safety hazards and recommends mitigation measures and regionally relevant solutions. It is interesting to note that while the primary purpose of APEX for Safety Reviews is the identification of safety gaps at the Host Airports, the Safety Review Team often discover good operating practices

when conducting reviews that can be shared with other aerodrome operators and that sometimes become ACI recommended practices.

2.11 ACI would like to invite States and international organizations to support the ACI APEX in Safety Program. States are strongly recommended to encourage their aerodrome operators to participate in this program, either as Host Airport or Safety Partner.

2.12 For more information on APEX in Safety, please contact Mr. Christopher Miles, Assistant Director, APEX in Safety – ACI World, at [cmiles@aci.aero](mailto:cmiles@aci.aero), Mr. SL Wong, Senior Manager Technical and Industry Affairs – ACI Regional Office APAC, at [sl@aci-asiapac.aero](mailto:sl@aci-asiapac.aero), or visit [www.aci.aero/apex](http://www.aci.aero/apex).

### **3. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the progress in the implementation of ACI APEX in Safety Program and its potential role in the promotion of runway and ground safety under the aegis of RGS WG;
- b) support the program; and
- c) encourage aerodrome operators in the MID Region to participate in the Program.

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