



**DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION-MIDDLE EAST REGION
FIFTH MEETING (DGCA-MID/5)**

(Kuwait, 4-6 November 2019)

Agenda Item 4: Global Developments

**UPDATE ON THE GLOBAL AVIATION SAFETY
OVERSIGHT SYSTEM (GASOS)**

(Presented by secretariat)

SUMMARY

The Global Aviation Safety Oversight System (GASOS) is a voluntary, standardized assessment and recognition mechanism for safety oversight organizations (SOOs) and accident and incident investigation organizations (AIOs). It is a tool to help strengthen the capabilities of SOOs and AIOs to carry out the provision of safety functions and activities to assist States in fulfilling their safety responsibilities. During its 217th Session, the Council approved the implementation of GASOS for Levels 1 and 2. Additionally, during the 40th Session of the Assembly, Resolution A39-14 was amended in order to include GASOS as a means to support regional initiatives.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Global Aviation Safety Oversight System (GASOS) is designed to be a voluntary, standardized assessment and recognition mechanism for safety oversight organizations (SOOs) and accident and incident investigation organizations (AIOs) on a cost-recovery basis. For the purpose of this paper, an SOO is an RSOO or any other intergovernmental regional or sub-regional aviation safety oversight body that supports a State or group of States in carrying out their safety functions and activities. In this context, an SOO expressly does not include private entities. Similarly, an AIO is an intergovernmental regional accident and incident investigation organization (RAIO). The assessment criteria and processes designed for GASOS are derived from the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) methodology. While GASOS uses similar methodologies to USOAP CMA, the programmes remain independent from one another.

1.2 Regional safety oversight collaboration has improved global aviation safety with the help of regional safety oversight organizations (RSOOs) and other regional mechanisms, such as regional accident and incident investigation organizations (RAIOs). Cooperative development of operational safety and continuing airworthiness programmes (COSCAPs) are another example of regional cooperation and provide tangible improvements through their support to States. Despite the continuous development of regional collaboration, many of these regional organizations still face some specific challenges that do not allow them to deliver the expected results. GASOS is a tool that presents a standardized set of criteria on which regional organizations can be assessed and improved upon.

1.3 By providing a qualification assessment and recognition mechanism for SOOs and AIOs, States may be encouraged to call upon these recognized organizations for specific safety functions and activities. This in turn will help strengthen the SOO's and AIO's Member State(s)' safety oversight, safety management and accident investigation capabilities.

2 DISCUSSION

2.1 Since March 2017, ICAO has been developing GASOS with the goal of launching the system in early 2020. ICAO, along with the GASOS Study Group of experts, composed of members from States and other stakeholders, has completed the planning work and documented the processes and procedures to meet this goal. Furthermore, ICAO has conducted three pilot assessments of RSOOs, which have been instrumental for testing and enhancing the GASOS assessment mechanisms.

2.2 The GASOS pilot assessments have already yielded tangible improvements for the SOOs assessed, such as approval of regional harmonized regulations by States; an increase in financial and technical support; a thorough review and upgrade to internal procedures; and support from other international organizations for technical projects.

2.3 To review and address legal concerns raised at the AN-Conf/13, the ICAO Legal Affairs and External Relations Bureau (LEB) conducted a legal analysis of GASOS with input from an external ad hoc legal advisory group. As a result of the legal analysis, ICAO concluded that GASOS assessment and recognition of RSOOs and RAIOS to perform Level 1 and 2 safety functions and activities can be implemented consistent with the Chicago Convention and that identified measures addressed or otherwise mitigated the liability risks of ICAO. The GASOS Levels are defined in Appendix B of the GASOS CONOPS.

2.4 To resolve potential governance issues raised during the AN-Conf/13, ICAO, with support from the GASOS Study Group, undertook a review of the issues. The group identified appropriate mitigation actions to resolve the potential issues, which were mainly related to State and SOO interfaces. A table of potential governance issues and the GASOS Study Group's recommended mitigation actions are found in Appendix F of the GASOS Concept of Operations located on the GASOS website www.icao.int/gasos.

2.5 As recommended by the AN-Conf/13, ICAO has undertaken a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) to identify and quantify costs and benefits of GASOS for RSOOs and States related to safety, capacity, efficiency, and economic benefit. As already identified through the pilot GASOS assessments, States and regional organizations will benefit from an ICAO GASOS assessment and recognition which is an enabler for the effective implementation of ICAO SARPs.

2.6 As a result of this extensive work, GASOS was approved in the 217th Session of the ICAO Council earlier this year. It was agreed that the GASOS programme would be implemented in a phased approach and officially launch in January 2020. The first phase will conduct assessments on the qualifications of RSOOs and RAIOS to perform advisory services (Level 1) and/or provide operational assistance (Level 2), with the focus on strengthening RSOOs/RAIOS in order to better support their member States.

2.7 Additional phases of GASOS may incorporate the assessment and recognition of an individual State to advise or assist another State in carrying out their safety functions and activities and in the conduct of its safety management responsibilities. Future phases may also include full delegation (Level 3) of functions and activities.

3 ESTABLISHMENT OF GASOS

3.1 The implementation of GASOS Levels 1 and 2 is based on the following key considerations:

- a) an RSOO or RAIO may perform certain safety functions and activities for their Member States; however, the ultimate responsibility for safety oversight remains with the State under the Chicago Convention;
- b) GASOS will be managed by ICAO on a cost-recovery basis, i.e. without seeking to make profits; any unutilized revenue will be earmarked for reinvestment in GASOS;
- c) voluntary financial contributions can have a direct impact by reducing the financial requirements for ICAO and allow an increase in the evolution of the programme;
- d) ICAO is developing, in consultation with the GASOS Study Group, guidance for States and RSOOs/RAIOs in the form of an ICAO GASOS manual;
- e) GASOS will be subject to a quality management system; and
- f) GASOS will remain independent from other ICAO programmes, including but not limited to the Technical Cooperation Programme and USOAP CMA; however, appropriate resources such as personnel and IT tools may be shared as best determined so as not to require additional budgetary resources.

4 CONCLUSION

4.1 In order to support regional initiatives, ICAO has developed a mechanism to assess the qualifications and capabilities of RSOOs and RAIOS to perform certain safety oversight, safety management and accident investigation functions that assist States in fulfilling their responsibilities under the Convention and its related Annexes. With the launch of GASOS in January 2020, RSOOs and RAIOS will be provided with a standardized tool to help them improve their capabilities in order to better assist their Member States.

5 ACTION BY THE MEETING

5.1 The Meeting is invited to note the content of this paper.

— END —