



International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG/19 and RASG-MID/9 Meetings

(Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 14-17 February 2022)

Agenda Item 2.2: Global updates related to COVID-19 including Outcomes from HLCC-2021

OUTCOMES OF THE HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON COVID-19 (HLCC 2021) –
SAFETY STREAM

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This paper presents outcomes of the Safety Stream of the High-level Conference on COVID-19 (HLCC 2021).

Action by the RASG-MID is in paragraph 3.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The High-level Conference on COVID-19 (HLCC 2021), virtually broadcasted from Montréal from 12 to 22 October 2021, discussed ten agenda items under two technical streams: the Safety Stream discussed Agenda Items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 and the Facilitation Stream discussed Agenda Items 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. The Conference was attended by 1,786 members and observers nominated by 129 Member States and 38 international organizations, as well as by advisers and others. 56 Ministers and Deputy Ministers, and 24 heads of international organizations attended the Ministerial Plenary sessions of the Conference.

1.2 The HLCC 2021 made 147 recommendations under the Safety Stream on matters related to its agenda. Most of the recommendations consist of two parts: a) calls for action addressed directly to States, with some also addressed to international organizations; and b) calls for action by ICAO.

1.3 With respect to all agenda items, some of the work called for by the recommendations:

- a) are either already being progressed, or can be accomplished, by expert groups;
- b) can be fulfilled through the dispatch of State letters or other communication means including rollout plans;
- c) are being progressed, or can be accomplished, by the Secretariat within the current Work Programme of the Organization; or
- d) will require new tasks in the Work Programme of the Organization, which may require additional resources and creation of new expert groups.

1.4 This working paper presents an overview of the recommendations of the Conference under the Safety Stream, which are relevant to the RASG-MID Work Programme. At the time of

publishing this working paper, recommendations can be found in the Yellow Cover Report, available on the ICAO website, at: [Yellow Cover Report \(icao.int\)](https://www.icao.int/yellow-cover-report/)

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Under the Safety Stream, the recommendations adopted by the Conference cover a wide range of subjects including:

- a) safety and operational measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the establishment of contingency arrangements by States, lessons learnt and how to plan for mitigating the effects of a similar occurrence in the future;
- b) the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP), the implementation of regional and national aviation safety plans, as well as evolving regulatory capacity in aviation;
- c) standardization associated with the oversight and new approaches, risk management, as well as ground handling;
- d) implementation and support to States in accomplishing certain safety oversight, accident and incident investigation as well as safety management functions and activities;
- e) other subjects that were not covered by a specific agenda item, including accident and incident investigation, Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme Continuous Monitoring Approach (USOAP CMA), Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP), the global aeronautical distress and safety system (GADSS) as well as the impact of 5G to safety critical radio altimeter functions safety and operational measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2 The follow-up to the recommendations of the Conference will involve considerable work, which may be tasked to ICAO expert groups, include panels, study groups and the Secretariat.

2.3 **GASP, and implementation of regional and national aviation safety plans**

2.4 The Safety Stream reviewed working papers regarding comments on the 2023-2025 edition of the GASP, including the Secretariat proposals developed through the GASP Study Group (GASP-SG). The Safety Stream agreed on:

- a) the need to continue evolving the GASP, focusing on a revision of the GASP update process, including alignment with other Global Plans and the revision of GASP goals, targets and indicators;
- b) the impact of global aviation disruption events, including the COVID-19 pandemic, on strategic safety planning; and
- c) further enhancing a performance-based approach and strengthening risk management capabilities at global, regional and national levels.

2.5 The Safety Stream expressed wide support for the proposed topics for the draft 2023-2025 edition of the GASP and agreed on the need for the GASP-SG to examine the appropriate means to take into consideration input from the Conference and the questionnaire, in preparation for subsequent endorsement of the GASP at the 41st Session of the ICAO Assembly.

2.6 The Safety Stream noted the interest for the planning and implementation regional groups (PIRGs) and regional aviation safety groups (RASGs) to include the management of COVID-19 impact in their agenda and work programmes, to support a safe recovery.

2.7 The Safety Stream agreed on the need for ICAO to continue with its efforts of updating existing guidance material and tools related to the implementation of regional and national aviation safety plans. The Safety Stream also agreed on the need for the GASP-SG to examine the appropriate means to take into consideration input from the Conference to revise existing ICAO guidance materials and tools that support the implementation of regional and national aviation safety plans, in line with the GASP. Recommendations call for States to develop and implement their national aviation safety plan (NASP) and provide the most recent version of their NASP for posting on the ICAO GASP public website. ICAO will submit a global report regarding the development of NASPs at the 41st Session of the Assembly.

2.8 **Enhancing safety by advancing and strengthening regional cooperation**

2.9 The Safety Stream discussed working papers on how to enhance regional implementation support mechanisms to assist States in accomplishing certain safety oversight, accident and incident investigation and safety management functions and activities. The Safety Stream highlighted the importance of strengthening regional safety oversight organizations (RSOOs), regional accident and incident investigation organizations (RAIOs), and other regional cooperation mechanisms by providing them with the necessary resources to ensure sustainability, as well as encouraging these organizations to actively participate in the RSOO Cooperative Platform (RSOO CP); the Global Aviation Safety Oversight System (GASOS); and the coordination of assistance activities under the Aviation Safety Implementation Assistance Partnership (ASIAP).

2.10 **Increasing participation in the contributory bodies PIRGs and RASGs**

2.11 The Secretariat highlighted the low level of support, technical expertise and participation by States, international organizations and industry to the contributory bodies of the PIRGs and RASGs as a common problem across most regions. The Safety Stream noted the proposed means to increase participation in the contributory bodies of the PIRGs and RASGs and expressed its support for these activities.

2.12 The Safety Stream agreed on the need for States to support the RASGs' data-driven, State-industry collaboration model to reduce fatality risk in a post-pandemic environment. The Safety Stream recognized the importance of on-going coordination between RASGs and PIRGs, recognizing that they both have unique missions. The Safety Stream also agreed on the need for ICAO to promote the proposed model of collaboration between States and industry to establish protocols into the work of the PIRGs and RASGs, to support global aviation safety.

2.13 **GANP and other safety and air navigation related matters**

2.14 Although the Secretariat did not present a working paper to HLCC 2021 regarding the revision of the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP), as was the case with the GASP, States and International Organizations presented working papers on the subject. Discussion related to the GANP included: the definition of performance metrics; the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the air transport system and service providers; mitigating the risk of 5G implementation to safety-critical radio altimeter functions; and the need for innovation in crisis recovery. The Safety Stream agreed that ICAO should facilitate discussions on a regional basis in order to build consensus around prioritization and identify critical paths and other opportunities to leapfrog technology. The Safety Stream also agreed that ICAO should continue coordinated aviation efforts, particularly at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), to protect radio frequency spectrum used by aeronautical safety systems.

2.15 Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Conference on COVID-19

2.16 During the conference, a total of 56 ministers and deputy ministers from 52 Member States, as well as 24 heads of invited international organizations, attended the three Ministerial Plenary Sessions (Round Tables I and II, and Closing).

2.17 At the Ministerial Plenary (Closing) on 22 October 2021, ministers and deputy ministers reviewed and adopted the Ministerial Declaration on “One Vision for Aviation Recovery, Resilience and Sustainability beyond the Global Pandemic”. The Declaration is published on the conference website at: <https://www.icao.int/Meetings/HLCC2021/Pages/ministerial-plenary.aspx>. The adopted Declaration has reflected comments in response to State letter 2021/61 dated 20 September 2021 and discussions made during the Ministerial Plenary Sessions. While the Declaration is not a legally binding document, it demonstrates solidarity and determination, and conveys a strong political message to international communities and world economies.

2.18 Next Steps

2.19 The Air Navigation Commission (ANC) is currently reviewing HLCC 2021 recommendations for which authority to act has been delegated to the ANC by the Council. Once this review is completed, the ANC will discuss and tentatively agree to the amendment of the ICAO Work Programme which may include the addition of new tasks, derived from these recommendations. This will be accomplished as part of the ANC approval of the draft report to Council related to the Safety Stream of HLCC 2021, scheduled to take place in February 2022. The report will then be presented to the Council for final approval of the actions proposed on relevant recommendations, taking into consideration the resource implications of implementing all the recommendations that require action in the next triennium.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) note HLCC-2021 recommendations, including the Ministerial Declaration, and take action, where appropriate; and
- b) call on States in the region to provide the most recent version of their NASP to ICAO for posting on the ICAO GASP public website (via email to: gasp@icao.int);
- c) call on States to actively participate and support the work of the contributory bodies of PIRGs and RASGs; in collaboration with RSOOs RAIOS, international organizations and industry; and
- d) support the RASGs’ data-driven, State-industry collaboration model to continue to reduce fatality risk in a post-pandemic environment