ASSEMBLY — 37TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 29: Report on the implementation of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) under the comprehensive systems approach and Evolution of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) beyond 2010

REPORTING ON THE RESULTS OF THE UNIVERSAL SAFETY OVERSIGHT AUDIT PROGRAMME COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS APPROACH

(Presented by the Council of ICAO)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) cycle of comprehensive systems approach (CSA) audits was initiated in 2005 and will be completed by the end of 2010. The objective of the USOAP CSA audits is to assess the effective implementation by States of the eight critical elements of a safety oversight system and the status of implementation of safety-relevant ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), associated procedures, guidance material and safety-related practices. As of 31 July 2010, 164 CSA audits had been conducted.

In order to understand the results of the audits conducted under the CSA, both information collected for the purpose of the audits, together with the findings identified during the audits themselves, have been systemically qualified and quantified. This information has been compiled for the period from 2005 to 2010, and is now available in the third edition analysis of CSA audits results which is available on the ICAO-NET. While these audit results revealed that findings are still being made in the areas of personnel licensing, aircraft operations and airworthiness of aircraft, the majority of audit findings under the CSA relate to the new audit areas, i.e. aerodromes, air navigation services and aircraft accident and incident investigation.

Action: The Assembly is invited to note the overall implementation of the USOAP.

Strategic Objectives:	This information paper relates to Strategic Objective A: Safety – *Enhance global civil aviation safety*.
Financial implications:	No additional resources required.
References:	Doc 9902, *Assembly Resolutions in Force* (as of 28 September 2007) Doc 7300*, Convention on International Civil Aviation* Doc 9734, *Safety Oversight Manual*, Part A — *The Establishment and Management of a State's Safety Oversight System* Doc 9735, *Safety Oversight Audit Manual* Electronic Bulletin EB 2009/27

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   The Assembly established the USOAP in 1998 (Resolution A32-11) in order to conduct regular, mandatory, systematic and harmonized safety oversight audits of all Member States. In 2004, the 35th Session of the Assembly (Resolution A35-6) resolved that the conduct of audits under USOAP should transition from an Annex-by-Annex approach to a comprehensive systems approach (CSA). The programme was expanded to include the safety-related provisions contained in all safety-related Annexes. The CSA began in January 2005, with a mandate to audit all States by the end of 2010.

1.2   The objective of the USOAP CSA audits is to assess the effective implementation by States of the eight critical elements of a safety oversight system and the status of implementation of safety-relevant ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), associated procedures, guidance material and safety-related practices.

2.   AUDITS

2.1   As of 31 July 2010, a total of 164 Member States had been audited under the CSA, as well as two Special Administrative Regions of China (SARs). In addition, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) was audited twice. All audited States have submitted a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) designed to resolve findings identified by the ICAO audit teams. Twenty-six audits remain to be completed under the CSA, though not all will be completed by the end of 2010 due to United Nations travel restrictions, as indicated on the USOAP Activity Schedule posted on the ICAO-NET website. In those cases, audits will be conducted as soon as security conditions improve.

2.2   CSA audit results are available to ICAO, to all ICAO Member States and to other relevant stakeholders on a continuous basis through the USOAP restricted website (http://www.icao.int/soa). In addition, comprehensive annual reports are produced and made available through the ICAO-NET. These contain analyses of CSA audit results and the latest report covers the period from April 2005 to July 2010. The analyses found in the annual reports is based on States' implementation of the critical elements (CEs) of a safety oversight system and allowsareas of concern to be identified globally, at the regional level and for individual States and groups of States. ICAO uses this information to evaluate the impact of safety concerns on global aviation safety and to consider the options available to improve States' conformance to the SARPs. This information can also be used to identify States which may require assistance in establishing effective safety oversight systems.

2.3   The analysis of audit results covers the 164 safety oversight audits completed under the CSA as at 31 July 2010. As can be seen in Appendix to this working paper, when the analysis document was published, the global average lack of effective implementation of the eight CEs stood at 42.3 per cent. The CE with the highest lack of effective implementation was CE-4, *Technical Personnel Qualification and Training*, which stood at 60.5 per cent. While findings have been made in all audit areas, it should be noted that the majority of audit findings under the CSA related to the audit areas not audited under the initial cycle of audits (Aerodromes, Air Navigation Services and Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation).

3.   **THE SHARING OF AUDIT INFORMATION AND SIGNIFICANT SAFETY CONCERNS**

3.1   In keeping with the Organization's dedication to improving transparency and the sharing of safety information, ICAO audit reports are published on a restricted website that is accessible to all ICAO Member States. In addition, much ICAO safety audit information is available on the Flight Safety Information Exchange public website. With regard to the CSA cycle of audits, all but two of the 176 States who have been asked for consent to release audit information have provided it. The States that have not consented to the release of this information are: Central African Republic and Equatorial Guinea.

3.2   In addition to sharing audit reports with Member States, ICAO has also undertaken to share information with them pertaining to identified Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs). An SSC may be identified during a CSA audit and is defined as: "A significant safety concern occurs when the audited State allows the holder of an authorization or approval to exercise the privileges attached to it, although the minimum requirements established by the State and by the Standards set forth in the Annexes to the Chicago Convention are not met, resulting in an immediate safety risk to international civil aviation".

3.3   As explained in Electronic Bulletin EB 2010/7, when an SSC is identified, a State is provided with a short time frame in which to take immediate corrective actions. If immediate actions are not taken to resolve the SSC, the information is shared with all Member States through the USOAP restricted website: http://www.icao.int/soa. SSCs are only removed from the website once ICAO has validated that the SSC has been resolved. Of 18 States with SSCs identified during their CSA audits, five successfully resolved these concerns, either prior to the SSC being posted on the restricted website or soon thereafter. However, 13 States still have unresolved SSCs, and the Secretariat is working with them to resolve these deficiencies.

3.4   The High Level Safety Conference, held in Montreal from 29 March to 1 April 2010, recommended that ICAO should explore measures to increase transparency, including how SSC information could be shared with the public in a form which would allow them to make an informed decision about the safety of air transportation. In order to address this recommendation, the ICAO Secretariat will be developing a mechanism for providing this information to the public. This mechanism will be presented to the Council for approval during its 191st Session.

4.   **USOAP ACTIVITIES OTHER THAN AUDITS**

4.1   **ISO 9001-2008 certification of USOAP**

4.1.1   The 33rd Session of the Assembly (A33-8 refers) requested a study on the establishment of an independent quality assurance mechanism to monitor and assess Programme quality and report to the Council. In accordance with the recommendations of the study, the Safety Oversight Audit (SOA) Section of ICAO was certified ISO 9001-2000 in 2002.

4.1.2   The ISO certification has been renewed on a number of occasions, and in October 2008 was extended to include the Safety and Security Audits (SSA) Branch. The SSA Branch, including SOA, was recertified ISO 9001-2008 in June 2010. This certification covers the preparation, conduct and reporting of safety oversight audits, USOAP auditor training, seminars and other key safety oversight-related activities of the Branch. The most recent maintenance audit was conducted by Moody Certification of North America in October 2009.

4.2   **Training of auditors**

4.2.1   All ICAO auditors must successfully complete USOAP auditor training, including training on the SOA Quality Management System and on-the-job training conducted during an actual audit mission. ICAO maintains a pool of qualified auditors by conducting periodic auditor training courses. Since the beginning of the CSA cycle of audits in 2005, fourteen such courses have been carried out, training more than 290 experts from ICAO Headquarters, Regional Offices, ICAO Member States and from international organizations. Currently, there are seventy-eight active auditors on the USOAP roster.

4.3   **Conduct of safety oversight-related seminars and workshops**

4.3.1   Under the USOAP, ICAO has developed and conducted safety oversight-related seminars and workshops covering a range of subjects, including safety oversight management systems, operation and airworthiness of aircraft and safety management systems. In addition, ICAO has been invited to support conferences, seminars and workshops organized by ICAO Member States, and by international and regional civil aviation organizations. Safety oversight-related seminar/workshops conducted by ICAO provide State officials and their staff with practical examples which guide them in the establishment and management of an effective safety oversight system.

4.3.2   USOAP seminars and workshops are regarded as an important tool for providing generic assistance to Member States. Since the beginning of the CSA cycle of audits in 2005, a total of 17 seminars have been delivered, four of them on a cost-recovery basis at the request of ICAO Member States. In all, 792 officials from 85 States and six international organizations have participated in these seminars.

4.4   **Development of guidance material related to safety oversight**

4.4.1   Another way in which ICAO supports the implementation of effective safety oversight systems is through the provision of guidance materials to Member States. Safety oversight-related guidance material is currently available, and new editions of the *Safety Oversight Manual,* Part A — *The Establishment and Management of a State's Safety Oversight System* (Doc 9734) and the *Safety Oversight Audit Manual* (Doc 9735) are currently being developed in preparation for the adoption of a continuous monitoring approach.

4.5   **Support provided to USOAP by Member States**

4.5.1   The support provided to the USOAP by ICAO Member States and by international organizations is essential to the effective implementation of the programme. This invaluable support has been provided primarily through the short- and long-term secondment of experts to assist in the conduct of CSA audits. Since the inception of the CSA audit cycle in 2005, nine States have provided 13 long-term seconded experts to the Programme, while a total of 31 States have provided 75 short-term seconded experts.

4.6   **Establishment of cooperative arrangements with international and regional entities**

4.6.1   The USOAP continues to coordinate its activities with organizations with which Memoranda of Cooperation (MoC) have been signed, including the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), EUROCONTROL, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the Interstate Aviation Committee (IAC).

4.6.2   An agreement has also been reached between USOAP and the European Commission (EC) to establish a procedure for the exchange of information related to safety oversight, including access to the EC Safety Assessment of Foreign Aircraft (SAFA) database. It is expected that more such agreements will be signed with other international and regional entities as the USOAP moves towards the implementation of a continuous monitoring approach.

4.6.3   The 2010 High Level Safety Conference recommended that ICAO should enter into new agreements and amend existing agreements for the sharing of confidential safety information with international entities and organizations in order to reduce the burden on States caused by repetitive audits or inspections and to decrease the systematic duplication of monitoring activities. ICAO has already signed a Declaration of Intent on the development of a global safety information exchange agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration of the United States (FAA), the Commission of the European Union (EC) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA). In the coming months, the parties will establish a framework for the information exchange. It will address technical, confidentiality, legal and policy implications, as well as the relevance and timing of information collected.
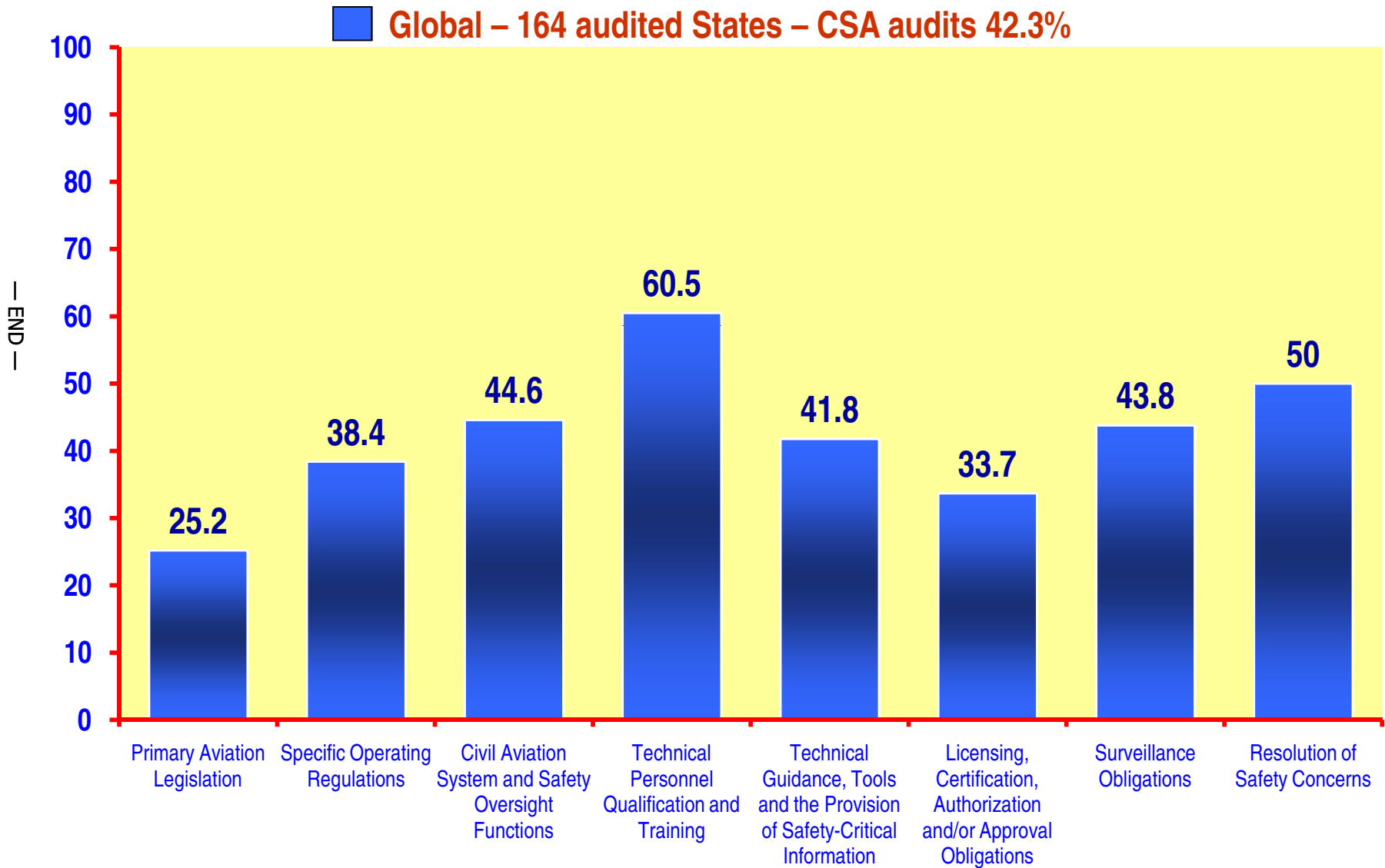
5.   CONCLUSIONS

5.1   ICAO Member States have demonstrated their support for the USOAP by each entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with ICAO prior to their audits and by submitting their CAPs within the specified period. As a consequence of this sustained effort, the CSA cycle of audits gathered a significant amount of information that will be of great value to both States and to ICAO in assessing the implementation status of ICAO SARPs and the effective implementation by States of the critical elements of a safety oversight system.

5.2   The information gathered through the CSA has enabled ICAO to perform detailed analysis of the audit findings, to determine areas of safety concern requiring special attention and to prioritize possible solutions. Accurate, factual and timely information enables Member States and the aviation community, in general, to assist in the resolution of identified safety concerns. However, this requires that the information gathered by ICAO be updated on a regular basis. To this end, once the CSA cycle is completed in December 2010, the USOAP will transition to a continuous monitoring approach (CMA), as is outlined in A37-WP/37.

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APPENDIX

ICAO UNIVERSAL SAFETY OVERSIGHT AUDIT PROGRAMME

GLOBAL DEGREE OF LACK OF EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EIGHT CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF A SAFETY OVERSIGHT SYSTEM (%)

Global – 164 audited States – CSA audits 42.3%

— END —

Critical Element	Value (%)
Primary Aviation Legislation	25.2
Specific Operating Regulations	38.4
Civil Aviation System and Safety Oversight Functions	44.6
Technical Personnel Qualification and Training	60.5
Technical Guidance, Tools and the Provision of Safety-Critical Information	41.8
Licensing, Certification, Authorization and/or Approval Obligations	33.7
Surveillance Obligations	43.8
Resolution of Safety Concerns	50