ASSEMBLY – 35TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 16:   **Improvement of safety oversight**

SAFETY OVERSIGHT - CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

(Presented by Bahrain)

SUMMARY
This paper analyses the challenges faced in implementation of safety oversight system by States and ICAO, discusses possible solutions, and recommends to the General Assembly solutions for consideration.
REFERENCES
1) Regional Summit on Aviation Safety and Security, Amman, Jordan, 9-12 February 2004, and the summit material issued by the George Washington University Consortium, Ashburn-VA, USA. 2) Conference on Expanded ICAO Safety Audits, Singapore, 5-7 April 2004; and the conference material issued by Singapore Aviation Academy, Singapore.

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Safe and secure civil aviation is a key factor in promoting air transport and social and economic development. Balancing between economic and safety needs requires significant effort in terms of coordinated procedures and improved technologies. Compliance with ICAO safety standards is critical to ensure the safety of all of their citizens, wherever they may live or travel. As signatories to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago, 1944), the Contracting States have undertaken to implement the standards and recommended practices (SARPs) as stated in the Annexes to the Convention. ICAO carried out voluntary safety oversight assessments from 1996 to 1998 in respect of Annex 1 (Personnel Licensing), Annex 6 (Aircraft Operations) and Annex 8 (Airworthiness). The results indicated a number of shortcomings in the critical safety elements. The current mandatory Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme commenced in January 1999 and completed initial safety audits at 181 of 188 Contracting States and 5 territories, and follow-up safety audit missions at a majority of States, until mid-2004. The assessment provided wealth of data and information on five areas of safety audits covering legislative, regulatory, organizational and safety compliance aspects of Annexes 1, 6 and 8 in respect of audited States.

2.   EXPANSION OF USOAP

2.1   The ICAO General Assembly Resolution A33-8 resolved that the USOAP be expanded to include Annex 11: Air Traffic Services and Annex 14: Aerodromes (Annex 13: Aircraft Accident/Incident Investigation was subsequently included). ICAO is now considering expansion of the USOAP to include other Annexes as well. The Annex-by-Annex approach may not be suitable for a number of reasons. Therefore, ICAO has recommended a comprehensive system approach to assess the status of the system as a whole.

3.   CHALLENGES FOR STATES AND ICAO

3.1   To establish and maintain a suitable civil aviation regulatory system for implementation of SARPs, States need to ensure a strong legal foundation with implementation structure and adequate human and financial resources. The critical elements of a State's safety oversight system, leading to achieve implementation of SARPs in respect of safety related Annexes are: Aviation law, Regulations, CAA Structure, Personnel, Technical Guidance, Certification, Surveillance and Resolution of safety issues.

3.2   Many States experience serious difficulties to meet safety oversight obligations, particularly in the areas of human and financial resources. There is also a shortage of trained personnel and technical guidance to implement SARPs. When a State is unable to comply with some SARPs, it either files a difference with ICAO, or indicates a long-term target date. Either way such scenario works against the interest of safety. ICAO and States need to consider the challenges in depth and arrive at possible solutions.

4.   POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

4.1   _Enhancement at ICAO_. The experiences during the USOAP in assisting States in implementing SARPs related to Annexes 1, 6 and 8, indicate that ICAO needs to enhance its set-up to assist States in drafting their aviation law, regulations, procedures for technical guidance to the personnel, and cooperate with States in establishing their structures for exercising safety oversight function and training their personnel to equip them in implementation of SARPs in the area of all the Annexes. The existing Safety Oversight Audit Section of the Air Navigation Bureau is comparatively very small to address all the Annexes. Therefore, the resources at ICAO need to be enhanced, perhaps there should be an independent Bureau for safety oversight.

4.2   _Financial Assistance_. Here are some recommendations:

(a)   International Financial Facility for Aviation Safety (IFFAS)
The IFFAS was mandated in early 2002 to assist States in enhancing their Safety Oversight functions related to airport and air navigation services infrastructure. This fund should be reviewed, enhanced and made user-friendly, to support the financial assistance required by the States.

(b)   Autonomous/Semi-autonomous Financial Agencies ·
Considering economic benefits of safe and secure air travel, which can demonstrate tangible results, such agencies can finance viable projects for safety oversight infrastructure.

(c)   Regional Financing Cooporation
Safety oversight funds can be established on regional basis wherein resources can be pooled by the member States, and thereafter can be disbursed to the needy States.

(d)   United Nations Development Projects (UNDP)
UNDP has been assisting the States on various projects. A requirement for Safety Oversight set-up can be added on to UNDP, which can assist States tangibly in the area of establishing Safety Oversight Systems of States.

4.3   <u>Training of Personnel.</u> During the USOAP for Annexes 1, 6 and 8, ICAO conducted a number of seminar and workshops to train auditors from States. Similar seminars and workshops should be conducted by ICAO to train the State experts. ICAO should draw support from established international and regional training organizations; e.g.: The George Washington University, Ashburn-VA, USA; Singapore Aviation Academy; Luchtvaart College-BV Netherlands; Queen Noor Civil Aviation Technical College, Jordan; FAA Training Academy, Oklahoma, USA. Such training organisations can workout required training programmes under the guidance of ICAO for the benefit of States.

4.4.   <u>Regional Approach.</u> There have been examples of successes of regional co-operation in exercising safety oversight in respect of Annexes 1, 6 and 8; e.g.: Central American Agency for Aviation Safety (ACSA), COSCAP, etc. Similar regional co-operations should be promoted to make a success of safety oversight in respect of the other Annexes.

4.5   <u>Cooperation with other International Bodies.</u> ICAO and States should work in cooperation with international organizations such as IATA, GWU etc.

(a)   The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has successfully embarked upon IATA Operation Safety Oversight Audit (IOSA) programme, which has a wealth of information. If all such programmes associated with safety oversight share the information, and possibly share resources as well, the implementation of SARPs would be more cost effective.

(b)   The George Washington University (GWU) Consortium, in association with George Mason University, has been conducting International/Regional Summit programmes on Aviation Safety and Security, which has enhanced awareness about the challenges in the areas of aviation safety and security. The GWU has developed valuable expertise and summit material in the areas of Aviation Safety and Security.

5.   REQUIRED ACTIONS

5.1   The General Assembly is invited to consider the challenges for implementation of safety oversight and the possible solutions as discussed above, and give suitable directions for successful implementation of safety oversight covering all the Annexes.

-END-