

ASSEMBLY – 35TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 16: Improvement of safety oversight

IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL SAFETY ORGANIZATIONS

(Presented by the Central American States¹)

SUMMARY

One of the greatest challenges for a given State has been the implementation of corrective measures emanating from the USOAP audits, especially when considering a lack of resources within that State. One solution has been the creation of Regional entities where a number of States are able to assist one another with the implementation of the Action Plans for correcting deficiencies from the audits.

The Central American States took the initiative to join efforts and optimize resources and during the five years since the creation of ACSA (The Central American Agency for Aeronautical Safety), many important improvements have been made for its member States in rectifying Annex 1, 6 and 8 deficiencies. Under the new comprehensive systems approach for the conduct of safety oversight audits, further challenges will arise and more than ever, the optimization of resources and the appropriate legal and regulatory harmonization seems to be the correct path for many States.

With the new Unified Strategy and the recently developed guidance material to assist the States on the formation of regional (or sub-regional) organizations, ICAO takes a key element role on this new face of implementation.

Action by the Assembly is in paragraph 4.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Central American States have expended great efforts in order to support the development of the aeronautical sector of the region through the compliance of international regulations related to safety and security issues. They have made significant investments by developing a new aeronautical culture based on the highest standards of air safety and security.

¹ Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua

1.2 The region has elaborated a civil aviation safety system which has developed the necessary tools so that the COCESNA Members States comply with their obligations as Contracting States of the Chicago Convention. For this, the Central America Agency for Aeronautical Safety (ACSA) was created on the basis of the eight critical elements of the USOAP program, and has complied with the COCESNA Directorate Council expectations under the standardization and harmonization principles.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The implementation process has been different in each State; in some it has been faster than in others due to legal and political complexities. Five of the six member States have promulgated new regulatory codes and new legislation.

2.2 In order for States to share human resources and effect harmonization, there must be a clear understanding of the “delegation of authority” concept. This, along with a common legal framework, which serves as the foundation for all other aspects related to standardization, is an extremely important basis from which to work. Two important examples in this context include the process of training technical personnel and the joint certification of air operators. These require a very high degree of coordination and harmonization of procedures that must be applied by all the member States.

2.3 Further, political commitment is a paramount issue with regard to the implementation of any regional safety oversight organization. Only through political commitment, taken at the highest levels of each Member State involved in this common effort, will they be able to establish a supervisory board to oversee the activities of these organizations and procure the needed sources of financing to be successful.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 The implementation of the regional safety system in Central America has not been easy. It has had to overcome national barriers and misconceptions of sovereignty. It has not been easy to make the States to be actively involved, learn to work in teams and in a concerted way. Nevertheless, in a period of four years the States of the Central American region have had great results. Their efforts have been rewarded not only at a compliance level and by improvement of the organizations, but also in the development of operators and users of the aeronautical sector from a compliance point of view and the acceptance of the established regulations.

3.2 The countries that have been enjoying the benefit of the ACSA advisory and inspectorate services and recognize the importance of this joint venture of cooperation and the advantages of a regional strategy in order to eliminate duplication of efforts, standardize regulatory frameworks, share human and financial resources and achieve economies of scale leading to better efficiency and safety.

3.3 There is no doubt that the regional mechanism has brought great benefits. Therefore, we invite ICAO member States to be aware of the successes and ask international entities as well as the ICAO States to make the necessary arrangements to promote the creation of regional agencies through the elaboration of the adequate documents, agreements, exploration of financial sources, and above all, the preparation of organizational and functional structures to face the creation of more regional agencies.

4. **ACTION BY THE ASSEMBLY**

The Assembly is invited to:

- a) note the information provided in paragraphs 2 and 3 relating to the difficulties encountered by some Contracting States in the implementation of the corrective measures emanating from their action plans.
- b) agree that the establishment of such organizations will have the potential to greatly assist many States, and, with the understanding that many other regional initiatives are emerging around the world, the role of ICAO is extremely important for the future establishment of new regional or sub-regional entities dealing with States obligations on safety oversight.
- c) endorse the concept, development and management of Regional Safety Oversight systems and encourage member States to participate on them.
- d) instruct the Council, to support these initiatives and to actively promote the use of the new guidance material Doc 9734-AN/959 Part B, within the scope of the implementation of the unified strategy to resolve safety deficiencies.

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