



**WORKING PAPER**

**ASSEMBLY — 36TH SESSION**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Agenda Item 16: Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP)**

**REPORT ON THE  
ICAO UNIVERSAL SECURITY AUDIT PROGRAMME**

(Presented by the Council of ICAO)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Assembly Resolution A35-9 requested the Council to report to the next ordinary session of the Assembly on the overall implementation of the ICAO Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP).

Since the launch of the USAP in 2002, 169 aviation security audits and 77 follow-up missions have been conducted. The audits have proven to be instrumental in the ongoing identification and resolution of aviation security concerns, and analysis reveals that the average implementation rate of Annex 17 Standards in most States has increased markedly between the period of the initial audit and the follow-up mission. The Assembly is invited to consider the continuation of the USAP and whether it is timely to explore moving toward a limited level of transparency of audit results with respect to unresolved deficiencies.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to adopt the text in Appendix B to this working paper relating to the continuation of the USAP, to be included as Appendix E to the revised version of Resolution A35-9: *Consolidated statement of continuing ICAO policies related to the safeguarding of international civil aviation against acts of unlawful interference.*

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	The action proposed will further Strategic Objective B ( <i>Enhance global aviation security</i> ) through the continuation of the USAP.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	No additional resources required. The work involved for the Secretariat is expected to be undertaken within the resources included under the Draft Budget 2008-2010, including voluntary contributions from States to the ICAO Aviation Security Plan of Action.
<i>References:</i>	A36-WP/62 – Level of Indicative Contributions for the ICAO Aviation Security (AVSEC) Plan of Action A36-WP/27 – Consolidated Statement of Continuing ICAO Policies related to the Safeguarding of International Civil Aviation Against Acts of Unlawful Interference Doc 9848, <i>Assembly Resolutions in Force</i> (A35-9, Appendix E)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 On the basis of Assembly Resolution A33-1 in 2001 and the recommendations of the High-level, Ministerial Conference on Aviation Security (Montreal, February 2002), the Council adopted in June 2002 the Aviation Security Plan of Action, which included the establishment of a comprehensive programme of regular, mandatory, systematic and harmonized audits to be carried out by ICAO in all Contracting States. The ICAO Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP) was subsequently launched, with the objective of all Contracting States having benefited from an initial audit by the end of 2007.

1.2 This paper responds to Assembly Resolution A35-9, Appendix E (2004), which requested the Secretary General to continue the USAP, and requested that the Council report to the next ordinary session of the Assembly on its overall implementation<sup>1</sup>.

## 2. PROGRESS ACHIEVED BY THE USAP ON STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE B (*ENHANCE GLOBAL AVIATION SECURITY*)

2.1 The following summarizes the progress achieved to date in the implementation of the USAP:

- a) **Audits:** As of 31 July 2007, 169 audits have been conducted. The programme remains on course for all 190 States to have benefited from an initial audit by the end of 2007, subject to the receipt of appropriate United Nations security clearances.
- b) **Training:** There are some 150 certified auditors on the USAP roster, from 59 States in all ICAO regions. The participation of certified national experts in the audits under the guidance of an ICAO team leader has permitted the programme to be implemented in a cost-effective manner while allowing for a valuable interchange of expertise.
- c) **State corrective action plans:** A critical part of the audit process is the requirement that all audited States submit a corrective action plan to address deficiencies identified during an audit. As directed by the Council (C-DEC 176/6), all States are notified (by State letter and on the USAP secure website) of States more than 60 days late in submitting a corrective action plan. As of 31 July 2007, there are seven States that are more than 60 days late. In the case of late corrective action plans, repeated reminders are sent to States, including at the level of the Secretary General and with the involvement of the applicable Regional Office, and ICAO assistance is offered should the State require advice or support in the preparation of its action plan. Extensive feedback is provided to each audited State on the adequacy of its corrective action plan, and an ongoing dialogue is maintained where necessary to provide support in the implementation of proposed actions.

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<sup>1</sup> A35-9 also requested the Council to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the USAP by progressively integrating its activities as soon as possible into the Regular Programme Budget: this issue is addressed in A36-WP/62 – Level of Indicative Contributions for the ICAO Aviation Security (AVSEC) Plan of Action.

- d) **Analysis:** Comprehensive analysis of audit results on levels of compliance with Annex 17 – *Security* Standards is performed on an ongoing basis (globally, by region and by subject matter). This statistical data is made available to authorized users on the USAP secure website and is shared with other relevant ICAO offices as a basis for prioritizing training and remedial assistance projects. The key findings identified by the audits at the national and airport levels are presented in Appendix A to this paper, with more detailed analysis presented in a separate Addendum.
- e) **Follow-up missions:** As of 31 July 2007, 77 follow-up missions have been conducted. These missions take place two years after the initial audit with the purpose of validating the implementation of State corrective action plans and providing support to States in remedying deficiencies. These missions are normally conducted by the applicable Regional Office, with close coordination through Headquarters. The results of the follow-up visits indicate that the majority of States have made significant progress in the implementation of their corrective action plans, as further detailed in the Addendum to this paper.
- f) **Audit Results Review Board:** A high-level Secretariat Audit Results Review Board (ARRB) has been established as part of an overall coordinated strategy for working with States that are found to have significant compliance shortcomings with respect to ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). The ARRB examines both the safety and security histories of specific States and provides an internal advisory forum for coordination among ICAO's safety, security and assistance programmes.
- g) **Administrative integration of ICAO's audit programmes:** Further to the Council's approval of the administrative integration of the USAP and the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP), a new Safety and Security Audits (SSA) Branch within the Office of the Secretary General was established in 2006 to manage both programmes. Increased efficiencies have been realized through a streamlining of administrative activities and sharing of non-technical resources, while maintaining the technical and functional independence of the USAP and USOAP.

### 3. PROGRESSION OF THE USAP IN THE 2008-2010 TRIENNIUM

3.1 With the initial cycle of ICAO aviation security audits concluding in 2007, the Council (C-DEC 176/8) considered the evolution of the USAP and agreed, *inter alia*, on the following conceptual principles to guide the conduct of future audits:

- 1) **Although the USAP should always preserve the principle of universality, not all States need to be audited at the same frequency.** With a solid baseline of audit results established for all States by the end of 2007, a more effective use of resources can be achieved by developing an appropriate scheduling/frequency model to determine the priority of future audits and frequency of visits to States. The principle of universality will be maintained with all States audited at least once within a six-year period.

- 2) **Wherever possible, ICAO aviation security audits should be focused on a State's capability to provide appropriate national oversight of its aviation security activities.** Using the results of the initial audits and follow-up visits, the scope of future ICAO audits should be adjusted to the prevailing situation in each audited State. Those States that have demonstrated the requisite national infrastructure necessary to oversee security activities at their airports may undergo a targeted oversight audit to verify adequate implementation of the State's national quality control programme. Such oversight audits would continue to include a verification of the implementation of ICAO provisions through spot checks at the airport level.
- 3) **Future audits under the USAP should be expanded to include relevant security-related provisions of Annex 9 – *Facilitation*.** With the recent expansion of the USOAP to a comprehensive systems approach covering all safety-related Annexes, Annex 9 is currently the only Annex which is not included in either of ICAO's two audit programmes. There are a number of security-related provisions contained in Annex 9, particularly as related to the security and integrity of travel documentation, which can be audited under the USAP along with the related Standards of Annex 17.

3.2 A primary issue for future consideration is whether the USAP should move toward a limited level of transparency of audit results. It may be recalled that the 35th Session of the Assembly mandated ICAO to maintain strict confidentiality of all State-specific information derived from the audits. However, in order to promote mutual confidence in the level of aviation security between States, the Assembly urged all Contracting States to "share, as appropriate and consistent with their sovereignty, the results of the audit carried out by ICAO and the corrective actions taken by the audited State, if requested by another State" (A35-9, Appendix E, Resolving Clause 4; and Recommended Practice 2.4.5 of Annex 17).

3.3 Resolving Clause 7 of the attached draft Resolution at Appendix B invites the Assembly to consider whether it would be timely to explore considering the introduction of a limited level of transparency with respect to ICAO aviation security audit results, balancing the need for States to be aware of unresolved security concerns with the need to keep sensitive security information out of the public realm.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The ICAO USAP has been implemented on schedule and within its budget allocation. The audits have proven to be instrumental in the identification of aviation security concerns and in providing recommendations for their resolution. From its inception, the USAP has enjoyed the support of Contracting States and is promoting positive change as States become increasingly sensitized to the international requirements. The USAP follow-up missions have validated a markedly increased level of implementation of ICAO security Standards, thereby attesting to States' commitment to achieving the objective of the USAP to strengthen aviation security worldwide.

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## APPENDIX A

### MAJOR FINDINGS IDENTIFIED BY THE AUDITS AT THE NATIONAL AND AIRPORT LEVELS

#### 1. KEY AUDIT FINDINGS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

1.1 Overall, States have placed high priority on security in the post-September 11th aviation environment, and there is an ongoing worldwide effort by States to align their aviation security frameworks with new and continuing threats to civil aviation. Many States have committed increasing resources to aviation security, particularly through the acquisition of new security equipment and technology in support of enhanced aviation security controls.

1.2 Nevertheless, the audits have revealed that continuing effort is required by States in developing a comprehensive national oversight framework for ensuring long-term sustainability of security measures. In this context, the audits have identified the following four primary areas that require enhancement at the national level:

- a) oversight and enforcement capabilities;
- b) certification of screening personnel;
- c) aviation security training; and
- d) National Civil Aviation Security Programmes.

#### 2. KEY AUDIT FINDINGS AT THE AIRPORT LEVEL

2.1 Common shortcomings at the airport level frequently relate to the need to update airport security programmes. Primary areas of concern in the application of operational security measures include:

- a) access control to security restricted areas of airports;
- b) security controls which are applied to cargo intended for carriage on passenger flights; and
- c) quality and consistency of passenger, cabin and hold baggage screening.

*Note.—A more detailed analysis of the audit and follow-up mission results is presented in the Addendum to this paper.*

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## APPENDIX B

### **PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO APPENDIX E OF THE CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONTINUING ICAO POLICIES RELATED TO THE SAFEGUARDING OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION AGAINST ACTS OF UNLAWFUL INTERFERENCE**

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## APPENDIX E

### **The ICAO Universal Security Audit Programme**

*Whereas* the ICAO Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP) has been successful in meeting the mandate of Resolution A35-9, Appendix E;

*Whereas* the primary objective of the Organization continues to be that of ensuring the safety and security of international civil aviation worldwide;

*Whereas* promoting the implementation of international aviation security Standards contributes to this objective;

*Recalling* that the ultimate responsibility to ensure both the safety and security of civil aviation rests with Contracting States;

*Recalling* that the 35th Session of the Assembly directed the Secretary General to continue the USAP, comprising regular, mandatory, systematic and harmonized aviation security audits to be carried out by ICAO in all Contracting States;

*Considering* that the USAP has proven to be instrumental in the identification of aviation security concerns and in providing recommendations for their resolution, and that the programme has validated an increased level of implementation of ICAO security Standards;

*Considering* the direction given by the Council of ICAO during its 176th Session on principles to guide the conduct of future aviation security audits following the initial cycle of USAP audits at the end of 2007;

*Recognizing* that the effective implementation of State corrective action plans to address the deficiencies identified through the audit is an integral and critical part of the audit process and to achieving the overall objective to enhance global aviation security;

*Recognizing* that the continuation of the USAP is essential to create mutual confidence in the level of aviation security between Contracting States and to encourage the adequate implementation of security-related Standards; and

*Recognizing* the importance of a coordinated strategy for working with States that are found to have significant compliance shortcomings with respect to ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), and noting the establishment of a high-level Secretariat Audit Results Review Board to assist the Council in its responsibilities;

The Assembly:

1. *Notes* with satisfaction that the ICAO Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP) has proven to be instrumental in the identification of aviation security concerns and in providing recommendations for their resolution;

2. *Expresses* its appreciation to Contracting States for their cooperation in the audit process and for making available security experts to be certified as USAP auditors to serve as short-term experts in the conduct of audits;

3. *Requests* the Council to ensure the continuation of the USAP following the initial cycle of audits at the end of 2007 guided by the principle of universality, while recognizing that not all States need to be audited at the same frequency; focusing, wherever possible, on a State's capability to provide appropriate national oversight of its aviation security activities through the effective implementation of the critical elements of a security oversight system; and expanding future audits to include relevant security-related provisions of Annex 9 — *Facilitation*;

4. *Requests* the Council to ensure that the implementation of State corrective action plans continues to be validated through the conduct of follow-up missions or other means;

5. *Urges* all Contracting States to give full support to ICAO by accepting the audit missions as scheduled by the Organization, facilitating the work of the audit teams, and preparing and submitting to ICAO an appropriate corrective action plan to address deficiencies identified during the audit;

6. *Urges* all Contracting States to share, as appropriate and consistent with their sovereignty, the results of the audit carried out by ICAO and the corrective actions taken by the audited State, if requested by another State;

7. *Directs* the Council to consider the introduction of a limited level of transparency with respect to ICAO aviation security audit results, balancing the need for States to be aware of unresolved security concerns with the need to keep sensitive security information out of the public realm; and

8. *Requests* the Council to report to the next ordinary session of the Assembly on the overall implementation of the USAP.

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