



**ASSEMBLY — 36TH SESSION**

**TECHNICAL COMMISSION**

**Agenda Item 30: Other safety matters**

**IATA SAFETY AUDIT FOR GROUND OPERATIONS**

(Presented by the International Air Transport Association)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

IATA SAFETY AUDIT FOR GROUND OPERATIONS (ISAGO) is an audit programme for ground service providers that improves safety and quality in ground operations, through the implementation of a formal, systematic process using internationally harmonized standards to manage operational risk and safety, that reduces accidents, incidents and injuries.

ISAGO has two fundamental objectives:

- a) improve safety in ground operations; and
- b) eliminate redundant audits of ground handling companies by airlines.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective A.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Not applicable.
<i>References:</i>	Not applicable.

<sup>1</sup> All languages provided by IATA.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The International Air Transport Association estimates that ground damage costs airlines about U.S.\$4 billion each year. The indirect costs such as aircraft downtime, injury claims, loss of revenue and crew costs, and handling delayed passengers and freight, are measured in multiples of this figure. Ground handling accidents also lead to physical injury or even death of personnel, and can pose a risk to flight safety.

1.2 At present, Ground Service Providers (GSPs) are subjected to multiple audits from their airline customers because there is little or no sharing of audits results, creating an inefficient environment, wasteful of resources on all sides.

1.3 In most cases, aviation and government authorities have little oversight of ground operations. In some countries, there is minimal direct regulatory oversight over GSPs activities in the following areas:

- a) selection and licensing;
- b) systems implementation;
- c) training and development; and
- d) auditing, reporting and compliance.

1.4 According to regulatory agencies requirements, it is generally the responsibility of the AOC holders to maintain a proper oversight of their party contractors.

## 2. PRINCIPLE

2.1 ISAGO is based on the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) framework, which assesses the operational management and control systems of an airline. It will achieve the same two fundamental aims of improving operational safety, and driving down the number of redundant audits. The principle is to establish a worldwide ground operational safety benchmark and standard. Like IOSA, ISAGO enjoys growing support from States and from airport authorities, who will benefit from being able to gain additional information which can facilitate oversight on ground operations within their States and airports respectively.

2.2 Upon completion of the audit and correction of any related findings, the GSP will be placed on a registry for an agreed period, at which time a renewal audit will be required. Airlines will accept the ISAGO Audit registration in lieu of conducting their own audit.

## 3. APPLICABILITY

3.1 The programme will be available to all GSPs worldwide, irrespective of size or independent status. Nevertheless the ISAGO Audit will be tailored to the specific ground handling activities conducted by the entity to be audited.

3.2 The ISAGO Audit will be achieved at different levels. At the corporate, regional and country level, the Audit will focus on corporate organization and management systems. At the station level, the Audit will focus on operationally oriented aspects, and is proposed to be conducted by qualified and approved auditors.

#### 4. **AUDIT SCOPE AND STANDARDS**

4.1 Technical specifications contained in the standards will focus on ground operations. Many of the standards will be drawn from existing documentation, including the Airport Handling Manual (AHM), IOSA Standards Manual (ISM), ICAO Annexes and FAA/EASA regulations, as well as relevant industry sources such as checklists used by airlines for ground ops audits. GSPs will need to demonstrate not only technical conformity with “hard” standards, but also conformity with a risk management philosophy, which will permeate all sections of the standards manual.

#### 5. **BENEFITS**

5.1 By setting international standards and risk management practices for ground handling, ISAGO will provide the following benefits:

- a) safer ground operations, less accidents and injuries;
- b) elimination of redundant audits from airlines;
- c) reduced costs: less damage and less audits;
- d) improved safety oversight;
- e) improved quality standards;
- f) a better understanding of risk exposures, essential for prevention;
- g) enhanced company image and reputation; and
- h) additional source of information for regulators.