

UAE Statement

ICAO Seminar on State Action Plan Assessments

Overview:

The issue of aviation's impact on climate change, largely as a result of CO₂ emissions, was by far the most contentious agenda item at the ICAO Assembly. Despite there being strongly divergent views, States and industry organizations shared a consensus that the civil aviation sector needed to demonstrate strong leadership by producing concrete and meaningful results.

Subsequently the pressure on international aviation and ICAO has increased. Council urged States to abide by the Assembly Resolution. The UAE is in a prominent position to showcase progress on this field

In May 2012, HE Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansouri, Minister of Economy and Chairman of the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA), approved the Environmental Policy for the civil aviation sector. This was done with the consensus of all local authorities that formed the civil aviation sector. This policy reaffirms the role of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to reduce the impact of emissions of civil aviation and climate change.

In this context, the UAE has worked tirelessly to elaborate an Action Plan. Thanks to the hard work of the UAE GCAA and the significant contribution from industry stakeholders, the UAE was able to submit an interim version of its Action Plan to ICAO in June 2012.

ICAO has provided a number of training sessions to assist Member States in the preparation of their respective action plans. In spite of this, the UAE is of the firm belief that there is still room for further ICAO involvement.

What is required from ICAO?

The UAE, and to a certain extent the rest of the Middle East region, believe that there is still a significant shortage of expertise with regard to environmental protection. In addition, it is noteworthy that a number of regulators do lack the authority to address environmental issues. There is no clear mandate. Clearly, environment is not a core business within civil aviation authorities.

It is the view of the UAE that ICAO could further deploy initiatives to increase awareness on environmental issues involving international civil aviation, with particular emphasis on operational opportunities to reduce its carbon footprint. There is a common, and yet valid, belief that safety comes first. There is a need to reconcile this priority with that of the environmental needs.

Also in the preparation of the SAP, stakeholders raised the question of who should cover the cost. There is a financial and political burden and there is a need to specify who should pay the cost of the implementation, and how ICAO can assure that there will be fund for the implementation. We do understand that ICAO is not a funding organization and this is out of their function, nevertheless; it

would be useful to clarify if ICAO can assure a financial assistance once a detail State Action Plan is submitted.

ICAO needs to urge Member States to be transparent about their action plans. State Action Plan should be something which we are all proud to share.