



Seventh Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America Annual Plenary Meeting (RASG-PA/7)
Willemstad, Curaçao, 11-12 September 2014

Agenda Item 5: Safety Initiatives
5.5 Other Safety Initiatives

**ASSURING COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL OVERSIGHT OBLIGATIONS
WITHOUT DUPLICATION; SHARED SURVEILLANCE OF APPROVED MAINTENANCE
ORGANIZATIONS**

(Presented by United States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Due to the breadth of globalization across the international aviation industry, maintenance organizations are now transnational, and as such are subject to oversight and surveillance by a multitude of regulatory jurisdictions due to the number of different certifications they hold. As a result, surveillance activities have become increasingly frequent and additional audits do not necessarily increase the level of safety. The United States would like to propose that ICAO, States, and industry initiate discussions on how best to mitigate duplicative surveillance of maintenance organizations while still fulfilling national oversight obligations. The development of a framework for shared surveillance of approved maintenance organizations would be of significant benefit to States and industry in realizing such efficiency and effectiveness in these activities.

Strategic Objective:

- Safety

1. Introduction

1.1 In accordance with the oversight obligations for States of Registry as bound by the Convention on International Civil Aviation, States have a fundamental responsibility to assure the continuing airworthiness of aircraft on their registry, which includes of a comprehensive program for conducting oversight of Approved Maintenance Organizations (AMO).

1.2 Due to the breadth of globalization across the international aviation industry, maintenance organizations are now transnational, and as such are subject to oversight and surveillance by a multitude of regulatory jurisdictions due to the number of different certifications they hold. As a result, surveillance activities have become increasingly frequent and additional audits do not necessarily increase the level of safety.

2. Discussion

2.1 The United States would like to propose that ICAO, States, and industry initiate discussions on how best to mitigate duplicative surveillance of maintenance organizations while still fulfilling national oversight obligations, and to also share concepts and efforts introduced by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to consolidate its national surveillance activities in this area.

2.2 For many AMOs, it is not uncommon to hold certificates issued by multiple States, which in some cases could be upwards of 20 to 30 different certificates due to business opportunities across different aircraft registries. While certificate holders are bound to the AMO requirements of the issuing State, an overwhelming number of surveillance activities by numerous regulatory agencies may unnecessarily duplicate the efforts of the States performing the surveillance. Initial certification and renewal procedures for AMOs must always be conducted by the certifying State, in accordance with ICAO Annex 6; however ongoing surveillance activities represent an area where improved efficiencies could significantly benefit stakeholders.

2.3 Identifying methods to reduce duplicative surveillance activities occurs both at the national and international level. In the United States, as part of an effort to evaluate how to more effectively and efficiently manage surveillance programs and resources nationally, the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration has identified several areas where audits may be more efficiently managed. This includes identifying those AMOs that may perform contracted maintenance activities for several different U.S. air operators and developing procedures to consolidate the number of audits performed by sharing audit results between two air operators. In addition, the U.S. FAA has developed criteria for risk-based and data-driven decision making to determine the need and frequency of AMO audit programs.

2.4 At an international level, for any durable, effective, and well-organized change to the management of surveillance activities for approved maintenance organizations by multiple States to be feasible, there must be a compliant, cohesive, collaborative, and detailed framework developed together by ICAO, States, and industry. Such a framework would allow States to better utilize resources by reducing the number of inspections needed on a recurring basis at a common location, and would allow the industry to conduct their activities in accordance with a more transparent and manageable surveillance schedule.

2.5 This framework may include a set of common criteria for AMO surveillance obligations and outcomes that could be used by States to utilize each other's findings. Such an approach may help to mitigate the need for duplicate surveillance by several States with similar inspection needs, such as in cases where an AMO is certificated to conduct maintenance on aircraft from the registry of multiple States.

2.6 Also to be considered in the development of this framework would be the status of participating States' compliance with international obligations. For States to be assured of the baseline capabilities of other participating States, it would be necessary to develop a system of on-going quality audits of all participant States to allow for confidence-building activities in regards to the ability to provide continued surveillance in compliance with ICAO standards. In order for any State to be able to utilize the findings of another's surveillance activities, the State conducting the surveillance must do so in compliance with the ICAO eight critical elements for safety oversight.

2.7 To build upon the progress already underway in this area, ICAO should consider existing internationally accepted auditing standards that have been developed but not yet widely implemented as a starting point for the development of a sharing framework. This could include the International Auditing and Assurance Standards, such as International Aerospace Quality Group (IAQG) 9100.

2.8 Finally, another consideration would be the ability of a State to legally accept the findings of another State as a basis for their safety oversight obligations. This may include the development of bilateral or multilateral agreements between States that would allow reciprocal acceptance of certain types of surveillance activities.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Civil air transportation is expected to grow significantly over the course of the next several decades; the aviation forecast developed by The Boeing Company predicts a 5.0 percent increase in commercial passenger traffic annually over the next twenty years. It is a reality that civil aviation authorities must be more effective in the application of its resources; this increase in air travel will demand the support of a trained and qualified inspector work force with an already taxing workload.

3.2 Therefore it is crucial that States work collaboratively to conduct their fundamental oversight obligations as efficiently as possible. The development of a framework for shared surveillance of approved maintenance organizations would be of significant benefit to States and industry in realizing such efficiency and effectiveness in these activities.