



**Twenty-Second Meeting of the AFI Planning and Implementation Regional Group  
(APIRG/22)  
(Accra, Ghana, 29 July – 2 August 2019)**

**CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVEMENT OF AVIATION SAFETY IN AFRICA AND  
UPDATE ON APEX IN SAFETY PROGRAM.**

*(Presented by Airports Council International)*

<b>SUMMARY</b>	
<p>This paper presents an overview of some safety initiatives executed by Airports Council International and an update of its Airport Excellence in Safety Program(APEX). It also explains how this program assists States in improving operational safety across aerodromes especially on runway safety, and aerodrome certification. Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3</p>	
<i>Strategic Objectives</i>	<b>A</b> – Safety, <b>B</b> – Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The mission of Airports Council International is to promote the collective interests of the world’s airports and promote professional excellence in airport operations and management. ACI strives to contribute towards the improvement of a secure, safe and sustainable development of aviation in Africa. The Africa region of ACI is currently composed of 64 members from 51 Countries representing 260 airports.

1.2 In collaboration with ACI World, the Africa Region implemented a safety program by empowering its Safety Working Group to engage in promoting safety excellence with initiatives such as ACI Africa Safety Excellence Awards, ACI Africa Safety Week, Safety Auditors Training Program, Appointment of Safety Champions and Promotion of APEX in Safety. In addition, ACI Africa has recently launched the African Airports Development Program (AADP), which is the gateway for African airports to confidently achieve excellence in management, operation and capacity building through the sharing and transfer of experience and expertise.

**2. DISCUSSIONS**

2.1 The Safety and Technical Working Group is an essential component and driver of our promotional activities which meets twice a year over a period of two days prior to ACI regional conferences. This group has matured as an effective voice for safety which inspires and directs a co-ordinated approach to development of regional positions on safety and technical related issues of concern for regional airport members. Assistance and Guidelines are provided to members who freely exchange information, procedures, checklists, documents and provides input to ACI World Committee of Safety and its Apex task team. Initiatives include sharing of resources and equipment such as friction testing, rubber removal, etc. This group, which has experienced consistent and regular attendance, focuses on aerodrome certification, SMS, runway safety, training and development, and is accountable to the ACI Board which measures performance against its own dashboard.

2.2 The ACI Africa Safety Awards were envisioned by ACI Africa to encourage and boost members' efforts to improve compliance with International Standards and best practices and reduce operational risks at their airports. Aerodromes are assessed via a well-developed evaluation criteria and framework and robust governance process. Since its inception four years ago, these awards received overwhelming interest and excitement from aerodrome operators world-wide. ACI has a partnership with IFALPA, Ground Handlers and other airport users that assist in our evaluation process. In addition to three award categories based on air traffic movements, an additional two awards recognise substantial efforts to close the gaps found during an Apex review or assessment by a recognised institution.

2.3 ACI Africa Safety week, launched in September 2018, received enthusiastic support with most members participating and demonstrating creative ideas and initiatives including community participation. The main objective of this project is to promote one of the often-neglected pillars of Safety Management System (SMS), namely Safety Promotion. The Safety Week aims to initiate a conversation with all employees and stakeholders at the airport and encourage them to promote safety awareness activities. A Safety Week Tool Kit, as a guide on how to launch this initiative, has been developed by the regional safety and technical working group. This campaign, held in September, will continue in the following years and ACI wishes to encourage all aviation organizations to participate in this initiative.

2.4 The challenge of expanding the APEX reviews in Africa was the lack of local qualified Aerodrome inspectors. In addition, there was a need to have assessors who was fluent in the language of the region since the use of assessors from other regions increased costs. To address this issue, ACI launched an Inspector Training program called "APEX Safety Auditor Training Program" to create a pool of African experts who will participate in different APEX missions on the continent. Following three classroom courses held during 2016/17 and Online and practical training in the field, 18 ACI APEX Safety Assessors have graduated in 2018. Success of this program was evident in that a number of APEX reviews have recently been conducted by a full African team. In addition, free aviation training is offered to participants following our Regional conferences.

#### **APEX IN SAFETY PROGRAM**

2.5 Since the launch of the APEX in Safety program, ACI has performed over 100 safety reviews, the majority of which has been conducted in Africa. This program, originating in Africa with the first pilot in Lomé, Togo in September 2011, has since increased its activities in all regions of the world and has collaborated with many industry partners and international organizations. Created as a voluntary programme to assist airports to identify safety gaps and vulnerabilities and set roadmaps for certification or safety enhancement, APEX in Safety has rapidly become a unique methodology that improves an airport's operational safety, promoting airport excellence through sharing of industry best practices.

2.6 Through partnerships with members and key stakeholders such as ICAO and governmental organizations including civil aviation authorities, ACI has been able to respond to the challenge to improve operational safety. Because this is a peer review, and not an audit, airports are also forthcoming about those areas where they have concerns and will actively seek advice on how they might improve. The value of the program is its scalability and that it can be tailored to any airport to meet both the general needs of compliance with the ICAO Annexes and address specific concerns of an individual airport.

2.7 Since its inception, at least 10 African airports have achieved Aerodrome Certification by using the recommendations and support provided by the program. The APEX in Safety Program has been an integral part of the AFI Plan Aerodrome Certification Project in both ESAF and WACAF Regions and is a good illustration of collaboration. The Abuja Declaration Targets now formally recognizes the value of APEX as a main solution to be used as a road map to

certification. The APEX in Safety program assists airports to obtain or maintain certification. With the agreement of the host airport, a review may also support the oversight functions of a Civil Aviation Authority by allowing it to be an observer on an APEX missions and even by other capacity building activities such as training and opportunities for discussion with CAA staff as required. During the last two years, ACI APEX in Safety Program has actively been assisting ICAO in conducting certification assessments and workshops in the LAC Region.

2.8 As observers on an APEX review, State authority/CAA inspectors have provided valuable input by providing their expertise in the oversight and regulatory functions. In return, they have benefited by receiving experience on daily operational safety aspects of airports along with networking with experts from around the world. In a rapidly growing and changing industry, where risk mitigation needs to be constantly assessed, regulatory oversight and integration with industry best practices becomes paramount. Other potential benefits for CAA inspectors who take part in reviews may include:

- understanding airport operator considerations and challenges during the certification process:
- understanding of an airport operator’s perspective on application of safety regulation with experts from around the world:
- understanding airport operator applications of a risk-based approach, including the application of mitigation measures:
- Participating in the challenges of implementing Safety Management Systems

## **AFRICAN AIRPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

2.9 The African Airports Development Program (AADP) has been launched by ACI Africa to assist its members meeting the challenges of safety, security, airport operations and economic viability in today’s dynamic and vibrant airport environment. The objectives of the program are as follows:

- Strengthen the human resources competencies of its members through the development of African expertise in the airport field.
- Identify and review the needs of member airports for trainings, short term technical expertise missions and extended technical support missions.
- Create new technical assistance and support services tailored to the specific needs of its members.
- Provide a catalogue of more than 100 classroom, onsite or online courses.
- Conduct training courses at local and regional levels.
- Develop and provide specific courses tailored to the needs of African airports.
- Provide scholarships to attend training courses provided by ACI.
- Provide airport management consultancy missions to identify and help resolve challenges related to airport management and operations.
- Develop a database of African trainers and experts.

Since its introduction in 2018, the AADP has assisted and supported:

- 14 in-class and on-site training courses for around 300 participants
- 11 online courses for 43 participants
- 7 short term assistance missions at 6 African airports

Through this program, ACI Africa wishes to promote the local expertise to support the air transport industry in Africa.

2.10 Regional cooperation is the basis for an effective and comprehensive APEX in Safety Review. The support of regulators is important in continuing the growth of the programme as airports who have received a review have found that safety performance has improved when all stakeholders share experiences.

### **3 ACTION BY THE MEETING**

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the progress achieved in ensuring aerodrome safety through the various ACI initiatives.
- b) Take note of the African Airports Development Program launched by ACI Africa to assist and support African airports in meeting the challenges of safety and air navigation deficiencies, especially after an ACI APEX review.
- c) To encourage airports operators to participate to the ACI APEX in Safety programme; and
- d) Encourage States to see APEX in Safety as the only programme of its kind, providing peer to peer assistance to airports on operational safety management.

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