![ICAO logo]

COMPREHENSIVE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR AVIATION SAFETY IN AFRICA (AFI PLAN)

TWENTY-SIXTH AFI PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Agenda Item 4: Review of the outcomes of the Aviation Professionals Study

(Presented by AFI Plan Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper presents the progress made in the conduct of the Aviation Professionals Study. It describes the main findings and recommendations of:

a) the initial gap analysis and assessment;

b) the implementation strategy and plan to address the existing gap and future demand; and

c) the review of the present capacity of approved aviation training centres to meet this demand.

In addition, this paper describes the main recommendations related to the sustainable funding of the proposed implementation of the plan.

Action: The Steering Committee is invited to note the information contained in this paper.

---

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   The challenge of inadequate aviation professionals is prevalent globally and more so in the AFI Region. ICAO aviation safety and security audits have identified the lack of qualified aviation personnel as one of the common deficiencies and root cause for low scores in the average level of effective implementation (EI) of critical elements (CEs) of a State oversight system, hence low levels of compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) in many African States. This impedes States' fulfilment of their international obligations under the Chicago Convention and effective participation in the global aviation market.

1.2   The enhancement of aviation human resource capacity in Africa remains a key component of the deliverables of the AFI Region initiatives, including the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan), the Comprehensive Implementation Plan for Aviation Security and Facilitation in Africa (AFI SECFAL Plan) and

the African Human Resources Development Fund (HRDF). There is also a need for capacity building on Sustainable Development of Air Transport in Africa and the development of State Environment Plans.

1.3   In addition to the ICAO programmes mentioned above, there is a need to implement the African Aviation Training Roadmap indicating aviation training needs in Africa, developed by the African Aviation Training Organization (AATO) supported by the ICAO Global Aviation Training Office (GAT) upon the recommendation of the Steering Committees (SCs) of the AFI Plan and the AFI SECFAL Plan.

1.4   Considering the various initiatives, programmes and plans in the region, it is imperative that priority be given to the development of a comprehensive database on aviation professionals related to ICAO's Strategic Objectives, as well as to develop a gap analysis and develop a forecast of the needs of the aviation sector in Africa.

1.5   The objectives of the project were to:

   a) establish baseline data/information on aviation professionals in the region and build a sustainable platform for available data on expertise in real time;

   b) assess the existing gaps of expertise in specific areas and present future anticipated demand to effectively carry out the oversight responsibilities of States in the AFI region;

   c) develop a tool to support a data bank/platform providing information on the available aviation professional and accessible to relevant stakeholders such as the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), AATO, ICAO's Capacity Development and Implementation Bureau (CDI), the AFI Plan and AFI SECFAL Plan, or regional safety oversight organizations (RSOOs);

   d) address the gender balance and parity inadequacies in the AFI Region; and

   e) prioritize and provide the required training and competencies.

1.6   Baseline data/information on aviation professionals in the region was established. Related data was gathered through a survey and stored in a prototype database. The main results and findings of the analysis as presented during SC/25 are the following:

   a) challenges were faced during the collection of the data (only 24 States across the Eastern and Southern African (ESAF) and the Western and Central African (WACAF) regions responded, out of which only 10 provided complete information);

   b) the highest staffing gaps were found in the areas of aircraft accident and incident investigation (AIG, 65 per cent), aerodromes and ground aids (AGA, 52 per cent) and aerodrome operational planning (AOP, 52 per cent); and

c) the lowest gaps were found in the areas of aviation security (AVSEC, 4 per cent), aeronautical information management/aeronautical charts (AIM/CHART, 11 per cent) and primary aviation legislation and civil aviation regulations (LEG, 11 per cent).

2.   DISCUSSIONS

2.1   Since SC/25, the following activities were carried out:

a) review and finalization of the existing analysis and assessment;

b) development of an implementation strategy and plan including the required resource to address the existing gap and future demand at least in the coming ten (10) years (2022-2032);

c) review of the present capacity of aviation approved training centres to meet the forecast capacity building demand; and

d) propose mechanisms/options for the sustainable funding of the proposed implementation of the plan.

2.2   The existing analysis and assessment was reviewed and finalized, including SWOT and PEST analysis of AFI States' capacity-building strategies in the areas of safety and air navigation in the AFI Region. The main results are the following:

Item	ESAF	WACAF
Strengths	a) No significant safety concerns b) 6 States have achieved the GASP Target of 75% EI c) 7 States have reached the world average of 67.6% EI	a) No significant safety concerns b) 5 States have achieved the GASP target of 75% EI c) 9 States have reached the world average of 67.6% EI
Weaknesses	a) 12 States below 60% EI and 2 States below 30% EI b) Weak performance in licensing, certification, authorization and approval obligations (CE-6) in PEL, OPS and ANS c) One State at SSP Level 4 Implementation	a) 10 States below 60% EI and 6 States below 30% EI b) Weak performance in licensing, certification, authorization and approval obligations (CE-6) in PEL, OPS, ANS and AGA c) No SSP Level 4 Implementation
Opportunities	a) Availability of GSI PEL, OPS and AIR courses b) The COVID-19 pandemic threat has reduced and economies opening up c) High mobile telephone penetration	a) Availability of GSI PEL, OPS and AIR courses b) High mobile telephone penetration c) Exceptional natural mineral resource and production of industrial crops
Threats	a) No GSI course for ANS b) No GSI course for Surveillance and RSC c) Political instability and uncertainty	a) No GSI course for ANS b) No GSI course for Surveillance and RSC c) Political instability and uncertainty

2.3   Regarding the development of an implementation strategy and plan including the required resource to address the existing gap and future demand at least in the coming ten (10) years (2022-2032), required training categories and courses were identified. The main findings and recommendations are the following:

>   a)   a list of 19 courses to be delivered in the short to medium term;
>
>   b)   a set of 15 target States for the short term;
>
>   c)   courses should be developed in English, French and Portuguese;
>
>   d)   approved training organizations (ATOs) to work with partners to develop local content versions of courses in the various categories and to develop specific course in uncovered areas; and
>
>   e)   to meet adequacy and regional balance in the medium to long term, States should encourage qualified individuals to apply and enrol as qualified instructors and provide motivational packages for instructors.

2.4   The review of the present capacity of approved aviation training centres shows the following main findings:

>   a)   any ICAO-approved ATO can deliver the Government Safety Inspector (GSI) Operations – Air Operator Certification (OPS), GSI Airworthiness – Air Operator and Approved Maintenance Organization Certification (AIR) and GSI Personnel – Personnel Licensing (PEL) courses, as well as the course CAA Approval of Training Organizations (CAA ATO);
>
>   b)   the East African Aviation Academy (EASA) can deliver the four recommended courses in the area of air navigation services (ANS); and
>
>   c)   more instructors should be certified for the GSI courses, including French-speaking ones.

2.5   The mechanisms/options for the sustainable funding of the proposed implementation of the plan include the following main recommendations:

>   a)   call on ATOs to lower course fees and when possible conduct in-house training;
>
>   b)   where a training centre can utilize staff of the local civil aviation authority (CAA), an incentive teaching fee should be paid;
>
>   c)   negotiate with various institutions, e.g. the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)/Department of Transportation (DOT), the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), the Government of Singapore, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, etc., for financial support;

d)   deliver GSI and other courses in virtual classroom format;

e)   consider the creation of an "AFI Aviation Professionals Fund" to be sponsored voluntarily by States, organizations, and corporate bodies as a sustainable long-term strategy to ensure continuous training of personnel.

2.6   A workshop was held from 14 to 15 June 2023 to present the outcomes of the study in more detail to Member States. The study report is available on the ICAO website: https://www.icao.int/WACAF/Pages/AviationProfessionalCVW.aspx .

2.7   In order to complete the activities related to the study, a database system is being procured. The system will allow the tracking of aviation professionals in the States and of the capacity of ATOs in the AFI region.

3.   ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1   The steering committee is invited to note the information presented in this paper and provide further guidance as necessary.

- END -